



Silvana Mangano

Italian actress, Silvana Mangano, was born on April 21, 1930, in Rome, Lazio, Italy. Her father, Amedeo, was a Sicilian train conductor. Her mother, Ivy Webb, was from England. She was raised in poverty in Rome during World War II and trained as a dancer and worked as model to support herself. In 1946 she won the “Miss Rome” Beauty Contest. A year later, she became a contestant in the “Miss Italia” beauty contest. This led to work in films. Her first notable success was “Riso Amaro” better known in English as “Bitter Rice,” in 1949. She would continue to work in films for the next twenty-plus years. Some of her most notable films were Anna (1951), the Gold of Naples (1954), Mambo (1954), Ulysses (1954), 5 Branded Women (1960), Barrabas (1962) and Death in Venice (1971.

In 1949, she married Dino De Laurentis, the soon to be famous film producer. They had four children, Veronica, Raffaella, Federico and Francesca. In 1981, her son, Federico, was killed in an Alaskan air crash.

Not having the same kind of drive as her two other Italian sexpot competitors, Gina Lollobrigida and Sofia Loren, Mangano’s career was completely controlled by her husband, Dino.

Her daughter, Raffaella, co-produced with her father, Silvana’s next to last film, Dune in 1984. Her Granddaughter is Giada De Laurentis, the host of the cooking show, Everyday Italian, on the Food Network.

She separated from her husband, Dino De Laurentis, in 1983 and abandoned her career to live in Paris and Madrid, where she made tapestries until her untimely death of cancer. Her divorce from Dino De Laurentis was never finalized.

Following surgery on December 4, 1989, that left her in a coma, Silvana Mangano died of lung cancer in Madrid, Spain on December 16, 1989. She was only 59 years old.

Silvana Mangano had a beauty that was contagious. The more you looked at her, the more beautiful she looked. I will never forget that beauty. Her granddaughter Giada greatly resembles her.

My late father always told us that Silvana could have been the daughter of one of his lost brothers, making her our first cousin. But that is a story for another time.

Researched from various Internet sites and submitted by Salvatore J. Mangano, PNP, Italian Heritage & Culture Chair of UNICO NATIONAL.

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