



Chasing Time

**Pitch Deck for a One-Hour, TV Drama
Written by Susan Lee Hahn**

SusanLeeHahn.com | susanleehahn@gmail.com | 847.224.5356



Genre & Artistic Sensibility

Genres: Historical + Mystical + Romantic, one-hour drama

Locations: Florence, Italy and outlying venues in Tuscany

Time Periods: During the Italian Renaissance (15C) and the present day (2018)

Logline

A gifted, American artist of Italian descent (35) moves to Italy in search of her artistic greatness and arrives at the exclusive Medici Artists Colony in Tuscany, Italy where she discovers an immortality elixir that was created during the Renaissance and has been fueling the lives of the patron and several others for over 500 years. With their souls yearning to be released from their bodies after having spent too much time on earth, they set her up to set them free since she is the reincarnation of their only child.

In other words, they want her to kill them.

The fate of the elixir and the future of mankind is up to her.

Story Engine

Isabella's dilemma (and the **story engine**) unfolds with haunting questions, such as:

If she decides to destroy the elixir... She will need to kill them, but after 500+ years of ingesting a drug that strengthens their will to live, this won't be an easy task. And, she loves them! They're her only family. AND, if she reinstates mortality as an essential element of the human condition, what will happen to the life-saving work being done there? *What's more important?*

If she decides to take the elixir... She may be able to ward off a potentially fatal, genetic illness and create her artwork while continuing to nurture the world's greatest artists and innovators, and possibly saving the planet. If she takes the potion, she would be ricocheting between the ecstasy/bliss of being reborn and the nightmarish hell of decaying while still alive — forever.

Does she have the personal strength, conviction, and ingenuity needed to obliterate the elixir, and purposefully kill the people she loves?

There are other questions inherent in the story engine that could be used for future seasons, such as who are the other people who have spent time at the villa and have the immortality elixir? Is it her responsibility to find them and destroy them too? She's not a killer; she's an artist. What are the over-arching, global ramifications of her dilemma?

World Building & Themes

The world of Renaissance Florence comes to life against the backdrop of some of the world's most beautiful and inspiring art, sculpture, and architecture as it explores the idea of timeless art and the themes of artistic passion, where to find it and how to keep it alive. This world (present and past) thrives on emotional and artistic energy, which celebrates nature and humanity. The guests at the villas are all extraordinary, brilliant, and usually a bit eccentric, providing grist for some interesting episodes and inspiration for audiences. Love, like great art can elevate to timelessness.



About the Immortality Elixir (aka "the Juice"):

- It's the **antagonist** of the series because it destroys the human condition and steals the soul's evolution
- Elicits an intense addiction as it strengthens the **will to live**, so users can never commit suicide
- Enhances ecstasy and euphoria beyond belief, heightened senses, enhanced sensual pleasures, etc.
- Rejuvenates the body to a much younger state, cures diseases, erases scars, imitates a kind of *re-birth*
- As it's waning, it brings rapid, painful aging, pervasive despair, and a loss of hope, which is a kind of death
- Even one dose causes irreversible infertility in both men and women
- Even one dose creates a lifelong addiction, and a very long life



Tone & Context

A celebration of beauty, art, love, and life with a supernatural twist



Bridgerton

Passionate, Romantic, Historical Drama



Medici The Magnificent

Italian History depicting a Powerful Dynasty



Killing Eve

European locations, Female leads



Source Material: Inspired by the ancient work

The Twelve Keys Of Basil Valentine, (1599)





Characters

Female Leads: Isabella Buonavita (30) + La Signora Sofia Merlini (60)

Male Leads: Michael Donati (40) + Bruno Medici (65)

Supporting Roles: Carlo Piagentini (40) + Lo Fredo (70) + Tonina Della Terra (45)

