

'Caligula: Package of Excellence' podcast debuts August 1st 2024

Six-part series explores how some of the most esteemed actors of the '70s came to star in the most notorious XXX film ever made

LOS ANGELES, CA, USA, July 22, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- When Malcolm McDowell, Oscar nominee Peter O'Toole, Sir John Gielgud and Dame Helen Mirren signed up for 1980's Caligula, they had no idea they'd be lending their talents to one the most controversial films the world has ever seen.



Production still - Malcolm McDowell as Caligula

In conjunction with the Drafthouse Films release of Caligula: The Ultimate Cut, the six-episode podcast Caligula: Package of Excellence will give movie lovers an inside look at how the original epic catastrophe came to be. Using new and exclusive interviews, firsthand accounts from the set and access to recently uncovered recordings, Package of Excellence is a behind the scenes audio documentary that answers the questions – how did it all go so horribly wrong? And why are some people so obsessed with recreating the film?

The shoot was a mess from the beginning. It started when the screenwriter was fired for making Caligula "too gay." It ended with the director fired for not making the hardcore sex sexy enough. In between, there were actual on-set orgies, bestiality, a plan to plant drugs on a difficult actress and have her arrested, rumors of Vatican hit squads, a live birth, a deadly half-drugged horse and a séance with the dead Roman emperor to get his feedback on the film.

Hosts Collin Friesen (Writer/director, NPR contributor) and Tara McNamara (Film Journalist, '80s Movie Guide) will narrate this deep dive into the making of the film Roger Ebert called "sickening, utterly worthless, shameful."

"It was a clash of egos for the ages," says Friesen. "The battle between Penthouse publisher and producer Bob Guccione, writer Gore Vidal and anarchist director Tinto Brass, created the perfect

storm of awful. Guccione says he put together a “package of excellence” to make the film, but ended up smuggling the footage out of Italy, reediting the movie to insert even more sex, then unleashing his creation on an unsuspecting world.”

But the story doesn’t end there. Tinto Brass fans believed there was a great piece of cinema – the one Brass shot - hidden in the bad one – the one Guccione created. And over the years, attempts to recut the movie have unspooled like a detective story. With false leads, dead ends, and a dash across Los Angeles to rescue the original footage from the trash compactor, the film is now about to have its Hollywood ending.

Caligula will return to theaters this summer in an all-new 4K Ultra High Definition version. Caligula: The Ultimate Cut, will let audiences see the complete reconstruction of one of cinema's most lavish-yet-notorious productions.

Package of Excellence is supported in part by Drafthouse Films, who will open Caligula: The Ultimate Cut in theaters nationwide starting August 16.

Learn more at caligula.drafthousefilms.com

[To listen to the first episode, click here.](#)

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