



Film by Diana Ringo

EVERY MASTERPIECE DEMANDS IT'S PRICE

The Curse of Modigliani

LOGLINE

An American artist in Helsinki discovers an antique diary that belonged to the legendary painter Amedeo Modigliani—unravelling a haunting spiral of love and betrayal that eerily mirrors the fate of the master himself.



Edward Pishiyski





SYNOPSIS

Struggling to establish himself in Helsinki's art scene, American painter Max stumbles upon an antique diary that he becomes convinced once belonged to the legendary Italian artist Amedeo Modigliani. As he delves into its pages, Max's curiosity morphs into an all-consuming obsession, and he begins to experience eerie visions.

When Max meets Julia, a relationship of passion and abuse begins. Julia is a young dancer who is willing to make sacrifices for the sake of Max's ambitions. Leo, Max's art manager, initially shares a friendship with him, but their bond gradually transforms into one of bitter betrayal.

As his fixation deepens, Max's once-promising career falters, his relationships begin to crumble, and Julia watches helplessly as he spirals further into delusion, while Leo struggles to keep him afloat. Frustrated by his lack of recognition and ongoing financial hardship, Max turns to self-destructive habits.

Caught in a whirlwind of artistic passion and despair, Max teeters on the fine line between genius and madness and becomes a target for manipulation.

ABOUT THE FILM

The Curse of Modigliani is a psychological drama filmed in Helsinki during the summer of 2024. Written and directed by Diana Ringo, the film is based on an original screenplay inspired by the life of the legendary Italian painter Amedeo Modigliani.

Diana Ringo is a film director well-known for her auteur cinema. In her first English-language feature, and her third full-length work, Ringo explores the destructive power of artistic obsession.

The film delves into the struggles of a contemporary artist, offering a powerful social commentary on the sacrifices and hardships faced by visionaries in a world that often prioritizes commercial success over artistic integrity. It is an exploration of relationships between people, which often turn to manipulation using the weakness of another party.

The film features original paintings by artist Elena Ringo.

The Curse of Modigliani reflects on the timeless challenges of creative ambition and the toll it takes on both the artist and those around them.

AMEDEO MODIGLIANI

Amedeo Modigliani (1884–1920) was an Italian painter and sculptor who struggled with poverty and addiction in Paris, but his once-overlooked work later gained global acclaim in the art world. His portraits are characterized by elongated figures and almond-shaped eyes.



Edward Pishiyski



Ilkka Hautala, Aksel Spencer, Edward Pishiyski

DIRECTORS STATEMENT BY
DIANA RINGO

As a film director, I try to create cinema that is both poetic and meaningful and explore the conflict between an individual and society. *The Curse of Modigliani* is an extension of this exploration, focusing on the struggles of a contemporary artist whose life is somehow similar to the tragic fate of Amedeo Modigliani.

I was raised in a family of a painter, and I know the art world from the inside. I know that an artist often faces challenges, and the art business can be cruel and unfair. I think that Amedeo's life was hard, but he lived in a period that was very rich and inspiring in many respects. The artistic world is increasingly corrupted and disconnected from its audience, straying from the true essence of art. Genuine talent is becoming ever more overlooked.



Edward Pishiyski

Why Did I Choose Modigliani's Story?

For many, the story of Amedeo Modigliani is a symbol of a struggling artist; a painter unrecognized in his lifetime, struggling against the harsh realities of the art world. This theme remains relevant today. Misunderstood by his contemporaries and unable to sell his paintings, Modigliani's life was cut short, as was the life of his beloved. In cinema, he is often portrayed as either overly romanticized or entirely mad, but my perception of him is different. I read a lot about his life, and I think that there are many mysteries in his story that remain unsolved and unexplored in cinema. For example, the nature of his relationship with his art dealer Leo, the death of his girlfriend, and several other aspects. In my film, I try to investigate these subjects, offering my own interpretation of these events.



Edward Pishiyski, Aapo Loimalahti, Matias Timonen

DIRECTORS STATEMENT BY
DIANA RINGO

My protagonist is a contemporary artist, Max, who has many things in common with Amedeo and somehow identifies himself with this artist.

Art is both creation and destruction; it elevates and consumes. In *The Curse of Modigliani*, I explore the fine line between genius and madness, inspiration and obsession. Max, a struggling American artist in Helsinki, stumbles upon a diary that he believes belonged to Amedeo Modigliani. What begins as admiration soon turns into a descent into darkness, mirroring Modigliani's own tragic fate.

