

**Filmmaker Festival**  
17 – 27 November 2023  
**Milan**

## Group 01



## Group 02



## Group 03



## Group 04



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## Scattering, Reasoning

*Luca Mosso*

What are we doing here? Asking this question occasionally – and for a festival, every year – is a necessary operation but above all a necessary check for those working in a field as light and ephemeral as the moving image. The current situation shows signs of an ongoing evolution: the film industry is reorganizing, Italian productions supported by major festivals are finally achieving remarkable box office results, a sign that the cinema is regaining some of the positions lost in recent years, and that complementarity between platforms and theatrical is not impossible.

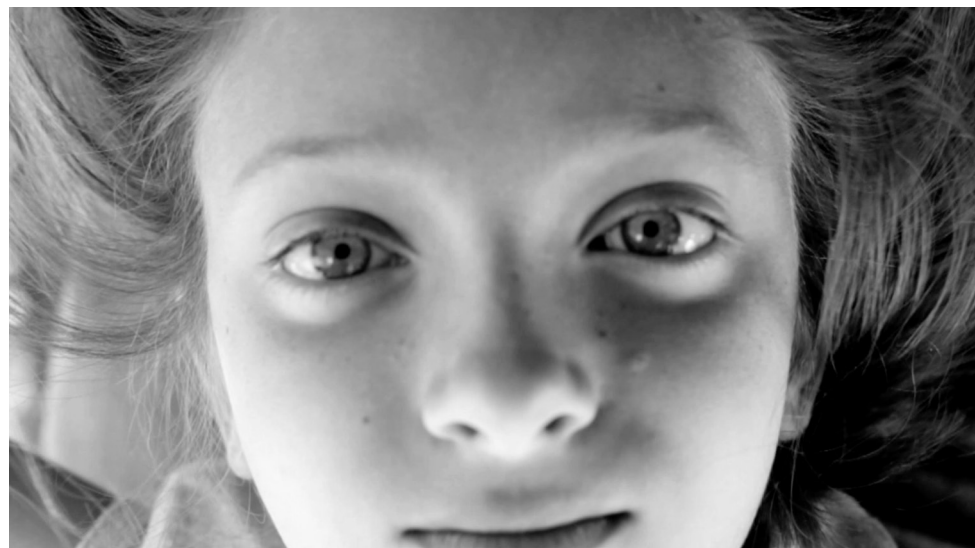
In this context, what place is there for a research-oriented, curious, and innovative festival like Filmmaker? The first answer, the most instinctive one, is to shuffle the cards, rejecting the ghetto of a cinema for the few, small and self-sufficient, including in the same program original authors capable of engaging with the industry like Alice Rohrwacher and her *La Chimera*, and a self-sufficient punk like Gaëlle Rouard, who opposes the infinite digital reproducibility with the uniqueness of 16mm projections performed in ever-changing ways. And, in the same competition, a film over three hours long to reaffirm that cinema is an art that cannot be measured in meters (or minutes) and that every viewing needs its time.

The second, more reasoned answer, goes in the direction of connection: curiosity about the new and the rigor of research are not the exclusive domains of anyone, and it is nice to recognize in different but not distant disciplines – virtual reality, literature, contemporary art, experimental theater, electronic music – our own curiosity and the same spirit of research. At Filmmaker, artists and musicians, actors and writers have always come together, welcomed by a program that is increasingly open to interdisciplinary exchanges. This year, we have taken a further step by collaborating with BookCity, the school of Nuove tecnologie per l'Arte in Brera, MMT, Care of, in addition to the ANICON research group at the University of Milan and the Raitre television program *Fuori orario*.

Filmmaker is the oldest film festival in Milan, but it strives to be the most inventive.



# FESTIVAL CLIP



The Picture of Ourselves  
RÄ DI MARTINO

# OPENING FILM



La Chimera  
ALICE ROHRWACHER

# LA CHIMERA

## ALICE ROHRWACHER

In a small village between Umbria and Tuscany, a gang of “tombaroli”, thieves of antiquities, plunder Etruscan tombs and sell the riches to art dealers. Arthur ‘the Stranger’, always dressed in a frayed white suit, reminiscent of a traveller in a 19th century novel, unearths the treasures for them. They call him “the Englishman”, he has the special gift of being able to “hear” the tombs from above, perhaps because he is looking for something else: not jewels and statues, but Beniamina, the girl he loves, who is no longer there and who appears to him in his sleep, just as Orpheus believes he can bring her back to the world with Eurydice. Arthur is a dreamer, as is Mrs Flora, who waits with him in suspended time for this lost daughter, and Italia, who, despite her name, comes from afar to build a new, all-female community in which to raise the future.

So what is ‘la chimera’? A fantasy, a fable, the sacred and the profane of characters and words that, like the songs of the storytellers, pass from one mouth to another to form a collective story.

In the Italian province of personal places transformed into a mythological landscape, Alice Rohrwacher creates a new narrative that speaks of the world, its changes, its fractures. With a documentary realism that allows itself to be invaded by moments of magic, she recreates the Italian mutation of the 1980s, the end of an innocent joy in a new cynicism, the loss of a community. And the poetic gestures of a resistance that are perhaps new ‘chimeras’, as absolute as love, as powerful as cinema.

*Cristina Piccino*

### BIOGRAPHY

Alice Rohrwacher (Fiesole, 1981) studied in Turin and Lisbon. She wrote and worked as a musician for the theatre before turning to cinema, starting with documentaries. She made her feature film debut with *Corpo Celeste* (2011), which was presented at the Directors' Fortnight in Cannes. His follow-up, *Le Meraviglie* (2014), won the Grand Prix at Cannes, while his third film, *Lazzaro Felice* (2018), won the award for best screenplay, also at Cannes. In 2015 she directed *The Djess*, a short film in the *Miu Miu Women's Tale* series. In 2016 she directed Giuseppe Verdi's *La Traviata* at the Teatro Valli in Reggio Emilia, while in 2020 she signed a contract with Rai and

HBO to direct the third and fourth episodes of the series based on Elena Ferrante's novels *L'amica geniale - Storia del nuovo cognome*.

In 2021 she made the documentary *Futura* with Pietro Marcello and Francesco Munzi, and in 2023 she was nominated for an Oscar in the Best Live Action Short category for *Le Pupille*, co-produced by Alfonso Cuarón for Disney. In the same year, the Centre Pompidou in Paris dedicated a solo exhibition to her entitled *Alice Rohrwache - Rêver entre le monde*, accompanied by the monograph *Alice Rohrwache - Le vrai du faux* (Éditions de l'Œil).

Italy, France, Switzerland | 2023  
35 mm | Super 16 mm | 16 mm  
134' | Colour  
O.V. Italian

Director  
ALICE ROHRWACHER

SCREENPLAY  
ALICE ROHRWACHER

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## Crossing the Fragility of Time

Cristina Piccino

**What is *La Chimera*? What does this world and the characters who inhabit it suggest to us?**

*La Chimera* is a ballad about materialism. While *Le meraviglie* refers to the 1990s, when materialism was already established, and *Lazzaro Felice* is based on a distant time, here we are in the moment that celebrates its affirmation: the Italian 1980s. It is an important passage in our history, little told, because it represents the point at which the past of things loses its aura. I have always been fascinated by the fact that in the place where I live, for over 2,500 years, no one had ever touched the precious objects in the tombs. Then a new generation came along and started looking at them only in terms of their market value. In the eyes of these young people, they had no sacredness, and they plundered them to sell them on to fences and art dealers. The question is always the same: what to do with our past, our culture? In this universe, the figure of Arthur expresses the romantic side of history, he is not interested in money, in wealth, he is looking for something else, he is looking for love. His is the romanticism that marked the path of so many other young men who came to Italy from the North and fell in love with ruins, antiquity and its mysteries.

**Since *Corpo Celeste*, the landscape has been a central element in your films. Much more than a simple setting, it almost becomes a character in itself. The same is true of *La Chimera*, which plunges us into a reality suspended between the sacred and the profane.**

My stories all start from places, making a film is like building a house, I go bit by bit, following old methods. There is a geographical aspect to this work and then I feel that the landscape we live in is so complex that it never exhausts the possibilities of its stories. Here we shot mainly in Tarquinia and in various areas around Viterbo. When we were researching locations during the preparation, we were shocked to discover that near the Civitavecchia power station there

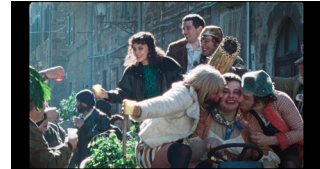
are abandoned necropolises, tombs that nobody cares about. The landscape that interests me is the one that is in danger, the one that has been violated. This applies to Calabria, Umbria, Tuscany, Lazio; these are areas where you can see the fragility of time.

**What were the references that guided you in your writing?**

Avevo in mente una narrazione che fosse popolare, libera, cantata, chi had in mind a narrative that was popular, free, sung, that could belong to anyone. Also because when I spoke to several grave diggers in the area while collecting material for the documentary, I was amazed at how each of them claimed an absolute uniqueness of their experience, while their stories were all the same. This contrast between the personal vision of an experience and the collective seemed important to me. The pattern had to be that of the classic short story - I am a lover of the great novel - but with a change of perspective. I wanted to try to shake things up by mixing folk roots with epic, mythology with songs and stories I heard in the bars of my childhood about people who got rich by discovering a tomb. So there is Monteverdi's *Orpheus* - which punctuates the various chapters - but also Vasco Rossi.

**What determined the choice of shooting formats - 16mm, Super 16 and 35mm?**

With Hélène Louvart, the cinematographer, we didn't decide between 35mm and Super 16mm, but since we were dealing with archaeology, we told ourselves that the film had to be archaeological in its making. So we mixed the media that have accompanied cinema throughout its history to bring them to the surface, just as archaeologists do when they go searching for the past. We combined stop-motion and silent cinema, but it was not a rational decision at the time.



# INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

## BACKGROUND

Khaled Abdulwahed

## BANZAVÓIS

Lorenzo Casali

## BEING IN A PLACE – A PORTRAIT OF MARGARET TAIT

Luke Fowler

## EL CHINERO, A PHANTOM HILL

Bani Khoshnoudi

## L'ALBUME D'ORO

Tiziano Doria, Samira Guadagnuolo

## LAST THINGS

Deborah Stratman

## LE FARDEAU

Elvis Sabin Ngaibino

## LOVING IN BETWEEN

Jyoti Mistry

## NUIT OBSCURE – AU REVOIR ICI, N'IMPORTE OÙ

Sylvain George

## VALLEY PRIDE

Lukas Marxt

## Images Against Oblivion

Eddie Bertozzi

There is a feeling that runs through the selection of the Filmmaker 2023 International Competition: the idea of challenging oblivion in a battle of images. To link history with the present by projecting into the future. In line with this ideal, several of the selected titles rethink the concept of the archive and reinterpret its methods of creation and use. One example is *Background* by Khaled Abdulwahed, a film that transplants the intimate into the historical, his father's private photographs into the public images of history, manipulating and filling in the gaps to invent an ideal missing archive. Or *Being in a Place - A Portrait of Margaret Tait*, in which Luke Fowler, following sensitive and subtle trajectories, collects and connects fragments of disparate images to compose a surprisingly organic portrait of the Scottish filmmaker and poet. Jyoti Mistry's *Loving in Between*, on the other hand, is a pulsating, vital, veritable archival provocation, a rhythmic tour-de-force that uses the found image to mock social norms and cultural taboos. *El chinero* by Bani Khoshnoudi dramatically reminds us of the responsibility of memory by bringing to light a forgotten tragedy - the deaths of hundreds of Chinese migrants in the desert of Baja, California, in 1916 - proposing to fill the void by creating an archive that no longer exists.

This need to witness is often linked to a reflection on our relationship with the land. Think of Lukas Marxt's *Valley Pride*, a work that lies between psychedelia and observation, a distorted symphony of sounds and images pointing the finger at large agricultural corporations and the exploitation of anonymous irregular migrants. In a completely different landscape, Lorenzo Casali's *Banzavóis* follows the transformation process of a former industrial area in the Milanese hinterland, creating a swirling narrative in which official historiography and personal memory become entangled. Just as we lose ourselves in the suspension of a Mediterranean landscape bordering on the magical, human and vegetable, in Tiziano Doria and Samira Guadagnuolo's *L'albume d'oro*, a work of inverted perspectives and conventions filtered through dreams. To *Last Things* by Deborah Stratman, a vertical immersion in the geo-biosphere, rethought as a place of plural possibilities, of post-human evolution, where prehistory and visions of the future meet.

But above all, Filmmaker's selection thrives on contrasts, plunging from abstraction into the concreteness of the present. As in *Le Fardeau* by Elvis Ngaibino Sabin, a chronicle of a couple's social and spiritual torment in the Central African Republic, between a seropositivity perceived as divine punishment and the expectation of a miracle. And finally, the winner of last year's edition, Sylvain George, with the second chapter of his monumental work *Nuit obscure - Au revoir ici, n'importe où*, once again in Melilla, immersed in the urgent and poetic pursuit of migrants, this time minors, waiting to reach Europe.

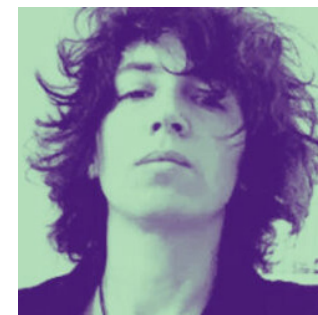
# THE JURY



Stefano Savona (Palermo, 1969) studied archaeology and anthropology in Rome and took part in several archaeological excavations in Sudan, Egypt, Turkey and Israel. Since 1999 he has devoted himself mainly to directing and producing documentary films and video installations. In 2000 he made *Siciliatunisia* and in 2002 *Un confine di specchi*. His feature film *Primavera in Kurdistan* (2006) won the SCAM prize at the Cinéma du Réel festival in Paris. In 2008 he made *Il tuffo della rondine*, followed by *Piombo fuso* (2009); *Spezzacatene* (2010). In 2010, together with Penelope Bortoluzzi, he founded the production company Picofilms in Paris. He is the producer and main director of *Palazzo delle Aquile*, Grand Prix at the 2011 Festival Cinéma du Réel. In 2011 he also made *Tahrir Liberation Square*, which won the David di Donatello and Nastro D'argento for best documentary. In 2018, with *La strada dei Samouni*, he won the Oeil d'Or, the award for best documentary at the Cannes Film Festival. In the same year, *Le Mura di Bergamo* (2023) was screened at the Berlinale in the Encounters section.



Marianna Schivardi (Brescia, 1972) is a documentary film director, lecturer and television writer. Her works include *Il Grande Fardello* (2004), a parody of the reality show *Il Grande Fratello*, filmed in San Vittore prison, and *69 Bites* (2008), shot behind the scenes of a pornographic film. Both films were selected by several national and international festivals. He teaches directing at the New Academy of Fine Arts in Milan (Naba) and screenwriting at led Milan. She has also made *Work Hard, Party Harder*, a series of short films for Elita Festival; *I Against I* - short film for "Wired"; *Always and Never* (2010), a video portrait of photographer Ari Marcopolus; *Grandi Opere* (2009), a documentary about artist Arnaldo Pomodoro. Her latest film *Balkanica* was presented in the International Competition of Filmmaker 2022.



Lucia Tozzi (Naples, 1974) is an independent researcher in urban politics. After years of freelance journalism in the field of culture and, in particular, architecture and cities, she wrote for "Domus", "Abitare", "Architectural Design", "Il manifesto", "La Stampa", "Alfabeta2" and other publications. Her publications include *City Killers. Per una critica del turismo* (Libria 2020), *Dopo il turismo* (Nottetempo 2020), *Contro il panorama* (Nottetempo 2022), *L'invenzione di Milano* (Cronopio 2023) and, in collaboration with Luca Rossomando and Stefano Portelli, *Le Nuove recinzioni* (Carocci 2023).

# Background

## KHALED ABDULWAHED

As Khaled Abdulwahed begins to record his father’s voice on the phone in Aleppo, where the man is trapped, bombs start to fall. The conversation is often interrupted, his father’s voice comes in distorted by the noise of a precarious line, sometimes disappearing, sucked in by the echo of the guns or the violent cough that seems to take away all the strength of the man. Khaled is in Germany, having arrived there in 2015 thanks to an artist’s residency, and has decided to stay while facing - locked up in refugee centers - the very long and complex process of obtaining papers. He tried hard to make his father join him, unsuccessfully, and so he decided to try to collect his memory from a distance. Until, suddenly, their conversation stops: Khaled’s father dies. What remains of those traces, of that memory that he sought among his words, of the time passed of a very different yet common history? Sixty years earlier, when he was a boy, his father had been in East Germany, in Leipzig, where Khaled now lives with his family, and in Dresden. As an Engineering student, he had been invited to take part in an exchange program between “friendly” countries - such as the then socialist Germany and Syria. To get there, he travelled between Turkey, Czechoslovakia and Austria, “always with a visa”. Using an old photograph as a starting point - the only archive material he has - the son-director tries to put this young, handsome father, full of expectations for the future, back at the centre of a geography that now excludes him. Background thus confronts an absence represented by the lack of images and bodies, dematerialized by the distance, but living in the transformations carried by history and in an impossible encounter, entrusted solely to the flow of memories. The author chooses a device that interrogates his own role as an artist, his personal and political research, the explicit manipulation of landscapes and experiences whose reality, in the present time, results erased forever.

Cristina Piccino

Germany | 2023  
2K | B/W, Colour | 64’ | O.V. Arabic, German

Director  
KHALED ABDULWAHED

Screenplay  
KHALED ABDULWAHED

Cinematography  
KHALED ABDULWAHED

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### BIOGRAPHY

Khaled Abdulwahed (Homs, 1975) is an artist, photographer and filmmaker. His work has been chosen by many festivals and art exhibitions, winning numerous awards and prizes. *Jellyfish* (2016), his first feature film documenting the Syrian civil war, was selected for the Berlinale Forum. His works include the videos *Bullet* (2011), *Tuj* (2012), *Slot in Memory* (2013); *Backyard* (2018). In 2020, he co-directed with Amel Alzakout *Purple Sea*

- presented in competition at Filmmaker. *Background* (2023) won the Grand Prix of the International Competition at Fid Marseille 2023. Since 2016 he has been working with the Berlin-based production company pong. He lives in Leipzig.

### What pushed you to to make this film?

I moved from Berlin to Leipzig in 2019, and that was after many attempts that I did to bring my father from Aleppo to Europe. After all those failures I told him that I wanted to record the memories of him as a student in the DDR 60 years ago. The conversation went on for some weeks, the connection was very bad. It cut off sometimes and his health didn’t help to continue. After a short time, he died. I became kind of obsessed from these recordings, and this is when everything has started, emotionally and also practically. I promised him that anything I could find about the places where he had been, I would tell him about it, and that I would send him some photos also. Later I found that I couldn’t keep the promise, and the film is my way to to process all of this.



### Can you describe the research that you did and the way you used some digital means to reconstruct memories?

I started from the places he told me about, then I went to the archives. I began from his school here in Leipzig, then from one info they gave me I could find another location, and so on. It kept evolving, and I went on to collect data. I received these two photos of him that my aunt sent me, there should’ve been more but she couldn’t find them. I started to fabricate the photos that I had not, I kept installing my father in many places, creating pictures that I imagine he could have in his collection. It was an unbelievable experience to imagine him, if he could have been there on that street or not. I was trying to connect something from 60 years ago with a lot of possibilities of the present, as I didn’t have accurate informations and many buildings don’t exist anymore. There were many things that I was intentionally or unintentionally achieving, one of them is the knowledge I was gaining, for instance, about my new home, my new country, Germany. At the beginning, the memories that I had were just a context, not a content. My father studied here, yes, but where? How? When? How was the whole society at that time?



### You already explored the immigration topic in your films, in *Background* it is not the main focus, but still we can notice that your father came to Germany easily, now the situation seems way more difficult.

It is the biggest paradox, a thing that made me wonder. It is about the time, about how happy he was here, the openness that he encountered compared to the present and to me. To how I came here, and how my friends came here. I didn’t want to make a direct comparison, but the connection can be found with the thread that connects the past with the present. And for me, as I think for any immigrant, this thread is something very personal. The moment in which we emigrate, especially when there is a war, we know that the landscapes will change at a tremendous speed. We need to comprehend all that and to take certain decisions, it’s an identity issue where memory is at stake.



Lucrezia Ercolani

Banzavóis

LORENZO CASALI

The passage of time inevitably brings with it the unfolding of history. More than one, in fact, and not just human, as contemporary thought never ceases to observe. It is this plurality that *Banzavóis* tries to capture in the story of the rise and fall of the Isotta Fraschini motor factory in Saronno. For a long time, the history of the subalterns was unwritten; in Casali’s film, it is they, the workers, who take the floor, recounting the anti-fascist resistance, which was also carried out with propaganda between shifts, and recalling the struggle to prevent the closure of the factory, which took place in 1990. But in addition to their voices, the images return another narrative, that of the exotic plants that have grown in these abandoned spaces, trying to create a new ecosystem. Man, machine and nature are conjured up in a cinematic narrative that, following Wittgenstein’s intuition, allows us to observe rather than explain. In this coexistence, where there is no shortage of friction, poetry is found everywhere, from the light that passes through the abandoned spaces, to the texture drawn by asbestos fibres, to Gadda’s “language games”, which not only inspire the title of the film, but also introduce it through the voice of Elio De Capitani. In the space between the old and the new, Casali succeeds in making the genius loci speak, thanks to the deep respect for the context that the images convey: everything is always situated - and Banzavóis is a living testimony to a distinctly Lombard reality, from the vernacular to the historical events that have crossed the territory - but at the same time everything is in dialogue with universal issues that concern being on the planet. Using materials from various sources, from photographs to digital models, through a meticulous sound construction, the film places “our” history in a new position, not at odds with the expressive diversity that surrounds us.

Lucrezia Ercolani

Italy | 2023  
4K | Colour | 74’ | O.V. Italian

Director  
LORENZO CASALI

Cinematography  
LORENZO CASALI  
GIANLUCA ANGIOI

Editing  
LORENZO CASALI  
GIANLUCA ANGIOI

Sound  
VITTORIO MAZZOLA

Music  
THE SELVA (ALMEIDA/JACINTO/  
MORAO)

Producers  
LORENZO CASALI  
GIANLUCA ANGIOI

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BIOGRAPHY

Lorenzo Casali (Tradate, 1980) works mainly in site-specific projects that start from an analysis of the complex network of relationships existing in a given place, from a study of the cultural, social, political and economic stratifications that define it. Since the early 2000s he has participated in awards, screenings, exhibitions and residencies in Italy and Europe. Since 2010 he has worked in the artistic duo Casali+Roubini, and since 2019 he has been a member of the art collective Museo Wunderkammer. Alongside his artistic research, he combines teaching activities, currently teaching Photographic Documentation at the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome and Editing Techniques at the Academy of Fine Arts Carrara in Bergamo. In 2022 he presented the experimental documentary *Post-Prod* at the Torino Film Festival.

What pushed you to make this film?

The project originated from a commission for the new owner of the area, but from there my partner Gianluca Angioi and I decided to go further and make a feature film, producing it ourselves, because we found the place extremely rich in stories and unexpressed potential. Saronno is my hometown and thanks to this work I discovered many things I could not even imagine about its development: small stories interwoven with great history, with local dynamics that turn out to be absolutely international, just think that the engines produced by the Isotta Fraschini factory were used from Russia to South America as early as the late 1800s.

One of the threads of the film is the relationship between industrial architecture and the reclaiming of space by nature. How did you develop that?

Since I started making moving images and artistic research in general about 25 years ago, I have always documented ruins. They have been an important topos at least since the rediscovery of classical antiquity during the Renaissance, and today there is a particular focus on them that can be captured on Instagram, with millions of images uploaded from all parts of the world. Until now, I had always focused on the decaying processes of civilian dwellings; industrial architecture had always seemed too laden with nostalgia and sensationalism, with wide-angle views and improbable sunsets. An approach I tried to avoid as much as possible in the film. Nature has completely reclaimed this space in thirty years, and having filmed in Covid during the pandemic, the process took on a special significance.

Can you explain the meaning of the title chosen for the film? How did you research the archive material?

The title comes from Gadda; it is a term he invented in *La cognizione del dolore*, but probably has nothing to do with the Lombard dialect. *Banzavóis* refers to the ‘empty bellies’, the peasants who flocked in large numbers to the nascent industry in the late 1800s. The factory was seen as a social salvation and an affirmation of identity. Gadda’s book is set in an imaginary South America, which is actually Brianza, and he invents “linguistic messes” for this as well. I liked the link between workers and exoticism, since this former industrial area is now full of exotic plants that have adapted well to our climate, the first to “colonise” spaces abandoned by man. For the archival material, we relied heavily on the willingness of former workers to keep it after the factory closed in 1989-90. The testimonies also often have an important political value, such as that of the partisan Aurelio Legnani, who carried out sabotage at a very young age. It covers almost a century of history and raises the question of a “mobile” memory that changes over time.

Lucrezia Ercolani



# Being in a Place – A Portrait of Margaret Tait

## LUKE FOWLER

The images in this film, a portrait of filmmaker and poet Margaret Tait through her own art, are particularly evocative. A canvas of multiple references acts as a structure: the ‘portrait’ was a cinematic form that Tait frequently practiced ; she and director Luke Fowler are both Scottish and rooted in the territory; they are both experimenters who aspire to the artistic status of filmmaking and situate themselves on the fringes of the industry. But above all, what enchants in *Being in a Place - A Portrait of Margaret Tait* is the soulful richness of the landscapes, captured on 16mm film, partly by Tait herself for a film that was never completed, and partly by Fowler, who made several trips to the Orkney Islands in northern Scotland, where Tait lived. And the location, as the film’s title suggests, is certainly significant: the key is to feel the poetry contained in the existence and expression of the elements, and then being able to condense it on film. Tait explains that she does not film in the immediate vicinity of her home, but moves to other parts of Scotland, never too far away, just enough to feel the necessary displacement. In this context, the human being is one being among others: it does not dominate, sometimes it provokes emotions simply by being there, fragile but alive. Fowler, who has already dedicated a short film to Tait, who died in 1999, for the centenary of her birth in 2019, seeks the testimony of those who knew her, but she seems always to elude the definitions of others. We can, however, find her in her own voice - which acts as a guide on this inconclusive journey - as the opposite of complacency: no acting, no emphasis, the pure reality of being there.

Lucrezia Ercolani

UK | 2022  
16 mm | Colour, B/W | 61'  
O.V. English

Director  
LUKE FOWLER

Screenplay  
LUKE FOWLER  
MARGARET TAIT

Cinematography  
LUKE FOWLER  
PETER TODD

Editing  
LUKE FOWLER

Sound  
LEE PATTERSON  
LUKE FOWLER  
SARAH NEELY  
LOUISE BARRINGTON

Music  
LIONEL MARCHETTI  
LEE PATTERSON  
DONALD W. LINDSAY

Producers  
LUKE FOWLER  
SARAH NEELY

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### BIOGRAPHY

Luke Fowler (Glasgow, 1978) is an artist, filmmaker and musician. He studied print-making at the Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design in Dundee. Several exhibitions have been dedicated to him in Europe, from retrospectives at the Serpentine Gallery, the IMO in Copenhagen, the Kunsthau in Zurich, to his participation in the British Art Show 7 at the Hayward Gallery (2011). His 16mm films are often portraits of radical social

experiments of the past, such as *What You See is Where You Are At* (2001) about Kingsley Hall in the 1960s, *Pilgrimage from Scattered Points* (2006) about Cornelius Cardew and the Scratch Orchestra, *All Divided Selves* (2011) about Scottish psychiatrist RD Laing. His short film Mum’s Card won the Scottish Short Film Award in 2019. Several of his films have been screened at the Rotterdam Film Festival, including the three-part work *A Grammar*

for *Listening*, in collaboration with Eric La Casa, Lee Patterson and Toshiya Tsunda. He was an artist in residence at the Tate Triennial in 2006, won the inaugural Jarman Prize in 2008 and the Contemporary Art Society Annual Award for Museums in 2010.

### Why did you call your portrait of Margaret Tait *Being in a Place*?

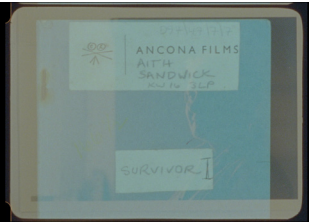
What was really important for me about the pilgrimage to Orkney, to Margaret’s world, was to understand how important context is to her, and I think that one of the things that gave me a new insight into her work was “being in a place” - literally being in this place that she made, that she had to survive, and that she made her home, and her place of work, and how that was both a gift and a curse for her. In many ways, I think Margaret was completely invisible when she was working in the sixties and seventies, and she liked that. She knew her own importance as a filmmaker. She had an ego as a filmmaker, no doubt. She had a bullishness about her, and she was very opinionated about film, and she had a very short shrift for fools and for people who weren’t thinking deeply. And yet in the same sense she’s very sensitive to the cultural and lived experience of Orcadians and to the place, to the landscape and people of Orkney, and she dedicated her life to representing them. But representing them in the way that she wanted to, which was within the realm of poetry, not within the realm of documentary. And that for me is what is so important about Margaret. Orkney is a very well documented place in terms of Scottish history, in terms of its archaeology and tourism, and Margaret completely understood all of that and looked at the other side of Orkney found in the small details and small aspects of everyday life that she filmed and she raised them up and turned them into film gems. It is the understatedness in doing something that is so important, in a very understated, fragile way.

### The portrait genre was dear to Tait also. How did you work on it?

This idea of a meta portrait is something that has interested me in my films to date, it preoccupies me and I think that’s one of the subtexts of the film. That’s why I picked out certain quotes where she talks about her relationship to documentary, about how she doesn’t feel it’s art. There’s a lot of cantankerousness from Margaret’s perspective in that she does not want to be put in a box.

