

VARIETY

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Spike Lee fends off partisan attack



'Miracle' blasted in Italy as misrepresentation

By [NICK VIVARELLI](#)

ROME — [Spike Lee's "Miracle at St. Anna"](#) is raising historical hackles in Italy, where the WWII drama — which links an anti-Fascist Italian partisan resistance group to the 1944 Nazi massacre of 560 Italian civilians — is being blasted as misrepresentation. Lee and “St. Anna” scribe [James McBride](#) fielded questions Monday in Rome on the sensitive subject of their depiction of the dynamics of the Nazi slaughter in the Tuscan village, following pic’s Italo press screening. In the film, which spotlights the role of black American soldiers in World War II, a partisan named Rodolfo collaborates with the Nazis, indirectly sparking the slaughter. This aspect of Lee’s “St. Anna” tale has incensed partisan veteran orgs, which fear it could fuel a “revisionist” backlash, as former partisan Moreno Costa told *Corriere della Sera*. “This is a fictional story,” said McBride. “The real question for me was how to make ‘St. Anna’ a reveal, because that is the craft of fiction.” “I am very sorry if I have offended the partisans. I have enormous respect for them. As a black American, we understand what it’s like for someone to tell your history, and they are not you. “But unfortunately the history of World War II here in Italy is ours as well, and this was the best I could do,” McBride added. Lee, instead, was not in apologetic mode. “I am not apologizing for anything. I think these questions are evidence that there is still a lot about your history during the war that you (Italians) have got to come to grips with. “This film is no clear picture of what happened. It is our interpretation, and I stand behind it.” “Miracle at St. Anna,” which did not seem to be well-received by local crix, will go out in Italy Friday on 250 screens, via co-producer RAI Cinema’s [01 Distribuzione](#) arm.