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# Vintage 'We the Living' remains vivid in telling political love story

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Ayn Rand left her native Russia for the United States in 1926. Her first novel, "We the Living," is a love triangle set within sweeping Russian social and ideological changes in the early '20s. The novel was adapted to the screen by Italian director Goffredo Alessandrini without permission in 1941, disappeared and was recently re-released.

They don't make 'em like this anymore. At three hours with an intermission, it's a colossal love story within a massive philosophical framework. The masterfully constructed plot traces the early adulthood of beautiful, strong-willed Kiri (Alida Valli), who wants to be an engineer. She falls in love with a penniless former aristocrat named Leo (Rossano Brazzi) and throws away her chances to progress within the heartless Communist hierarchy by running away with him.

When secret police honcho Andrai Taganov (Fosco Giachetti) also falls in love with her, Kiri uses his favors, in return for her own affection, to secretly fi-

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**3 1/2** WE THE LIVING with Alida Valli, Rossano Brazzi and Fosco Giachetti, directed by Goffredo Alessandrini. Unrated: adult themes. In Italian with English subtitles. 3 p.m. tomorrow at Gusman Cultural Center

Movies are rated on a scale of 1 to 4. The rating system is based on the following categories: 1, poor; 2, fair; 3, good; 4, excellent.

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nance Leo's recovery in a tuberculosis sanatorium. Meanwhile, ideals and convictions swirl around like snowflakes in a foggy blizzard.

Valli's powerhouse performance is reminiscent of a young Ingrid Bergman. It's strange to see all these Italians acting like Russians, but Alessandrini pulls it off with bleak, evocative sets, concentrating almost entirely on character development. Artful gradations of black and white, a sensitive, roving camera and clever transitions give the film a timeless quality, and make the principals seem like mythical, cinematic demigods. Keep this masterpiece out of Ted Turner's hands.



Alida Valli is heroine in Italian version of Ayn Rand's novel