### There are many testimonies in the film, but they are involved in a context, they don’t predominate. What was your approach towards words and speech?

I was very conscious of the fact that I didn’t want talking heads with people that were making testimonies about how important Margaret was. So I was interested in this idea of having more vernacular or colloquial speech. The people in the film don’t need to impart a lot, for that matter they don’t need to even have to say anything that’s wildly important to Tait’s life. It can almost just be the turn of phrase that they use, or how they address me, and a lot of the times I was removing rather than adding speech in the edit. That’s very contrary to the way that a documentary editor would edit speech - you would transcribe and then you would make points where one person follows on from the next person, and they’re building up a portrait of somebody or proving something.

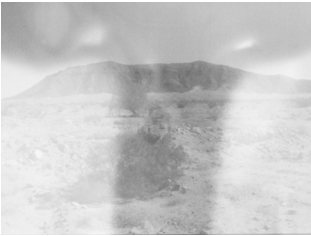


# El Chinero, a Phantom Hill

## BANI KHOSHNOUDI

At the beginning of the 20th century, hundreds of Asian migrants died in the desert of Baja California, not far from the border with the United States, trying to escape racial persecution in Mexico. There is no trace or historical documentation of any of this, except in the legends about the mountain that overlooks this place, 140 kilometres from the city of Mexicali: El Chinero. There Bani Khoshnoudi begins her research to construct a possible memory, a kind of “reinvented” archive to reveal to the world the racism hidden behind the claim of “national identity”. An archive that, in its “invisibility”, creates a direct reference to the present of migrants, wars, political repression, nationalist myths and totalitarian regimes. A line that connects Mexico to Iran, following a connection between those who are uprooted and made invisible by history, a connection that runs through her research. “Images not to forget this place” reads one of the film’s posters. The place thus speaks and becomes the material for constructing a possible narrative in which legend, oral tradition, phantasmagoria are superimposed to the point of imprinting their nature on the filmic material, the film - shot with a Bolex - “contaminated” by the organic elements of the desert. In black and white, accompanied by Andy Moor’s electric guitar, these images, like a western, transforms the landscape into history, changing the meaning of its iconography in a constant dialogue with the violence of the present.

Cristina Piccino



### BIOGRAPHY

Bani Khoshnoudi (Tehran, 1977) left Iran with his family after the 1979 revolution and emigrated to America. She studied at the University of Austin, Texas, and then participated in the Independent Study Program at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. Her artistic research moves between cinema, photography and installations. Her work explores the themes of exile, modernity and its violence. Between 1988 and 2003 she made her first short

films, which won prizes at various festivals - *Life Suspended* (1998); *Memory* (1999); *Pineapple* (2000); *The New Criminals of Europe* (2003). *Transit* (2005) was followed by *A People in the Shadows* (2008). *Ziba* (2012), her first feature film, was developed at the Cinéfondation in Cannes. In 2014, she revealed that she was the director of *The Silent Majority Speaks*, presented in 2010 by the anonymous Silent Collective, in which the 2009 parliamentary elections in

Iran and the Green Wave opposition movement call for a retelling of revolutionary events in Iranian history. Since then, she has never been able to return to Iran. In 2016, she presented *Transit(s): Our Traces, Our Ruins* for the Centre Pompidou with a performance by Valentina Campora. Her second feature film, *Fireflies* (2018), is set in Mexico City, where she used to live, and will be followed by *Benizit* (2019). She currently lives in Paris.

### How would you describe the absence that is at the center of *El Chinero*?

I approached the site El Chinero because of the name, which is cryptic and mysterious because it doesn't really mean anything. While I was doing research for a fiction film that I'm writing, I came across a couple of mentions of it within legends and oral histories. There were vague descriptions of a disappearance of migrants happening there. Maybe once, maybe more times, because in the different citations there's different years mentioned. It's a myth that cannot be proven. This made me very curious to why there was no more documentation about it. And if you start to dig through the research that's been done around migration of Chinese within Mexico, you discover many layers of conflict and violence. El Chinero is mentioned in some texts as being the person who helps or defends the Chinese. Having lived in Mexico for a long time, it was extremely interesting working on this region for me and the absence creates a question that I wanted to put into images.

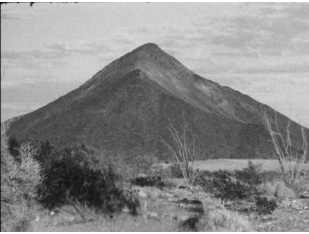
### We are used to think to Mexicans as a discriminated people by the US, in your film they are in the opposite position.

I think that it's a correct image that we have, there's a lot of discrimination against, not just Mexicans, but migrants coming from Central America and from other places further away. But there's also another layer of discrimination happening again within Mexico towards others. I think that violence and racism are not confined to one place or nationality, and neither are they always coming from the countries of the North. They exist everywhere, and they're cyclical.

### Do you think that the landscape that you film incorporated what happened there in the past?

The landscape has no fault for what happened there, but in general it carries what humans have done to each other and what they continue to do. So if it allows us to think and not just contemplate on the beauty it can be an interesting site for thinking through our own actions. El Chinero is a non-monument, but we have also failed in making them because they don't really keep us from repeating catastrophes. The film itself, we could say, is this ephemeral, time based monument, which keeps us from denying the existence of this place and this story. The film also works through memory, for this reason I gathered some elements at the site: dirt, plants, little objects that I used when I was developing the film by hand in a collectively run laboratory I'm part of. There I experimented a lot with the chemical and organic processes, using coffee, salts and objects to inscribe another layer of writing. I haven't intervened on it after, so there's no superimpositions or optical printing or scratching, it was all done at the moment of development, which also talks about accidents, fragility and also force that a film can have.

Lucrezia Ercolani



L'album d'oro

TIZIANO DORIA, SAMIRA GUADAGNUOLO

To hear the call, to let yourself be lulled into a dimension that is not an alternative to ordinary reality, but that it's next to it, often unnoticed, enchanting and irresistible, like the song of the sirens. *L'album d'oro* seems to contain an invitation to discovery through an experiential plan where hierarchies between beings are suspended, relationships are re-signified at the meeting point between the archaic and the futuristic. In the black and white images captured by the 16 mm film that the two filmmakers choose to use, a Mediterranean landscape appears, a landscape that has still a lot to tell us in its secret symmetries, with its chicken songs and the creatures that coexist under the dazzling light, following a thread of experiences that unite thousands of years. The wisdom of the tree, of the animal, of the shared meal, emerges from time spent together, a knowledge as authorless as the biblical texts. Painting is then an attempt to imprint an experience, a passage from outside to inside, which then finds a new way to the outside - and the camera adds a magical element of further dispossession. New ways of generating are tried - but are they not a sinking, a *détournement* of the old ones? Why does fear make us lock up our fantasies?

Lucrezia Ercolani

Italy | 2023  
16 mm | B/N | 65' | O.V. Italian

Directors  
TIZIANO DORIA  
SAMIRA GUADAGNUOLO

Cinematography  
TIZIANO DORIA  
SAMIRA GUADAGNUOLO

Editing  
TIZIANO DORIA  
SAMIRA GUADAGNUOLO

Sound  
TIZIANO DORIA  
SAMIRA GUADAGNUOLO

Interpreters  
GENNY ALBERGO  
MICHELE CAGLIA  
ROSSANA CAGLIA  
MAURO CAPIELLO  
MILENA DORIA  
TIZIANA DORIA  
MARK JACKEL  
ROCCO PETTA  
CRESCENZA PIRRO  
ROCCO SILANO  
TERESA TUCCIARIELLO

Production  
WARSHADFILM

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BIOGRAPHY

Tiziano Doria and Samira Guadagnuolo are a filmmaking duo who call themselves WARSHADFilm. In their work they move towards a re-appropriation of the entire film production process. In their Låbbash laboratory in Milan they have recovered and repaired film cameras, developers, projectors, telecinema. It is a “non-industrial laboratory” where, in addition to bringing their films to life, workshops are offered to those who want to become

familiar with 16mm film, the duo's favourite format. Their installation *Canti neri* (2019) was selected by the Mostra del Nuovo Cinema in Pesaro, the short film *Incompiuta* (2019) by Locarno and Torino Film Festival. That same year, they participated in the “Walking Cinema” project at Filmmaker. *La zita* (2021) was presented at the Thessaloniki Documentary Film Festival, where Doria and Guadagnuolo won the Golden Alexander Film Forward Award.

*Appendix to a Film Shot in the Summer* (2022) was selected at the Bellaria Film Festival, where the directors won the Oxilia Award. The following year they returned to Bellaria with the installation *La Vague*.

**Which intuition guided you in the making of this film?**

It all started with the story that our protagonist told us. Perhaps protagonist is not the right definition, because in the film there are different actors, including entities that are not necessarily human, and all of them are at the same level. This lady, who was quite old, told us how she “hatched” an egg: she kept it in her bra for 21 days, keeping it warm, until the chick came out. She did this to relive the experience of motherhood, which was no longer available to her. We thought it was an incredible story, coming from a person who knows chickens very well, having lived with them for a long time. All the characters, things, people and animals, have a very close relationship with the place. There is an objective knowledge on one side, and on the other, something that transcends into a dimension that goes beyond common sense and beyond the limits of what is considered possible or known. Reality is experienced in a very profound way, not to affirm reality itself in its materiality, but to suggest something else, a symbolic possibility. You have the issue of birth, the egg as the perfect form, the references are many. In the relationship with the animal, all superstructure is demolished, rhetoric is put aside: there is simply a vision of respect for nature.

**There is an explicit pictorial aspect in *Album d'oro*. In the search for framing you often seem to be influenced by it.**

There are several reasons why we decided to film the paintings. The first is that in Italian iconography the theme of the sleeper recurs frequently, and when it is consciousness that falls asleep it can indicate ignorance. But at the same time, the sleepers experience dreams and thus have the vision, the ability to see something else. Reality presents us with the possibility of overcoming through something that has nothing to do with the concrete data. The other reason is that we are very attentive to the landscape. In the paintings there is a tradition that we like, a forgotten world. Finally, in many of our paintings there is no central point of view, the perspective is still not codified in a 'modern' sense, but it is rather multi-centered. These paintings are the result of different perspectives related to individual elements. This is also related to the structure of the film, which does not have a single point of view, because it wants to be extremely democratic and polyform.

**Why did you shoot in 16 mm?**

With film there is always a latency that stays in the conversion from negative to positive, these are steps that 'decant' reality and transform it into something else. We have a lab in Milan where we do everything ourselves, including developing, spending hours in the dark. We like the idea that we have took the whole process back, we need to feel it in our hands instead of delegating it.

Lucrezia Ercolani



# Last Things

## DEBORAH STRATMAN

Can the Earth, its history, its future be told only from the point of view of stones? Starting from this question, which is implicit in any artistic research where the boundaries between historical and political, primordial and modern issues, are constantly blurred, Stratman carries out an investigation into our planet, leaving the human and the animal aside, to adopt the perspective of the rocks. The crystalline and mineral organisms that preceded us and will outlive us become the references in the biosphere to deal with the idea of evolution and extinction, in relation to which human beings disappear from the picture. Monuments and places thus become works of art that act autonomously, no longer waiting to be represented, they are ritual and cultural machines that transcend history to shape our subjectivity. In this highly personal cosmogony (and cosmology), poetry, science and geology are revealed in powerful images that range from microscopic forms to vast landscapes; a movement that goes from the representation of stones to a lunar landscape, gliding to the bottom of the oceans and into infinite space, mixing forms and intuitions, to affirm in its very texture the principle contained in the first sentence inspired by Claire Lispector: “All the world began with a yes”. To guide us - or perhaps to confuse even more the “cardinal points” of our mental geography of the world - there are two voices. That of the geologist Marcia Bjørnerud, for whom every stone is an archive with a history that goes beyond us, which we must learn to read in order to understand the temporal multitudes parallel to our existence. The other voice is that of the French director Valérie Massadian, who tells a story inspired by two novellas by J.H. Rosny, pseudonym of the Boex brothers, in which they imagine aliens half mineral and half geometric. It is along these edges and between their caesuras that Stratman’s artistic gesture, like a comet, traces a space and time in which a sense of things still to be discovered is affirmed, where the scientific dimension becomes poetic and in the transition from the tiny to the infinite, the world appears in its temporality and fragile finiteness.

Cristina Piccino

France, Usa, Portugal | 2023  
16mm | Colour | 50’  
O.V. French, English

Director  
DEBORAH STRATMAN

Cinematography  
DEBORAH STRATMAN

Editing  
DEBORAH STRATMAN

Sound  
SIMON APOSTOLOU

Narrators  
VALÉRIE MASSADIAN  
MARCIA BJØRNERUD

Production  
PYTHAGORAS FILM  
STENAR PROJECTS  
ELINKA FILMS

Producers  
DEBORAH STRATMAN  
ANŽE PERŠIN  
GAËLLE BOUCAND

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### BIOGRAPHY

Deborah Stratman (Washington D.C., 1967) is an artist and filmmaker. Her work has been exhibited in major art institutions such as MoMa, Centre Pompidou, PS1, and has participated in numerous international festivals including Sundance, Berlinale, Rotterdam Film Festival, Viennale. Her artistic research explores issues of power, control, exodus, freedom, sisterhood, as well as evolution and extinction, birds of prey and comets, exploring the ways in

which places, ideas and society intertwine and contaminate each other. Her recent works include *The Illinois Parables* (2016); *Xenoi* (2017); *Siege* (2018); *Vever (for Barbara)* (2019); *For the Time Being* (2021); *Laika* (2021). She teaches at the University of Illinois in Chicago, the city where she lives.

**What pushed you to make this film?**

Just a general, multiyear, low grade anxiety that so many of us have right now about extinction or maybe for being the cause of it. I was also immersed in the thinking of psycho ecology, which was something I was talking a lot about with my students at the time. And then when Covid hit, I was in the middle of a different project, one that was largely and still is being shot in Ethiopia, so I had to put that on hold. I needed to find a film that I could work on easily from a base. That’s how it started, with a research for footage from archives, including my own archive, and from material I shot many years ago. And then the last passage was going out and shoot once we could leave the house again.

**In *Last Things* we can hear extracts from beautiful literary texts as well as precise scientific notions. How do arts and science come together?**

It was one of the challenges of the film, to include data based knowledge with other kinds of material, more metaphysical or fictional. That’s why the film has two narrators and also a complicated grain or texture. It’s really, at heart, a collage film. The joy and the struggle was finding what the film was through the editing, that’s how I build meaning, not through a script, and there’s something the film can say that you wouldn’t be able to say with a sentence. It’s only possible to say it in cinema, and maybe it’s hard to translate it into anything else. But I am really interested in alternate ways of telling story, so I was definitely influenced by other thinkers and writers, who have found ways to speak through the speculative future. I think a lot of science fiction writers do that, like Rosny, but also Ballard and Ursula K. Le Guin.

**In the story you tell the beginning and the end touch each other. Why this need to go back?**

At one point of the production I felt that I was going off track because I feared I was just making a sci fi adaptation. That’s why I started researching the geological, that seemed impossible to leave out because it was so mind blowing to me. For instance, minerals evolve and it felt as a different way to say some of the same things that the science fiction tells. What was before the beginning? Was there anything there? Was there not? How did that start? These questions open us up to a past that is not just our past, but the past of a lot of other things. I was just trying to unpack this idea that minerals make life possible and life makes mineral evolution possible. A question I had and that I still have is, when we draw those evolutionary trees like Darwin did and many others have done, where you’re looking at the evolution of species, I think we minerals should be included on those.

Lucrezia Ercolani



# Le Fardeau

## ELVIS SABIN NGAÏBINO

In Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic, Rodrigue (nicknamed Bokassa because of his big nose, which makes him look like the former emperor) and Reine live with their three children and earn their living from a meagre production of manioc flour. Deeply rooted in their community, they attend the local church, where they are very active, trying to follow the teachings of their pastor and dreaming of having their own church. For them, the latter is both a support and a burden (as we see in the opening scene, in which a cross is erected). But Rodrigue and Reine have to bear another burden, linked to the church, which is their greatest secret: they are both HIV-positive. This is a condition they cannot share with their fellow believers because, in a society where the battle between God and Satan is present in every event, the disease is seen by those around them as divine punishment. After a stunning debut in 2020 with the Rossellini-esque *Makongo*, the story of a pygmy community struggling for access to education, Elvis Sabin Ngaïbino stages in *Le Fardeau* an Africa deeply marked by its own tradition but resilient in its efforts to reach new understandings. Rodrigue and Reine's journey is not only one of sickness, but also one of healing and sharing. Although seemingly trapped in their grief, the couple will find a new community capable of welcoming and understanding them, with whom they can seek a new life.

Antonio Pezzuto

Central African Republic, France,  
Democratic Republic of Congo,  
Italy | 2023  
HD | Colour | 80'  
O.V. French, Sango

Director  
ELVIS SABIN NGAÏBINO

Cinematography  
ELVIS SABIN NGAÏBINO

Editing  
LÉA CHATAURET

Sound  
CHRIST VANCE SHOW

Production  
MAKONGO FILMS

Co-production  
QUENTIN LAURENT PER LES FILMS DE  
L'ŒIL SAUVAGE  
KIRIPI FILMS  
BARBEL MAUCH FILMPRODUKTION,  
START, CANAL+

Contacts  
ANANDA@FILMSBYANANDA.COM

### BIOGRAPHY

Elvis Sabin Ngaïbino (Begoua, 1985) graduated in biology and then decided to devote himself to filmmaking: in 2012, with some friends, he founded the Académie du Cinéma Centrafricain, with which he produced films for television in the Central African Republic. He then studied directing at Ateliers Varan, where he made the short film *Docta Jefferson*, which was followed by *Makongo* in competition at Filmmaker in 2020.



### What pushed you to make this film?

Primarily, the fact that in Africa in general, and in the Central African Republic in particular, there are many people affected by AIDS who live in silence, unable to speak about this disease even to those closest to them, and often die without help. All this because AIDS in my country is considered something to be ashamed of; the sick are stigmatized by religious figures who see it as a divine punishment. That's why I decided to make a film that shows this reality. Rodrigue is my cousin, and when he contracted the virus, I was one of the first to know, but he asked me to keep it a secret. When I started working on the project, I sought characters by visiting churches, but it wasn't easy. During that time, I talked to Rodrigue, who had become a pastor, about my idea: to focus the film on a seropositive couple. He then said to me, "Why not talk about me? I give you permission." The same happened with his wife.



### What does religion represent for the Central African Republic?

Many things; it allows people to be in contact, in communion with God. It often means the solution to the problems of the Central Africans. Ours is a very religious country, and representing salvation, there is this important connection between religion and illness.

### What is the situation for filmmakers in your country? What kind of difficulties have you encountered?

About two decades ago, the first fiction film, *Le silence de la forêt* by Didier Ouénagaré and Bassek Ba Kobhio, was made, even though it's not 100% Central African. Since 2017, with the arrival of the Ateliers Varan, there is a new generation of filmmakers, of which I am a part, working together to advance cinema in our country, which has been practically nonexistent until now. Since then, many films, particularly documentaries, have been released and screened in various places from Europe to Africa. So, we can say that something is happening. Some are starting to work on projects, but certainly, the situation is still evolving. There is still a battle to be fought, and we are doing it so that there is a transmission that allows young directors to emerge. Filming in the Central African Republic is a rather delicate matter; it requires authorization from the Ministry of Arts, which oversees everything. If we dare to denounce certain situations, the film can be censored, as happened with *Nous, Étudiants!* by Rafiki Fariala. The government thought we wanted to demonize them, inciting students against them, which is not the case; we just wanted to show a reality for what it is.

Lucrezia Ercolani



# Loving in Between

## JYOTI MISTRY

After *When I Grow Up I Want to Be a Black Man* (2017) and *Cause of Death* (2020), in which she explored the relationship between sexism, feminicide and racial violence, South African Jyoti Mistry concludes her trilogy with *Loving in Between*, inspired by the poem *Advice* written by one of the most important figures of the Harlem Renaissance, Langston Hughes: “Folks, I’m telling you, / birthing is hard, / and dying is mean, / so get yourself / a little loving / in between.” Deconstructed texts recited according to the dictates of Beat performance or spoken word by two other South African artists, Kgafela oa Magogodi and Napo Masheane, and punctuated by the notes of “Diga Diga Doo,” a 1928 jazz standard reinterpreted here by composer Nishlyn Ramanna, who has collaborated with Mistry on previous films. Accompanying this sound system are images that narrate a kind of “optimistic archive,” ranging from Cretinetti’s films made in 1911 to anonymous lesbian porn films of the 1970s, to images that show men in boxing matches, people making love in the dunes, women on the beach or having tea, or cloistered nuns kissing passionately, while flocks of birds, fish, leaves, or shells burst onto the screen and fly past the frame. A love that is lived naturally, that transcends social and religious norms and taboos. A love that has the ability to emancipate us, that has the strength and power to change our attitude to life, in the short time between birth and death.

Antonio Pezzuto

Austria, South Africa   2023
2K   Colour, B/W   19'
O.V. English
Director
JYOTI MISTRY
Screenplay
JYOTI MISTRY
Editing
NIKKI COMNINOS
Music
NISHLYN RAMANNA
Sound
PETER CORNELL
Voices
NAPO MASHEANE
KGAFELA OA MAGOGODI
Animation
STEPHEN GALLOWAY
JANO BOOYSEN
Production
SÜD NORD FILM, BLACKBOARD TRUST
NONE
Producer
FLORIAN SCHATTAUER
Contacts
FLOSCHATT@YAHOO.COM

### BIOGRAPHY

Jyoti Mistry (Durban, 1970) combines cinematic practice with installation research so that her images can be recontextualized off-screen in galleries and other venues. Her films have been shown at numerous international festivals, including Locarno, Rotterdam, Durban, Toronto, and at the Kunsthau Zürich, Museum der Moderne Salzburg, and Kunsthalle Vienna. She has been artist-in-residence at the Netherlands Film Academy in Amsterdam

and the California College of the Arts in San Francisco. Her films include *We Remember Differently* (2005); *I Mike What I Like* (2006); *Le loeuf sur le toit* (2010) 09:21:25; (2011) *Impunity* (2014). She currently teaches film at the University of Gothenburg. Her publications include *Race, Memory, Imagination* (2012), a collection of essays exploring the complexities of racial identity in South Africa. *Regimi dello sguardo: film e femminismi in Africa* (2015). *Places*

*to Play: practice, search, pedagogy* (2017) on the use of the archive as an exemplary element in rethinking colonial images through “decolonized” film practices. She co-edited a special issue of the *Journal of African Cinema: Film as a Research Tool: Practice and Pedagogy* (2018).

### What does this film represent to you?

My interest is linked to its multi-layered history. Seven years ago, when I first went there, I found out that the Salton Sea, which is the biggest lake in California, is not accessible because it died off, there is no fish living inside the the lake anymore, and also a way less birds. I started researching and I figured out that the cause is the intensive agriculture growth, because over the last several decades, all the pesticides and fertilizers were ending up in the lake, taking out the oxygen of the water. In the new film *Valley Pride* I wanted to depict the workers of this agricultural area, which is the most extensive in the USA. Most of them come from Mexico and are being kept without papers so they can be paid with lower wages. The film is made by a process of collecting, driving through the fields and just talking with the people, because “officially” it was not possible to shoot. That’s also the reason why we had to be careful with the identities of the workers who cannot be shown, so we had to blur them.

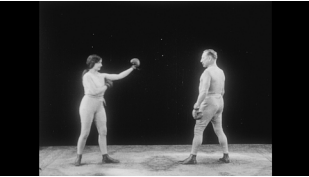
### The title of the film comes from a Langston Hughes’ poem, what kind of inspiration you took from it?

What I like about the Langston Hughes poem is that it is so simple on the surface. But because of Langston Hughes’ own sexuality as a black gay man, I think his playfulness of the “in between” is exactly that. He’s talking about the in-between of life and death, but in his very particular play with language, he is already cueing to the fact that we need to celebrate the in-betweenness of the categories of sexuality. The idea of queering is very important for me, like liminality and the “third space” by Homi Bhabha. In those spaces something new can happen because it’s not fixed in a category. So I like this idea of the in-between of queer politics and also, I think that this expression is beautiful because it implies some kind of movement.

### Loving in between is based over extensive archival researches. We always think that we’re gaining more sexual freedom in our days, but looking at these old images we get another impression.

Yes, our fantastical idea is that we are evolving in our sexuality, mostly because we have the license now to talk about it openly. But it doesn’t mean that we were less sexually experimental or imaginative before. And I think that is the misstep we’ve often made in our thinking. Of course we celebrate human rights because that’s really an evolution, but it is just about how we have talked about sex in the public sphere. We’re thinking about the Lgbtqi+ movement as a set of sexual rights rather than the expression of private acts. I’m quite interested in that slippage between the private and the public. Talking about the materials, I had established a relationship with the archives since 2015 when I began my researches for *When I grow up, I want to be a black man*. The archivists see what interests me, what I’m curious about and what I’m unafraid of watching. I can only know the ethics of something if I know what it is, so to not censor yourself even before you’ve seen, which is something quite common, is really the question for me. Then the animation allowed me to establish a dialogue with the footage, together with the voices of Napo Masheane and Kgafela oa Magogodi.

Lucrezia Ercolani



# Nuit obscure – Au revoir ici, n’importe où

## SYLVAIN GEORGE

Suddenly a young boy appears, climbing nimbly up a rope onto the deck of the ship bound for Europe. He seems to have made it, but he suddenly slips. His friends come closer and, all together, they flee the police, silently, in the dark. Melilla, a Spanish enclave, was a fortress in its colonial past, and still is today as Europe’s bulwark against migrants. Young, not-so-young, contemporary flâneurs roam the city, each waiting for their moment to cross to the ‘other side’, risking their life. The urban space has adapted to the policy of control: barbed wire, barriers, police everywhere. For several years, Sylvain George has been filming the lives of the migrants who live in Melilla “on the ground”, with patience and, above all, care, in order to get an aesthetic and cinematographic form opposed to the most codified narratives. It is in this suspended space between two worlds, that the *Nuit obscure* project was born, highlighting the effects of restrictive policies on the bodies, living conditions and representation of those targeted. If adults were at the centre of the first chapter, in this new *Nuit obscure - au revoir ici, n’importe où* the protagonists are children who, in their struggle for survival, seem to explore the possibility of revolt. Everything becomes a game, to play is to resist. Then, a manhole becomes a wardrobe where you can leave blankets for the night, a tree becomes a bed. They stay together, they fight, they separate, they find each other again. The sea is both refuge and enemy. The story is about this improvised everyday life, made up of gestures that are repeated and yet surprise each time. It is the flow of time that George delicately transforms into a painful, stubborn adventure that does not exclude moments of joy: the challenge of those who affirm their existence as best they can against the prejudice of exclusion.

Cristina Piccino

France, Switzerland | 2023  
2K | Colour, B/W | 183’  
O.V. Arabic, French, Spanish

Director  
SYLVAIN GEORGE

Cinematography  
SYLVAIN GEORGE

Editing  
SYLVAIN GEORGE

Sound  
SYLVAIN GEORGE

Production  
NOIR PRODUCTIONS  
ALINA FILM  
RTS – RADIO TELEVISIONE SVIZZERRA

Producers  
MARIE-NOËLLE GEORGE  
OTTAVIA FRAGNITO

Co-producers  
EUGENIA MUMENTHALER  
DAVID EPINEY

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**As last year Filmmaker screened the first part of *Nuit obscure, Feuilletts sauvages*, how *Au revoir ici n’importe où* is in relation with that film?**

I made the shooting between 2018, 2019 and 2020, just after the pandemic. I started to build the film with respect of the chronology; the first part is a certain kind of exposition of Melilla, is a geopolitical situation that develops in a place where different relation of strength between people and authorities can be found. After that, in *Nuit Obscure* I start to follow a group of young adults, between 18 and 30 years old. When I came back there in 2020, there has been a sort of turnover in town and I met very quickly some underage people, especially Malik who’s at the center of this second part. I thought it was interesting just to be with them, following their steps we can discover the colonial past of the town and the present of immigration policies, how the place are configured. At the same time, those youngsters make a kind of re-creation of Melilla, finding solutions to survive and to materialize their desire to go to Europe.

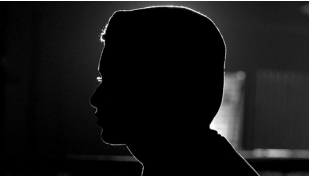
**Even thought Melilla was theatre of terrible brutality, we never see it directly in the film. What’s your thought about the representation of violence?**

For me to see this underage people sleeping in the street, in the trees or on the rocks is very violent. To see the social center dedicated to minors so small, old and dirty is violent. To see them washing their face in the park’s fountain is a result of society’s violence. There are some very simple gestures that by themselves show the consequences of European policies, even if not in a didactical way. But these young people are not victim for me, I shared and experience with them, we could understand each other and find a common ground. They spend their time playing, and this very important as they introduce something different, they open the city and also the world to something else. Even if they had terrible lives, often being subject of sexual abuse and so on, they have te desire to propose a new form of life, another way to inhabit.

**Would you describe it as a creative resistance?**

Well, childhood is a particular phase, and if we read philosophers like Walter Benjamin, we find out that in that age people are not submitted to the strength of habits, they have a powerful imagination which does not imply the domination of nature or other human beings. Youngsters have the possibility to be shocked by things and then to react creating something totally new. Society is afraid of them, of their energy, of their anger. I think that it is a revolutionary force. And then, of course, when you’re an adult, to spend some time with children also means to have a confrontation with your own childhood. Everyone of us has a responsibility for the child he/she has been.

