

## Fiorile

That talented Italian filmmaking team, the Taviani brothers, have come up with their latest effort, *Fiorile*, based on their own family tale and sited in their beloved Tuscany. It proves to be a delicate and wistful family saga.

*Fiorile* (the title is Italian for the month of May in the French Revolutionary calendar) traces the twisting course of a family curse, triggered when a Napoleonic soldier in French-occupied Tuscany is executed for losing his company's gold hoard. It turns out a local unworthy has stolen the gold while the soldier, in a sylvan interlude, has impregnated his sister. Their family, the Benedettis (Italian for "the Blessed") thus becomes the "Maledettis" (the "Cursed") as both the crime and the girl's offspring percolate through the generations.

The narrative is told by a contemporary Benedetti, as he wheels his family around the countryside looking for pieces of his past. This is a familiar landscape for movie fans who remember fondly the Tavianis' Tuscan-based works, like *The Night of the Shooting Stars*, and it is picturesque territory indeed.

The film has the feel of fable, and you see a good bit of it through children's eyes, those who are told the family legend. You sense young Paolo and Vittorio Taviani themselves hearing such a tale at a parent's knee and passing it on to a new generation. It untwines its strands of several generations gently and discursively.

The principal protagonists are played--effectively--by many of the same actors in differing incarnations. Fans of Italian cinema may recognize the nefarious Benedetti, Claudio Bigagli, who has appeared in earlier Taviani films and who played the squad leader in the Italian Oscar winner *Mediterraneo*.

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