***All images are for illustrative purposes only and do not signify any commitments from actors.**

Isabella Buonavita

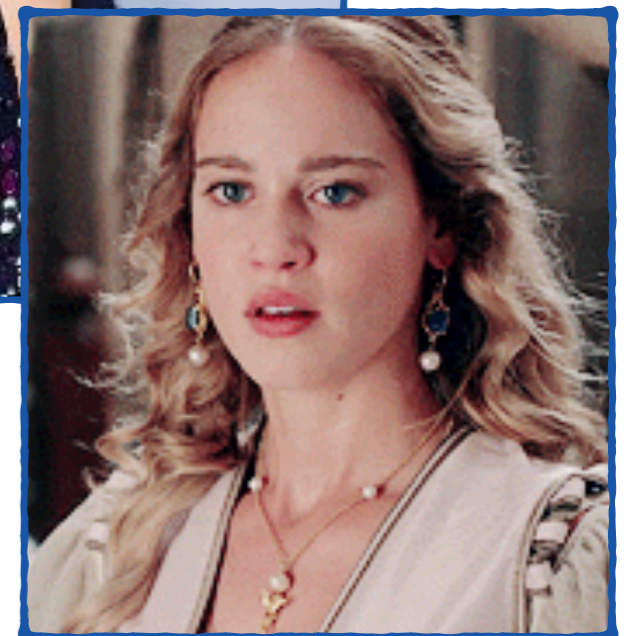
Main Character (Age 30+)

She's an artist, an orphan, an explorer, and a lover. She arrives in Florence in search of her most brilliant, artistic self. Warding off grief over the recent death of her mother and panic from an undiagnosed, potentially debilitating genetic disease, she's driven to find her highest artistic expression before it's too late. She yearns to belong to a family, to find a soulmate lover, and to join the long line of great artists that she comes from, though she doesn't know yet who her ancestors are.

Fearless and frightened at the same time, Isabella reveals her true self to the people closest to her, especially **La Signora** whom she sees as a surrogate mother, to **Michael Donati** whom she believes is her destiny and great love from a previous lifetime, and to **Bruno Medici** with whom she feels an affinity, a salvation, and a gateway to her own greatness.

In her previous incarnation as **Amorosa Merlini** (born 1475), she became a fiercely independent, free-spirited artist having grown up at the Medici Villa as the alleged 'love child' of her mother, Sofia Merlini and Bruno Medici. Her talent as an artist was unrivaled, especially for a woman of that era.

She fell in love with a married man (**Angelo Donati**), died in childbirth, and never knew that her biological father was really Sandro Botticelli. A romantic at heart, she was a prolific painter and lived with her mother until she died, leaving behind a newborn daughter who became the thread to present-day Isabella. Her soul's evolution has growth in strength and power, making her the only one who can free them.





La Signora Sofia Merlini

Main Character (Age 60+)

Immortality elixir age 500+

Her beauty is eclipsed only by her brilliance. She's regal, has a moral compass, and has spent over five hundred decades awash in the regret and terror that her discovery could possibly be the demise of mankind. ***She is Basil Valentine. She discovered the Twelve Keys that became the immortality elixir. She camouflaged her identity as a Monk to protect her and her loved ones.***

At her core, she's a lover and a mother. Her greatest wish was to live with her family intact and for them to live long and healthy lives. When she realized that her discovery created 'hell on earth' for all those who took it, she tried to stop it, but it was too late. She's got the cunning and inner strength to stay alive long enough to see this 'experiment' to the bitter end and to hopefully die in the arms of the man she loves, Bruno.

She implores Isabella to destroy the elixir, which also means she'll be killing Bruno and herself. She's not a religious woman, but is deeply spiritual and yearns for the time when she and Bruno can reunite once more in this lifetime, then evolve their souls together in another, more purely energetic state. She's tired of staying awake all the time so she can constantly sip her elixir from the silver flask she carries with her everywhere disguised as coffee. She's not one for needles and contraptions, but will endure whatever she has to in order to be reunited with her loved ones.