Lucrezia Ercolani



### BIOGRAPHY

Sylvain George (Lyon, 1968) studied philosophy, law and film at the Sorbonne before turning to directing. In 2006, he made his debut with the first two parts of the *Contrefeux* series, reunited in the documentary *Contrefeux 1 et 2: Comment briser les consciences? Frapper!*, followed by *Contrefeux 3: Europe année 06 (Fragments Ceuta)* and *Contrefeux 4: Un homme idéal (Fragments K)*. He then made the short films *No Border* (2008) and *N’entre pas*

*sans violence dans la nuit* (2008). In 2009 he made *L’impossible - Pages arrachées*. In 2010, *Qu’ils reposent en révolte (Des figures de guerres)* won the International Competition at Filmmaker. In 2011, *Les Éclats (ma gueule, ma révolte, mon nom)* was awarded Best International Documentary at the Turin Film Festival. In 2013 he made *Vers Madrid* and in 2017 *Paris est une fête - Un film en 18 vagues*, winner of the Young Jury Prize at Filmmaker.

*Nuit obscure - Feuilletts sauvages* (2022) won the International Competition at Filmmaker.



# Valley Pride

## LUKAS MARXT

In Southern California, on the border with Mexico, in the Sonora desert, agribusiness is wreaking havoc on one of America’s most important agricultural areas. We are in the Valley Pride, in the regions of Coachella and the Imperial Valley, where the Salton Sea (the largest lake in California, created by accident after a flood at the beginning of the last century) is drying up, with disastrous consequences, also because of the pollutants in its depths, which will soon be released into the air.

The curious and seemingly neutral gaze of Lukas Marxt observes the monoculture and intensive irrigation - the relationship between human beings and nature being one of the constants of his poetics. Human beings that, in order to withstand the sun and toxic substances, are forced to work completely covered, dehumanised, alongside huge and increasingly complex machines. And next to these crops are the silhouettes of palm groves, now completely destroyed, burnt by pollution.

Rhythmically punctuated by Jung an Tagen’s electronic soundtrack, *Valley Pride* tells the story of a distorted use of nature and shows how corporate interests and industries ruthlessly plunder a land that was not meant to be cultivated.

Antonio Pezzuto



### BIOGRAPHY

Lukas Marxt (1983, Austria) is an artist and filmmaker who lives and works between Cologne and Graz. He studied geography and environmental sciences at the University of Graz, and then, with audio-visual studies, at the Art University of Linz. He received a Master of Fine Art from the Kunsthochschule für Medien in Cologne and attended the postgraduate program at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst in Leipzig. His work has been exhibited

and screened at numerous museums and festivals, including most recently the Torrance Art Museum (Los Angeles, 2018), the Biennial of Painting, Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens (Belgium, 2018), the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rijeka (Croatia, 2018), the Locarno Festival and the Viennale 2023.

Austria, Germany | 2023  
2K | Colour | 14' | O.V. No dialogues

Director  
LUKAS MARXT

Screenplay  
LUKAS MARXT

Cinematography  
LUKAS MARXT

Editing  
LUKAS MARXT  
VANJA SMILJANIĆ

Sound  
JUNG AN TAGEN

Production  
S U N³B³U³R³S T FILM

Producer  
LUKAS MARXT

Contacts  
SUNBURSTFILM3000@GMAIL.COM  
OFFICE@SIXPACKFILM.COM

**You already shot films in the Imperial Valley, California. Why you keep coming back to that area?**

My interest is linked to its multi-layered history. Seven years ago, when I first went there, I found out that the Salton Sea, which is the biggest lake in California, is not accessible because it died off, there is no fish living inside the the lake anymore, and also a way less birds. I started researching and I figured out that the cause is the intensive agriculture growth, because over the last several decades, all the pesticides and fertilizers were ending up in the lake, taking out the oxygen of the water. In the new film *Valley Pride* I wanted to depict the workers of this agricultural area, which is the most extensive in the USA. Most of them come from Mexico and are being kept without papers so they can be paid with lower wages. The film is made by a process of collecting, driving through the fields and just talking with the people, because “officially” it was not possible to shoot. That’s also the reason why we had to be careful with the identities of the workers who cannot be shown, so we had to blur them.



**You chose the USA because they established this relation between humans and nature shaped by capitalism?**

The disaster of the Salton Sea pushed me to deepen my researches, which now include also the military history and pre-atomic testings from the Manhattan Project, because everything is linked, it’s a vertical history. The lake was created by an accident as a dam broke off the Colorado River in 1904. The military came there and did the testings in the 60s. There was a kind of a California Rivera back then where celebrities spent time there, like President Eisenhower, for speed boating and chilling on the lake. And then two typhoons came and pushed the water in whole area. So they didn’t need to water anymore all the fields around. But still they used the lake to dump water and as it is, a lake without an outlet, the level rose and all pesticides became more concentrated. This was the end of the Salton Sea as a recreational area. So all projects were pulled out, all people left. And the community who still lives there, mainly Native Americans, is suffering the consequences.

**How did you find the gaze of the film?**

I think it just came out from being there every day, trying to understand people, getting different points of view. It’s about observing and gaining the access not only to the human side but also to nature. I looked for ways to depict it and to be as close as possible to get a feeling of the surroundings, that is amplified by the synthetic sound design in order to feel this machinery and its pressure, which include the work shifts as the sucking the water out of the earth, 24 hour per day.

Lucrezia Ercolani



# PROSPETTIVE

## ANNALUCIA

Lea Binarelli

## A NORMA

Carlotta Cosmai, Pedro Pablo HdeO, Michela Zolfo, Maryam Shater

## API

Luca Ciriello

## BUON ANNO

Yichun Ma

## CALUGEM – STORIA DI UN PADRE SUI TETTI

Giacomo Bolzani

## DOVE SIAMO

Emma Onesti

## EQUILIBRI INVOLONTARI

Luca Pallaro

## ESCHATON AD

Andrea Gatopoulos

## FALTERONA

Giulio Melani

## JAIMA

Francesco Pereira

## LACRIME DI TERRA

Manuele Granelli, Ettore Rinaldi, Francesca Venzano

## /ma·tri·mò·nio/

Gaia Siria Meloni

## QUELLO CHE NON POSSO FARE

Ilaria Scarcella

## SAN DAMIANO

Gregorio Sassoli, Alejandro Cifuentes

## TUTTO IL MIO CORPO È STANCO

Giulia Visco Gilardi

OUT OF COMPETITION

## CORTILE

Riccardo Stabilini

OUT OF COMPETITION

## Z.O.

Loris G. Nese

## The Thrill of First Times

Cristina Piccino, Antonio Pezzuto

Dedicated to Italian directors under-35, the Prospettive section aims to be a laboratory of ideas, capturing the spirit of young independent Italian cinema and accompanying new talents into the future. There is a passion for risk in this bet, expressed above all in the choice of very different formats and lengths, often in dialogue with other visual expressions. Among family stories, places, private and collective archives, the films in competition and out-of-competition express the excitement of a first time - or a return - in which the search for a vision of the world coincides with the gesture of filming.

It is a “family film”, *Dove siamo*, the new work by Emma Onesti, already in the 2022 Prospettive competition with Tatiana. In the diary of a year shared with her father, her new partner and Simone, her brother, a child on the autism spectrum, the author shares an intimate journey that at the same time affirms a different representation of neuro-diversity. The mother-daughter relationship runs through Gaia Siria Meloni's */ma-tri-mò-nio/* and Yichun's *Buon anno*. In the former, Meloni interweaves her grandmother's and mother's experiences with her own, looking for fractures and the transmission of a “female gaze” over time. In the latter, the director, who came to Milan from China to study at the Brera Academy, explores the disorientation and desires of those who live elsewhere, starting with the conflicted relationship with her distant mother. Mother and daughter, the director and her mother, are also present in Ilaria Scarcella's *Quello che non posso fare*, a confrontation within the walls of the home kitchen. Giacomo Bolzoni, in *Calugem - Storia di un padre sui tetti*, chooses instead the father's point of view to explore the relationship between the protagonist and his daughters.

Winner of the 2022 Prospettive Jury Prize with *Racconto*, Giulio Melani's *Falterona*, in a dialogue between 8mm home movies and current footage, follows the search for a possible treasure, moving along the uncertain border between reality and fiction. *Eschaton Ad*, with which Andrea Gatopoulos returns to Filmmaker, is a seismograph of great transformations, cataclysms that affect the life of the planet as well as creativity. Once again, the images come from the archives of RSI (Swiss Radio and Television) - *Eschaton Ad* was made during the “Find a film!” workshop led by Radu Jude at the last Locarno Festival.

Three realities, three portraits. A generational narrative is that of *Api*, in which Luca Ciriello follows the summer holidays of a group of boys on the outskirts of Aosta, for whom bees are a shell that allows them to advance in the world. A first-person chronicle of a resistant life is *A Norma* by Carlotta Cosmai, Pedro Pablo HdeO, Michela Zolfo and Maryam Shater, which traces the experience of the protagonist in her own words and brings the relationship between director and character into play.

Is Damien a saint or a devil? In *San Damiano*, Gregorio Sassoli and Alejandro Cifuentes also come face to face with their subject in the daily life of their character, a young homeless man living around Rome's Termini station.

*Annalucia* is the surprising short film by Lea Binarelli, who meets one of her peers in adolescence: they talk about love, sexuality and the body, with a final cinematic twist. The images of Giulia Visco Gilardi in *Tutto il mio corpo è stanco* and Luca Pallaro in *Equilibri involontari* deal with a personal crisis.

Francisco Pereira searches the desert for the stories of the Sarahawi, the people whom Morocco expelled from their land by occupying it: *Jaïma* makes a restitution in the tea ceremony. The memory of a place is also the focus of Manuele Granelli, Ettore Rinaldi and Francesca Venzano in *Lacrime di terra*. Out of competition, Loris G. Nese returns with *Z.O.*, while Riccardo Stablini's *Cortile*, a story of a summer, is a happy debut.

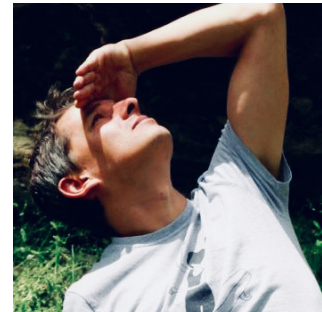
# THE JURY



Caterina Bogno (Varese, 1992) is a journalist and film critic. After graduating in 2016 with a Master's degree in Modern Literature, she has worked since 2017 as an editor for the historical weekly “Film Tv”, where she writes about film, television and books, collaborating with online titles such as “Gli Spietati”.



Beatrice Favaretto (Venice, 1992) is a visual artist whose research focuses on the representation of sexuality and pornography in the contemporary world and the use of the body as an instrument of intimate and private activism. In 2023 she is the winner of the Lydia Prize, promoted by PAC and Fondazione Il Lazzaretto in Milan. In 2021 she is one of the finalists of the first edition of the Biennale College Arte, curated by Cecilia Alemani and Marta Papini. In 2020 she won the Artists' Film Italia Recovery Fund Prize promoted by Schermo Dell'Arte and was a finalist in the Ducato Prize 2020. Her recent collaborations include: 2023, Nuovo Forno del Pane, MAMbo Bologna; 2022, Nel paese delle ultime cose, Manifattura Tabacchi e NAM - Not a Museum, Florence; 2022, Poison Green, Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, Venice; 2022, Premio Artists' Film Italia Recovery Fund, GAMeC, Bergamo; 2021, CLAMOR, Sala Santa Rita, Rome; 2021, ArtCity Bologna, Cassero LGBTQI+, Bologna; 2021, PRIME TIME, Magic Lantern Film Festival, Fondazione smART, Rome.



Alberto Tamburelli (Tortona, Alessandria, Italy, 1983) is a director, screenwriter and producer. He graduated in Literature from the Sapienza University of Rome in 2010 and then switched to video production. He has made institutional videos and documentaries, curated film seasons and organized workshops. His short films have been presented in competition at the Locarno, Turin and Filmmaker festivals. His works include *Spazio vuoto* (2011), *Demolire Genova* (2013), *La cognizione del dolore* (2014), *Through the Looking Glass* (2016), *Libarna, una storia* (2016), *Fine di un amore* (2017).



Annalucia  
LEA BINARELLI

Annalucia appears to us immersed in the water of a lake. Off-screen, the directors ask her some questions, they are about love, declined in every possible form. Love for her partner – who is not “just the girlfriend” but a companion in adventures – love for the grandmother, a reference point in the storm of adolescence, love for friends, parents. Sexuality, family relationships, modesty, and the relationship with one’s own body, identity, and femininity. A dialogue between peers that touches on common questions and moods, recurring in teenagers like the protagonist and the two authors. “We tried to build an intimate and confidential exchange, which progressively leads, from the initial questions, to focus on one’s own interiority following the common thread among the five of a certain empathy for things, people, for the world. And so we become them,” say the directors. Annalucia engages in the comparison without fear, with a fluid confidence, never emphasized, like her delicate movements in the water. She is not intimidated by the camera, on the contrary, she seems to attract it, she has no shyness or embarrassment with herself and in front of those who watch her, she traverses that emotional territory full of risks in a relaxed, almost flirtatious manner. With a small final twist, which becomes a cinema epiphany.

Cristina Piccino



**BIOGRAPHY**  
Lea Binarelli (Bergamo, 2006) developed this project in the artistic and multimedia high school Preziosissimo Sangue in Monza under the direction of Samira Guadagnuolo, Tiziano Doria and Fabrizio Saiu. The starting point was the idea of opening a panorama on female youth today. The short film will be part of a feature that will also involve other voices and experiences of girls of the same age.

Italy | 2023  
HD | Colour | 8’ | O.V. Italiano

Director  
LEA BINARELLI

Cinematography  
LEA BINARELLI

Editing  
LEA BINARELLI

Producer  
LEA BINARELLI

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A Norma  
CARLOTTA COSMAI,  
PEDRO PABLO HDEO,  
MICHELA ZOLFO,  
MARYAM SHATER

Norma loves David, but he is not very trustworthy when it comes to talking about her and their relationship. Norma has been “a child, a boy, an effeminate boy, a transvestite boy, a transsexual, a masculine, a feminine, a superfeminine”. Today she is a woman who has had surgery, lives in Italy and is a sex-worker, working independently in a small flat where she welcomes people she talks to and has sex with. People she looks after. And she is already thinking with sadness about when she will no longer be able to do that and will leave them alone. Norma’s world is big - she has met so many people, she feels like a woman, even if she is afraid of the smell of her own sweat - and she opens her heart and her mind to four students from the Scuola Civica di Milano. They reflect and question themselves in front of a woman who represents a taboo for our society. Norma is not the “fabulous creature” that is said to still exist in the waters of lake Como. Instead, that creature lives within us. In our fears and prejudices. In an imagination that relegates people like her to the edge of a sidewalk, at the mercy of superficial glances and crude jokes.

Antonio Pezzuto



Italy | 2023  
HD | Colour | 43’  
O.V. Italian

Directors  
CARLOTTA COSMAI  
PEDRO PABLO HDEO  
MICHELA ZOLFO  
MARYAM SHATER

Screenplay  
CARLOTTA COSMAI  
PEDRO PABLO HDEO  
MICHELA ZOLFO  
MARYAM SHATER

Cinematography  
PEDRO PABLO HDEO

Editing  
CARLOTTA COSMAI  
PEDRO PABLO HDEO  
MICHELA ZOLFO  
MARYAM SHATER

Music  
FRANCESCA MARIANO

Production  
CIVICA SCUOLA DI CINEMA LUCHINO VISCONTI

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G.BIANCO@FONDAZIONEMILANO.EU

**BIOGRAPHY**  
Carlotta Cosmai (Monza, 1994), with a background in Feminist film studies, studied screenwriting at the University of California, UCLA. Since 2021 she has been working as an author and screenwriter for international TV series and film projects. *A Norma* is her first documentary film.

Pedro Pablo HdeO (Guadalajara, 1995), Mexican, graduated in Audiovisual arts at the Universidad de Guadalajara and has been working as a cinematographer and director since 2018. His first feature film is *Crimen Por Omisión* (2018). His short films have been screened at various festivals.

Maryam Shater (Messina, 1988), Italian-Iranian, worked in the world of cooperation for six years after graduating in Law and Global studies. She now works as a director and production assistant. *A Norma* is her first documentary film.

Michela Zolfo (Monza, 1990) started working as an editor in 2015, working on commercial and non-commercial projects. Since 2021 she has dedicated herself to documentary filmmaking and now works as an editor, director and production assistant. *A Norma* is her first documentary film.



There is a territory, the immediate sharing of a code, the time always spent together. And then there are the bees. On the outskirts of Aosta, a group of boys spend their summer vacation on unusual vehicles, conceived as shells with which to advance in the world. They need to be upgraded, modified, adapted. With artisanal talent young people take care of the bees. Bees are their glue and only interest in a place that, surrounded by majestic mountains, could offer other hints. Luca Ciriello managed to gain the complete trust of the tribe, we can see that in the freedom and spontaneity with which these young people express themselves. The camera does not inhibit them, on the contrary they feel the urge to show their everyday life, hurling insults when necessary, although irreverent behaviors certainly do not exhaust their relationship with the sacred, as the revealing final images show. The director, who was born in Naples, has thus skillfully placed himself in a geographically distant context, not being his intention that of sugarcoating these young lives, but of understanding them. *Api* is the second chapter of a triptych dedicated to adolescence; the first, *Quaranta cavalli* (2020), was set in the Venetian lagoon, while Ciriello will return to his hometown for the next work. Perhaps cinema can show us with simplicity that this search for freedom, with the creation of a microcosm as fragile as magnetic, belongs to young people of all latitudes.

Lucrezia Ercolani



BIOGRAPHY

Luca Ciriello (Naples, 1988) is a documentary filmmaker, director and producer. He holds a degree in Modern Philology, a Master degree in Cinema from the Naples Film School “Pigrecemme” and studied documentary film at the Atelier “FilmAp”. In 2017 he founded the film company Lunia Film. In 2018 he won a special mention at the Lucania Film Festival and the Festival “Mamma Roma” with his first documentary *Racconti dal Palavesuvio*. In 2020 he participated in Venice Days with the documentary *Quaranta cavalli* (winner of the Laguna Sud Award), presented and

awarded in about 70 Italian and international festivals. In the same year he took part in the Festival dei Popoli (Florence) and Fescaaal (Milan) with his documentary *L'armée rouge*. At Laceno D'oro (Avellino) he won the audience award for the best documentary film with *Ponticelli Terra Buona*. He is currently working on his next documentary *Wasantha, the snake charmer*, which will be shot in Sri Lanka.

Api  
LUCA CIRIELLO

Italy | 2023  
4K | Colour | 20'  
O.V. Italian

Director  
LUCA CIRIELLO

Screenplay  
LUCA CIRIELLO

Cinematography  
LUCA CIRIELLO

Editing  
SIMONA INFANTE  
LUCA CIRIELLO

Sound  
LUIS MURRIGHILE

Interpreters  
SIMONE SABA  
GIULIO GALLO  
JIL FIOROT  
FEDERICO ROMEO  
RUDY SCAVONE  
MATTEO ELFIERI  
PIERREYUILLAZ  
CLAUDINE ROLLET  
HELENE ARGENTOUR  
ALICE OLIVO  
ANDREA MAZZOCCHI  
ERIK MAMMOLITI  
SIMONE OLIVO  
SIMONE GIACCHINO  
FILIPPO PUGLIESE  
DYAN PRESTI  
JAVIER BLANC  
NICOLAS JACQUEMIN

Production  
L'EUBAGE  
LUNIA FILM

Producers  
LUCA BICH  
LUCA CIRIELLO

Contacts  
DISTRIBUTION.SAYONARAFILM@GMAIL.COM



Buon Anno  
YICHUN MA

Italy | 2023  
MOV | Colour | 58'  
O.V. Chinese Mandarin

Director  
YICHUN MA

Cinematography  
YICHUN MA

Editing  
YICHUN MA

Producer  
YICHUN MA

Contacts  
YICHUNMA@FADBRERA.EDU.IT

We could be in any city in the world, but this is Milan. A Chinese girl is studying at university, has no idea of her future, lives with four cats, celebrates Chinese New Year alone at home, making dumplings and lighting streamers on the balcony. Everything seems perfect, except for the phone calls from her mother and sister, who want to know what will happen after she graduates. Will she go back to China, will she get married, will she help her sister, a single woman with a child and a job that does not guarantee her a weekend off? *Buon anno* does not tell the story of a “clash of civilisations”, but simply and lightly presents different perspectives of life (China with its work and the weight of the family; Italy with its high prices and the distance from home) and, above all, the desires and difficulties of a woman who wants to decide her own future on her own (and in her own time). But hers is not a single battle. Just as she is controlled by a mother who already knows what her daughter’s path in life should be, so she realises, in a small way, that she too has control over her four cats; that she too knows what is the best life for them. And by choosing to respond, she affirms the right of each of us to walk around the world, to see and smell what is around us.

Antonio Pezzuto



BIOGRAPHY

Yichun Ma (Shandong, 1995) studied Public Art at the Design Department of East China Normal University in Shanghai. Since 2020 he has been studying New Cinema and Video Technologies at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts in Milan.



Calugem – Storia  
di un padre sui tetti  
GIACOMO BOLZANI

Alberto is a chimney sweep who lives in the Trentino mountains with his daughters. As he goes back and forth with his work, climbing high on the roofs, he talks about many things. Confidences, memories, deep sorrow, death, mourning, fragility, balance, and questions to himself about being a good father. The director listens, follows, and captures him, almost seeking in his professional acrobatics those of the heart amidst life. Like those at home with his daughters, between a game of ping pong, jokes, a discussion with the eldest who doesn't want to collect firewood while he suddenly finds himself in the role of the more traditional father. Alberto moves from one topic to another, filling the frame, always in motion with his thoughts. At times, he seems to elude the director: but is it really so? Over time, a relationship is built mediated by the "distance" of the camera through which we get to know the protagonist in the different moments of his daily life, which slowly becomes a comparison with the act of filming. The roles almost seem to reverse behind and in front of the lens, Alberto stages himself and in doing so, in becoming a character, he redefines the author's point of view, his position, leading him to also put himself at stake. The encounter takes on the movement of a journey up to the ascent they will make together in the mountains; at the end of the trails, a high peak awaits them, in a nature that is part of Alberto: it is becoming water, transforming to travel around the world and be something else when no longer on Earth. An exciting feeling of being in the world that speaks to us deeply.

Cristina Piccino



BIOGRAPHY

Giacomo Bolzani (San Benedetto Po, Mantova, 1988) graduated from Dams-Cinema in Gorizia. He attended a directing school in Milan and subsequently a master's program at the Cineteca di Bologna focused on interactive documentary. He lives and works as a filmmaker/editor in Milan. Among his works: *Oltalpe* (2013), a video-poem selected at the Aviff Art Festival in Cannes, *Renato* (2017), produced by Edison and supervised by Andrea

Segre and Gabriele Mainetti; *Caravaggio era un maiale* (2017), which won as the best art film at the Asolo Art Film Festival. In 2021, he directed *Cincheciò - Gente di morra*, awarded at the Corto&Fieno Film Festival and the Glocal Film Festival in Turin. In 2022, he participated in 'In Progress', a seminar on writing and development of the Milano Film Network.

Italy | 2023  
HD | Colour | 57' | O.V. Italian

Director  
GIACOMO BOLZANI

Cinematography  
GIACOMO BOLZANI

Editing  
GIACOMO BOLZANI

Producer  
GIACOMO BOLZANI

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Dove siamo?  
EMMA ONESTI

Simone is a child with autism spectrum disorders. He is the director's brother from his father's second marriage. But this family film is not just a portrait of Simone, it is also a story about the search for relationships and shared perspectives, for a place where relations need to be constantly reinvented, involving everyone. Emma, the director, and her brother Pepi share with this family "exceptional" moments of outings, holidays, travels: but what is left out in everyday life? And what does it mean for the parents to organise the daily life of an autistic child? The director filmed them for a year, putting herself in the frame looking for answers. Simone, in his silence and acting without any immediate reference, in his glances at the camera, he seems to play with the lens but at the same time he seems not to care. Simone becomes then the centre of the film, multiplying the wager and the emotional possibilities, for over a year: the snowy winter and the gloves that the little boy does not like to wear, that he immediately wets; the discovery of Paris, with the child's grandparents, the walks in the woods, the interior of Simone's apartment with his mother reading him a fairy tale, the games with his father and with Emma herself, the hot summer, his trajectories that create little improvised dances. The questions, the fears, the uncertainties about the future and the present of the two adults, the moments of joy: each fragment shows this constant training in life in which each of the protagonists experience a possible balance. Distancing from the rhetoric that too often accompanies the representation of neurodiversity, the film tries to restore the meaning of a real experience, in a narrative between the edges of strength and fragility.

Cristina Piccino



Italy | 2023  
HD | Colour | 61' | O.V. Italian

Director  
EMMA ONESTI

Cinematography  
EMMA ONESTI

Editing  
ANDREA MIELE

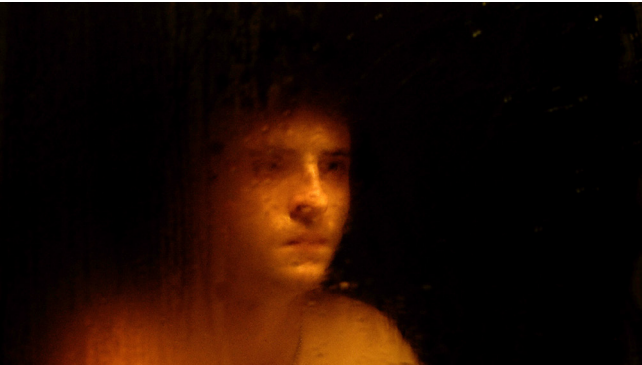
Producer  
EMMA ONESTI

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EMMAONESTI@OUTLOOK.IT

BIOGRAPHY

Emma Onesti (Salerno, 1999) spent her childhood between the Amalfi Coast and Verona before moving to Milan. There she graduated in Art History and completed her studies with a Masters in Cinema, Television and New Media, specialising in documentary film. With *Tatiana*, a portrait of the Russian sculptor Tatiana Brodatch, she took part in the Filmmaker's Prospettive competition. The film was awarded at Chameleon Festival, Vertigo

Film Fest, Prisma. She is currently working on several projects, including a video art installation in collaboration with the Cinescatti archive in Bergamo. She was also assistant director in the production of a documentary about the photographer Natela Grigalashvili, shot in Georgia in July 2023.



Equilibri  
involontari  
LUCA PALLARO

A boy and a girl in an apartment in Milan. She seems caught up in the daily rituals of shopping and cooking, he in the anxiety of an important deadline: the audition for an acting school. He studies, responding with nervous jerks to the harmless question: “Shall we have lunch?”, he gets up and dramatically locks himself in his room. Is this a theatre scene? Or is the ‘image’ that encloses the gestures and the space between two people a possible staging of an experience? The film recounts this suspension of time, its shifts between disappointment, pain, perhaps even a little resentment towards oneself. Samuele, known as Sam, is the boy’s name when the moment of the exam arrives and he reacts to this failure by literally excluding his sister Giulia from the shared space. Then he seems lost, disoriented and at the same time attracted by a strange sound coming from underground. “We are external observers of internal processes and can only grasp their consequences. The point of view from which Sam’s life is observed seems to be that of the walls that surround her, wide and motionless, disinterested,” says the author in the director’s notes. So what are these ‘involuntary balances’ that the film’s title evokes? A search for the self, whose narrative the author constructs by remaining precisely on the threshold of emotions and moods. They are layered and at the same time remain mute, unable to find a word with which to (self-)represent themselves, but instead become gestures, emotional wanderings, images and, above all, sounds. This sound environment, which contains the wavering, the anxiety, the sadness of something precious and very important, is this passage that is recorded, in the solitude of the boy with his mysteries and his inner processes, the full meaning of which no one, probably not even he, will be able to grasp clearly. In the play of reflexes, of an offscreen that disappears or is left to the viewer’s imagination, and of a presence in the field that does not explain everything, an existential moment is left to flare up, a fragment of life that is the possible beginning of infinite stories.

Cristina Piccino



BIOGRAPHY

Luca Pallaro (Brenno Useria, 2000) graduated in 2019 from the “A. Frattini” Art School in Varese with a degree in audiovisual and multimedia, and then continued his film studies at the Michelangelo Antonioni Film Institute in Busto Arsizio. During the Academy he had the opportunity to work mainly as director of photography and

cameraman for various independent short films, light&grip for commercials, short films and independent films. In 2023 he took part in the development workshop “In Progress” organised by Milano Film Network. *Equilibri involontari* is his graduation project and his first short film.

