

# Le Quattro Volte

Cert U Italy 2010 88 mins

## Crew

Director /writer	Michelangelo Frammartino
Original Music	Paolo Benvenuti
Cinematographer	Andrea Locatelli
Film Editors	Benni Atria Maurizio Grillo

## Cast

(as themselves)	
Giuseppe Fuda	old shepherd
Nazareno Timpano	charcoal burners
Bruno Timpano	
Artemio Vellone	
Domenico Cavallo	shepherds
Santo Cavallo	
Peppe Cavall	
Isidoro Chiera	priest

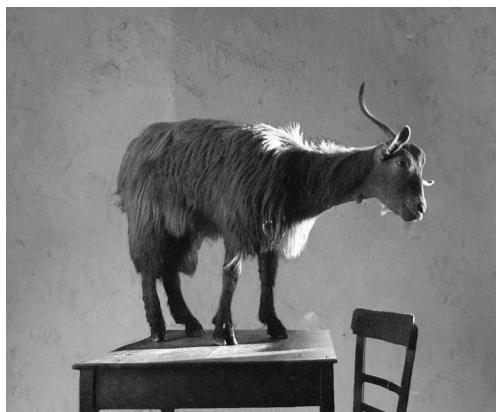
## Synopsis

*Calabria, the timeless present. Smoke smoulders from a scarazzo (charcoal kiln). The beat of a spade compacting its side resounds up into the hills along with a chorus of goat bells. The aged, ailing goatherd medicates himself with a solution of dust bought from the local church; but later he dies in his bed, surrounded by his goats.*

*A kid is born, and is sent out into the world with the herd; lost, it wanders the hillside and settles in a fir tree.*

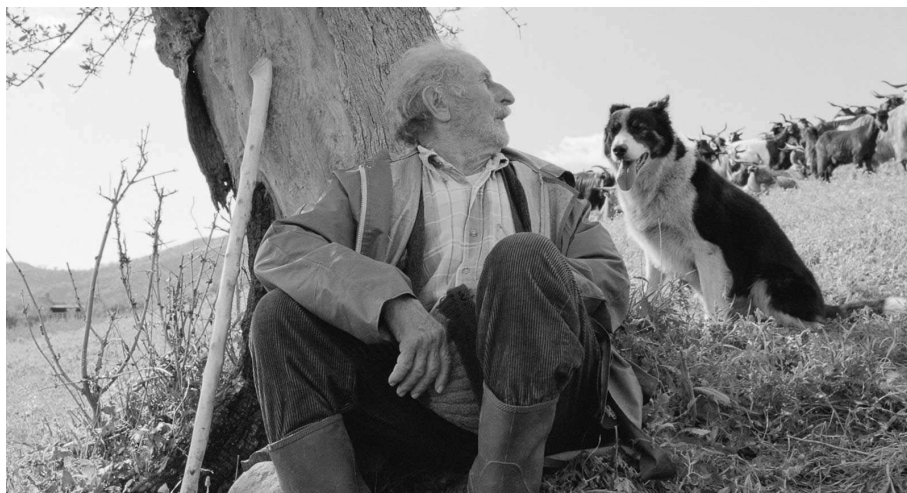
*The film follows the tree through the seasons; it is felled, shaved, re-erected in the village for a festival, then chopped into logs and entombed in another scarazzo...*

*Abridged from Sight & Sound, June 2011.*



**Film trailer:**

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpDSIbNj](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RpDSIbNj)



## Reviews

When Michelangelo Frammartino's intriguing film was shown at Cannes in 2010 critics were tearing round the Croisette saying, "You have to see the goat film." It's outstanding all right but, in truth, probably not for everybody.

The setting is a remote village in Calabria where an old goatherd tends his animals with his faithful dog and every day visits the church to leave some milk in return for a packet of holy dust, which he is convinced will help his persistent cough.

It doesn't, because he dies and a funeral takes place. But before that the dog, shooed away when the villagers mount a religious procession, some of them dressed as Roman soldiers, grabs (possibly in revenge) a block of wood which has been preventing an old lorry rolling backwards down a hill, and watches as it hits the fence that holds the goats secure. The result is havoc....

Apparently Pythagoras, who had a school in Calabria, used to teach his pupils from behind a screen. And Frammartino makes his film in the same sort of way. He never imposes upon it apart from shooting it brilliantly so that the whole seems simply part of the natural order of things rather than either a drama or a documentary.

Like the recent *Sweetgrass* (2011), it is all rather wonderful - a balm to the spirit and a tribute to the natural world, unsullied by consumer society.

*Derek Malcolm, London Evening Standard, 27 May 2011*

*Le Quattro Volte* takes its title from a quote attributed to Pythagoras suggesting that we each live our life 'four times'. Accordingly, the film is in four parts, each discreetly demarcated by a brief interval of blank screen - but that is not to say that these different episodes, concerned variously with an elderly goatherd, a newborn goat, a giant tree and a sack of newly made coal, somehow lack continuity or thematic coherence.

On the contrary, the shift in focus from human to animal to vegetable to mineral presents a portrait of Calabrian life where everything has its place in a repeating natural cycle - even if the film is also an elegy for the circle's end, as writer/director Michelangelo Frammartino documents an age-old way of life that is, both literally and metaphorically, going up in smoke.....

Told mostly in long shot, not only without dialogue, but even without the human centre from which more conventional narratives unfold, *Le Quattro Volte* is a slow, contemplative film about time and transformation, rewarding the viewer's patience with its mysterious, even transcendent vision - and some unexpected humour.

*Anton Bitel, Film4*