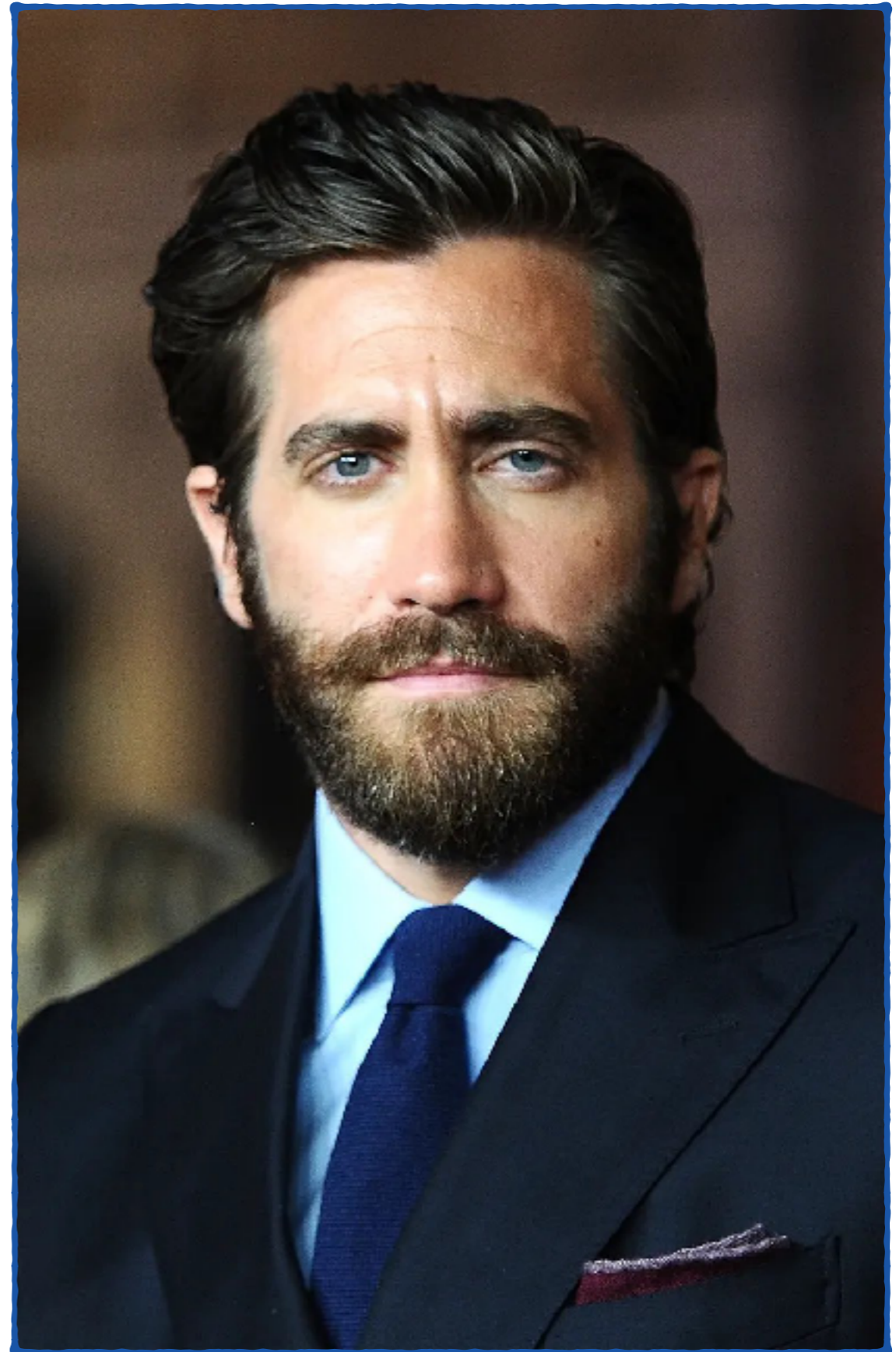
Michael Donatí

Main Character (Age 40)

A lover, not a fighter, Michael has a great gift for recognizing artistic talent as an art dealer in New York. Born in Florence to a prominent family whose ancestors date back to the time of Dante. Like his father and grandfather(s) before him, he has a gift for fencing and won many tournaments in his youth. He utilizes his talent for strategy, nimble movement, and reading his opponent to his fight to get Isabella back once she has been sequestered at the Medici Villas. He's kindhearted and tenacious and completely in love with her. His loyalty and friendship to Carlo carries him through some dark moments, along with his quick wit and optimism.