Italy | 2023  
4K | Colour | 23’ | O.V. Italian

Director  
LUCA PALLARO

Cinematography  
CHIARA TENCONI

Editing  
LICIA CAMPION

Producer  
LUCA PALLARO

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LUCAPALLA00@GMAIL.COM



Eschaton Ad  
ANDREA  
GATOPOULOS

Italy | 2023  
2K | Colour and B/W | 8’  
O.V. English

Director  
ANDREA GATOPOULOS

Screenplay  
ANDREA GATOPOULOS

Cinematography  
ANDREA GATOPOULOS

Editing  
ANDREA GATOPOULOS

Sound  
TOMMASO BARBARO – FULLCODE

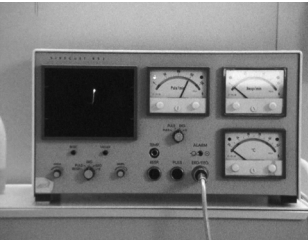
Production  
IL VARCO CINEMA  
NAFFINTUSI  
POLITTICO

Producers  
MARCO CRISPANO  
ORAZIO GUARINO  
MARCO SANTORO  
GIORGIO CALOGERO

Contacts  
ADMINISTRATION@GARGANTUAFILM.IT

Is the end near or has it already come? *Eschaton Ad* is a seismograph of great transformations, cataclysms that affect the life of the planet as well as creativity. A trip to the mountains, an afternoon spent playing, the multifaceted expression of nature - black and white images of another era, idyllic memories that will soon become something else. But not without an abrupt “reality bath” (but what reality?) to interrupt the flow: this may be the last movie made by a human being, soon artificial intelligence will allow everyone to be an artist effortlessly. Boutade, unraveling or paranoia? Meanwhile, the movie takes the turn of an apocalyptic tale, as if it had already foreseen its own end. The images follow one another with tight editing, they come from the archives of RSI (Swiss Radio and Television), *Eschaton Ad* was actually made as part of the “Find a film!” workshop led by Radu Jude at the Locarno Festival. Between man and AI, the movie is a twilight dance - can machines imagine the beginning and the end of life? The movie does not give an answer, but it puts our state of existence on the stage and reminds us that we may be living these “last days” or that they were lived long ago.

Lucrezia Ercolani



BIOGRAPHY

Andrea Gatopoulos (Pescara, 1994) is a producer, director and distributor. He founded the production company Il Varco and is the artistic director of Il Varco - International Short Film Festival; he also founded the monthly Short Days in Rome, the “Nuovo Cinema d’Abruzzo” screenings in Pescara and the film distribution company Gargantua Film. His productions have been screened at numerous festivals around the world, including

Cannes Fortnight, Venice International Critics’ Week, Camerimage, Rotterdam, Sarajevo and Seminci. In 2020 he worked with Werner Herzog on his film *Accelerator* in Leticia, Colombia, where he developed the filmed correspondence *Lettere a Herzog*. His latest short film, *Happy New Year, Jim* (2022), was presented at the 54th Cinéastes Fortnight and then at Filmmaker Festival.



Falterona  
GIULIO MELANI

A family spends the summer in their home in mountains. The passing of the days is interrupted by an event that interweaves past and present: a letter from a foreign bank promising a large inheritance, which turns out to have been mysteriously withdrawn. The figure of the grandfather or ‘great father’ is thus evoked in many ways, in his weaknesses but also in his successes - it would be the horses he bred for racing that brought his fortune. A ‘treasure’ that immediately generates a hunt, inside and outside, in collective memories and in the meanders of the house. The 8mm film responds to this quest, to a past that fits into the present. Maps of beloved places are left behind - and then what? What if not images? “In *Falterona*, my family and I have tried to portray the truth and veracity of our history. We started with the figure of my grandfather Giuliano and from there, thanks to the father-daughter synergy and the memories of Alessandro and his mother, the film built itself. The search for the treasure coincided with the search for ourselves within the scene. Each sequence is stolen and constructed at the same time, as if I was director and spectator” says the director, emphasising the uncertain dimension between reality and fiction that constitutes the “rhythm” of the film.

Lucrezia Ercolani



BIOGRAPHY

Giulio Melani (Florence, 1995) is an illustrator, filmmaker and cinematographer. A son of art, he studied painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Florence. Driven by his passion for light, he became interested in the photographic and cinematic medium, to which he applied the chromatic and compositional sensibilities he had acquired as a painter. With his first short film, *Astronomer* (2019), he debuted in the Filmmaker Prospettive

competition, where he returned with *Dafne* (2020).

Italy | 2023  
HD | 8 mm | Colour | 36'  
O.V. Italian

Director  
GIULIO MELANI

Screenplay  
GIULIO MELANI

Cinematography  
GIULIO MELANI

Super8 Filming  
GIULIANO BARONTI  
IMPERIO BARONTI

Editing  
GIULIO MELANI

Sound  
GIULIO MELANI

Interpreters  
ALESSANDRO BARONTI  
BIANCA BARONTI  
DARIA BARONTI  
ILARIA CERBAI  
ROSA STEFANI

Musics  
NICOLA GURRIERI

Production  
UNA

Contacts  
INFO@GIULIOMELANI.COM



Jaima  
FRANCESCO PEREIRA

Western Sahara is the strip of land that was once a Spanish colony, illegally occupied by Morocco after the Spanish left, where the oppressed Sarahawi people have been waiting since 1975 to vote in the referendum for self-determination established by a UN resolution. One part of them lives in refugee camps in the Algerian desert, the other in the occupied territories on the Moroccan side, amidst isolation, unbearable weather conditions, repression, censorship, arrests and a constant violation of human rights. The two groups are also physically separated by the wall that Morocco began to build in 1980, fortifying it with bunkers and mines. It is a war - the clashes resumed in 2020 after an attempt at peace talks that Morocco continues to deny. But how to tell this reality today? The film tries to shift the point of view to an everyday dimension that contains moments of joy and that, in its ritual dimension, encapsulates the narrative of an oppressed, persecuted people driven from their land. In a “jaima” - the traditional tent of the Sarahawi - a woman offers three kinds of tea: the first is bitter like life, the second is sweet like love, and the third tastes like death. Each one hints at a possible story, is the voice and sign of a memory that defies erasure by making itself a sign of endurance over time.

Cristina Piccino



Switzerland | 2023  
4K | Colour | 19' | O.V. Arabic

Director  
FRANCESCO PEREIRA

Screenplay  
FRANCESCO PEREIRA

Cinematography  
NOEL SAAVEDRA

Editing  
LUCA HUSER

Sound  
DAVIDE LONDERO

Musics  
ENEA DI SALVO  
TARBA ABEIBU

Production  
CISA-COSERVATORIO  
INTERNAZIONALE DI SCIENZE  
AUDIOVISIVE  
EFA- ESCUELA DE FORMACIÒN  
AUDIOVISUAL  
ABIDIN KAID SALEH

Producers  
MARCO POLONI  
TIBA CHAGAF

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BIOGRAPHY

Francesco Pereira (Madrid, 2000), Spanish father, Italian mother, moved with his family to Switzerland when he was 10 years old. At the age of fourteen, he made a short film that was presented at the Swiss Youth Film Festival and has continued to explore film-making ever since. He is currently studying filmmaking at Cisa in Locarno. *Jaima* is his first movie.



The moving paintings in *Lacrime di terra* are compositions that weave multiple dimensions with a rhythm that envelops everything. The desolation of an abandoned village, Craco, in the Basilicata region - due to a violent landslide that struck it in the '60s - becomes tangible in the cracks that run through the houses, in the breaths of the wild animals that still live there. The authors move among empty houses, crumbling walls, observing interiors that still bear witness to a past human presence, such as clothes and objects left behind. They then choose to show a temporal counterpoint: in the archival images, there is the bustling of people, young and old, the work of the land, the everyday life. “The colors are emphasized to underline the value of the human trace left in abandoned places, especially with clothes and personal items. They take on an equally symbolic value, as they are complete, appearing faded and structured in gradients, like something that is about to go away but not completely,” write the directors. Everything is swept away by a natural event - but, one could argue, time would have eventually erased those faces anyway. Cinema then arrives “after” to give a new form to what remains, a poetic interpretation of the passage on this earth.

Lucrezia Ercolani



BIOGRAPHIES

Manuele Granelli (Milan, 2001) graduated from the Technical Institute I.T.S.O.S. in Milan with a focus on Cinema, Photography, and Graphics in 2020. Subsequently, he enrolled at the New Academy of Fine Arts (NABA) with a specialization in Media Design. During his school years, he developed some short films and experimental videos. Throughout the NABA three-year program, he worked on various projects, including short films, music videos, and multimedia installations. Ettore Rinaldi (Potenza, 2000) graduated from a classical high school in 2018. He

initially enrolled in Philosophy at Sapienza University in Rome and later transferred to the University of Basilicata, based in Potenza, without completing his degree. Driven by his passion for cinema and audiovisual arts, he joined the New Academy of Fine Arts (NABA) in Milan, where he is currently in his third year. He has created independent music videos, promotional spots, and self-produced short films. He is nearing the completion of his academic journey toward his thesis. Francesca Venzano (Genoa, 2001) obtained her classical high school diploma from

Lacrime di terra  
MANUELE GRANELLI,  
ETTORE RINALDI,  
FRANCESCA  
VENZANO

Italy | 2022  
4K | Colour | 13' | O.V. Italian

Directors  
MANUELE GRANELLI  
ETTORE RINALDI  
FRANCESCA VENZANO

Cinematography  
MANUELE GRANELLI  
ETTORE RINALDI  
FRANCESCA VENZANO

Editing  
ETTORE RINALDI

Production  
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ARTI

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/ma-tri-mò-nio/  
GAIA SIRIA MELONI

Italy | 2023  
HD | Colour, B/W | 20' | O.V. Italian

Director  
GAIA SIRIA MELONI

Cinematography  
GAIA SIRIA MELONI

Editing  
JACOPO BENINI

Production  
PREMIO ZAVATTINI – ARCHIVIO  
AUDIOVISIVO DEL MOVIMENTO  
OPERAIO E DEMOCRATICO

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Three women, three generations, three lives that span the decades between the last century and the current millennium. Three different lives, sometimes in conflict, yet close. What is it that unites them? What is it that makes them intertwine, that makes each of them leave traces in the other? Mirella is a child in the post-war period, she knows hunger and grows up quickly. She works, falls in love once, gets married a second time. With Luigi, her husband, she will have five children. There are memories of photographs, her own, when she was not yet a wife and mother, and those with the children, from black and white to colour. Assunta is her first child, she is rebellious from childhood, she dreams of escaping, of being free; as soon as she can, she leaves, she even changes her name, she becomes Alessandra. She too marries, smiles happily in her films, she too has a little girl: Gaia Siria, the director. “For as long as I can remember, I have always been drawn to boxes of family photos, home movies, letters, silent memories that spoke to me. But what is unique in each of our lives that can be meaningful ‘beyond us’?” says the author in her director’s notes. Following this family line of mother-daughter-granddaughter, the author constructs a narrative that is both a search for ‘personal’ and collective memory. And it’s about the feminine in its relationships, in its escapes and returns, in the constant search for a place in Italian society and in the (tight) web of its laws that determine everyone’s existence. These are fragments of struggles, of choices, of conquests, of research. Something that remains and is passed on, that questions the legacy of gestures and words in the bonds of affection and in the search for one’s own history in which to find oneself.

Cristina Piccino



BIOGRAPHY

Gaia Siria Meloni (Rome, 1990) is a director and cultural worker at Cinema Mundi Coop Onlus, which runs the Aquila cinema in Rome since 2018. She curated the documentary selection of the Tulipano Nero festival. She graduated in Sociology from the Sapienza University of Rome and attended the Civica Scuola di Cinema Luchino Visconti in Milan. Her graduation short film at the Civica, *Senza negazione* (2019), made with Elisa Baccolo and

Giacomo Riillo, participated in several film festivals and won awards. He worked as assistant director and archival researcher for *Romanzo Radicale* (2021) by Mimmo Calopresti. With */ma-tri-mò-nio/* he won the 2022-23 edition of the Zavattini Prize.



## Quello che non posso fare ILARIA SCARCELLA

Italy | 2023  
Full HD | Colour | 16' | O.V. Italian

Director  
ILARIA SCARCELLA

Cinematography  
ILARIA SCARCELLA

Editing  
ILARIA SCARCELLA

Production  
ILARIA SCARCELLA

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ILARIASCARCELLA95@GMAIL.COM

A relationship between mother and daughter, where worlds with undisclosed secrets collide, and, above all, different ways of facing life. With a humorous touch, Ilaria Scarcella brings to life a film project of which she is clear only about the destination, not so much about the journey. Shot in a disorderly manner, the story found its identity in the editing phase, where thoughts are concentrated and clarified. The bond between this mother and daughter fractured about a decade ago, and in front of the camera, in a kitchen —“the place where everything happens”—the attempt to find reconciliation takes shape. Not a dialogue between mother and daughter, but simply a daughter asking questions, trying to understand things that were never clear to her. The mother has no questions—is it so?—but she is too afraid to know the answers.

Photos, food, old footage, stories about how the relationship between the parents began, the first wedding night—the author not only seeks to understand what the mother is, her sensitivity, her desires but, above all, to understand the origins of herself through this narrative.

Antonio Pezzuto



## BIOGRAPHY

Ilaria Scarcella (Milan, 1995), after completing a bachelor's degree in Cultural Heritage, specializes at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts. She collaborates with the magazine Filmidee and participates in the Grandi Speranze residency at the Locarno Film Festival. Following her specialization in post-production, she works as a video editor for a communication agency. *Quello che non posso fare* is her directorial debut.



## San Damiano GREGORIO SASSOLI, ALEJANDRO CIFUENTES

Italy | 2023  
2K | Colore | 15' | O.V. Italian

Directors  
GREGORIO SASSOLI  
ALEJANDRO CIFUENTES

Cinematography  
GREGORIO SASSOLI  
ALEJANDRO CIFUENTES

Editing  
ALEJANDRO CIFUENTES

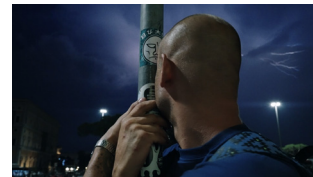
Sound Editing  
MICHELE BARONI  
MATTEO EUSEPI

Production  
RED SPARROW

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Who is Damiano, a god or a devil? Polish, he lives in Rome, in the Termini station area, in the streets inhabited by the many homeless who spend their time there, seeking a shelter, a reference point, people who have somehow built their refuge there. But he has managed to climb to the top, he has conquered the tower on the Aurelian walls that flank the station, from where the landscape of Rome seems to stretch out into an infinite horizon. In front of the camera, Damiano stages his character, singing, dancing, shouting, attracting the attention of everyone who crosses his path. He is provocative and friendly at the same time, he takes pictures of the tourists in St Peter's Square and teases them gallantly, he jokes and laughs, he shouts at the cars passing by asking to find him a husband: 'I'm a faggot! And then? With his tattoos, he writes the story of his life: prison, violence, a wrong move (or several). The friend who will stay forever on his skin, who died in an accident 'because of me', but who forgave him from the other side. The choice to steal, because for someone like him, coming from a foreign country without money or a mobile phone, there is no alternative. What is his truth, then, and where should we look for it? Perhaps in the words of his songs, which speak of loneliness and fragility, of nameless pain, of memories too heavy to face. "Damiano is a child. A child who deceives himself and others in order to play with the world. Damiano is a cheat who is always cheated, a traitor who is betrayed, a thief who is robbed. Damiano is both a perpetrator and a victim, he is both mocked and scorned" the directors say of him. On the fringes of a theatre that is the theatre of life, where he can find many ways to hide, Damiano becomes the protagonist of a hand-to-hand fight that questions the choice of filming and thus the role of the filmmaker. In this confrontation, he chooses to receive his enigma and his challenge in the fractures, in the fragments of an excessive, unrestrained movement, an almost endless exhibition; the silences that come from fear and the fragility are, then, the inseparable reverse shots.

Cristina Piccino



## BIOGRAPHY

Gregorio Sassoli (Bologna, 1989) studied film at NYU - Tisch School of the Arts in New York. After graduating, he worked on the sets of Paolo Sorrentino, Woody Allen and Roger Spottiswoode, among others. His first film as director and screenwriter is *The Wisdom Tooth/Il dente del giudizio* (2019), followed by *Il Provino* in 2022.

Between 2022 and 2023 he produced and directed *Futuri Probabili*, a series of 13 short documentaries for Fondazione Leonardo - civiltà delle macchine and Intesa Sanpaolo. He is currently working on his feature film *Asincronie*.

Alejandro Cifuentes (Milano, 1990), has

worked for the television production company Stand by Me and as a writer for several online newspapers, including Fondazione Leonardo - civiltà delle macchine. From 2018 to 2021 he worked for the television production company Corima as a junior author making *Forum*.



We are invited to believe that it is possible to rewrite our history, that healing is at hand, that happiness is not far away. Just imagine a happy ending and then try to film it, if not live it. What if little or nothing has changed? What if this presence, unwanted, uninvited, but now so familiar, continues to weigh on the body and mind? It is a gesture of rebellion against easy solutions, that of Giulia Visco Gilardi who, in *Tutto il mio corpo è stanco*, thematizes her relationship with depression. The images of a “failed movie” are burned, they are the ones in which evil was overcome, a “fairy tale” that in its falsity generated even more pain. For each image there is now a thought, it is a stream in which some words return, as in a spiral. Discourse has taken the place of narrative in a ritual that does not mean giving in, but rather opening the door to reality, in its harshness, but also in the possibility of coming to terms with it. Dialogue requires respect - and this film is a letter from the director to “her”, but also to all of us.

Lucrezia Ercolani



BIOGRAPHY

Giulia Visco Gilardi (1997) was born in Busto Arsizio. She studied video and audiovisual production at CFP Bauer in Milan and then documentary film at the Civica Scuola di Cinema Luchino Visconti in Milan. She works mainly with audiovisual experiments, exploring universally accessible themes from personal experiences, choosing sound as her central language.

Tutto il mio corpo  
è stanco  
GIULIA VISCO  
GILARDI

Italy | 2023  
HD | B/W | 9'  
O.V. Italian

Director  
GIULIA VISCO GILARDI

Screenplay  
GIULIA VISCO GILARDI

Cinematography  
GIULIA VISCO GILARDI

Editing  
GIULIA VISCO GILARDI

Sound  
GIULIA VISCO GILARDI

Production  
CIVICA SCUOLA DI CINEMA LUCHINO  
VISCONTI

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Cortile  
RICCARDO STABILINI

Summer, the Cremasque countryside. A time and a space are the perimeter, the “courtyard”, where young lives meet and spend their days together. Stabilini captures them in authentic moments of intimacy or in their interactions with the environment. Dalin is the girl who most often returns to the shots, a force field where balance is sought, a composition in which colour is a key expressive element. Recite the director’s notes: “The approach was to film most of the scenes without looking for them”. But it is not only the group of young people who appear in these “animated postcards”: there are also the farm machines and, above all, the animals, whose caged everyday life seems to contrast with that of the boys, although a “life in society” is also recognisable among them. Timeless natural cycles merge with hyper-contemporary codes: what are the fixed points and what are the historical transformations? How much does this world belong to the children, how far is it from their wishes? Summertime, in its suspension, tints the sky with a twilight atmosphere, and it is already nostalgia.

Lucrezia Ercolani



BIOGRAPHY

Riccardo Stabilini (Crema, 2001) lives and works in Izano (Isàa), in the Lower Po Valley of Cremona. He is a student of Art, where he studies the audiovisual and analyses its relationship with the contemporary visual

arts. His research is capable of translating into works the complex identity of the self in relation to the territory, through the documentation or recreation of familiar personal contexts, “as common as they

are precious”. He produces the soundtracks for his films.

Italy | 2022  
4K | Colour | 15’ | O.V. Italian

Director  
RICCARDO STABILINI

Cinematography  
RICCARDO STABILINI

Editing  
RICCARDO STABILINI

Sound  
RICCARDO STABILINI

Musics  
RICCARDO STABILINI

Production  
NABA, NUOVA ACCADEMIA DI BELLE  
ARTI DI MILANO

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Z.O.  
LORIS G. NESE

Z.O., the “eastern area” of Salerno, which has grown in speculation “chaotic, without services” until it has become a non-city. There live Biscotto, Banana and Bambolina - the latter is the voice of the narrator, Francesco Di Leo - three teenage children of organized crime families. “When I was 15, dangerous things made me feel good because they made me feel part of something,” says Bambolina. It is therefore a story in the past tense, in the distance of time, the late 1990s, which allows the protagonist to return to a painful experience and a caesura that determines the choices of his future. Of the three, Bambolina is the one considered weak, “the wimp”, his father is killed, he often takes the beatings of Biscotto, who is instead the leader, his father is in prison for murder. The three of them have a small refuge, “the cleb”, “where nothing existed”, that is, where there was no world outside: only the Playstation and Salernitana - which, however, falls to the second division. And then? One day some heavy fireworks appear, it seems like an accident and instead part of a plan: they blow them up in a factory, procurement problems - “I didn’t understand anything about it”. But the plan goes wrong, the police arrive, in the stampede Bambolina’s anger attacks Biscotto, and something happens that will change everything. Forever. Nese returns to his own autobiography - he also comes from the same area of Salerno and has a family history close to that of his characters - and transforms the personal experience into a collective narrative, concerning the experiences of individuals and of the entire city as it evolves. The use of animation with the rotoscope technique, to which archival material and photographs are mixed, makes this relationship even more powerful: it is on the verge of a dialog between reality and its staging, in that grain that becomes history, past and present of a country and its never healed contradictions: our own.

Cristina Piccino



BIOGRAPHY

Loris G. Nese (Salerno, 1991) debuted in 2019 with *Quelle brutte cose*, a portrait of a daughter unable to rebel against the burden of family upbringing. It was followed by *Malumore* (2020), the story of a neighborhood “besieged” by a negative feeling, and in 2021 by *Il turno* (co-written with Chiara Marotta). His works have been presented and awarded in numerous Italian and international festivals, from Sic - Settimana Internazionale della Critica in

Venice to Sundance. He is the author of video clips, works for documentary series and has produced audiovisual projects for museums.

Italy | 2023  
2K | Colour, B/W | 14’ | O.V. Italian

Director  
LORIS G. NESE

Screenplay  
LORIS G. NESE

Editing  
CHIARA MAROTTA

Sound  
DAVIDE MARESCA

Interpreters  
FRANCESCO DI LEVA  
TANCREDI MAROTTA  
LORENZO FILOSA  
FRANCESCO CIFELLI

Narrator  
FRANCESCO DI LEVA

Production  
LAPAZIO FILM

Producer  
CHIARA MAROTTA

Contacts  
LAPAZIOFILM@GMAIL.COM

# OUT OF COMPETITION

**BENVENUTI IN GALERA**

Michele Rho

**CHUTZPAH - QUALCOSA SUL PUDORE**

Luca Ciriello

**LA MISURA DEL CORAGGIO**

Bruno Bigoni, Gruppo Maelstrom

**LE MURA DI BERGAMO**

Stefano Savona

**LOVANO SUPREME**

Franco Maresco

**NOTRE CORPS**

Claire Simon

**ORLANDO, MA BIOGRAPHIE POLITIQUE**

Paul B. Preciado

**SCONOSCIUTI PURI**

Valentina Cicogna, Mattia Colombo

**SPARTA**

Ulrich Seidl

# Benvenuti In Galera

## MICHELE RHO

The dedicated website welcomes visitors with the following: “InGalera Bollate, the most gourmet prison restaurant in Italy”. It all began in 2005 with an idea by Silvia Polleri, already an entrepreneur in the restaurant business, who wanted to take on a new challenge: to open a restaurant inside a prison, that of Bollate in Milan, considered one of the most avant-garde Italian penitentiaries. The aim is to create an integration project that will give the inmates a new opportunity to work, training them both in the kitchen and in table service. Nothing is taken for granted: the menu and the wine list are carefully selected, the setting is simple and elegant, and the success is such that you have to book several weeks in advance to dine in the evening. But the movie is not only the story of the restaurant, what its creator tries to do is to narrate the daily routine of the work, its constant challenges, big and small, the gestures that are behind what welcomes the enthusiastic public there every day. There is the great chef with his imagination and his moments, sometimes a bit “dark”, sometimes playful in duets with Polleri about the choices and the organization of the day. Almost maniacal in his perfection, like a shaman of flavors, he handles the ingredients and directs their combinations behind the stove, ready to become impatient if the pace suffers any setbacks. Between the selection of the menu, the tasks of ordering food, the kitchen, the lunch and dinner room - everything has to work perfectly, the customers must never leave disappointed - the expectations of the inmates who work in the restaurant intersect, the hope to continue even when they are “outside” thanks to their newly acquired skills with the desire to leave the past behind. But this space also allows the “outside” to have a different approach to the reality of the prison, perhaps creating a new dimension of encounter.



### BIOGRAPHY

Michele Rho (Milan, 1976) is a director, screenwriter and producer. He graduated from the Paolo Grassi School of Dramatic Art in Milan and studied film at Columbia University in New York. His work moves between film, theater, television and commercials. In 2006 he participated in the collective film *Bambini* with Peter Marcias, Alessio Federici, Andrea Burrafato. *Cavalli* (2001), his first feature film, was presented at the Venice Film Festival in the

Controcampo section. In 2017 he made *Mexico! Un cinema alla riscossa*, dedicated to the single-screen cinema of Milan and to Antonio Sancassani, who has run it independently for 30 years, taking care of every detail.

Italy | 2023  
HD | Colour | 73' | O.V. Italian

Direction  
MICHELE RHO

Screenplay  
MICHELE RHO

Cinematography  
PATRIZIO SACCÒ

Editing  
WALTER MAROCCHI

Musics  
DARIO MOROLDO

Production  
WEROCK

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## A challenge between “inside and outside”

Cristina Piccino

*In Galera* is not just the story of the first restaurant opened in a prison, which over the years has become one of the most famous in Italy. Or of its tireless coordinator, Silvia Polleri, who started this adventure in Milan's Bollate prison in 2013. Or the inmates who work there every day, from the kitchen to the dining room, in uniform, trained to ensure quality in every area. Everyone is talking about them, “even the New York Times”, says Polleri proudly. In the evenings, the customers who crowd in are won over by the chatter, by the familiar - but always discreet - way of welcoming people. On the walls, with a touch of irony, are posters of ‘theme’ films, from *Escape from Alcatraz* to *The green mile*.

In the kitchen, Davide, the chef who studied at the school of Gualtiero Marchesi, sets the pace for the work, which starts early in the morning with the shopping, and he already swears for delays, gets angry, teases, he is rough, direct and very good at giving each person their role and their time, almost as if it were a score. We talk about the price of asparagus, ‘30 euros a kilo’; we joke, it’s Tuesday, the week starts again, there are desserts to make, reservations to manage, the room to clean.

For those who are there, work is much more than a job, it becomes almost a symbolic and concrete dimension of the possibility of starting again ‘inside’ and ‘outside’, two spatial references loaded with meaning. In what is considered to be the most advanced prison in Italy, thanks to the social integration projects for prisoners, where only 17% of prisoners return inside compared to 70% in other prisons, *In Galera* represents a joint bet on the present and the future. This is what the director tries to focus on with a “diary” in which the many characters who are his protagonists reaffirm their presence always in relation to this place and its time, almost an “edge” along which to re-signify their existence.

Between these fragments that unfold over the course of a day, Rho establishes a relationship that works on duration - he filmed for three years between the interruptions of the pandemic - and that allows him to move fluidly and, without “invading”, to give the word to those in front of the lens, where a different narrative of prison gradually takes shape. Without the effective rhetoric of the stereotypical images often used on this subject, his black and white of reality in abstraction constructs a reflection that questions our civil society on fundamental issues that are concentrated precisely in the opposition between inside/outside, between expectations, prejudices, opportunities to be built together. If Davide, who feels “old” even after several years, is still the cook with the passion necessary for his creativity, the others we meet in the film have gone out and are working. And still others will come to study, in search of a future (and a present) that can be different.



# Chutzpah - Qualcosa sul pudore

## MONICA STAMBRINI

A woman, the director, at a moment of transition in her own existence, the end of a love affair that suddenly calls into question all the others: the one with her parents, who separated when she was a child; the one with her two small children, mirrors of what she was like when she suffered the same separation; the one with the analyst, of whom she is no longer convinced, and above all the one with herself. A disorientation that drives her on a restless, chaotic search, full of humour and even a little “shameless”, as the Hebrew word chosen for the film’s title suggests. *Chutzpah*, in fact, means “shamelessness” and this is expressed in the images of the film - and the author’s “play” with them - shot in different formats over the years (ten), almost like a diary in which the different moments overlap in a search that questions the most secret intimacy and makes it, also thanks to this sharing, the narration of a life. “Mum, stop filming”, says one of the two sons on the beach. Instead, she films everything, even seemingly unimportant details. What do you look for in these fragments, where can you lose yourself again? These are questions that are never asked of the mother, who is still moved when she talks about her separation. “How did it feel not to be able to hold me?” asks Monica, referring to a back problem that prevented her from making a series of movements. Tears again. The father, from a working class family, the mother from the upper middle class, had given in to his era: the “open doors” - at home and in his own life - were those seventies of the freedom of love and bodies. Had it worked? There are no answers, only attempts at existence. She, Monica, “an efficient mother every other week and a wild teenager when she is alone”, moves gracefully despite her emotions, irony is her strength. Even in moments of sadness, she laughs a little at herself, with the bubbles of a glass of champagne. Meanwhile, the pictures become a story, they touch our being in the world. And in this ‘very private’ space, they manage to talk about each one of us.

Italy, Switzerland | 2023  
Different formats | Colour | 70’  
O.V. Italian

Director  
MONICA STAMBRINI

Cinematography  
MONICA STAMBRINI

Editing  
PAOLA FREDDI

Music  
DIANA TEJERA & ALTRI

Production  
A LITTLE CONFIDENCE SRL

Producers  
VALERIO ANTONINI  
RAFFAELLA MILAZZO  
PIETRO TORCOLINI

Co-production  
FRANCESCA SCALISI  
MARK OLEXA PER DOK MOBILE

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### BIOGRAPHY

Monica L. Stambirini (Mountain View, 1970) graduated from the Scuola Civica di Milano. Her short film *Sshhh...* won the Torino Film Festival in 1998. In 2002 she made the feature film *Benzina*, based on the novel of the same name by Elena Stancanelli, which was in competition at the Turin Film Festival and the Toronto Film Festival. In 2007 he made the television film *Terapia D'Urto*, an episode of the series *Crimini* for Rai2. In 2012 she took part in the Venice

and Rotterdam film festivals with *Sedia Elettrica*, the making of *Io&Te* by Bernardo Bertolucci. In 2014 she was one of the founders of *Le Ragazze del Porno*, a collective project of explicit art films by Italian female directors, for which she made the short film *Queen Kong* (2016). In 2018 she directed and produced *ISVN – Io sono Valentina Nappi*.

