

Tale of Tales

Cert 15 Italy/France/UK 2015 133 mins

Crew

Director	Matteo Garrone
Screenplay	Matteo Garrone, Ugo Chiti, Eduardo Albinati, Massimo Gaudioso
Cinematography	Peter Suschitsky
Film Editing	Marco Spoletini
Original music	Alexandre Desplat

Cast

Salma Hayek	Queen of Longtrelis
Vincent Cassel	King of Strongcliff
Toby Jones	King of Highhills
John C. Reilly	King of Longtrelis
Shirley Henderson	Imma

Synopsis

Once upon a time, three kingdoms...

...in Longtrelis, a childless queen follows the unpalatable advice of a visiting sorcerer in the hope of becoming pregnant ;

...in Strongcliff, a womanising King flies into a psychotic rage after accidentally seducing an old crone;

...in Highhills, a King marries his daughter to an ogre after becoming distraught on the death of his friend, a giant flea.

Or - three everyday stories of regal folk, and the blinding effects of loss, love and desire.



Booking Information

Distributor: Artificial Eye

DVD bookings:

BFI Film Distribution

020 7957 8938

Bookings.films@bfi.org.uk

www.bfi.org.uk/distribution

Available: now



Reviews

For his English-language debut, Matteo Garrone (*Gomorra*) splices together three yarns by 17th-Century Neapolitan writer Giambattista Basile who, like the Brothers Grimm, creatively reworked traditional folk tales. Characters from each strand show up in the others, but there's no narrative intertwining à la *Into the Woods*; instead, Garrone cuts from one to the next.

The visuals are sumptuous and the whole cast (including Salma Hayek, John C. Reilly and Toby Jones) immerse themselves in this fantastical world. Dark, gory and gruesome, this isn't kids' stuff. As a work of gothic imagination, it's a rare treat.

Philip Kemp, Total Films, August 2016

....Bawdy romping, meaty heart-munching and toothy creature-feature fare are all on the menu in this sprawling collage of fables that owes as much to David Cronenberg's adaptation of *Naked Lunch* as to Neil Jordan's *The Company of Wolves*....

Garrone describes Basile's tales as epitomising "that blend between the real and fantastic which has always characterised my artistic endeavours", a statement that may surprise fans of the director's most celebrated work, *Gomorra*, an unflinchingly "realist" portrait of Neapolitan crime and corruption. Yet as 2012's *Reality* demonstrated, there has long been an operatic quality to Garrone's work, and in *Tale of Tales* we find outlandish flights of folklore fancy rooted in the terra firma of the tangible world. Astonishing locations lay the foundations, from Apulia's octagonal Castel del Monte to the otherworldly wonders of Sicily's Alcantara gorge - real settings that evoke unreal, theatrical environments.

As for the creature effects, the decision to use computer graphics merely to enhance rather than replace old-fashioned puppetry and animatronics pays down-to-earth dividends.

Here be dragons that one can believe in, creatures whose forms seem physical rather than digital, particularly when viewed through the underwater fog of a diver's helmet, like exotic escapees from a movie by Georges Méliès or Guy Maddin.... This is a theatrical piece: a three-ring circus of a movie for which front row seats are highly recommended.

Mark Kermode, The Observer, June 2016

FILM FACTS...

- ☆ The film premiered at the Cannes Film Festival 2015 where it was nominated for the *Palme D'Or*. It won 8 *Donatello* Awards in 2016, including Best Director.
- ✦ It is Matteo Garrone's first English language film, and was an Italian/French/English co-production. Its English production company was RPC, whose recent films include *A Dangerous Method* and *Only Lovers Left Alive*.