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**Music Control**

by **Jim Crescitelli** published in issue #1313  
**Orlando**  
**No Need to Bat an Eye for Beauty**

**LASHES TO LASHES**, dust to dust. Beauty beckons and reply we must. Do you realize how big the beautification industry is in this world? It's amazing. Some \$160 billion dollars is spent annually on things like lipstick and loofa sponges. (And think of all the rabbits that have to go blind in order to ensure that the latest shade of eye shadow doesn't blind *you*.)

Aren't you amazed and a little appalled when you stroll through Publix and gaze upon all the flavors of shampoo that are available? You can step out of the shower smelling like you just spent a weekend picking cranberries in Maine, or you can give off a simply unscented and natural aroma (which somehow requires even more ingredients).

And maybe it's just me, but when I saunter past the Arden counter on my way into the depths of Macy's to buy a new ironing board cover, I can't help but think that those 500 shades of lip liner all look the same. (Wouldn't you just love to scrawl *Stop the Madness* on Anna Wintour's bathroom mirror?) In any event, the thoughtful among us try to keep a proper perspective, and there are safe and sound ways to achieve the right look. Some of us even become test rabbits ourselves. Witness a recent afternoon I spent at M Salon in Winter Park, having artificial eyelash extensions applied one by one. Daved and Krystyna offer the services of a company called Xtreme Lashes, which dramatically lengthen one's natural lashes without fuss and drama. You may ask why would I need my eyelashes lengthened? My mother asked me the same thing, and she told me not to do it, because I would look too "you know," but I acquiesced and placed myself in a horizontal position while Daved worked on me.

For one thing, I was very curious as to how it all would look when I was done, because I had never heard of such a thing as placing eyelashes on individually.

"Don't make me too girly," I begged, and in a couple of short hours I was done. You can't move too much and shouldn't talk a lot, because placement is critical. (I prayed a rosary to myself to pass the time, and also did the multiplication tables through the Twelve Times.) The results? There's a difference, but not a huge difference. One's eyes definitely do appear brighter, but it's not like I'm running around resembling Tammy Faye.

And they'll stay for months! You even get a little brush to perk them up in the morning.

**ITALIAN WEEK!** No, we didn't spend the last few days gorging ourselves on manicotti. Well, we did, but in a different way, thanks to the wonders of Netflix. We enjoyed two really fabulous movies based in beautiful Italy, the first starring everyone's favorite dramatician, Anna Magnani.

*Mamma Roma* (1962) tells the story of an aged prostitute whose life is entwined nonetheless with friends and neighbors. She has a son, whose coming-of-age in Rome is angst-ridden and problematic, but what the whole movie is about is Magnani's acting. It's not for nothing that she won an Academy Award for *The Rose Tattoo*! She's blowsy and bouffanted and loud and extremely magnetic, apparently incapable of sharing a scene with anyone without stealing it entirely. Ultimately heartbreaking, it's a beautiful film written and directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini.

Our second *tour de cinema* was *His Secret Life* (2001), a very warm tale about an Italian Yuppie couple. He dies when he's hit by a car, and his widow ends up discovering that he's had quite a clandestine life, one that included a boyfriend of seven years. She also meets the attendant Greek chorus that such a coupling will involve: the bitchy friends, the older women accomplices, the sex change in progress, the AIDS patient, etc. What could have turned into a typical gay-themed movie larded over with clichéd characters turns out to be a beautiful collection of character studies, wonderfully led by the gorgeous Margherita Buy and the handsome Stefano Accorsi. Being an Italian film, most of the action takes place on weekends when people are preparing grand meals to *mangia al fresco*. (Nobody ever seems to work in Italy; everyone is either eating or making love—my life is exactly like that!)

And being Italian, everyone talks very quickly and at once, and it is all very funny and warm and honest and life-affirming. By all means, rent this movie!

**Issue Info**

Issue 13-13  
Runs Jun 29th, 2006  
Through Jul 12th, 2006

Today is Friday  
March 16th, 2007

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**KEEP THESE PEOPLE** in mind when you're praying special intentions in church, temple, mosque, or slipping on your garden gloves and worshipping the earth: Larry H., Rob S., Rob W., Joe M. and Larry T. They all need any positive energy you can send their way. And count your blessings if you're in good health! That's really the best thing to have. W

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