## Fragments of Life

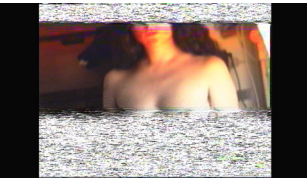
Antonio Pezzuto

The story of a moment in the journey of a lifetime. A very long moment. It took Monica Stambirini almost ten years to make this film, which focuses on a fragment that encompasses others: her problematic relationship with her parents, who separated when she was very young; her children, who grew up; her partner, with whom she celebrated a separation; the psychologist, who fought tooth and nail against the taping of her sessions; friends and lovers. Just one moment, because in life there are no breaks, only events that follow one another.

Chutzpah is a Hebrew word that can be translated as shamelessness, impertinence, but which over the years has also taken on a more positive connotation in American English. In fact, chutzpah also means audacity, and audacity is the attempt to transform a personal experience, born in a moment of existential and professional crisis, into an artistic project that can involve anyone who looks at it.

So it was born out of an intimate need, this film, and it was born ten years ago, when Instagram (and other social networks) had not yet overturned the canons of representation of intimacy. Ten years spent collecting the material she shot every day, then reworking it with Paola Freddi, her accomplice editor, with whom the structure of the film we now see on the screen was slowly created. Ten years of revealing her present and her past. To push the boundaries of the private. Shameless images, from her early self-portraits, in which she plays with her own body, to the poignant ones in which she brings the camera close to the body of her elderly grandmother, in a kind of video clip of a poem by Patrizia Cavalli, which the poet has set to music with Diana Tejera.

This is not the first time that Monica Stambirini has started from herself and the relationships she builds in order to narrate the world and the world around her. From her very first short films in the 1990s, such as *Ambliopia* or *Monique Publique*, through *Benzina*, to the making of Bernardo Bertolucci’s *Io e te*, *Sedia elettrica* in 2012. Then the short films made with Patrizia Cavalli and the two films in which she directed Valentina Nappi, *Queen Kong* (2016) and *ISVN - I am Valentina Nappi* (2018), the result of her experience within the *Ragazze del Porno* (Porn Girls), a collective that sought to tell a different way, beyond boundaries, of narrating and looking at sexuality. And just as there is no leap in the narrative of a life, there is no leap in her confused and chaotic filmography. *Chutzpah* is another film that tries to look and be looked at by twisting the boundaries of modesty. This time she is joined by the camera, alcohol and psychotherapy. The leitmotif of an autobiography in the making. An autobiography that has no point of departure and no end, because life, as the film tells us, flows like a torrential and far from calm river, to which it is impossible to build banks.



# La misura del coraggio

## BRUNO BIGONI, GRUPPO MAELSTROM

Three young filmmakers have a film project to return to the history of the Resistance from the point of view of women, looking beyond the historical reconstruction to what is left of it today. They will be filming in Bussoleno, in the Susa Valley, and while they are working they will be filmed by another group of filmmakers, including Bruno Bigoni: it will not be the background of their film, but a film that will in turn tell of this creative process.

In this multiplication of narrative levels, the questions to be faced are also multiplied, concerning our time, its (possible) history, its past, what remains; and above all, the meaning of images, their nature. What defines the female gaze? The three girls struggle to reconcile “historical memory and individual memory” and, above all, to find their own place in this memory - even the word resistance seems distant. Where to look, what directions to take? There are the writings of Ada Prospero Gobetti, who was a partisan in these places, slowly interwoven with the voices of other women they meet, women who live in the valley and who, in their daily lives, develop new forms of resistance. There is the fight against the Tav construction sites, the Turin-Lyon high-speed railway and the destruction it is causing to the environment around it - because you have to respect and love the places you live in. “The No Tav movement has allowed us to rediscover a sense of community,” says Nicoletta Dosio, who was sentenced and imprisoned for her struggles in the No Tav movement - where she has been since the beginning. Other women help migrants crossing the border into France and resist the persecution they face. Each of these fragments is a possible story and confirms a cinema open to the world and not afraid to confront its conflicts.

Italy, Switzerland | 2023  
Different formats | Colour | 52'  
O.V. Italian

Directors  
GRUPPO MAELSTROM  
BRUNO BIGONI

Cinematography  
GRUPPO MAELSTROM

Editing  
GRUPPO MAELSTROM

Production  
ELECTRIC FILM

Producer  
BRUNO BIGONI

Interpreters  
CHIARA TOFFOLETTO  
CHIARA FERRETTI  
ANEK SPERANZA  
BRUNO BIGONI  
GRUPPO MAELSTROM

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### BIOGRAPHY

Bruno Bigoni (Milan, 1950) was one of the founders of the Teatro dell'Elfo in 1972 and one of the founders of Filmmaker in 1979. In 1983 he made his first film, *Live* (co-directed by Kiko Stella), and in 1987 he began his work in documentary filmmaking with *Nome di battaglia: Bruno*. In 1990, together with Minnie Ferrara and Kiko Stella, he founded the production and distribution company Minnie Ferrara & Associates. His films include *Veleno* (1993); *Faber* (1999) – with Romano Giuffrida; *Cuori all'assalto* (2003), *Chiamami Mara* (2005), *L'attimo assoluto* (2011); *Il colore del vento* (2012); *Sull'Anarchia* (2015); *Chi mi ha incontrato*,

*non mi ha visto* (2016); *My war is not over* (2017); *Voglio vivere senza vedermi* (2019) co-direction Francesca Lolli; *Cinque stanze* (2023).

Maelstrom Group  
It is a collective of young filmmakers from Lombardy and the Canton of Ticino who have recently graduated from various postgraduate courses in the audiovisual industry. It is formed by Pietro Repishti, Santiago Torresagasti, Antonio Frascella, Giada Cappa, Dino Hodic. The common situation of precariousness, the vertical and inaccessible dimension of the film

world, the absolute predominance of the commercial aspect over the artistic one, have led this group to collectivize their individual feelings into a reasoned critique of the audiovisual system and to imagine a different development of this profession. The form of self-organisation and mutual aid on which this experience is to be based aims, on the one hand, to rationalise certain aspects and contradictions of the Italian and Swiss film industry and, on the other, to develop personal and collective projects that would otherwise find it difficult to find space and to see themselves realised.

## The Alchemy of Cinema

Lucrezia Ercolani

To what extent can cinema capture life? This is just one of the questions that runs through *La misura del coraggio*. A film that contains many of them, starting with the mode of filming chosen: there are three girls, Chiara Toffoletto, Chiara Ferretti and Anek Speranza, whose research on women's partisan memory in the Valsusa area is at the centre of the project. And then there is another group who will be filmed as they move around the territory, talking to women and activists and discussing how to take the work forward. It is a radical questioning of the act of filming and the elements involved: the gaze, the camera. How do they influence the process? At times it seems that the truest and most intimate moments are inevitably condemned to remain outside. Your intervention changes the situation, a bit like Heisenberg's uncertainty principle. Failure is always around the corner, sometimes opportunities are missed, we do not go as deep as we would like. But there is another possibility, of alchemical rather than scientific origin, that of an enhanced life that only cinema makes possible.

This device evokes several ideas: the gaze is not neutral, we live in constructions and it seems impossible to observe ourselves “from individual to individual”; therefore a specific exploration of the female gaze is necessary. The story of Valsusa is told by women who have fought and continue to fight, starting with the diaries of Ada Prospero - Piero Gobetti's wife, who is remembered by her surname - who, after her husband's death, went to the valley with her young son to resist. Then there are today's resisters, like Nicoletta Dosio, who fight not only against the Tav, but also for a world in which the individual is less isolated than the production system would like him to be. A community that includes the environment, from the vegetable garden to the majestic mountains that surround the landscape. And then there is the Valsusa borderland, through which migrants pass on their way to France, crossings that never seem to end, and where the knowledge of other women is also developed in a land that has proved to be welcoming and supportive.

Despite all these themes, *La misura del coraggio* is not a thesis film. In fact, self-observation, understood as constant discovery and risk taking, remains central. The camera is a very useful medium for this, and Valsusa, a place characterised by the encounter of diversity during these years of struggle, becomes a place of the possible, where one can begin to “measure”: what happens when a scene is shot in a hurry? How does knowledge influence filming? How is a small camera perceived in comparison to a large one? Seemingly limited questions - which the three young directors address with a radical attitude of confrontation, almost a practice of “filmic self-awareness” - but necessary to complete this alchemical process so that cinema is.



# Le mura di Bergamo

## STEFANO SAVONA

“Three years ago, with a group of young filmmakers who had been my students at the CSC Documentary School in Palermo, we crossed a deserted Italy to arrive in Bergamo in the midst of an unprecedented crisis. On tiptoe, we began to film the lives of those who were trying to cope with the catastrophe that was overtaking us. Our bet was to testify the movements of a community of resistance”. (Stefano Savona) Thus *Le mura di Bergamo* was born, a film that allows the director from Palermo to continue his personal training with reality and the images that reality produces. But this is not a movie about Covid or the days of the pandemic, like so many that were shot in the closed spaces of houses or on terraces, in the numbing and unreal silence of our cities. Nor is it a movie about the recent past. In a way it is a science fiction movie, a movie about the future, as it searches for something that does not yet exist. In fact, what Savona's images try to construct, between the dream of the archive and a reality suddenly devoid of references, is the narrative of a community surprised by an unimaginable event and its attempt to cope with it by reinventing roles, rhythms and habits. Over the course of months, as things return to their “usual” aspect, this community dares to search for a common language to give a name to this experience. It is a bumpy and moving path, made up of small personal pieces that become collective. Isn't it the same in every story, in every trauma, in the fractures that bring us closer to a common feeling? Savona and his fellow young filmmakers soon learn to enter the cracks of “normality”, restoring its disorientation between comedy, emotion, humor, tears, laughter, sweetness; as it happens in every existence, in every life story.



### BIOGRAPHY

Stefano Savona (Palermo, 1969) began working as an independent photographer in 1995 after studying archaeology and anthropology in Rome. In 2000 he made *Sicillatunisia*, followed by *Un confine di specchi* (2002), about the cultural and historical ties between Sicily and Tunisia. With *Primavera in Kurdistan* (2006), shot among Kurdish guerrilla female fighters, he won the international SCAM prize at the Paris Cinéma du Reel festival and was

nominated for a David di Donatello. *Piombo fuso* (2009) won the Special Jury Prize at the Locarno Film Festival - where it was presented in the Cineasti del presente section - while *Palazzo delle Aquile* (2011) won the Grand Prix at the Cinéma du Reel. That same year, he made *Tahrir Liberation Square*, about the revolution in Egypt that would bring an end to the Mubarak regime. *La strada dei Samouni* (2018) was presented at the Cannes Cinéastes Fortnight,

Italy | 2023  
4K | Colour | 119' | O.V. Italian

Director  
STEFANO SAVONA

In collaboration with  
DANNY BIANCARDI  
SEBASTIANO CACEFFO  
ALESSANDRO DRUDI  
SILVIA MIOLA  
VIRGINIA NARDELLI  
BENEDETTA VALABREGA  
MARTA VIOLANTE

Screenplay  
STEFANO SAVONA

Cinematography  
STEFANO SAVONA

Editing  
FRANCESCA SOFIA ALLEGRA

Music  
GIULIA TAGLIAVIA

Producers  
ANDREA IERVOLINO  
MONIKA BACARDI  
FERDINANDO DELL'OMO

Production  
IERVOLINO&LADY BACARDI ENTERTAINMENT  
RAI CINEMA

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where it won the Oeil d'or for best documentary. *Le mura di Bergamo* was selected in the Encounters section of the Berlinale 2023.

## A narrative to be invented – Jury Films

Cristina Piccino

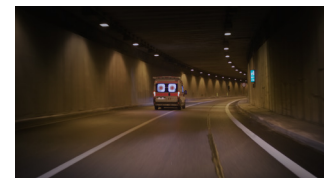
In March 2020, Stefano Savona arrives in Bergamo with a group of young filmmakers: Danny Biancardi, Sebastiano Caceffo, Alessandro Drudi, Silvia Miola, Virginia Nardelli, Benedetta Valabrega and Marta Violante. If the city “is a sick body within its walls”, the question for them as artists is to find a way to deal with the unexpected reality of the “pandemic”: what to film, how to build relationships in the loneliness of fear and death?

Savona listens - this is the “method” of his cinema - carefully to collective and individual emotions that seem impossible to define. The images take us back to a time that now seems distant: the procession of coffins crossing the city, which immediately became the site where the pandemic showed itself in its evidence, the deserted streets, the silence, the sound of ambulances. And the nights and days in the hospitals, the fatigue of the doctors and nurses, the sick bodies, the decisions that the caregivers are forced to take helplessly.

But *Le mura di Bergamo* is not simply a report of events that, through its images, now distant in time, reveals a different depth. On the contrary, the film constructs a kind of memory of the pandemic that has been declined to the present; a memory that is fragmented, very partial, differentiated according to each person's experience. To do this, it creates three movements: the beginning, when, with courage and taking every risk, the crew begins to film what is happening; they do it with the right sensitivity, in the rooms and along the corridors of the hospitals, and they film the everyday life of those who are outside for reasons of common needs. The second movement enters the Covid hotels, where the survivors cannot find the words to tell their stories, to speak of the sense of guilt for having survived, guilt that is stronger than the relief. There are a few characters that we see in different moments, among them a young woman from the funeral parlor who tries to bury all the dead, an impossible deed, while her father is ill and she looks after every beat and breath of him.

In the third movement, some of the characters have decided to meet regularly in a garden close to the walls of Bergamo to give new meaning to the words of a common narrative; a small starting point through which to name trauma. Their conversations don't mention institutions, criticism, confused emergency management, placing feelings, disorientation and fragility at the center. And from an intimate experience they form a political and collective discourse in which people can recognize themselves, to address what has been removed in the general perception.

The relationship between the individual and the community is one of the fundamental references in Savona's cinema, whether we compare it with the revolution in Egypt (*Piazza Tahir*) or the occupation of a building in Palermo (*Palazzo delle Aquile*). The participants are moved by those confessions devoid of rhetoric, by taking part in a collective action and drawing a possible space in which they can recognize each other.



# Lovano Supreme

## FRANCO MARESCO

A saxophonist wanders through an empty auditorium, cicadas sing, then he starts to play. So begins *Lovano Supreme*, Franco Maresco's diaristic homage to the American musician Joe Lovano, of Sicilian origin, as we soon discover. Lovano's arrival on the island, organised on the occasion of a concert in Palermo, also takes on the meaning of a discovery of roots. His contact with relatives he had never seen before and with the inhabitants of the two small towns in the Nebrodi mountains from which the Lovano family had emigrated is marked by grotesque emotions: we are still in a Maresco film. But there is a generosity in the musician - an attitude that perhaps stems from his admiration for John Coltrane, whose artistic quest went hand in hand with his spiritual one - that really allows us to meet young and old who play with passion in the Sicilian hinterland. In the saxophonist's tribute to Coltrane and the history of jazz, music becomes both a means of exaltation and of sharing, from the events at the historic Village Vanguard venue in New York to the experience of the bands that still exist in the local Italian reality. *Lovano Supreme* is thus one of Franco Maresco's least gloomy films, one could almost say it sends a message of hope, thanks to the divine power of music, reflected in the Catholic religiosity that still inflames the hearts of the South.

### BIOGRAPHY

Franco Maresco (Palermo, 1958) began working as a satirical cartoonist and radio writer at a very young age. In 1980 he was one of the organisers of the Nuovo Brancaccio film club, which operated in one of the most mafia-ridden areas of the city. In 1986 he met Daniele Cipri and, after the first video experiments on Palermo's TVM, they created CINICO TV in 1989, one of the most revolutionary and offensive programmes in the history of Italian television. In the 1990s, the pair made two feature films that remain unique in contemporary Italian cinema for their innovative charge and fierce vision of the world: *Lo zio di Brooklyn* (1995) and *Totò che visse due volte* (1998). This was followed by *Il ritorno di Cagliostro* (2003) and the documentary *Come inguaiammo il cinema italiano, la vera storia di Franco e Ciccio*

(2005), both presented at the Venice Film Festival. Maresco then made his solo debut in 2010 with *Io sono Tony Scott. Ovvero, come l'Italia fece fuori il più grande clarinetista del jazz*, presented at the Locarno Film Festival. In 2014 he directed *Lucio*, written by his lifelong friend Franco Scaldati, who died the previous year, for the Teatro Stabile Biondo in Palermo. The documentary *Gli uomini di questa città io non li conosco* (2015) is also dedicated to the life and work of the playwright. In 2014 the film *Belluscone. Una storia siciliana* won the Orizzonti Prize at the Venice Film Festival, where in 2019 *La mafia non è più quello di una volta* won the Special Jury Prize.

Italy   2023	Director
2K   Colour e B/W   74'	FRANCO MARESCO
O.V. Italian and english	Co-director
	GERMANO MACCIONI
	Screenplay
	FRANCO MARESCO
	FRANCESCO GUTTUSO
	GERMANO MACCIONI
	Cinematography
	ANDREA JOSÉ DI PASQUALE
	TOMMASO LUSENA DE SARMIENTO
	Editing
	FRANCESCO GUTTUSO
	EDOARDO MORABITO
	Sound
	CARLO PURPURA
	LUCA BERTOLIN
	Interpreters
	JOE LOVANO
	RAVI COLTRANE
	SALVATORE BONAFEDE
	MARCELLO PELLITTERI
	PIETRO CIANCAGLINI
	Production
	QOOMOON
	ASSOCIAZIONE LUMPEN
	ELIOFILM
	Producers
	LUCA SCARABELLI
	ANDREA JOSÉ DI PASQUALE
	LEANDO PICARELLA
	FRANCESCO GUTTUSO
	UGO POLIZZI
	FEDERICO MARESCO
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## Happiness of Cinema

Luca Mosso

A man with a saxophone case slung over his shoulder enters a large open-air arena, Palermo's Teatro di Verdura, alone. He is Joe Lovano, a Sicilian-American jazz musician whom Franco Maresco has invited to Palermo in 2017 for a concert in honour of John Coltrane on the 50th anniversary of his death. "Lovano" explains the director "is one of the greatest living tenor saxophonists, the musician best suited to celebrate one of the musical geniuses of the 20th century, as well as a great innovator of the jazz saxophone in the years between 1958, when he played in Miles Davis's sextet, and 1967, when he recorded *Expressions*, a few months before his death". It is interesting to note that Lovano, born in 1955, never had the opportunity to meet Coltrane, nor to play with him, and the unconditional passion for his music is a long-distance love, mediated through listening to records and the testimony of others. There is the account of a legendary jam session with his father, also a musician, the professional relationship with those who had played with Coltrane, such as Elvin Jones, Rashid Ali and Reggie Workman. And then his affection for Ravi, Coltrane's son, to whom he says: "You are the one who should do this concert".

This subtly melancholy line, skilfully framed by excellent archive material and beautifully filmed live performances, withstands the tasty comic interludes generously offered by the journey to Alcara Li Fusi and Cesarò, the towns near Messina from where Lovano's parents come. A local TV news bulletin, with a falsetto narrator rattling off the essential news about Lovano, works just as well as the joke about the driver who, to Lovano's astonishment at recognising a scene from *The Godfather*, replies, "The Mafia isn't what it used to be". Coppola, B-series television and his own cinema are all elements of an imaginary landscape that Maresco complicitly shares with his audience: I'm still here, are you? is the implicit message he mockingly conveys. But when Lovano asks three young musicians about their musical passions, between a reception of tearful relatives and a chubby mayor offering him citizenship, the tone quickly turns serious. "Max Roach ignited my passion for drums" says one of them. And after a quick listen to their drumming, he replies: "You need to listen to Max Roach more!"

The choice of masters to be inspired by, the ability to listen, the quest for perfection are all expressions of a necessary drive, even if it is destined to remain unfulfilled, articulations of that original void on which Maresco builds the character of Lovano and which he triumphantly manages to fill with an unusual artistic gesture. *Lovano Supreme* is the means by which Lovano joins Coltrane, playing with him in a sequence of exemplary discretion, bridging a void and creating a vibrant experience that is as spiritual as it is concrete. Maresco asks cinema not just to reproduce, but to go beyond itself and become an act of the lives of the people it involves. "I want to give people something similar to happiness," said Coltrane. Maresco shares this intention and makes an extraordinary cinematographic gesture, a profound act of love that testifies to the vitality of an author capable of constantly relaunching his project in challenges as daring as they are necessary. A great film.



## Notre Corps CLAIRE SIMON

“Our body” is the body of women seen in different periods of life, from birth to old age, through adolescence and youth, conditions that in their singularity involve desire, self-discovery, motherhood, illness, care, death. A multiple body, then, that the author avoid trapping, escaping the codified representations of a secular culture of shame, oppression, commonplaces, silences that human society produces on it, in order to present it in a new perspective. An imperfect, magnificent, powerful body that is not patinated by what fashion dictates, but belongs to everyday life.

She recounts an existence through people from different countries and cultures, who express specific needs, including that of not wanting to recognise themselves in their body, but wanting to change their gender. In every word, in every look, in every fear, in every tenderness, the body tells of our time and the questions it raises. Claire Simon enters the gynecological department of the Tenon Hospital in Paris, where she spends several weeks filming. She does that so discreetly, observing women's bodies meticulously and lovingly, and if, on the one hand, she reveals a new form, perhaps more common in medical documentation - the microscopic images of in vitro fertilisation, those of an operation for endometriosis - on the other, she affirms how much this body, in its multiple declinations, provokes at the level of the symbolic.

Then, suddenly, the balance shifts again: the director herself steps in front of the camera and becomes a patient, discovering during the filming that she has cancer. She puts herself at risk by filming what concerns her with the same sincerity and modesty that had guided her gaze up to those moments, in the equality of care that excludes class and origin, in a collective self that is “our body”.

France | 2023  
2K | Colour | 168'  
O.V. French, English, Spanish

Director  
CLAIRE SIMON

Screenplay  
CLAIRE SIMON

Cinematography  
CLAIRE SIMON

Editing  
LUC FORVEILLE

Sound  
FLAVIA CORDEY

Production  
MADISON FILMS

Producer  
KRISTINA LARSEN

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### BIOGRAPHY

Claire Simon (London, 1955) came to directing through editing, and moved towards direct cinema after attending the Ateliers Varan. She established herself with *Récréations* (1993) and *Coûte que coûte* (1996), which marked an important transition to documentary cinema. In 1997, she made her first fiction film, *Sinon, oui*, followed by *800 Kilomètres de différence* (2000); *Mimi* (2002); *Ça brule* (2006), among others. In 2008, Le

*bureaux de Dieu*, starring Nathalie Baye, Nicole Garcia, Isabelle Carré and Michel Boujenah, won the SACD Grand Prix at the Cannes Directors' Fortnight. In the same year, Filmmaker dedicated the first Italian retrospective to her.

*Le concours* (2016) won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival for Best Cinema Documentary. With *Premières solitudes* (2008) she deals again with the life of young people, while in *Vous ne désirez que*

*moi* (2021) she tells the story of Marguerite Duras through the loving words of Yann Andréa.

## A Shared Knowledge on the Threshold

Alessandra Pigliaru

That Claire Simon's *Notre Corps* is a feminist film is clear from the first words the French director addresses to those who decide to watch what she calls “a mad waltz of destinies”. In fact, Simon's opportunity to work in the gynaecology department of the Tenon hospital in Paris comes from a meeting with another woman, producer Kristine Larsen, who tells her how she has been living with a rare disease for two years. And of the world of women that has opened up to her. In the corridors of the hospital, in the operating theatres, in the waiting rooms, in the simple consultations, Claire Simon's filmic gaze chooses a position between the quantitative and diverse narration of cases and the emotional description of experiences. This awareness, however, derives from an already established fact, namely that health, in this case women's health, is never a neutral discourse, but rather presents itself as a conjunction of histories in which the private and the political circulate, not only among like-minded people.

In this way it echoes what the Boston collective wrote in 1971 in the book *Our Bodies Ourselves* (Noi e il nostro corpo, Feltrinelli 1973) about embodied sexuality, reproductive justice - and the violence associated with it. If at that time it was a question of sharing critical knowledge, which came not only from the United States but also from Europe, and in France there was a desecrating uprising (think of the telluric force that greeted Luce Irigaray's *Speculum* in 1974), today Simon is not concerned with the obsessions of scientists, nor with proprietary claims on our bodies.

What emerges is rather a community of anonymous women dealing with abortion, endometriosis, female pleasure, but also with the transition to the diagnosis of cancer, pregnancy and childbirth, and so on. In direct contact, the time marked by the urgency of medicine and the sensitivity that slows down or intensifies words and understanding, the inside of one's own body - the silence of hands that touch a living pain - is mirrored on the outside, where, for example, activists demonstrate against obstetric and gynaecological violence.

In 2019, the Council of Europe passed a resolution that gender-based violence is to be considered violence, but what Claire Simon takes up is a gift of care that goes beyond the walls of a public hospital to point to what precedes and underpins it. One need only read the diaries of Audre Lorde or Carla Lonzi, or open *Im-patient. A feminist exploration of breast cancer* by Mounia El Kotni and Maëlle Sigonneau (published in Italy by Capovolte). There are our relationships and the materiality of our lives, including class differences, of which health and illness are a part. There are our bodies, and it is crucial to continue to tell about them with dedication.



## Orlando, ma biographie politique

### PAUL B. PRECIADO

A community speaks, presents itself to the camera, shares an experience. Each person is a different declination of 'Orlando', the character at the centre of Virginia Woolf's novel of the same name, who undergoes a sex change from male to female during a long sleep. For this trans community, the metamorphosis of the self has been far more complex and painful, the stigma remains strong and the obstacles many. It is on the acceptance of becoming, of transformation over time - one of the fundamental philosophical stakes of queer theory - that our societies still seem to have strong resistance. In his directorial debut, Paul B. Preciado interweaves his own personal story - from the young Beatriz growing up in a remote part of Spain, to his first dose of hormones in New York, to his choice of the name Paul - with the others. He also said that *Orlando, ma biographie politique* was born out of a rejected proposal from Arte to make a film about himself. In this collective, people of all ages, from children to the elderly, search for themselves, often mixing irony and justification. "You might be synthetic but you're not apologetic, you're not the doctor's bitch" is the refrain of the song Preciado created to sum up the struggle against the psychiatry of trans experience, immediately followed by a critique of psychoanalysis, from Freud to Lacan, which has tried to cage sexuality with explanations that inevitably sound like condemnations. But the struggle for self-determination also has a history - fiery archival footage appears in the second part of the film - just as every individual has one, to be respected, made their own and told in the present.

France | 2023  
4K | Colours, B/W | 98' | O.V. French

Director  
PAUL B. PRECIADO

Screenplay  
PAUL B. PRECIADO

Cinematography  
VICTOR ZEBO

Editing  
YOTAM BEN DAVID

Sound  
ARNO LEDOUX

Interpreters  
OSCAR-ROZA MILLER  
JANIS SAHRAOUI  
LIZ CHRISTIN  
ELIOS LEVY

Musics  
CLARA DESHAYES

Production  
LES FILMS DU POISSON  
24IMAGES  
ARTE FRANCE

Producers  
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#### BIOGRAPHY

Paul B. Preciado (Burgos, Spain, 1970) is one of the leading figures in the study of gender and body politics. As a curator, he has worked on documenta 14 (Kassel/ Athens), the Taiwanese Pavilion at the 58th Venice Biennale in 2019, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona (Macba). His books - from *Manifesto controsessuale* (2000) to *Dysphoria mundi* (2022) - are landmark works in contemporary queer, trans and non-binary thought and activism.

*Orlando, ma biographie politique* is his first film.

## Virginia Woolf, One of Us

Lucrezia Ercolani

"Contrary to what you thought, Virginia, Orlando was not alone". One of the picks of the first film by Paul B. Preciado, a fundamental philosopher of queer theory, is this: the collective and shared character of 'dysphoria mundi', that force that transforms individuals by displacing them from the axis 'predetermined' by binary law. This was not the case in Virginia Woolf's book, written almost a hundred years ago, in which young Orlando faced his sex change alone, with only his dog to keep him company.

It is therefore near and far from this 'foundational' novel of trans experience that the multiple correspondence addressed precisely to Virginia, at the centre of *Orlando, ma biographie politique*, develops. After all, the author was "one of us", she too a psychiatric patient, she too unhappy in the categories she always felt were too narrow. The struggle with the psychiatrist is just one of the ordeals that society imposes on 'Orlando', and Preciado recounts these obligatory passages in a continuous back and forth between testimony and staging, her memories intertwined with those of others, who take the floor and pronounce their names as if in a small ritual. The name is an example of what we did not choose and what we could change if we wanted to. From scalpels to the tools of poetry, operations on language are at the heart of this subversion, for our nature is that of 'discursive artefacts, assemblages of flesh and fiction'. And where there is fiction, reinvention is always possible, even if bureaucracy always tends to evade that possibility.

What is most frightening is the 'grey zone', not wanting to belong, not being able to define this or that. The uncertain must not exist. But isn't this precisely the game of the poetic word, its multi-semanticity, the cross-references that can't find a definitive order? The critique of binarism in this film uses a whole series of 'pop' stylistic devices, starting with the colour palette, and liberation also takes the form of a dance song, making *Orlando, ma biographie politique* Preciado's most accessible work - where his books delve into the history of Western thought and challenge the reader.