In his previous incarnation as **Angelo Donati** (born 1460), he was married with two children by the time he met and fell in love with the free-spirited, passionate, Amorosa. They first met when he 'sat' for a portrait for her and fell in love. Their passionate affair gave way to her pregnancy out of wedlock. He tried to divorce his wife, but being Catholic during that era made it impossible.

When Amorosa died in childbirth, he took on the burden of responsibility for her death, along with the guilt, shame, and heartbreak. Bruno and Sofia refused to acknowledge him as the child's father, which gave him on parental rights. He spent the rest of his life in emotional agony. His future generations carry the epigenetic yearning to be reunited with his true love, which in this case, is Isabella.





Bruno Medici

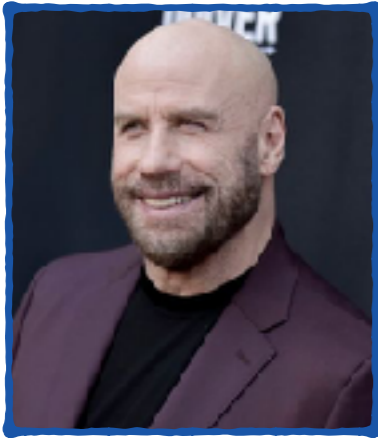
Main Character (Age 65+)
Immortality elixir age 500+

A great man with a great big vision and an unparalleled role in the world. At first glance, it appears that Bruno Medici is an egotist or a Narcissist, but digging deeper, he's really more of an idealist, a visionary. He believes that with enough time and the proper support, all of the world's problems can be solved. He has the financial resources and now with the elixir, he has the time to really nurture great ideas that can change the world. He loves his work at the helm of the Medici Villas, believes in it, and keeps going, even though he's exhausted and worn out from having been alive for so long. He loves being in control, craves the spotlight, and sometimes yields his power to satisfy his own desires. He's a sensual man and loves humanity.

At his core, he's a romantic. He is still in love with Sofia, even after all these centuries and the heartbreak that they've endured. He has fine-tuned his telepathic skills and speaks to her from his heart and soul to hers on a daily basis. Even though they haven't seen one another for years, she lives on in his heart, his imagination and his soul. They communicate through the 'cosmic' airwaves, a technique they've perfected over centuries.

Bruno also has a temper, an impulsive nature, and carries a hefty dose of guilt. He feels responsible for the five hundred plus years that they have had to stay alive because he was so impetuous in his younger days and took the elixir without conferring with her first. By the time he realized the addiction and the 'living hell' that he had entered into, it was too late. Sofia sacrificed herself and took the elixir after Amorosa was born so she could be alive with him, die with him, and eventually see the elixir destroyed, though they were too far gone and their will to live had been too heightened to destroy it themselves.

Supporting Characters



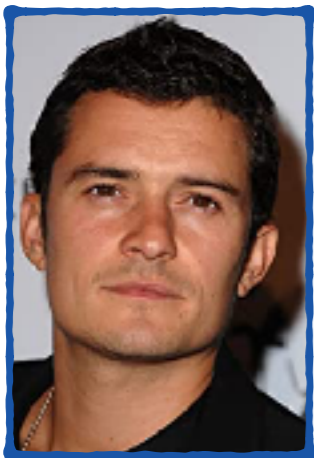
Lo Fredo

A contemporary of Bruno and Sofia's and also addicted to the immortality elixir for centuries, he was close with many of the artists from the Renaissance, specifically Michelangelo whom he offered the elixir to, but Michelangelo vehemently refused it. Lo Fredo became the world's greatest art teacher after he modeled for **MICHELANGELO'S DAVID**. Being so close to Michelangelo and his brilliance, Lo Fredo was the first to really understand how destructive the elixir was to mankind. Michelangelo declared that artistic passion comes from chasing time to the end of his life, that mortality was the key to the human condition and a happy, productive life. Without mortality, he would never be able to create another work of art. A 'point of view' character, he is gruff, cynical, and angry. He's also deeply compassionate and a loyal friend. to Bruno and Sofia. He has been finished with living for a while and longs for a reprieve.

