

Lilli Carati is dead

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Ileana Caravati, the actress from Varese who was known to the public by her stage name **Lilli Carati**, died yesterday at the age of 58, after a long illness. She was known, together with Gloria Guida, as one of the sex symbols of the 1970s, thanks to her appearance in a great number of **Italian-style sex comedies**. Lilli Carati's career was one of ups and downs, and she had had a tormented private life.

The **daughter of shopkeepers from Varese**, Ileana started her career in 1974, after coming second in the Miss Italy competition. She was immediately signed up by Franco Cristaldi, of the production company Vides Cinematografica, through which she got her first parts in detective and exploitation films. In 1978 she co-starred with Gloria Guida, in the film "**Avere vent'anni**", directed by Ferdinando Di Leo. The film underwent all types of censorship because of the numerous scenes of explicit violence. She took part in the film "**Il corpo della ragassa**" (directed by Pasquale Festa Campanile), which was based on the novel by Gianni Brera, and which also starred Enrico Maria Salerno and Renzo Montagnini. In 1981, after a car accident, in which she almost died, Lilli's career suffered a sudden halt because of rehabilitation, and it was only after four years that she returned to the big screen, with a series of erotic, soft porn and porn films. In the meantime, she got caught up in drugs, as she later admitted, and she ended up making porn films to pay for them.

In 1988 she was arrested near Luino with heroin on her, and her two attempts to commit suicide were the lowest points in her private life. It was only in 1990 that Ileana began finally to shake off her drug habit. In 2008, after a long silence, she began appearing in public again, in a number of TV programmes. In 2012, after returning to the set for a new film, a brain tumour forced her to retire once more. The tumour eventually led to her premature death yesterday.

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