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"People with money need art to live, and people with art need money to live," director Mauro John Capece says of the lead characters in *La Scultura*, including a prostitute portrayed by Corinna Coroneo, who co-wrote the screenplay with Capece.

FESTIVAL DES FILMS DU MONDE

Sculpting the subtexts

THE ITALIAN FILM *LA SCULTURA* portrays an age-old dilemma, contrasting an artist's struggle to pay the rent with a prostitute's struggle to nourish her soul

Italian filmmaker Mauro John Capece's *La Scultura* (The Sculpture) is about two of the oldest professions on the planet. This highly erotic, thought-provoking film, which has its world premiere at the Festival des films du monde this week, is about an artist and a prostitute, and Capece suggests the two professions may have more in common than you might think.

"It's about contemporary art and it's talking about the prostitution of art," Capece said in an interview on Monday.

"Prostitution is not only sexual. It can also be with the brain. Living in Italy, it's a country full of art. But people are sad. They can't see art on television, they can't see art in cinema. There are a lot of people who are searching for something artistic. And that's the movie."

La Scultura, Capece's third feature, focuses on a sculptor, Moses (Adrien Liss), who isn't prostituting himself. Au contraire, he's a pure artist, and like pure artists since the beginning of time, he's having trouble paying the



BRENDAN KELLY

SHOW BIZ CHEZ NOUS

rent. He's being harassed by a pair of psychotic businessmen — or gangsters? — who routinely berate Moses for being the worst sort of loser artist.

Korinne (Corinna Coroneo), on the other hand, has no problem making her payments on the first of the month. She's a high-class escort, seen making the big bucks entertaining one rather troubling client. She rents a room in Moses's beautiful country home, and that's when Capece goes to town underlining the similarities and differences between the two trades.

(You are apparently just meant to accept that this starving artist lives in this incredibly beautiful, spacious home, and also has a state-of-the-art sculpting studio.)

"People with money need art to live, and people with art need money to live," said Capece. "So it's a sort of exchange. The escort in the

movie learns about art and spirituality from the sculptor. And the sculptor learns the way to make money from sex from the escort."

These are age-old dilemmas: how to make money as an artist, and how to feed your soul while working in a soul-destroying job. The theme is oh so 2014, and is also as old as they come.

"This movie is not contemporary," Capece said. "It's always been the same. In the past, (artists) had to work for the church. Now they work for television, which is the new church."

La Scultura's screenplay was written by Capece and Coroneo, and they didn't shy away from including quite realistic sex scenes, which occupy a fair chunk of the screen time.

Coroneo said she wasn't in the least bothered by spending so much time filming erotic scenes.

"It's very simple for me, because I approach my character with honesty and humility, and without false modesty," she said. "I stop being myself and I become the character in the film."

Moses also starts dressing as a woman later in the film, which adds yet another layer to this unusual tale.

"It's a bit like a sculptor changes the material he's working with," Capece said. "So he changes himself when working as a prostitute. He changes himself like he changes his art. There are a lot of subtexts in this film."

This is Capece's second visit to the FFM. He was here in 2008 with his film *Alien*, the Man of the Future. He says it's his kind of fest.

"I've seen a lot of movies," Capece said. "I think the quality is good. It's better than other festivals. It's not a mainstream festival. So I like it a lot. I like Rotterdam, Sundance. I don't like to focus on mainstream movies."

La Scultura screens Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. and Wednesday at 4:50 p.m. at the Quartier Latin cinema, 350 Emery St., as part of the Festival des films du monde. For more information, visit ffm-montreal.org.

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