But the weapon of irony and "lightness" that this film uses is born on the terrain of powerful, painful experiences that resonate in the speeches of all the Orlandos, as they give themselves and themselves to the camera. It is this sharing that leaves its mark, gently questioning the foundations of our legal systems, the automatisms of which we are victims, the stereotyped images that imprison us. A new and more meaningful beauty is what we need, and if the trans experience has its own specificity to recognise, we are all Orlando, seeking each other in change, loving each other in our unpredictability, fighting for a liberation that includes the joy of bodies.



# Sconosciuti Puri

## VALENTINA CICOGNA, MATTIA COLOMBO

Cristina Cattaneo is a forensic pathologist and lecturer at the University of Milan. She is the director of Labanof, the Laboratory of Forensic Anthropology and Odontology, where every day she tries to give an identity to those “pure unknowns” who have lost it in death. It is an ethical issue, a right that must not be denied to anyone, and she fights for it every day.

But who are the “Pure Unknowns”? They are the homeless, people who live on the margins of society, young runaways and, in recent years, above all, migrants who die in the Mediterranean and are therefore destined to remain unknown. It was Cristina Cattaneo and her team who worked to identify the victims of the Lampedusa shipwrecks in 2013 and 2015 - she found the school report sewn into the jacket of a Malian boy who dreamed of a different future (there are many stories in her book *Naufraghi senza volto. Dare un nome alle vittime del Mediterraneo*) - cataloguing clothes, objects, so that the families of the disappeared can recognize their loved ones.

The film follows this daily struggle, which sometimes seems an impossible one, against the anonymity of loneliness and indifference, in a human and professional practice that puts our time at the centre. During the months of Covid, Cristina Cattaneo, at home and at a distance, confronts her team and continues her project with tenacity, lucidity and coherence: her bet, in which she succeeds, is to take it to the European Parliament, so that the right to a name is recognized and governments invest to provide the necessary means, starting with a European database where information can be shared with other countries. Aware as she is that caring for the dead is a way of caring for the living, filling a void over the fate of our loved ones, and at the same time to build a necessary collective consciousness with those people.



### BIOGRAPHY

Valentina Cicogna (Milan, 1984) is an editor, scriptwriter and director. She worked as assistant director and editor on *Napoli Piazza Municipio* (2000) by Bruno Oliviero, with whom she then collaborated on the screenplay for *La variabile umana* (2013). She edited, among others, *MM Milano Mafia* (2011) by Bruno Oliviero; *Comandante* (2014) by Enrico Maisto; *74 Miglia* (2009) by Laura Viezzoli; *Il passo* (2016) by Mattia Colombo, Francesco Ferri, Alessandra Locatelli. She was screenwriter and editor

for *La convocazione* (2017) by Enrico Maisto, and her latest works include *La scomparsa di mia madre* (2019) by Beniamino Barrese and *Brotherhood* (2021) by Francesco Montagner. *Sconosciuti Puri* is her first direction.

Mattia Colombo (Milan, 1982) made his debut with the short film *Il Velo*, which was shown in several international festivals. In 2014 he made *Alberi che camminano* (*Walking Trees*), co-written with Erri De

Italy, Switzerland, Sweden | 2023  
4K | Colour | 93'  
O.V. Italian, English

Directors  
VALENTINA CICOGNA  
MATTIA COLOMBO

Screenplay  
VALENTINA CICOGNA  
MATTIA COLOMBO

Editing  
VALENTINA CICOGNA

Sound  
SIMONE PAOLO OLIVERO  
PAOLO BENVENUTI

Music  
ZENO GABAGLIO

Production  
JUMP CUT  
AMKA FILMS PRODUCTIONS  
SISYFOS FILM PRODUCTION  
RSI

Producers  
SEBASTIANO LUCA INSINGA  
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Luca. With *Voglio dormire con te* (2015) he was a finalist at Filmmaker In Progress Lab and Premio Solinas and won the Premio Corso Salani. He then directed *Il Passo* (co-directed with Alessandra Locatelli and Francesco Ferri) and *Ritmo Sbilenco*, a documentary about Elio e le Storie Tese, a special event at the Rome Film Festival. In 2017 *Uninvited* will be followed by *B Heroes* (Yam112003) in 2021. Together with Gianluca Matarrese, he made *Il posto* (2022), a finalist at the David di Donatello Awards.

## A Denied Memory

Mazzino Montinari

Cristina Cattaneo is a professor and a forensic pathologist. She has set herself the task of identifying nameless corpses, called *Sconosciuti Puri* in the film's title. Restoring an identity to a naked body means not only establishing the death of a person, with all the consequences that such a certification entails, but also delivering to those who survive that person a history that would otherwise be lost in a grief that can never be authentically processed. It is therefore an act of justice for those who are no longer with us and, above all, for those who are still with us.

Cattaneo's work is equally nourished by theory and practice, by the study of a method that is constantly being updated and verified on the ground. In this willingness to search and hope to find, she is never alone. When she is not with her students or in the laboratory, she is speaking in public and on the phone, traveling from city to city, from classroom to classroom, trying to convince others of the urgency of what she is doing. There is no selfish motive in this incessant movement. She works for the community, for a multitude of people who have nothing directly to do with her.

Watching Mattia Colombo and Valentina Cicogna's film, we are reminded of classical studies. Memory leads to the figure of Antigone, to Sophocles' tragedy. Burying the dead, restoring their dignity, defying the rigid and inhuman laws of the State. It does not matter that Polynices betrayed Thebes. His body is now part of the lives of others and, as such, should not be the object of revenge or oblivion.

The clash between Antigone, who wants to bury her brother, and Creon, the king of Thebes, who strictly enforces the rules and tolerates no exceptions, is the example of a conflict between the private and the public, between family and State. In *Sconosciuti Puri*, however, Cattaneo does not represent a “religious” dimension; she does not ask for exceptions to a ritual. She fights to open everyone's eyes, to show the absurdity of blind closure.

“It is the opposite of what would happen in any other scenario caused by a humanitarian disaster” she says in one of her many speeches, “where we would use all our forces to identify these people. But that is not happening in this case. [...] We have to convince States and nations that it is necessary to identify these bodies and that this should be business as usual.” The Creons of our time, in their ruthlessness, seem similar to the rulers imagined by Liliana Cavani in *I cannibali*, not coincidentally a film inspired by Antigone. And if in that dystopian work the bodies were permanently exposed (burial was forbidden by law) as a warning and a form of contempt for those who dared to rebel, in *Sconosciuti Puri* the horror lies in the institutions that take away not only the lives of those pushed to the edge of the world, but also their history and their identity.



Sparta

ULRICH SEIDL

Ewald is a 40 year old man in crisis. He left Austria years ago to move to Romania, he has a girlfriend, her family seems to like him, he has a few friends, a job. But he is uncomfortable, unhappy, his relation with the girl is tense because, although she tries to seduce him, he seems less and less interested in sexuality. The only time he smiles is when he is playing with the neighborhood children or her grandchildren. He acts as if he were a child too, so much so that some people look at him with surprise. One day he decides to change everything: he leaves the city for the countryside, buys a school in ruin, turns it into a kind of fort, and starts a new existence. He will take care of the local children, children who come from poor, abusive families, abusive, alcoholic, naughty fathers. Ewald, instead, makes them play and practice sport, he tells them stories, he is kind; soon they spend more time there than at home. It is enough to raise suspicion and discontent in the village, while the man begins to focus on the truth he has always repressed: his pedophilic feelings. A realization that forces him to confront his own story and himself.



BIOGRAPHY

Ulrich Seidl (Vienna, 1952) has established, film after film, a radical and “disturbing” poetics and stylistic trait that can be seen in his very first works, made as a film student, such as *Einsvierzig* (1980) and *Der Ball* (1982) - presented at Filmmaker in the print restored by the Austrian Film Museum in 2016, as part of a focus on his work. After several documentaries - *Good News* (1990); *Tierische Liebe* (1995); *Models* (1998) - he made his feature film debut

with *Hundstage* (Canicola, 2001), which won the Special Jury Prize at the Venice Film Festival. *Import Export* (2007) is the first film the director has produced with the company he founded with Veronika Franz in 2003. This was followed by the “Paradise Trilogy,” consisting of *Paradise:Love* (2012), in competition at the Cannes Film Festival; *Paradise:Faith* (2012), Special Jury Prize in Venice; and *Paradise:Hope* (2013), presented at the Berlinale: three female

Austria, France, Germany | 2022  
HD | Colour | 99'  
O.V. German; Romanian

Director  
ULRICH SEIDL

Screenplay  
ULRICH SEIDL  
VERONIKA FRANZ

Cinematography  
WOLFGANG THALER  
SERAFIN SPITZER

Editing  
MONIKA WILLI

Interpreters  
GEORG FRIEDRICH  
FLORENTINA ELENA POP  
HANS-MICHAEL REHBERG

Producers  
PHILIPPE BOBER  
ULRICH SEIDL

Production  
SEIDL FILM PRODUKTION  
COPRODUCTION OFFICE  
ARTE FRANCE CINÉMA  
ESSENTIAL FILMPRODUKTION  
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portraits embodying three different forms of conflict between interiority and normality. In 2014 he made *Im Keller*, which was followed by *Safari* (2016) and *Rimini* (2022). In 2006, Filmmaker dedicated a retrospective to him, accompanied by the book *L'inferno visto da vicino. Il cinema di Ulrich Seidl*, curated by Luca Mosso and Gaia Giani.

The Two Sides of Guilt

Cristina Piccino

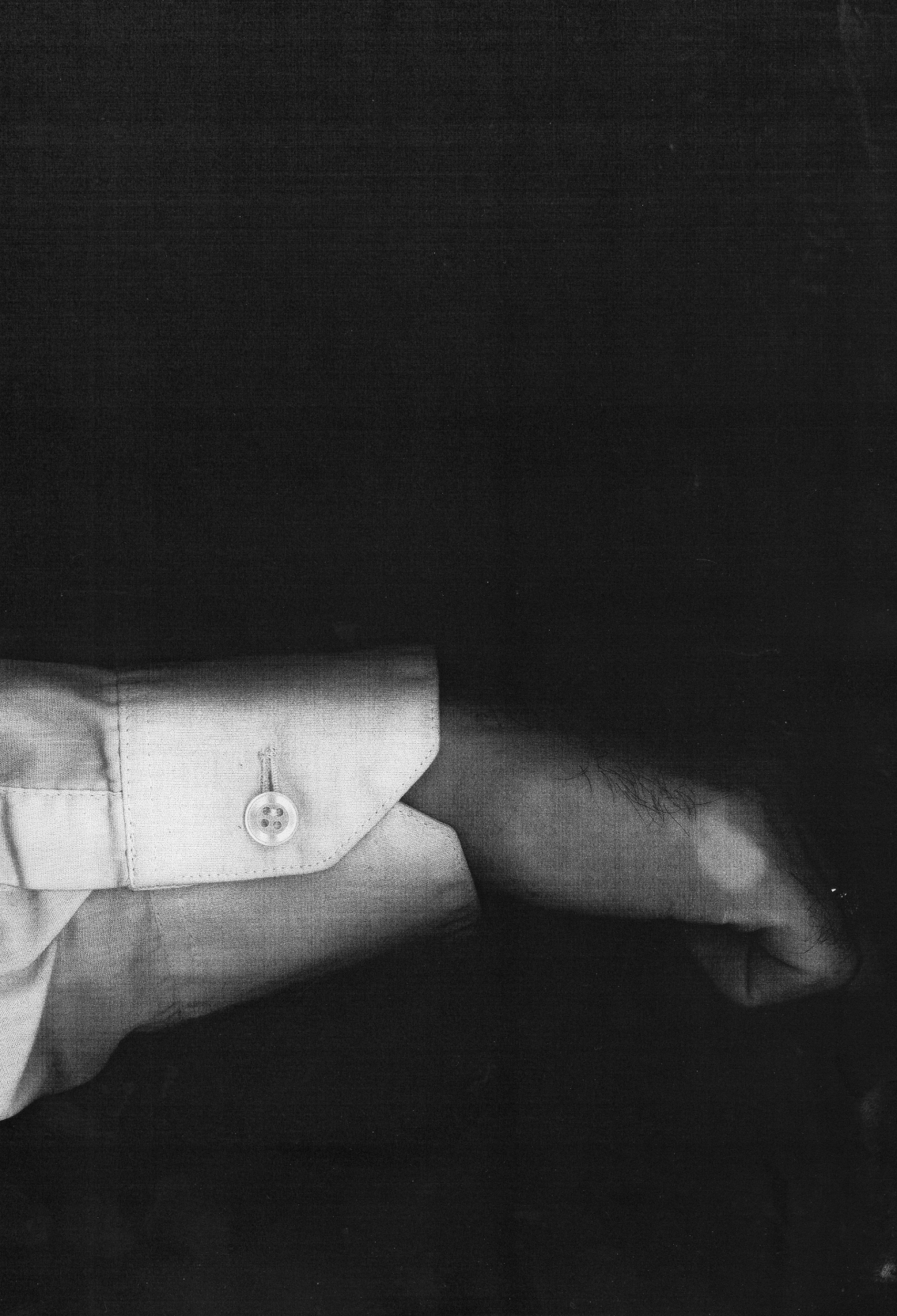
Conceived as a dark reverse-shot to *Rimini* (2022), with which it ideally forms a collective family story, *Sparta* shifts the focus from the singer Richie Bravo, the protagonist of that film, to his brother Ewald, an engineer who has left his native Austria to Romania. If Richie is a soul lost in the cynicism of his artistic failures, Ewald is even more devastated by what we sense was a childhood of violence, buried in the repressed past of his Nazi father – a past he shares with his country, Austria - and in a homely façade of basements and Christian manners to cover the cracks in their existence. The challenge that built up Seidl’s poetic since his first films is giving unfiltered form to subterranean impulses in gestures, faces, bodies, spaces and geometries. It is an archaeology of the human being, which, in revealing its survival, touches the most exposed nerves, the unspeakable embarrassments, the “secrets” that reveal what is normally covered by social taboos, public decency and deep fears.

The question he wants to ask is: can you be a victim and a persecutor at the same time? The answer is somehow implicit, but the path is complex, elusive, full of ambiguities that make this film perhaps the most ambitious in the Austrian director’s quest. Undoubtedly the most controversial - and therefore debated - but also the most successful in its uncompromising exploration of the darker side of human behaviour. Ewald, who - we understand - was an abused child, is attracted to children and sees himself as one of them. His attraction does not lead him to physical abuse; on the contrary, Ewald, though in precarious balance, fights his demons as best as he can. Until he decides to take over the premises of an abandoned school in the Romanian countryside, where he opens a judo gym that reminds of a summer camp. He calls it ‘SPARTA’, a name that echoes the national socialist mythologies inherited from his father’s upbringing. But what is he looking for there, in a marginality where he appears as the rich one, who can have it all, the representative of a coveted and at the same time hated European capitalism?

Seidl, who co-wrote the screenplay with Veronika Franz, chooses to construct his narrative in the most difficult way, which is not that of judgements - good/bad; good ones/bad ones; rather, he wonders (and asks us) what lies at the root of misery and violence, and he also wonders how much this affects the most celebrated institutions - family, homeland, etc. Confirming the consistency of his own artistic project, he follows Ewald and the boys, whose domestic humiliations are in a way a reflection of his, and whose fathers perhaps resemble his own. With this elusive man, they seem to enjoy themselves, above all some of them, those that - we find out - are abused, as if they sense the “secret” he is hiding. Along this border of mutual “recognition”, the director places what is not said and does not happen, but that at the same time is affirmed in the constant intertwining of these lives, without any judgement, but reproducing precisely the anxiety and perturbation that the figure of Ewald provokes. Will these children be as violent as their fathers? Or doomed to be as sick as they were? It is the social (and historical) power of family and patriarchy that Seidl targets, the indifference or complicity of a system that relies for its own survival on hypocrisy. He tries to expose that by taking the full risk in a work that is not afraid to look at the world with wide open eyes.



# YOUNG FILMMAKERS GROW



## PROCIDA

Cecilia Catani, Giorgia Ciraolo, Enrica Daniele, Valentina Esposito, Dario Fusco, Angela Giordano, Simone Grieco, Rebecca Gugliara, Ernesto Raimondi, Giorgia Ricciardiello, Nina Rossano, Lucia Senatore

## WELCOME TO PARADISE

Leonardo di Costanzo



Twelve boys and girls, one island, one cinema. This is the wager in the film made at the Atelier di Cinema del Reale for the Procida 2022 Cultural Capital. Guided by three tutors, Caterina Biasiucci, Claudia Brignone, Lea Dicursi, and under the supervision of Leonardo Di Costanzo, the group of very young filmmakers tried to construct a narrative of the place. But how to restore its meaning, identity, memory and presence in a limited space of time and considering that some of the filmmakers had never been there? They begin to explore the territory, evaluate the possibilities, considering the available tools. Relationships unravel the stories which, in their singularity, share a common space: the sea which surrounds the island, being its main beauty, its attraction, which affects the daily life of those who live there and, more sporadically, the life of those who visit the island on holiday. All of them, adults and children alike, refer to it as the “aquatic dimension”: it shapes reality, determines their habits, their mental landscape, their sentimental geography, their fantasies and gestures. There are diving champions and those who, like a French lady in Procida, return every year because they feel ‘at home’. The archives bring back images of more distant Italian holidays, in a collective game of mirrors. In front of the sea, someone recounts past experiences, when they used to work as sailors, or love stories that defied distance. An Englishwoman who was married to a Procidan, remembers how she secretly fled from home to get to Calais in order to see him. The black and white photographs show them, beautiful and young, hugging. He is now gone, she has stayed in Procida because everything there still makes her feel close to him. The boys run away, smiling, a little intimidated by the camera. “What do you do during the day? I go to the sea” they answer. What is this island then? It is the glimpses of beauty, the unseen secrets, the colourful facades, the gardens that open surprisingly behind the house doors. It is the energy of the inhabitants and the unavoidable love for the place. A face mirrors a face, an encounter leads to new discoveries with the joyful explosion of eyes that know how to open themselves to the wonder of cinema.

Cristina Piccino

BIOGRAPHIES

Caterina Biasiucci (Naples, 1995) made her directorial debut with the short film 668 (2014), followed by *Appunti sulla mia famiglia*, presented in competition at Filmmaker in 2017. She won the Zavattini Prize in 2020 and made *Il mare che non muore* - in the Filmmaker Prospettive competition in 2021. She was selected for the Locarno Spring Academy in 2022, where she made the short film *Limes*.

Claudia Brignone (Naples, 1985) made her documentary debut with *La malattia del desiderio* (2014). In the same year she

made *L'altalena* as part of the FILMAP project - Atelier del Cinema del Reale in Ponticelli. In 2015 she shot the short film *I sogni son desideri* and in 2017 *Il corridoio delle farfalle* (2017). In 2019 she shot *La Villa*, followed by *Tempo d'attesa* in 2023.

Lea Dicursi edited *Apertal pubblico* (2017) by Silvia Bellotti; *La villa* (2019) and *Tempo d'attesa* (2023) by Claudia Brignone. She is assistant director to Leonardo Di Costanzo in *L'intrusa* (2017) and *Ariaferma* (2021).

Procida

CECILIA CATANI, GIORGIA CIRAULO, ENRICA DANIELE, VALENTINA ESPOSITO, DARIO FUSCO, ANGELA GIORDANO, SIMONE GRIECO, REBECCA GUGLIARA, ERNESTO RAIMONDI, GIORGIA RICCIARDIELLO, NINA ROSSANO, LUCIA SENATORE

Italy | 2023  
2K | Colour | 68'  
O.V. Italiano, English

Directors  
CECILIA CATANI  
GIORGIA CIRAULO  
ENRICA DANIELE  
VALENTINA ESPOSITO  
DARIO FUSCO  
ANGELA GIORDANO  
SIMONE GRIECO  
REBECCA GUGLIARA  
ERNESTO RAIMONDI  
GIORGIA RICCIARDIELLO  
NINA ROSSANO  
LUCIA SENATORE

Pedagogical and artistic direction  
LEONARDO DI COSTANZO

Tutor direction  
CATERINA BIASIUCCI  
CLAUDIA BRIGNONE  
LEA DICURSI

Editing  
LEA DICURSI  
CLAUDIA BRIGNONE

Sound Design  
MARCO SAITTA

Production  
REGIONE CAMPANIA  
FONDAZIONE FILM COMMISSION  
REGIONE CAMPANIA  
PARALLELO 41 PRODUZIONI  
PROCIDA CAPITALE ITALIANA DELLA CULTURA 2022

Producer  
ANTONELLA DI NOCERA

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Exchange, recognition and closeness are sometimes made possible by conditions outside the norm, by a sudden change that one day occurs. Young Nadia, marginalized by the dominant group among her peers, meets a boy who belongs to it. Their attunement is made possible by the fact that they cannot see each other, because of his “imprisonment” which allows them to overcome prejudices and shyness. It is a “protected” capsule where the two meet for a short time, where words finally flow, where diversity is not a reason for ridicule, but a value. It is a role play we are supposed to take part in, where there is no final catharsis, as it often happens in life and perhaps less often on stage. But Di Costanzo's is first and foremost a gesture of transmission, in a tense battlefield where the young performers are requested to face their first cinematic experience. In fact, *Welcome to Paradise* was made within the framework of “Bottega XNL - Fare Cinema”, the advanced film training course of the Fare Cinema Foundation in Bobbio, chaired by Marco Bellocchio and directed by Paola Pedrazzini. Referring to the life of adolescents, the director said: “Perhaps this is what explains my interest in this world: to tell about human relationships at a time in life when they are less controlled and, although less defined, they show themselves with more evidence”.

Lucrezia Ercolani



BIOGRAPHY

Leonardo Di Costanzo (1958) moved to Paris after graduation, where he attended the Ateliers Varan seminars on film direction. He worked for French television and made several documentaries. In 1991, he participated in the collective work *Premières Vues* with the short film *In nome del Papa*. He joined the pedagogical team of the Ateliers and in 1994, together with the Cambodian filmmaker Rithy Panh, founded a training center for documentary filmmakers in Cambodia. In 2000, he created an Atelier Varan at the University of Bogotá. He directed *State Trials* (1998), about the determination of Luisa Bossa, a former high school principal who was elected mayor of Ercolano (Naples) after the judicial investigation “Mani Pulite” in 1995. In 2003, with a minimal crew, he

filmed an entire school year in a suburban school in Naples, creating *A scuola*, which was presented at the Venice Film Festival and received a David di Donatello nomination for best documentary. In 2006, with *Odessa*, he and co-director Bruno Oliviero won the prize for best direction at the fifth edition of the Infinity Festival in Alba. In 2012 he made his first feature film, *L'intervallo*, presented in Venice in the Orizzonti section, with which he won the David di Donatello for best first-time director and the Grand Prize of the Foreign Press at the 2013 Globi d'oro. *L'intrusa* (2017) was presented in Cannes Fortnight, while *Ariaferma* (2021), out of competition in Venice, won two David di Donatello (Best Actor for Silvio Orlando and Best Screenplay).

Welcome to Paradise

LEONARDO DI COSTANZO

Italy | 2023  
4K | Colour | 24'  
O.V. Italian

Director  
LEONARDO DI COSTANZO

Screenplay  
ALESSANDRA RUSSO

Cinematography  
LUAN AMELIO UJKAJ

Editing  
CARLOTTA CRISTIANI

Sound  
RICCARDO MILANO

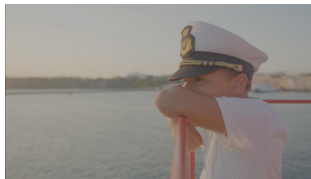
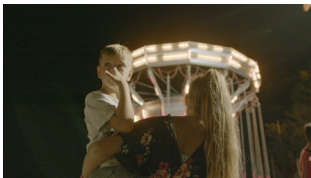
Interpreters  
MARTA CAMMI  
SOFIANE BAHARI  
GIORGIA RESTELLI

Musics  
PEPPE FRANA

Production  
MOMPRACEM  
RAI CINEMA  
FONDAZIONE FARE CINEMA

Producers  
PIER GIORGIO BELLOCCHIO  
CARLO MACCHITELLA  
MANETTI BROS.  
PAOLO DEL BROCCO  
PAOLA PEDRAZZINI

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## Guiding on the Cinema Journey Conversation with Leonardo Di Costanzo

Cristina Piccino

**Although in different contexts and in different ways, *Procida* and *Welcome to Paradise* are two examples of bringing young people to filmmaking. Teaching is a constant in your work, which proceeds almost parallel to directing and writing your films. What does it mean to you?**

More than teaching, I would say accompanying these girls and boys in the experience of a film. *Welcome to Paradise* was developed within the framework of Bottega XNL - Fare Cinema, the advanced film training of the Fondazione Fare Cinema in Bobbio. It is a very interesting model, interesting because it allows each person to develop and enrich their own skills in their own way. The young people are part of the crew and each of them settles in the department where they feel most comfortable. Marco Bellocchio has made a short film: he invites the boys and girls to see him at work and to take part. We worked on the script and a story was born: the actors, all in their first experience, interpreted it.

In the case of *Procida*, a film was to be made whose original purpose was to show the island in the year of its designation as European Capital of Culture. Many of the boys and girls who took part in the project were there for the first time, and this innocence and desire to discover the place became the starting point for building a narrative. Everyone went looking for stories, and I encouraged them to find their own way of observing, while maintaining fixed points in relation to the people and situations they were filming. Lea Dicursi and Claudia Brignone, the tutors of the project, together with Caterina Biasiucci, found a coherence in the editing by following these common traces: the focus on a reality and the experiences that were part of it. Accompanying such experiences is above all a pleasure for me. It is not an economic report, but a report of knowledge: I am interested in understanding where the gaze of the generations that will come after me will be directed. Without this curiosity, it is impossible to relate to the visions of others. In the case of *Procida*, we were confronted with blank pages, and accompanying them in their search for their world

and the way to tell it is a very interesting aspect of my work. It helps me to duplicate myself, to become my own coach, to ask myself the same questions that I ask them.

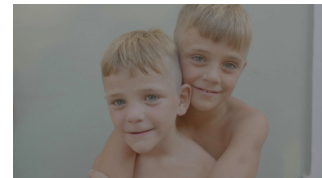
### How did you come to this teaching practice?

It all started with the experience of the Varan workshops. When I found myself in Colombia or Cambodia or Belgrade, in countries that were going through very dynamic phases, the fundamental question was to understand what image the people there wanted to give back of the place where they lived. The idea of the workshops is that it is they who tell the stories about themselves - following Godard's teaching in post-colonial Mozambique and Rouch's in Africa. We were to accompany them, we were to give them the tools, but what each film ultimately expressed was the research into the imaginary of the place. In Cambodia, for example, shadow theatre often entered the images. Our work with the ateliers was based on these materials; we worked together, we did not do it for them, but we shared the tools to realise the projects. Then you have to avoid dead ends and this is perhaps the most complicated aspect.

### What do you mean by 'dead ends' and how do you work on this aspect?

Teaching is not about telling them what to do or not to do, or solving problems for them. Rather, the beauty of this work is that even in projects that are very far from your vision of cinema, you can find an interesting clue. This position sometimes allows you to discover things about yourself; it shows you other ways of observing reality, of filming; it asks you questions and challenges certainties. And this is very important in terms of the research that I do for my stories, because it suggests to me the possibilities of perspectives that are not my own, but that exist and that in any case permeate time in which we live. That is why it is always exciting to follow the process of a project, to see the directions it takes, the changes it undergoes. It is difficult, it really does require constant listening, especially when you are confronted with those who are strongly opposed, and then it is a question of whether it is a possible genius or someone who is going to throw a spanner in the works.

It can also happen that the dialogue gets stuck or has to be completely reformulated. It is a constant game, a training that always allows you to learn something.



# FILMMAKER EXPANDED

## BLOODLESS

Gina Kim

## TEARLESS

Gina Kim

## COMFORTLESS

Gina Kim

## DEAR DIARY

Margherita Bergamo Meneghini

## KURSAAL

Davide Rapp

## NAPUL3

Omar Rashid

## POLY MESH

Banz & Bowinkel

## RECORDA ME

Emilia Gozzano

## SCRITTO A MANO (HANDWRITTEN)

Lui Avallos

## VR FREE

Milad Tangshir

OUT OF COMPETITION

## VAJONT

Iolanda Di Bonaventura

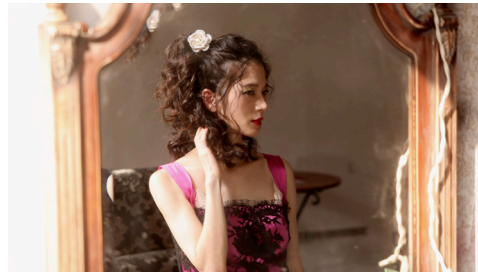


## Bloodless GINA KIM

Gina Kim's VR trilogy constitutes one of the most interesting examples of the documentary, witnessing and denunciatory power of the new medium. It is a fierce and intimate journey that aims to deconstruct a dual form of power and abuse (of men over women and of one population over another), which permeates the identity-less villages inhabited by sex workers destined for the American military bases that have occupied a large part of South Korean territory since the 1950s. Three immersive short films recount violence and abuse by catapulting the user into *medias res*, encountering events in their immediacy, without the aid of prior information or narrative synthesis. In the first short film, *Bloodless* (2017), we follow the last day of life of Yun Keum Yi, brutally murdered in 1992 by an American soldier on the night of Oct. 28, 1992 in the residential village of Dong-ducheon. We find ourselves stalking her footsteps among the neon lights of bars and nightclubs, in a no-place detached from History but not from its strategies of power. After an ellipsis, Gina Kim takes us back to a bare motel room, in which a body encased in sheets begins to spill blood. These are the shocking traces of murder, which we witness in retrospect from an impossible vantage point. Her not only to the strategies of identification and witnessing typical of documentary cinema, but also of immersive journalism, *Bloodless* takes us to the center of an event made invisible by the strategies of patriarchal and colonial power. Just as invisible and unaccountable is the posturing urban space created for the sexual subjugation of the U.S. military. Gina Kim shows it from an intimate and personal point of view, proper to a viewer free to know and explore reality according to all the directions made possible by the 3 DOF. Supporting this quest is the need to return to the actual sites of the crime, using immersive media as a forensic reconstruction of the events that official History, written by the dominant, wants to suppress from any narrative.