An enigmatic, forward-thinking scientist, Tonina quickly befriends Isabella when she arrives at the Villa. Inherently shy, she listens before she speaks, has brilliant, original ideas, and is extremely thoughtful in everything that she does. Her love of the planet and of humanity is powerful and she has dedicated her life's work to finding solutions that will keep them both alive. She has invented a technique for 'Soul Mapping' that's similar to DNA testing, which uses the breath to discern previous lives. She determines that Isabella is the incarnation of Amorosa. There's some question about whether or not she has taken the elixir. In the end, it pains her to realize that the only way to save the planet is to depopulate it. She leaves the Villas just before Isabella's going away party and alludes to a 'drastic' measure that she believes she must take to save the earth. This is 2018, before the pandemic.



Tonina Della Terra



Carlo Piacenza

The only child of his adoring, brilliant parents, Carlo feels lost, angry, and vengeful after they both die from what he believes is their discovery of the immortality elixir since they were professors of the Renaissance Occult at the University of Florence. He wants revenge against Bruno Medici who he believes is really Basil Valentine. With his cunning intellect and remarkable artistic talent, this purebred Italian is out for blood.

SERIES SYNOPSIS

Isabella Buonavita (35) arrives in Italy in 2018, searching for the chance to become a great artist and hoping to find a place where she truly belongs. When she meets **LA SIGNORA (aka Sofia Merlini)**, the woman whose home she's staying in, she experiences flashes from a previous lifetime in Florence during the late 1400s, which are enhanced when she meets **MICHAEL DONATI**, an art dealer and her new love interest, who also happens to be the reincarnation of her Renaissance lover, **ANGELO**. As the stories from their two lifetimes intertwine, Isabella is confronted with both tragedies and responsibilities that contribute to her central conflict. ***Is it her responsibility to destroy the elixir or is she destined to take it?***

She falls in love, gets separated from her lover, and settles into the life at the Villa. When she witnesses the patron, **BRUNO MEDICI** administer the immortality elixir after he has entered a frighteningly advanced state of aging, she is thrust into the pivotal role of either destroying the immortality elixir or championing its next chapter. To complicate matters, she has already grown to love both Bruno and Sofia who were her 'original' parents and also lovers and pioneers during the Renaissance. The elixir began with them, and they're still alive after more than five hundred years. They are also still in love, but haven't spoken for centuries since they are *not* in agreement about the future of the immortality business. They both love Isabella fiercely since they believe that she is the reincarnation of their only daughter, **AMOROSA** the love child they had during the Renaissance who died tragically at twenty-two during childbirth. She (Isabella/Amorosa) is their greatest hope for the future, not just the future of their lives and the elixir, but the future of the world, the planet, and all of mankind.

Every episode begins with a Renaissance 'Teaser' and reveals more about their back story, which illuminates aspects of life during the Italian Renaissance and the life of their unconventional family. These scenes are grounded in historical facts, and also leap off the screen with imagined dramas and unbridled passions. Of course, there's a lot of art, architecture, food, and lovemaking to entertain an audience.



When Renaissance Sofia discovers that Bruno is infertile due to the elixir's effects, they convince the famous painter, **SANDRO BOTTICELLI** to father Sofia's child. When he discovers the truth about the elixir, he leaves the Medici Villa and goes to work in Rome for the Pope. Not long after, when the notorious Fryer, Girolamo **SAVANAROLA** takes down the Medici family and inspires the crowd to destroy all objects of beauty in the terrifying 'Bonfire of the Vanities', Botticelli joins the Fryer and burned many of his own masterpieces.

Other narrative drives include Michael's friend and accomplished artist, **CARLO PIACENZA** who is on a quest for revenge or justice after his parents' death. He believes that his parents discovered the elixir, ingested it, and both died because of it. After Isabella leaves for the villa, her lover, Michael (Carlos's best friend) joins forces with La Signora and Carlo to reach Isabella at the Villa. Michael and Carlo find their way there. Michael is shocked when Bruno challenges him to a fencing match, then discovers that he really wants Michael to kill him. The season cliffhanger comes from her friendship with **TONINA DELLA TERRA**, a brilliant scientist whose work is poised to save the planet, if only she can remain alive long enough to complete it.

