



Norway, 1997

Director

Erik Skjoldbjærg

Producer

Petter J. Borgli, Tomas Backström, Tom Remlov

Screenwriter

Nikolaj Frobenius, Erik Skjoldbjærg

Cinematographer

Erling Thurnman-Andersen fnf

Editor

Håkon Øverås

Music

Geir Jenssen

Cast

Stellan Skarsgård, Sverre Anker Ousdal, Bjørn Floberg, Giske Armand, Maria Bonnevie

Print SourceFirst Run Features
153 Waverly Place
New York, NY 10014
212) 243-0600**Running Time**

17 Minutes

Original LanguageSwedish and Norwegian
with English subtitles

Wed Nov 4, 8:00 PM

Phipps

Insomnia

An intense and moody thriller, *Insomnia* begins with two inspired plot twists: a film noir set during the midnight sun, and a criminal investigator who strives to conceal evidence rather than uncover it.

Add to this a stunningly well-conceived script, the magnificent Stellan Skarsgård as the cop, and the vast and eerie northern Norwegian landscape as the setting.

On the surface a police procedural story, the film opens as two detectives arrive in a fog-shrouded town to investigate the gruesome murder of a young woman. But in a Hitchcockian transition, Skarsgård's Detective Engstrom switches from investigating a crime to concealing one. His troubles are exacerbated by his insomnia, due to the incessantly burning sun.

With great finesse, the movie deftly builds suspense and a web of lies and deceptions. The paranoia of Engstrom causes him to question his own most deeply-held notions of who he is and what he stands for. Skarsgård's riveting performance perfectly melds ruthlessness, eroticism, professionalism and frustration.

Siskel & Ebert not only gave *Insomnia* "Two Thumbs Up," but they named Stellan Skarsgård as one of their new faces to watch.

- Michelle Forren



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Italy, 1998

AwardsCannes Film Festival
Grand Jury Prize**Director**

Roberto Benigni

Producer

Gianluigi Braschi, Mario Cotone

ScreenwriterRoberto Benigni,
Vincenzo Cerami**Cinematographer**

Tonino Delli Colli

Editor

Simona Paggi

Music

Nicola Piovani

CastRoberto Benigni,
Nicoletta Braschi,
Giustino Durano**Print Source**Print courtesy of
Miramax Films**Running Time**

114 Minutes

Original LanguageItalian
with English subtitles

Sun Nov 1, 6:30 PM

Phipps

Life is Beautiful

At the 1998 Cannes Film Festival, director Roberto Benigni charmed the world with his exuberance. When this glorious film was announced as the winner of the Grand Jury Prize, he literally kissed jury chair Martin Scorsese's feet, causing quite a commotion.

That moment pinpoints the essence of wiry, rubber-faced director and actor Roberto Benigni. But here he goes far beyond his previous incarnation as a physical comedian. While maintaining his manic physical presence, he imbues both his character and the film with a deep and abiding jubilation that asserts that the human spirit is indefatigable.

The bittersweet *Life is Beautiful*, set against the backdrop of World War II and the Holocaust, is a stirring fable of true love, sacrifice, and maintaining hope in desperate times. Guido (Benigni) moves from the country to a Tuscan town. There, he becomes enamored with a schoolteacher, Dora (Nicoletta Braschi, Benigni's real-life wife). But Guido's Jewish uncle is confronted with anti-Semitic attacks, which are an ominous foreshadowing. Years later, the now-married Guido and Dora and their son, Giosue, are imprisoned in concentration camps. With Dora in a different camp and their situation dire, Guido gives his son a precious and enduring gift - a shield from life's harsh realities.

- A. Richard Langley