South Korea, USA | 2017  
VR 3 DOF | 12'

Production  
CYAN FILMS IN ASSOCIATION WITH DANKOOK UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC CONTENT BK21 PLUS  
TEAM, INSTITUTE OF DANKOOK GLOBAL VISUAL CONTENT,  
VENTA VR, VR SOUND



## Comfortless GINA KIM

Last chapter of Gina Kim's immersive trilogy. Nowadays, urban agglomerations built in South Korea at the gates of American military bases to house "comfort women" have become abandoned and disused spaces. During the production of the immersive documentary, the South Korean Supreme Court issued a verdict recognizing the responsibility of the South Korean government in justifying and encouraging prostitution, officially using the term "comfort women." The final chapter plays on reminders between the present and the past, traversing American Town, a "pleasure town" now being dismantled. The documentary itself is a race against time not to lose the last traces of the crimes of the past and bring them to light for good. In a series of immersive *tableaux vivants*, like those in previous works, we discover how the no-place is still haunted by the ghostly presence of sex workers, whose bodies appear within the mirrors scattered throughout the crumbling interiors. Similarly, we can still hear off-screen the predatory voices of the clients-expressions of subjugating fantasies that may never have gone away. In *Comfortless* Gina Kim works precisely on the complex balance between recognition and estrangement, making it the figurehead of any investigation of an unresolved past. With a final question addressed to the viewer: in all this story, who am I?

South Korea, USA | 2023  
VR 3 DOF | 12'

Production  
CYAN FILMS (GINA KIM, ZOE SUA CHO, MOA SON), EUNSUK  
JO, SEUNGHYEUN LIM, HANJAE KIM



## Tearless GINA KIM

The exploration of the history-less villages built outside American military bases, inhabited by sex workers destined by the South Korean government for the pleasures of the U.S. military, continues. This time Gina Kim's attention focuses on another no-place, the "Monkey House," a hospital and detention center where "comfort women" suffering from sexually transmitted diseases are imprisoned, named precisely because of the screams of the inmates eager to escape. A space without intimacy or care, designed only to isolate bodies deemed no longer comfortable but dangerous. Once again, Gina Kim's VR challenges the social and political laws governing the visible and invisible, penetrating the architectures created by patriarchal and colonial rule to transform the immersive user into a witness to their earthly hells. If in the 1970s the danger of sexually transmitted diseases was managed through stigma by forcing sex workers to wear medical test results, incarceration as a cure proves to be an even more pervasive and potentially deadly dispositive (both because of the treatments administered with large doses of penicillin and the impossibility and dangers associated with escape). Through the head-mounted display, it becomes possible to relive the daily organization of time in spaces aimed at the most radical subtraction of humanity: communal showers, bunker beds, refectories. In fact, the reconstruction is based on documented research work based on the direct testimonies of the imprisoned women. In Gina Kim's archaeological investigation, it thus becomes possible to uncover the roots of the fetishization and domination exercised by the U.S. imaginary over the bodies of Asian women. A rigorous and subversive idea of VR, capable of exposing the crimes of History through an intimate and shocking journey.

South Korea, USA | 2021  
VR 3 DOF | 12'

Production  
MASS ORNAMENT FILMS, ICON STUDIO, AND CYAN FILMS  
PRODUCTION.

Co-production  
VENTA VR



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO  
DIPARTIMENTO DI FILOSOFIA  
"PIERO MARTINETTI"



## Topographies of memory Conversation with Gina Kim

Margherita Fontana



### How did the idea for the trilogy come about?

The idea came from my experience as a student activist. In 1992, the first democratic elections without military candidates were held: there was some progress politically, but the biggest issue that year was the murder of Yun Geum-i, a camp town sex worker. Korean activists distributed flyers with a photo of the brutally mutilated victim. Even though I always wanted to do a film about it, when I was introduced to VR in 2016, I immediately knew it was the right medium: I wanted to erase the image of the body forever, only symbolically, and tell the story in a poetic way, so that there is no indication of what literally happened in this brutal murder. When I was in pre-production of *Bloodless*, I was shocked to see that the camp town was so well preserved, as if 1992 was yesterday. Therefore, the experience is part documentary and part, not fiction per se, but a re-enactment of what happened.

### What was the writing process like?

The first story, *Bloodless*, basically follows the last moments of Yun Geum-i's life. The second, *Tearless*, was inspired by a hand-written sign about the rigid routine of the inmates I saw at the Soyosan Medical Prison. I wondered what it would be like to follow their daily routine, so in the VR we are neither victims nor perpetrators, just innocent passers-by who happen to see someone without really understanding the implications of the story. The VR takes us through each room, gently suggesting what has happened. In *Bloodless*, I was obsessed with her final itinerary, as there were a limited number of roads that could have taken her from the club to the room where she was murdered. In *Comfortless*, instead, based on a lot of testimony and written documents, I came up with this loose narrative, extracting the routines of what had happened in the American town.



### How do you deal with the theme of memory and the testimonial value of places?

In the trilogy, I wanted to tell the story from the point of view of the victims. I never experienced any of these events, but there is very tangible evidence of what happened, namely the space. It is there, but the stories of the victims are not documented: how do I combine them? I had to “summon up” this spectral figure who is inherently virtual. When we lock eyes with this female figure, we also become a being that no longer exists in the physical world. This liminal, in-between space is where the story can be told. The history of US military comfort women is so repressed in Korea that many people deny it. Interviewing the people who run the small businesses around the abandoned medical prison, I asked them if they knew anything about the building and they said «There's nothing there, what are you talking about?» They just don't allow that building to exist in this world. To empathize with the victims, we have to be in the same dimension, in this purgatory of time and space. The “Monkey House” will soon be demolished and the American town you see in *Comfortless* will also be redeveloped: once everything is gone, what have we seen? That's why I've also scanned all the sites so that at least we have a very tangible virtual proof.





## DEGREES OF FREEDOM COMPETITION

### Virtual explorations

Margherita Fontana

2nd edition of “Degrees of Freedom”, a collaboration with the AN-ICON research group of the University of Milan

“Degrees of Freedom” is an immersion in the Italian VR panorama, created to highlight works that dialogue with the language of film and performance, reflecting on the technical peculiarities of this medium, which is approaching expressive maturity. The visual landscapes opened up to the public range from 360-degree video to interactive computer graphics and investigations into corporeality and the sense of presence. A delicately conceived reflection on virtual reality emerges as a media metaphor for the present: a mirror of the constant mystification of the online dimension of our lives, but also a promise of a shared heritage of dreams and desires.

Through a spatialised and immersive musical composition, *Recorda me* by Emilia Gozzano takes us on an exploration of parallel universes that reveal their richness only to those who have the time and attention to observe carefully. Davide Rapp's *Kursaal* is a renewed reflection on the relationship between immersion and the cinematic experience: thanks to VR, we are catapulted into the spaces of the CineKursaal in Rumelange, the oldest cinema in Luxembourg, to discover its history, crisis and transformation. In the vein of the all-encompassing documentary, *Napul3* by Omar Rashid captures the celebrations of the Neapolitan team's recent Scudetto in a compelling way. Presented at the 2019 Venice Film Festival, *VR Free* by Milad Tangshir is a moving reflection on the potential for dislocation that VR offers in a challenging context such as prison. The duo Banz & Bowinkel present *Poly Mesh*, a lysergic epic about the unpredictability of the human being in contact with the repetitiveness of artificial intelligence. *Handwritten* by Lui Avallos uses a visual language reminiscent of the 1990s web to reflect on communication in an age of social distancing. Choreographer Margherita Bergamo Meneghini, on the other hand, puts VR in dialogue with the performing arts, creating a work, *Dear Diary*, that places the experimenter at the center of a dynamic of gazes and bodies.

Finally, sixty years after the tragedy, we present, out of competition, *Vajont* by Iolanda Di Bonaventura, an interactive VR that confronts us with the poignant alternative of staying or leaving in the face of the impending catastrophe.

The selected works will compete for two prizes: the Degrees of Freedom prize for the best Italian work in VR, worth €2,000, and the Rai Cinema Channel prize, worth €3,000, in the form of a contract for the purchase of the web rights of the work for three years, to be displayed on raicinema.it, on the partner sites and on the Rai Cinema Channel VR APP.



## Dear diary MARGHERITA BERGAMO MENEGHINI

The art of performance and dance in a natural, everyday context where unpredictable relationships are woven together. A poetic and creative combination of movement, music and words that finds a new expressive dimension in VR.

Francia | 2022  
VR 3 DOF | 10'

Produzione  
COMPAGNIE VOIX



## Napul3 OMAR RASHID

May 4, 2023: a VR camera is fixed at the center of the most important event in the recent history of Naples, the conquest of the third Scudetto. The witnessing power of immersivity, understood as a new strategy of recording the real.

Italia | 2023  
VR 3 DOF | 10'

Produzione  
GOLD



## Kursaal DAVIDE RAPP

The CineKursaal in Rumelange is the oldest cinema in Luxembourg. Its owner, Raymond Massard, tells us its story through his personal recollections, while cinematic screen frames deconstruct and reshape the immersive space. A research documentary on the movie theater as an atlas of memory.

Italia | 2022  
VR 3DOF | 14'

Produzione  
-ORAMA



## Poly Mesh BANZ&BOWINKEL

The world simulated by algorithms and artificial intelligence. Mass-produced mannequins walking about, discernable only by their masks, while numbers and slogans fill the digital ether. Various immersive scenarios created to narrate the surreality of our technological present.

Germania | 2021  
VR 6 DOF | 9'

Produzione  
BANZ & BOWINKEL (supportati da DBK BANK)



## Recorda Me EMILIA GOZZANO

A virtual universe in which several possible worlds float, in the form of spheres. It is up to you to choose which one to make actual, as unconscious demiurge of an exploded reality. A dreamlike, metaphysical experience, open to infinite interpretations.

Italia | 2022  
VR 6 DOF  
6' VARIABILI

Produzione indipendente



## VR Free MILAD TANGSHIR

The experience of incarceration in the Turin prison. VR as a tool offered to inmates to escape into open space. A documentary and meta-reflective experience of the immersive medium's potential for isolation and escape.

Italia | 2019  
VR 3 DOF | 10'

Produzione  
ASSOCIAZIONE MUSEO NAZIONALE DEL CINEMA



## Scritto a mano (Handwritten) LUI AVALLOS

Love, sex, therapy in the time of the pandemic. Different voices and languages confess their experience confined in the interiors of homes and digital screens where each person's life survives and adapts. A kaleidoscope of visions that becomes an intimate and collective diary.

Italia, Brasile,  
Portogallo, Francia  
2021 | VR 3 DOF  
9'

Produzione  
MUNDIVAGANTE STUDIO

## OUT OF COMPETITION



## Vajont IOLANDA DI BONAVENTURA

The catastrophe of 1963 and the need for a choice: stay in Langarone and die or escape and save oneself? And how to convince those who will not listen to reason? History experienced from a unique and personal point of view, in an experience that asks each person to decide the course of his or her own future.

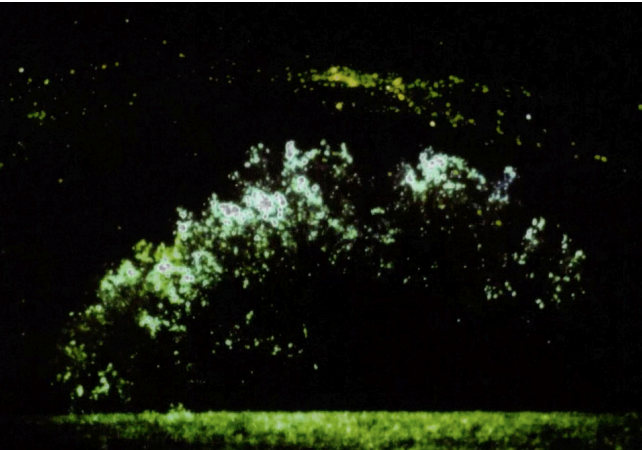
Italy | 2020  
VR 6 DOF | 45'

Production  
ARTHERIA S.R.L.

# FUORI FORMATO



**DARKNESS, DARKNESS, BURNING BRIGHT**  
Gaëlle Rouard



A spirited pastoral song, a mountain wake full of ghosts, mists and shimmers, Gaëlle Rouard’s first feature film is a luminous spectacle that stands between painting and cinema via the optical phantasmagorias of the 19th century. The projection of a film like this is a ritual to be officiated by the author herself, the last step in a handmade cinema where the careful manipulation of the film during development returns a celestial, vaporous and hallucinated version of reality. In this case a rural landscape familiar for the filmmaker: alpine pastures suspended on the edge of a galaxy, astral cattle and moon phases blaze through the mists as in a creation myth. Often the images are almost motionless, traversed only by luminescent flickers, figures contrasted and sculpted by flashes of solarized film rise from the screen as if from a bush shaken by the night wind. Right from its title, *Darkness, Darkness, Burning Bright* is an invocation to a primal darkness, a blackness essential to the formation and restitution of the image. The plastic seduction of this film pulls you into an obscurity that makes you see, a perfect darkness without which the eye would miss the subliminal subtleties, the efflorescences imprinted on a film exposed in penumbra and carefully shaped in the process of development. Structured in two acts, *Prelude and Oraison*, this twilight prayer rises accompanied by a seductive ‘concrete’ sound fabric composed by the filmmaker, amid hypnotic images that flicker like lanterns and flow as slow as magma, mottled with iridescent dust, populated by severe and simple forms like the motifs of a folk art. Rouard films as if she were painting, already sensing in a ray of light the photochemical minutiae from which the images will bloom.

Tommaso Isabella

BIOGRAPHY

Filmmaker, alchemist, performance artist. Gaëlle Rouard (1971) has been making handmade films since the early 1990s, specializing in film development. She is a longtime member of Le 102, rue d’Alembert, a place dedicated to the creation and dissemination of experimental music and film in Grenoble. Rouard also leads workshops in a variety of settings, from art schools to one-on-one teaching. She develops and explores various methods of chemical treatment of film. With performances around the world, she experiments with the possibilities of live multi-projection, both in collaboration with various people and in solo acts.

Rouard co-directed the DIY Atelier MTK film laboratory in Grenoble for 12 years, until 2006. Her work has been shown on various screens such as those at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Syros International Film Festival, Institute of Modern Art Brisbane and many others. Presented at the International Film Festival Rotterdam, *Darkness, Darkness, Burning Bright* was screened at numerous festivals and won the Istanbul International Film Festival award, the Experimental Competition award at Curtas Vila do Conde and the Best Sound Design award at the Ann Arbor Film Festival (2023).

Darkness, Darkness, Burning Bright  
GAËLLE ROUARD

France | 2022,  
16mm | Color | 70’ | V.O. English

Director  
GAËLLE ROUARD

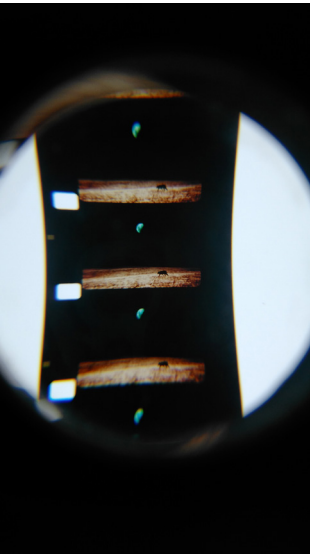
Screenplay  
GAËLLE ROUARD

Cinematography  
GAËLLE ROUARD

Editing  
GAËLLE ROUARD

Sound  
GAËLLE ROUARD

Producer  
GAËLLE ROUARD



What a Film Can Do. Gaëlle Rouard’s Handmade Cinema

Tommaso Isabella

This year’s program of Fuori Formato focuses on a single projection, and a unique projection at that, since it features the work of an artist like Gaëlle Rouard, who always keeps in focus the singular, ephemeral and unrepeatable nature of each projection as an alchemical moment in which matter becomes light, where film, from an inconspicuous and secretly shaped object, becomes an enveloping radiation and a shared experience.

Rather than to cinema itself, Gäelle Rouard’s works belong to the art of light projection of which cinema is only a chapter, and in their meticulous realization the filmmaker draws as much from photography as from painting amid iridescent chromatic mixtures and ghostly silhouettes produced by the solarization of film as by other operations in which reality is photochemically transfigured. A “hand-made cinema” in which the artist disposes of his material as a palette made up of luminous imprints and chemical reagents where not only the shooting and editing, but also the development and printing of the film become cornerstones of the creative process.

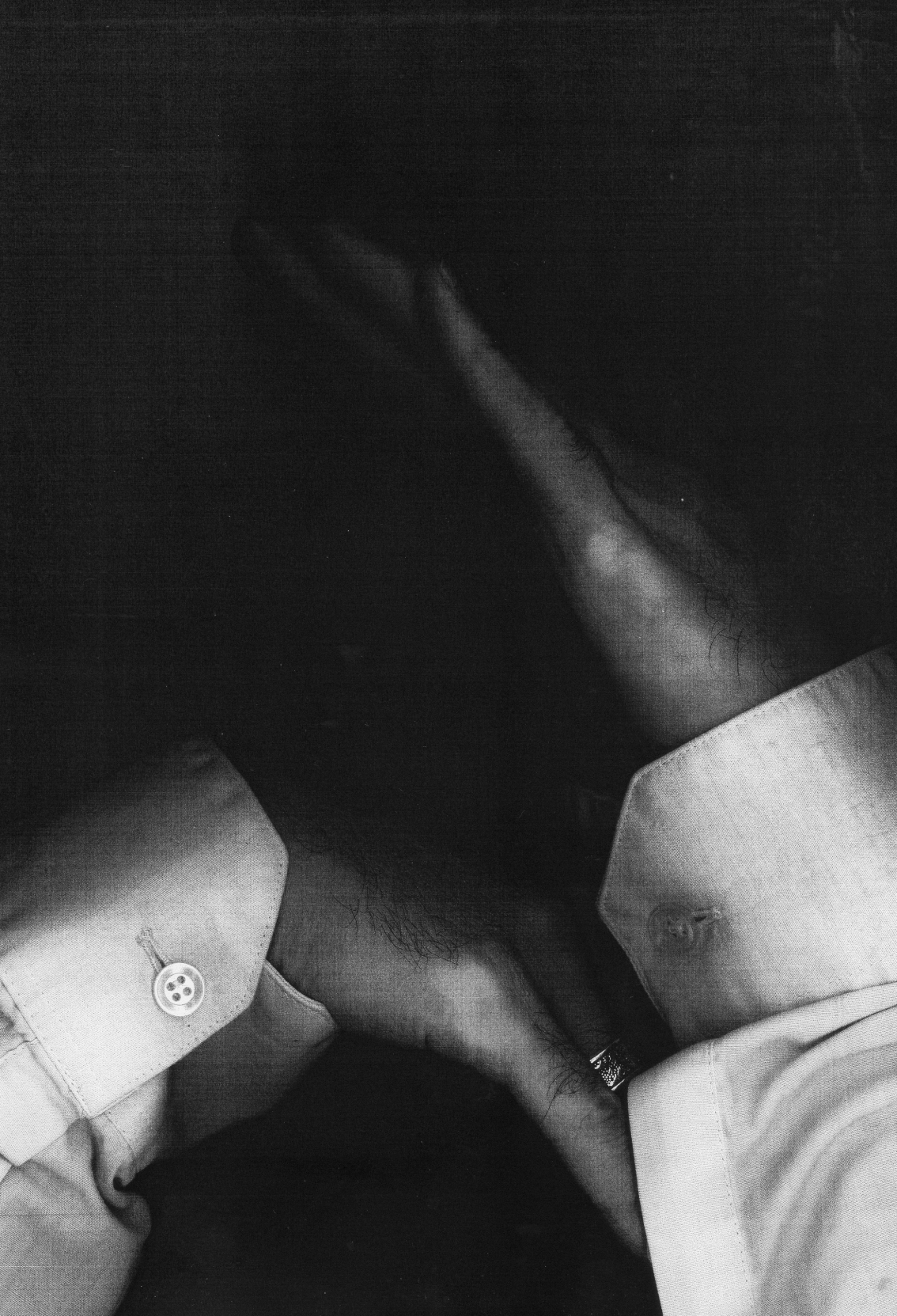
These technical stages, usually removed from the direct experience of many filmmakers, are indeed crucial in Rouard’s film practice and closely linked to her biography. In fact, her filmmaking beginnings in the early 1990s coincide with the first emergence of the artist-run film labs, collectives of filmmakers who, at a time when the film industry was converting to digital, were active in recovering and preserving analog tools and technologies from the professional film labs that were being decommissioned. Inspired by the Do It Yourself ethos and instances of autonomy already characteristic of the film cooperatives of the 1970s, the artist-run film labs represented a resistance to the times and the dictates of the market by filmmakers who appropriated industrial processes by reconverting them to an artisanal and experimental dimension, where ‘correct’ professional standards became only a starting point for exploring the figural possibilities of film.

Together with other Grenoble-based filmmakers, Rouard was among the leading figures of Atelier MTK, one of the very first of its kind in Europe, and here she experimented with collaborative forms of expanded cinema, focusing on performative aspects of projection that she still practices when presenting her films, intervening in the functioning of the projector, employing filters and other tools in order to modulate the images on the screen. This dimension of chance and improvisation is accompanied in Rouard’s career by an increasingly meticulous and subtle study and control of the photochemical properties of film, which flourished in her solo work starting in 2011, after her detachment from the MTK collective.

Today Gaëlle Rouard works in her personal atelier, but she is always in touch with a network of film labs that is now increasingly branched, vibrant and valuable for preserving and passing on the knowledge and passion of analog filmmaking. And she will do so also in occasion of her presence at Filmmaker Festival thanks to the workshop she will hold in the Milan workshop of UnzaLab.



# STRADE PERDUTE (LOST ROADS)



Ruth Beckermann,  
Julio Bressane, Massimo D'Anolfi, Martina Parenti,  
Tonino De Bernardi,  
Leonardo Di Costanzo,  
Alberto Fasulo,  
Fabrizio Ferraro,  
Michelangelo Frammartino,  
Sylvain George,  
enrico ghezzi / Alessandro Gagliardo,  
Carlo Hintermann, Giovanni Maderna, Alberto Momo,  
Alessandro Rossetto,  
Mauro Santini,  
Claire Simon,  
Stefano Savona, Bruno Oliviero

## Strade perdute (Lost Roads)

Fulvio Baglivi

We asked a number of filmmakers to tell us about one of their 'lost roads', that is, a sequence, a scene or a cut that did not make it into the final version of one of their films. This is almost always the case: an idea, a vision, even sequences considered fundamental are sacrificed to questions of rhythm, meaning, form, or to the mutation of images as much as of the filmmaker's imagination. The vision of these fragments becomes a false return to what we imagine we have already seen, and instead loses us in paths, roads, dead ends and labyrinths. The eighteen fragments we present come from hidden situations, from different and distant spaces, they go in the most different directions, together they form a detour to nowhere, between lost highways and road to nowhere, to quote titles that make art out of being lost.

Each fragment has its own accomplished presence, often with a different title from the film for which it was made, which one does not need to have seen to find meaning; on the contrary, those who set out thinking they know the world they are traveling through will find themselves disoriented.

We have to get lost between counterpoints and directional fans, between Julio Bressane's *Escadas* (staircases), which come from his impressive filmography and intersect in his river work *O longa viagem do ônibus amarelo* (*The Long Journey of the Yellow Bus*, 2023), as well as in the blackness of *Abisso del Bifurto*, that hole (*Buco*) in which Michelangelo Frammartino takes us back to discover a cow carcass. We wander with Bruno Oliviero and with Lino Musella through prison captivity (*Cattività*) in the Rome filmed by Maderna in *The Walk*, and find ourselves lost in the woods like Little Red Riding Hood in Alberto Fasulo's *Dove sei*, which gives us a scene cut from his *Menocchio*, or in the midst of a hunting party as in *Amabili resti* from Hintermann's *The Book of Vision*.

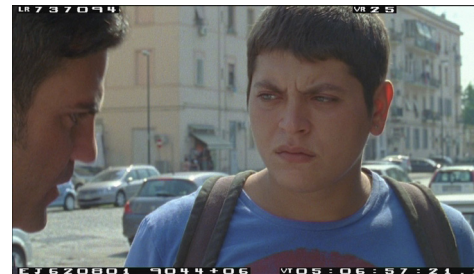
Distant films that cross paths, the Aeolian islands of *Gli ultimi giorni dell'umanità*, filmed by Enrico Ghezzi at different times and for different reasons, speak a language familiar to Tonino De Bernardi's *Strade ritrovate* between Paris and Turin, which in turn catapult us into Ruth Beckermann's Nocturnal Jackson.

The meadows of bodies in dialogue between life and death in Stefano Savona's scenes, which ultimately did not make it into his *Le mura di Bergamo*, contrast with those in Claire Denis's *Three Splinters*. Leonardo Di Costanzo's teenagers, like Sylvain George's young migrants in northern France, are adrift in a dirty, unfinished world. Fabrizio Ferraro, with Michelangelo Dalisi and Denise Tantucci, shows an alabaster splinter shot in the Roman sunset, a luminous black view left out of his last *Wanted*, while Alessandro Rossetto returns to the Hong Kong of *Effetto domino* to find an ending different from the one we know. Each filmmaker has freely interpreted the concept of a lost road, as Alberto Momo has gone "*A ritroso*" ("backwards") to bring to light material from sketchy projects, as has Mauro Santini, who gives us a glimpse of *Storia di una famiglia francese*, a work begun years ago and never finished. Taken together, these lost roads form the imaginary topography of another place, as suggested by Massimo D'Anolfi and Martina Parenti, who found a basic course of topography (*Corso base di topografia*) in the footage of *Guerra e pace*.



Ruth Beckermann, *Jackson/Marker 4 am*, 12'10", da *American Passages*

Alessandro Rossetto, finale alternativo di *Effetto domino*, 2019, 2'34"



Julio Bressane, *Escadas da O longa viagem do ônibus amarelo* (*The Long Voyage of the Yellow Bus*, 2023), 7'25"

Mauro Santini, *Storia di una famiglia francese*, progetto ancora non terminato, 3'44"

Massimo D'Anolfi e Martina Parenti, *Corso base di topografia*, da *Guerra e pace*, 2020, 5'05"

Claire Simon, *Les bois dont les rêves sont faits*, 2015, 20'22"

Stefano Savona, scene tagliate da *Le mura di Bergamo*, 2022, 9'04"

Tonino De Bernardi, *Strada ritrovata da Universi paralleli / 2*, 2022, 6'50"

Leonardo Di Costanzo, *Scena tagliata da L'intervallo*, 2012, 8'53"



Alberto Fasulo, *Dove sei*, da *Menocchio*, 2018, 6'26"

Fabrizio Ferraro, da *Wanted*, 2023, 3'04"

Michelangelo Frammartino, da *Il buco*, 2021, 1'09"



Sylvain George, *Une chambre pour dormir*, da *Qu'ils reposent en révolte*, 2010, 3'18" enrico ghezzi / Alessandro Gagliardo, da *Gli ultimi giorni dell'umanità*, 2022, 13'21"

Carlo Hintermann, *Amabili resti* da *The Book of Vision*, 2020, 5'55"

Giovanni Maderna, *Scena mancante*, da *The Walk*, 2021, 7'20"



Alberto Momo, *A ritroso*, progetto ancora non terminato, 6'53"

Bruno Oliviero, *Scena scelte da Cattività*, 2019, 8'05"

# FILMMAKER MODERNS

**ANIMAL**

Riccardo Giacconi

**IL CORRIDOIO ROSSO**

Davide Rapp

**LE MONDE**

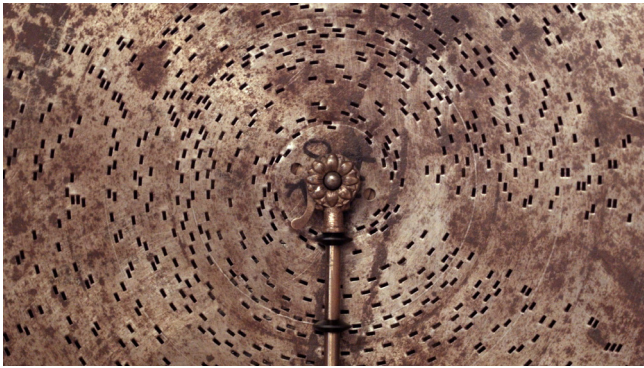
Alberto Baroni

**RITRATTO TEMPORALE III - ALESSANDRA**

Ilaria Pezone

**BALLO FILES 23**

Francesco Ballo



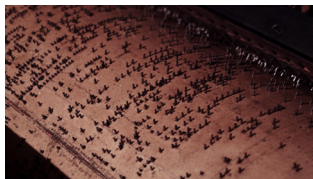
## Animal RICCARDO GIACCONI

The voice of an artist narrates her research at the Laboratory of Robotics and Artificial Intelligence in Switzerland. In this diary of words and images, the encounters follow one another, as the unfolding of strange days revolve around the discovery of robotic machines at the EPFL, the École Polytechnique Fédérale in Lausanne. Alongside these, the author places the puppets of the Carlo Colla & Figli company in a visual and sensory “short-circuit” that puts the mechanical body operated by the human being at the center – human being who remains at the edges of the images, except for the voice, which could belong to an AI. The challenge here involves a philosophical thought and a reflection about a possible “autonomy” of these machines from human control.