Isabella cannot kill Bruno and Sofia, nor can she take responsibility for the fate of the elixir. She doesn't have it in her. She has a very short window of time to finish her masterpiece about the Nine Muses from Greek Mythology. By 'chasing time' to complete her work, she fuels her artistic passion, and elevates her work to a new level. These extraordinary panels remain incomplete. *She will never have enough time. No one will.*

In the end, it's love that inspires Isabella to open the window that will set the room on fire, eventually killing Bruno and Sofia. Her hope is that they will take the secrets of the elixir with them. *It's not over yet.* With their house on fire (literally), Isabella gets news from Tonina that she has left the Villa after decades of work to try to save the earth because she has arrived at the conclusion that the only option is to de-populate it. The type of work she needs to do next, she doesn't want to do at the Medici Villa. She alludes to a 'catastrophe' that she must create on a global scale. This is the set up for the next season.

Episodes Concepts

Pilot Episode 1: “It Starts with an Apple”

TEASER: *The creation of the immortality elixir (1475) ignites the passion between Bruno and Sofia and sets in motion the narrative drive of the series. They give the alchemy potion on an old stallion who transforms into a viral young stud. Bruno tries it next, unbeknownst to Sofia. He’s instantly addicted, though he doesn’t know it.* Isabella arrives in Florence, Italy (2018) and falls in love with the city, with La Signora (Sofia), and with Michael Donati (Angelo reincarnated). She attends Lo Freddo’s art workshop, visits the Medici Villas, and meets Bruno Medici. Reverberations from her past life during the Renaissance reveal that she’s Amorosa, Sofia and Bruno’s only daughter who lived during the Renaissance, also a gifted painter. Afraid that history will repeat itself, Bruno whisks Isabella off to the Medici Villa without notice. **END:** Bruno ages beyond recognition before he takes the “Juice” and reverts back to himself.

Episode 2: “La Primavera”

TEASER: *Sofia and Bruno discover that the “Juice” is making him infertile, so they get Botticelli to impregnate Sofia and go with the ruse that it’s Bruno’s.* Isabella arrives at the Villa and befriends Tonina and learns about her work saving the planet and mapping souls. Michael and Carlo visit La Signora in search of answers. Michael “connects” with Amorosa’s paintings. Isabella tries to acclimate to the Villa, no phones, and misses La Signora. She calls her, asks about Michael. Isabella knows that something is going on, but what? **END:** She goes to tell Bruno something and catches a glimpse of Bruno’ hooked up to the machine that administers the elixir and transform from a horrifyingly aged state to his younger self.

Episode 3: “Amorosa’s Childhood Wish”

TEASER: *Amorosa’s childhood at the Villa is magical. She spends most of her time with Bruno while Sofia is in the alchemy lab. She tells Bruno that she wants to live there forever.* Isabella’s artwork thrives and she begins her masterpiece, nine huge panels depicting the nine Muses from Greek Mythology. Michael and Carlo scheme ways to find her. She learns about her ancestors and gets closer to Bruno. Tonina explains ‘Soul Mapping’ to her. **END:** She sneaks away from the Villa to find La Signora. We learn that Lo Fredo is also taking the Juice and wants to die.

Episode 4: “The Flight to Florence”

TEASER: *Amorosa (20) and Sofia take an apartment in Florence so Amorosa can have a broader life than the one at the Villa. Bruno is upset and wants them both with him - always. Sofia makes Bruno promise to never give the Juice to Amorosa or anyone else. Michelangelo sees Botticelli and asks him if they’ve offered him the immortality elixir..* Bruno finds Isabella who wants to leave. He tells her the whole truth. She wants to go back to Florence. Instead, La Signora comes to the Villa and explains that she must stay and destroy Bruno and the Elixir. La Signora meets with Carlo and Michael. **END:** La Signora sends them off to the Medici Villa. They’re not sure, but think she just asked them if they could kill Bruno.