This film is not just about art; it is about the artist's soul. It is about the intoxicating power of creation, the sacrifices it demands, and the illusions it weaves. Through Max's journey, we confront the question: does art demand suffering, or is that merely the lie we tell ourselves?

Stark contrasts and dreamlike imagery reflect Max's unraveling psyche; the diary itself becomes a character—whispering its seductive myths. The city of Helsinki, with its melancholic beauty, serves as both a muse and a prison and the film's score enhances the hypnotic pull of Max's obsession.



Edward Pishiyski



Sakari Viitala, Aksel Spencer

As a filmmaker, I have always been drawn to stories that blur the lines between reality and illusion, past and present, creation and destruction. *The Curse of Modigliani* is my meditation on inspiration, love, friendship, and betrayal.

The visual style of *The Curse of Modigliani* is deeply inspired by the beauty of expressionist cinema, blending evocative compositions with rich, painterly textures. The film's cinematography employs a muted palette punctuated by bold splashes of color—deep blues, ochres, and blood reds—mirroring the protagonist's descent into delirium. The contrast between Helsinki's stark, modern architecture and the intimate spaces of Max's studio creates a visual tension that reflects his inner turmoil.

The Curse of Modigliani is also a commentary on the modern art world, where artists are often forced to conform to market demands, sacrificing authenticity for commercial success. Max's journey is that of many creatives today; struggling to survive in a world that often does not value artists.

Masterpieces are painted in blood; true artistic vision often comes at a personal cost, whether through suffering or the relentless

pursuit of perfection. Modigliani, like many artists before and after him, poured his soul into his work, only to be recognized posthumously. Max, too, walks this dangerous path, questioning whether artistic greatness is worth the personal torment it demands. The film is a reflection on the myths surrounding artistic suffering and the toll it takes on those who dedicate their lives to creation.

I was pleased to find many talented actors in Finland who were eager to participate in an internationally focused production aimed at global audiences. I believe Finland is an underestimated international hub with a bright future in filmmaking.

This film is deeply personal to me, not only as a director but as an artist myself. It is my hope that audiences will see in Max a reflection of their own creative struggles and that *The Curse of Modigliani* will resonate as a powerful tribute to all those who dare to create against the odds.

***Director and composer
Diana Ringo***





DIANA RINGO

Diana Ringo (born 1992) is a Finnish director and composer known for her distinctive cinematic vision and psychologically infused storytelling. A classically trained pianist, she has composed music for numerous films, earning international acclaim for her scores. Her directorial debut, the dystopian drama *Quarantine* (2021), was followed by the ambitious sci-fi adaptation *1984* (2023) based on George Orwell's novel.

The Curse of Modigliani is Ringo's first English-language feature film.



EDWARD PISHIYSKI

Edward Pishiyski (born 1990) is a British film and television actor. He has appeared in acclaimed series such as *The Sandman* and *Black Mirror*. With *The Curse of Modigliani*, Pishiyski takes on his most challenging role yet, embodying the tormented artist Max with raw intensity.

FILM BY
DIANA RINGO

A movie poster for 'The Curse of Modigliani'. The background is a dark, moody scene with a blue tint. In the foreground, a man with dark, wavy hair and a black shirt is looking towards the camera, holding a lit cigarette. In the background, a woman in a black strapless dress and high heels stands on a staircase, looking away. The title 'The Curse of Modigliani' is written in a white, stylized script at the bottom.

*The Curse
of
Modigliani*

The Curse of Modigliani

INFORMATION ABOUT THE FILM

Title - The Curse of Modigliani
Genre - drama, black comedy
Country - Finland
Language - English
Year - 2025
Runtime - 120 minutes
Film - color
Format - DCP

CAST

Edward Pishiyski - Max
Diana Ringo - Julia
Sakari Viitala - Art collector
Aksel Spencer - Leo
Ilkka Hautala
Kari PJ Ketonen
Frits Soetmann
Aapo Loimalahti
Matias Timonen
Tuure Ollila
Miro Puintila

CREW

Executive producer, director, screenplay, DOP,
editing, composer - Diana Ringo

Production - Aelita Productions

AE LITA PRODUCTIONS