On the nearly deserted campus in summer, robotic dogs alternate with visions of nature; a glimpse of a lake is made eerie by the presence of a sleeping man. While “Real” dogs” bark at night until they wake the narrator, whose sleep is populated by nightmares because it is too quiet there.

The anthropomorphic mechanisms of two very distant universes seem to come closer in what is called “an act of faith” or “the suspension of our disbelief” along a line that unites ancient and contemporary traditions, while questioning technology in its multiple implications. Using the dialogues of several EPFL researchers as a starting point, Giacconi continues the exploration of the frontier between man and machine that has already appeared several times in his poetics, starting from the mechanical cinematic eye that composed the geometries of chance in *Entrelazado* to the Colla puppet protagonists of *Diteggiatura*, confirming the precision of his formal sign.

*Cristina Piccino*



## BIOGRAPHY

Riccardo Giacconi studied Fine Arts at the IUAV University of Venice. His work has been presented in many art institutions such as Grazer Kunstverein, ar/ge kunst, MAC in Belfast, WUK Kunsthalle Exnergasse, FRAC Champagne-Ardenne in Reims, tranzitdisplay, Fondazione Sandretto Re Re Rebaudengo. His films have been selected and awarded in several international film festivals. He has been artist-in-residence at the

Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne, the Centre international d'art et du paysage in Vassivière, France, a lugar a dudas in Cali, Colombia, MACRO Museo d'Arte Contemporanea in Rome, and Künstlerhaus Büchsenhausen in Innsbruck. He co-founded the collective listening festival Helicotrema and teaches at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University in Boston. His films include *L' altra faccia della spirale* (2010),

*În forma lucrurilor care trebuie să vină* (2011), *Chi ha lottato con l'angelo resta fosforescente* (2013). With *Entrelazado*, he participated in the 2014 Filmmaker Perspectives Competition, where he returned to the International Competition with *Piuccheperfetto* (2019), followed by *Ekphrasis* (2020) and *Diteggiatura* (2021).



## Il corridoio rosso DAVIDE RAPP

*Il corridoio rosso* (The red corridor), from which the film takes its title, refers to the project of the same name curated by Giovanni Agosti and Jacopo Stoppa for the Milan Triennale as part of the 23rd International Exhibition (15 July - 11 December 2022). The installation, staged by Margherita Palli and lit by Pasquale Mari, “reconstructs” the corridor of an early 20th century bourgeois house, in which entering and leaving the various rooms suggests to the viewer a reflection on knowledge, imagination and the unconscious. However, the film is neither a documentation nor a backstage, but rather it creates a new relationship between these two environments, starting from the double role of Agosti, who is both the curator of this project and the inhabitant of the house that inspired it. And he does so in an almost immersive way, using the suggestions of an overlap that in turn opens up other possible phantasmagorias. “When I visited Giovanni Agosti’s house for the first time and finally walked through the corridor that I had seen re-created at the Triennale, I felt a double vertigo: on the one hand, I was able to verify the extreme expertise of the reconstruction coordinated by Margherita Palli, and on the other hand, I was overwhelmed by the unexpected number of books, paintings and objects accumulated everywhere. The film tries to return this feeling of dizziness,” says the author. Following this trace, which is also a desire, the parallel movement that takes us from the “real” house, which has become a “staging” of itself, winds along the corridor, where each door seems to contain a secret. What is this house telling us, what is its meaning? The long corridor that separates the different rooms, which is so common in modern architecture, has a strong charm in itself in the echo of voices and the fragments of the existences that have inhabited it. The objects, the refined grace of their compositions, the paintings, the bathroom with the paintings of ancient Etruscan beauty on the walls. And, above all, the books, which in turn suggest other stories intertwined with Agosti’s memory, with the fragments of childhood that flash before the lens between his words. The images seek, explore, invent synergies on the edge of a private space that has become public: it is in these cracks that the author places his narrative, which is the experience of a life and its possible inventions.

*Cristina Piccino*

Italy | 2023  
4K | Colour | 34' | O.V. Italian

Director  
DAVIDE RAPP

Cinematography  
LUCIO PONTONI

Editing  
OLGA STOPAZZOLO  
DAVIDE RAPP

Production  
WWW.TWINSTUDIO.IT  
TRIENNALE MILANO

Producers  
ELENA PEDRAZZINI  
TOMASO PESSINA

Contacts  
DAVIDE.RAPP@DASHORAMA.EU  
ELENAPEDRAZZINI@TWINSTUDIO.IT

## BIOGRAFIA

Davide Rapp (Verbania, 1980), director and video artist, lives and works in Milan. An architect by training with a PhD in interior design, in 2014 he participated in the 14th International Architecture Exhibition - Fundamentals (Venice Biennale) with *Elements*, a 32-minute montage film describing the fundamental elements of architecture through a sequence of more than 500 film clips. In 2021, he participated in the competition of the Venice

VR Expanded section of the Venice Film Festival with *Montegelato*, a virtual reality montage film dedicated to the Montegelato waterfalls, the setting of more than 180 Italian films from 1950 to the present day.



Alberto Baroni’s films give. In front of *Le monde* (a new card, after *La force*, of the Major Arcana of the Tarot), one feels suspended on the elusive ridge where reality and fiction overlap, as in a *Fata Morgana*, in a revelatory mirage. Through the figure of the mystic Mirabai of Merta, who wrote down everything she saw before she left the world, through sharp images documenting signs of life, Baroni tries to immerse himself in reality, to make transparent what is hidden, to pull back the curtain and see what lies beyond the first appearance. Pictures that follow a double movement, *one centripetal*, penetrating deep inside, the other centrifugal, towards a distant space. It is from the meeting of these two movements that an *ecstatic truth* emerges, a level of truth much deeper than that of everyday reality.

Matteo Marelli

## Le Monde ALBERTO BARONI

Italy | 2023  
4K | B/W e Colour | 11' | O.V. Italian

Director  
ALBERTO BARONI

Cinematography  
ALBERTO BARONI

Editing  
ALBERTO BARONI

Sound  
ALBERTO BARONI

Producer  
ALBERTO BARONI

Contacts  
ALBERTOBARONI07@GMAIL.COM



### BIOGRAPHY

Alberto Baroni (Brescia, 1986) started working as an independent filmmaker after graduating from the University of Milan with a thesis on Fritz Lang's *Fury*. He produces documentaries, web-docs, corporate and advertising films, taking on the roles of director, operator, editor and colourist. He collaborates with the C.T.U. (University Television Centre) of the University of Milan, contributing to the production of documentaries and commercials for the

university. In 2015 he directed his first short film, *Impero*, and in 2017 he presented the invented language short film *Carro* at the Filmmaker Festival, which won the Best Photography award at the Valdarnocinema Film Festival in 2018. In the same year, the short film *Efeso* is presented in several national and international festivals, and in 2019 it wins the Best Film award at the Brianza Film Corto Festival. *LE - TOI - ILE* takes part in the 2019 Filmmaker Festival

and wins the Best Sound Design award at the Hermetic International Film Festival. *La force*, after its premiere at Filmmaker 2022, was presented at ShortCircuit in Brighton and at the International Festival Zeichen der Nacht in Berlin. Since 2018 he has been writing for the online film magazine *Gli spietati*.



A girl is walking down the street, seems to be taking life lightly, one might even say a little naive. But she gets serious when she talks about her artistic practice: questions of perception, synaesthesia, the translation between seeing and hearing are at the centre of her research. Alessandra is the protagonist of the third episode of the series “Temporal Portrait”, dedicated to “misunderstood or emerging protagonists of contemporary artistic practice”, writes director Ilaria Pezone. There is a correspondence between the two, starting from biography - Alessandra comes from a wealthy family, studied in America, where her passion for the visual arts was born - to actual artistic experimentation. And here is the key to Pezone’s film, which aims to “modulate the shooting and editing on the subject and her work”. The film editing thus becomes the director’s voice, suggesting, commenting on, showing the work of this young woman and, with her, a whole generation of artists. In Alessandra’s seemingly peaceful life, the search for beauty becomes an engine rather than a conflict, and we grasp all the practical implications of creation, as Pezone immerses us in the process rather than the product.

Lucrezia Ercolani



### BIOGRAPHY

Ilaria Pezone (Lecco, Italy, 1986) is a lecturer in film techniques at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts, where she graduated with a degree in cinema and video. Since 2010, she has been involved in collaborations as an audio-video operator and editor in the production of documentaries. She is the author of the book *Cinema di prosimità – privato, amatoriale, sperimentale e d'artista* published by Falsopiano in 2018. Her filmography consists of short films

(*Leggerezze e gravità*, 2008; *Greistmo*, 2010; *1510 – sogno su carta impressa con video*, 2013; *Concerto Metafisico*, 2015; *Con lievi mani*, 2017; *Luna in Capricorno*, 2018), medium-length films (*Masse Nella Geometria Rivelata Dello Spazio Tempo*, 2012; *Andare Tornando A Rilievi Domestici*, 2011; *Politico Preludio Adagio Altalenante*, 2009; *Ego etiam advenus*, 2013; *Vedere Tra*, 2014; *Asmrrrr Molesto*, 2019), and feature films (*Indagine su sei brani di vita rumorosa*

## Ritratto temporale III - Alessandra ILARIA PEZONE

Italy | 2023  
FullHD | Colour | 19' | O.V. Italian

Director  
ILARIA PEZONE

Cinematography  
ILARIA PEZONE

Editing  
ILARIA PEZONE

Sound  
ILARIA PEZONE

Producer  
ILARIA PEZONE

Contacts  
INDIRIZZOPOCORIGINALE@GMAIL.COM

*dispersi in un'estate afosa – raccolti e scomposti in cinque atti*, 2016; *France – quasi un autoritratto*, 2017), many of which have been presented at various festivals.

## Letter to a Lover. Francesco Ballo.

Matteo Marelli

This is not a presentation; it is an autonomous, self-sufficient love letter, imbued with chaste Platonism, to Francesco Ballo, who, edition after edition, and also because of the impetuous enthusiasm with which he presents his works for viewing, makes us relive the excitement of the beginning every year. Watching a programme of Ballo's films is a little like spending an hour on a rollercoaster; it is dizzying to see what he has managed to put together: always new pieces of a fiercely independent, very underground, poor cinema workshop, poor, very poor, but very rich in inventions and stimuli, shot with agile and light cameras which, exploiting the fluidity and economy of their performance, constantly reinvent the freedom of filming. A cinema, Ballo's cinema, that cannot be pigeonholed and, for this reason, is perhaps incomprehensible to those visual experts who have to put their fancy labels on everything.

To study his filmography is to admire the acceleration that technological innovation has imposed on the work of the super-optician; from the small step to video to digital, steps that have led him to constantly reconstruct a possible relationship with the new medium. Ballo knows that a technique, that of film and its instrument, is never harmless or innocent: every device, unless one is willing to play with objective individual creativity, therefore forces one to rethink what one is doing. A filmmaker turned videographer, who never lost his love and pleasure in the process of transformation. This is what counts in the act of filming. An observation that applies both in general and in the specific case of the films we are presenting this year.

The programme opens with *Incontro con il poeta Guido Ballo su "Altre arie lombarde"*, a video portrait of Francesco's father, shot in U-matic in April 1984. A film in continuous transit, in which the sound of the poet's voice becomes a musical rhythm that accompanies the vision, a coming and going between the two poles of an affective geography, along a line drawn by the camera cars that connect Milan and Induno Olona. *Come si muove l'acqua* is the story of an encounter with a Rohmerian flavour, a falling in love that takes the form of an urban tailing. In *Vagando*, the grammar of silent film is short-circuited by sound: Czech subtitles, vocal fragments that compose an intellectual autobiography, edited in alternation with experimental images made by a hand-eye that spirals forward. *S'era fermato il treno*, a deliberately silent film shot with a Dadaist taste, closes the show. The protagonist is a bag emptied and filled by a young woman and carried through the streets by a dark, elderly man. A lunar film, on the irrational, on chance, on mystery, hovering on the imprecise border between the real and the surreal, between a bizarre melancholy and the absurdity of existence.

Francesco Ballo (Milan, 1950) has been a professor of Film and Video History at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts. He is a scholar and filmmaker. Among his books are *Jacques Tourneur. The Trilogy of the Fantastic* (Falsopiano, Alessandria, 2007) - Premio Internazionale Maurizio Grande VI, and *The Cinema of Buster Keaton. Sherlock Jr.* (Falsopiano, Alessandria, 2013).

In the last twenty years, he has directed, among others, the 16 mm feature film *Quando le ombre si allungano* (1996), *Muri Bianchi* (1998), *Hai chiuso la valigia?* (1999), *Buster Keaton di corsa* (2003), *Guido Ballo. Poesie*, with Marina Ballo Charmet (2004), *Risa* (2007), *Note su Sherlock Jr.*, with Paolo Darra (2009), *La fantastica coppia. Roscoe Arbuckle e Buster Keaton* (2014), *Ghiaccio Rosso* (2016), *Esperimenti* (2015-2016-2017) and *Preferirei di no* (2018).

In 2019, he presented at the Pordenone Silent Film Festival *Variazioni di "The Blacksmith" di Buster Keaton e Mal St. Clair* (2018) e *The Blacksmith – Versione Ballo* (2018), at Milano Film Festival *Pietra* (2019). At Filmmaker Festival, he has curated numerous collections of his short films, including in 2020 *Ballo Files/20*, an anthology of the "magnificent obsessions" that underpin his visual poetics. In 2021, he presented at the Milano Film Festival *Milano. Capodanno 2005-2006*, a journey through the city, live and in-car camera, between the silence of urban geographies and the explosions of celebrations.





Meeting on a street corner. A boy and a girl. Playful glances and falling in love. One walks forever outside through Milan. Distant echoes of 1960s cinema and beloved directors.

## COME SI MUOVE L'ACQUA

Italy | 1994  
U-MATIC | 12' | O.V. Italian

Director  
FRANCESCO BALLO

Cinematography  
BUSTERIO CHITONI

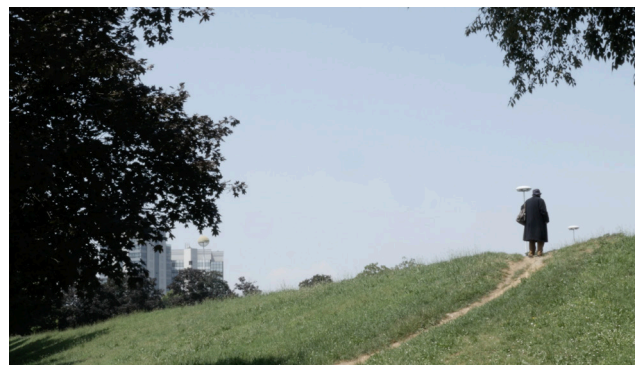
Editing  
MASSIMO SACCONI

Sound  
DOMENICO MURDACA

Interpreters  
ALESSANDRA MONTI  
DANIELE PALMITESSA

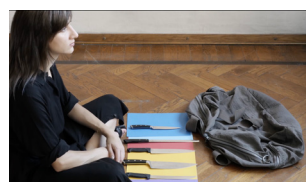
Production  
MÂD

Contacts  
francescobkballo@gmail.com



A deliberately silent movie. Only a dark, elderly man moves around with a bag, which is alternately emptied and filled by a young woman. The irrational, chance, mystery and a strange melan-

cholic sense of loneliness and existential absurdity.



## S'ERA FERMATO IL TRENO

Italy | 2023  
4K | 25' | No dialogues

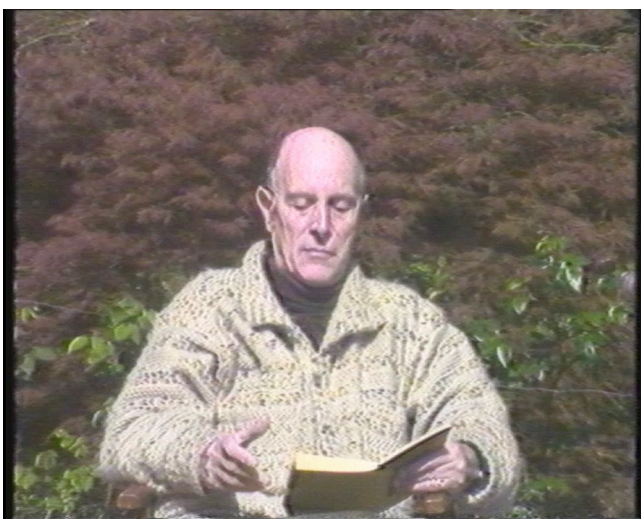
Director  
FRANCESCO BALLO

Cinematography  
FRANCESCO BALLO

Editing  
ILARIA PEZONE

Interpreters  
ILARIA PEZONE  
FRANCESCO BALLO

Production  
MÂD



*Incontro con il poeta Guido Ballo su Altre arie lombarde* was shot in U-matic between Induno Olona and Milan in April 1984. The sound of the poet Guido Ballo's voice becomes a musical rhythm that accompanies the movie. The poems are taken from other Lombard arias and the

poet transcribes excerpts from them, reading them outdoors and in his studio in the countryside. The written text becomes an image so that the viewer can see how his poetry is structured. The camera cars near the lake and then in Milan are elements that give the movie a flat rhythm.

## INCONTRO CON IL POETA GUIDO BALLO SU ALTRE ARIE LOMBARDE

Italy | 1984  
U-MATIC | 18' | O.V. Italian

Director  
FRANCESCO BALLO

Cinematography  
VITO MASTROROCO

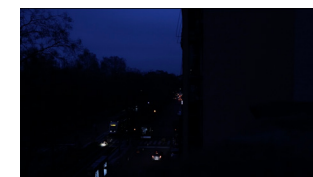
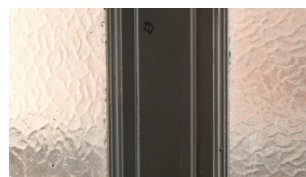
Editing  
ERIO JEMMA R.V.M.

Production  
BALLO PRODUCTION



*Vagando* is a movie in which I experiment with the linguistic inventions of silent cinema, transformed into sound. The subtitles are words read on a black background, edited with deliberately silent experiments.

The apparent negation of a classical image (I deliberately choose black), edited alternately with experimental images. It is perceived as an autobiographical vision of my work on cinema.



## VAGANDO

Italy | 2023  
4K | 15' | O.V. Italian

Director  
FRANCESCO BALLO

Cinematography  
FRANCESCO BALLO

Editing  
FRANCESCO BALLO  
ASTRID ARDENTI

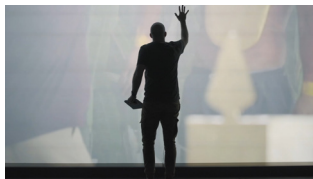
Production  
MÂD

# TEATRO SCONFINATO

Todos Los Males  
ANAGOOR

# Todos Los Males ANAGOOR

A young man emerges naked from the sea. He turns to a reverse shot (the shore) and an off-screen (the hall that will become, in its own way, visible matter). But who is watching whom? The notes are those of *Les Incas du Pérou*, the second of the four movements of *Les Indes galantes* by Jean Philippe Rameau, a celebration of Europe's encounter with other continents. Who discovers whom? This is the question to set in motion to arrive at a post-colonial thought outside the boundaries and beyond any vice of the gaze, which reduces the other to an image of one's own will. *Todos los males*, in showing us the story of the Inca princess Phani who fell in love with a *conquistador*, confronts us (descendants of those conquerors) with the spectacle of the Conquest. The arias of this episode, perhaps the most emblematic of this opera-ballet for the unexpectedly current issues that run through it, sound perfect in their problematic nature to try to reflect on contemporaneity. It is not a documentary that follows the preparation of a theatrical production; it is and is not a film-opera, rather, a "documentary of the imagination" and at the same time an (im)possible re-enactment, a re-staging, in action of what has been with the complicity of a small representation of Italian citizens of Peruvian origin who actively participated in the filming and dramaturgical writing. *Todos los males*, without the need for preachings or edifying reassurances (a mix of falsehoods and nauseating goodness), puts us in front of a mirror, however, scorching, which focuses the rays on our shadows, on our darkness and our unbridgeable voids. And, rather than illuminating them, filling them, or reflecting them, it sets them on fire.



## BIOGRAPHY

Simone Deraï (Castelfranco Veneto, 1975) founded in 2000, with Paola Dallan, the company Anagoor of which he is the artistic director with Marco Menegoni. Anagoor's theater falls into different final formats where performing art, philosophy, literature, and hypermedial scene enter into dialogue. Among the plays: *"jeug-* (2008); *Tempesta* (2009), special mention at the Premio Scenari; *Fortuny* (2011); *L.I. Lingua Imperii* (2012), among the winning shows of Music Theatre NOW 2015; *Virgilio Brucia* (2014); *Socrate il sopravvissuto / come le foglie* (2016) nominated for the Ubu Awards as show of the year. In 2012, the

company approached musical theater with the film-concert *Et manchi pietà*, followed by two opera directions: in 2013 *Il Palazzo di Atlante* by Luigi Rossi and in 2017 *Faust*. The concert for images *Mephistopheles eine Grand Tour* dates back to 2020. Among the awards received: the "Jurislaw Korenić" award to Simone Deraï as the best young director at the 53rd Festival MESS (2012), the Hystrio Award - Castel dei Mondì (2013), the ANCT Award for innovative theatrical research, the HYSTRIO award for direction (2016), the ReteCritica Award and in 2018 the Silver Lion for Theater.

Italy | 2023  
HD | Colour | 72' | O.V. English

Director  
SIMONE DERAÏ

Screenplay  
SIMONE DERAÏ

Cinematography  
GIULIO FAVOTTO

Editing  
SIMONE DERAÏ  
ELIA RISATO

Sound  
MAURO MARTINUZ

Producers  
SIMONE DERAÏ  
GIULIO FAVOTTO  
MARCO MENEGONI  
MAURO MARTINUZ  
LUCIO SCARPA  
MARCO CABERLOTTO

Production  
ANAGOOR  
KUBLAI FILM  
SAGRA MUSICALE MALATESTIANA

Interpreters  
JUANA MYRIAM CHERO TARAZONA  
MARIA ELENA SOTO CHERO  
MARCO CICCULLO  
CRISTIAN ALEXIS  
ALARCON JARA  
EKATERINA PROTSENKO  
NICHOLAS SCOTT  
MATTEO DOLCINI

Contacts  
WWW.ANAGOOR.COM

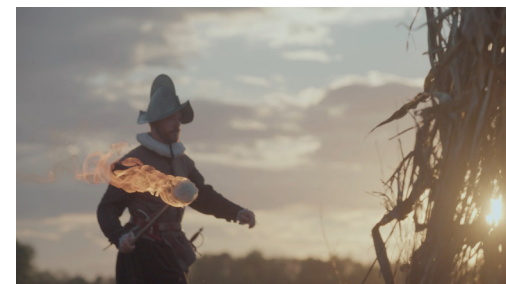
## Who Watches Who?

Matteo Marelli

"It is seeing," writes John Berger, "that determines our place in the world around us. The eye, the instrument of seeing, is the place-narrative of the other; the place where the other is staged as an image. But seeing as revelation, knowledge, discovery, epiphany, the instrument by which the principle of reality and individuation is refounded, can only be sanctioned as transgression. The words of Romeo Castellucci come to mind when he says: "To continue to gaze at a performance will be like not being able to take one's eyes off Medusa". To persist in gazing without regard for one's own safety.

As we watch *Todos los males*, our vision is repeatedly burned by burning mirrors that focus their rays on our shadows, our darkness, our gloom and our unbridgeable emptiness. And instead of illuminating, filling or reflecting them, it sets them on fire. It ignites the good conscience of us, the descendants of the conquistadors, who are subjected to the spectacle of conquest. *Todos los males* - a project that literally explodes boundaries and resistances to attempt an unprecedented encounter between music and theatre and research cinema - works on the arias of *Les Incas du Pérou* - the second part of Jean-Philippe Rameau's opera *Les Indes Galantes* (already brought to the cinema by Philippe Béziat with *Indes galantes*, backstage of the production of the same name curated by the artist Clément Cogitore for the Opéra Bastille in Paris). *Les Indes Galantes* is a work divided into a prologue and four entrées, each of which is conceived as an autonomous episode in which the theme of love and war is re-enacted in ever-changing scenarios (Turkey, Peru, Persia and North America), with a critical focus on the abuse inflicted by Europeans on the peoples of the New World (even if it is still corrupted by a certain narrowness, as if everything that is not Europe is the same as barbarism).

Anagoor (a company founded by Simone Deraï, which for more than 20 years has demonstrated, to quote the theatre critic Renato Palazzi, "a depth of thought that places the group at the forefront of the new national scene"), continuing this reflection on the decolonisation of the gaze, widen the perspective even further in their very powerful adaptation, and arrive at the question: who is looking at whom? Who is discovering whom? *Todos los males* is not a film opera, but rather, to borrow a definition from Joshua Oppenheimer, a "documentary of the imagination" and an (im)possible re-enactment. As Deraï explains, "the video fresco is at once a work on the colonial tradition of Europe, on the gaze, on the danger of representation and yet on its irreducible necessity, on the historical failure of an encounter and yet on the unexpected opening of meaning that individual lives know how to open wide. Shot entirely in Veneto, among cornfields, alpaca and llama farms and burnt forests, this work blatantly pretends to be an impossible reconstruction; but by meeting a small representation of the Peruvian community in Italy, it ends up being an authentic photograph of a distant Italy, racing towards the creation of a new tapestry of the future, trying to overcome the past - through understanding".



# THE LONG LIFE OF WORDS

WRITERS, NOVELS AND FILMS

ALESSANDRO  
BERTANTE

HELENA  
JANECZEK



A writer and a novelist, Alessandro Bertante and Helena Janeczek, choose the novels they would like to see filmed, imagine them, narrate them and explain their reasons to the public. Both of them know from their own experience the problems of the transformation that cinema makes of stories, and they propose to the public, through an exercise in concrete imagination, films made only of words.



#### ALESSANDRO BERTANTE

Alessandro Bertante is a writer and essayist. He is the author of the essays *Re Nudo* (2005) and *Contro il '68* (2007). His novels include *Al Diavol* (2008), winner of the Chianti Prize; *Nina dei lupi* (2011), finalist for the Strega Prize and winner of the Rieti Prize; *Estate crudele* (2013 Rizzoli), winner of the Margherita Hack Prize; *Gli ultimi ragazzi del secolo* (2016), winner of the Selezione Campiello Prize; *Mordi e fuggi. Il romanzo delle BR* (2022), finalist of the Strega Prize. He is Senior Course Director of the Three-Year Course in Cinema and Animation at NABA - New Academy of Fine Arts in Milan.

#### HELENA JANECEK

Helena Janeczek, poet and writer, was born in Munich to a Jewish family of Polish origin and has lived in Italy since the early 1980s. She made her debut with the German-language poetry collection *Ins Freie* (1989), while her first novel, *Lezioni di tenebra* (1997), for which she won the Bagutta Prize, was written in Italian, as were her subsequent novels. He is a foreign fiction consultant for Adelphi and Mondadori and has collaborated with several newspapers and magazines, including Nuovi Argomenti and Nazione Indiana. His works include the novels *Cibo* (2002); *Le rondini di Montecassino* (2010); *La ragazza con la Leica* (2017, Premio Strega and Bagutta), about the life of Gerda Taro, the first photojournalist killed in the war. She organises the SI - Writers Together literary festival.



### Blood Meridian by CORMAC MCCARTHY Alessandro Bertante

One of the greatest writers of our time, Cormac McCarthy's long and fruitful literary career has championed an America of wide open spaces, of the frontier and of horizons that never end. But he is also a visionary writer who sublimates the violence and brutality of American history into sharp, powerful and evocative prose. Some of his novels have been made into successful films, such as *No Country for Old Men* and *The Road*, and for years there has been talk of bringing what I consider to be his masterpiece, *Blood Meridian*, to the screen.

But is it possible?

Is it possible to translate into images the extraordinary ambition of a novel that manages to be cruel, bloody, adventurous, philosophical and imaginative without distorting its most profound nature? This is the question we will try to answer.



### La buona condotta by ELVIRA MUJČIĆ & Il demone a Beslan. by ANDREA TARABIA Helena Janeczek

Two Italian novels deal with the issue of war-related violence. Set in international settings and differing in style and narrative strategy, they both lend themselves to film adaptations that could be of great interest today. In *La buona condotta* (Crocetti), the Bosnian-Italian writer Elvira Mujčić focuses on a Serb-majority town in Kosovo, where a mayor is elected who has promised to work for all citizens. The narrow margin of victory infuriates the nationalists, who bring in a second mayor from Belgrade, recently released from prison and hailed as a war hero.

The story, composed in a crescendo of tension and twists, presents the small conflicted reality through a lively cast of characters, through whom we get a sense of the ease with which ordinary people can be swept up in the dynamics of violence. The choice of a tragicomic - rather than tragic - register makes Mujčić's approach even

more original and open.

In one of his most acclaimed novels, *In Il demone a Beslan* (Bollati Boringhieri), Andrea Tarabba reinvents the events of the Beslan massacre of 2004 with great imagination and, at times, visionary freedom. With an open reference to Dostoyevsky's *Demons*, Tarabba stages a questioning of evil and violence that goes beyond historical facts without betraying them. How does one become a terrorist who slaughters children? Once again, the polyphonic and multi-perspective narrative invites directors and screenwriters to grapple with more complex narrative choices than a story driven by a single protagonist. But isn't that the thrill of many series and, increasingly, feature films?



**Filmmaker Festival**  
17 – 27 November 2023  
**Milan**