Episode 5: “Lovers that Last”

TEASER: *Angelo Donati comes to Amorosa’s studio to sit for a portrait and the two fall in love. He’s married with children, but is willing to leave and risk his standing for her.* Bruno seems to be expecting Michael and Carlo when they arrive at the Villa. He invites them in and insists on a fencing match with Michael, a champion. At a vulnerable moment, Bruno pleads with Michael to kill him. Isabella is furious with Bruno. Before she leaves to spend the night with Michael, they celebrate a sculptor who is leaving. His work inspires them all, reminding her of the great work being done at the Villa. She spends a steamy night with Michael, but she returns the next day, citing her artwork as the reason. **END:** Michael watched the black limousine pull away, afraid he will never see her again.

Episode 6: “Michelangelo’s Decision”

TEASER: *Lo Freddo is the model for Michelangelo’s David. He offers the Juice to Michelangelo who refuses and explains that the impulse to create comes from chasing time to the end of life.* Isabella returns to the Villa and dives into her art. Tonina is having a crisis with her work. Bruno informs her that she has two weeks to finish, then she must leave. She asks about the Juice, but he won’t let her try it, never wants her to take it. She asks about staying at the Villa without taking it. Carlo destroys his parents’ papers with the elixir. **END:** Isabella sneaks into his bedroom and hooks herself up to the apparatus. She’s about to get her first drop of it when the lights go black.

Episode 7: “Bonfire of the Vanities”

TEASER: *Amorosa goes into labor as Savonarola’s frenzied crowd creates the Bonfire of the Vanities. The destruction of beautiful works of art (Botticelli) and the birth of the baby overlap as Amorosa dies in childbirth.* Bruno arrives in time to save Isabella from the Juice by shutting off the power. He gives her two days to finish her artwork. She claims it’s not enough time. Carlo pays him a visit, possibly to kill him, but instead leaves with answers and wisdom. Lo Freddo orchestrates his own murder. **END:** Isabella works frenetically and with passion on her nine Muse panels, which transform in the short amount of time, but are still incomplete.

Episode 8: “Going Away Party”

TEASER: *With Amorosa gone, Sofia raises her granddaughter in Florence and reveals to Bruno that she took the elixir since she created it (she’s Basil Valentine) and must stay alive to see it through to its end.* Isabella’s final day at the Villa. She shares a memorable, private few moments with Bruno. Michael arrives with Carlo and La Signora. Isabella unveils her work to the awe of the admiring crowd. Tonina is not there. Bruno and Sofia reunite, dance, and rekindle their everlasting love in person. In the final moments, Isabella goes to say goodbye to them and helps them leave this world and destroy the elixir by lighting a candle that will set off a fire. **END:** With Bruno’s Villa still in flames, Isabella learns that Tonina left to pursue an unconventional solution to saving the planet - **depopulation**, which will require some ‘dark’ work that she can’t do at the Villa and eludes to a virus that may soon be unleashed...

Chasing Time

*“The act of chasing time to the end of one’s own life is what keeps the fires of passion burning.
If I believed that I would live indefinitely, I would never create another work of art.”*

*Michelangelo Buonarroti
(from the screenplay)*

If you could live indefinitely, would you? This is not a new question, but in the context of today’s challenging and ever-changing world, the idea of living indefinitely resonates differently for those who want to save the planet or change the world or advance medicine or simply create beauty and harmony. The immortality stakes are higher than ever as autocrats already yield too much power and influence. ***What if one of them got the opportunity to live forever?***

The appeal of the series, **Chasing Time** is both visceral and spiritual. In addition to the vicarious travel thrills of being in Italy, which always inspires audiences (Florence, Italy is the 5th most visited city in the world), this serial drama explores the nature of artistic passion, as well as the life and the evolution of the soul. Throw in some retro-Renaissance characters, stunning locations, steamy sex scenes, sumptuous shots of food, and iconic works of art, and you’ve got a recipe for intriguing and unique entertainment.

Contact: Susan Lee Hahn

SusanLeeHahn.com | susanleehahn@gmail.com | 847.224.5356

Legal Representation; Dan Stutz

dstutz@stutzlawcorp.com | (310) 993-9004