

FILMMAKER

CONCORSO PROSPETTIVE 2016



Parallelo 41 produzioni
presents

Pagani

a film by
Elisa Flaminia Inno

Italy, 2016
HD, color, 52'

a production



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PAGANI

Italy, 2016, HD 52" Color
Language: Italian – English subtitled

a production
Parallelo 41 produzioni



film of cultural interest with financial contribution of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities
and of Tourism, General Direction Cinema

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Written and directed by
Elisa Flaminia Inno

Produced by
Antonella Di Nocera and Elisa Flaminia Inno

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Gerardo Sinatore

with
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Biagio De Prisco
Ermanno Cutolo
Bruno Buoninconti
Maurizio Graziano

and with the participation of
Vincenzo Romano

trailer

<https://vimeo.com/204355412> password: PAGANITRAILER

LOGLINE

What is religion today? In Pagani, a small town around Vesuvio, a community of devotees to The Lady of the Hens keep ancient pagan traditions alive adapting them to a contemporary way.

Synopsis

In the deep South of Italy survive ancient religious sincretisms tied to Mother Earth. In Pagani, a small town near Pompei, seven days after Easter, people celebrate The Lady of the Hens, a Virgin celebrated with ancestral dances and songs. For thirty days the devout people yove as one in order to perpetrate the Tradition, an event in which all the population participate animated by a faith that becomes memory and transcendence. Fonzino leads the devotees in preparing the *Tosello*, a little secret baroque temple, that every year is shown to the community the day of the celebration. Biagino is the leader of a gay believers' community, protagonist of the liturgical events and bearer of ancient rural traditions rooted in the gay culture of the place, such as *The marriage of the Zeza*, the *Death of Carnival* and the *Litter of Femminielli (a sort of local transgender)*. The wait for the Madonna marks the days preceding the celebration, between the fields' sowing and the recurrence of folk rituals that mark the moment of transition from a season to another one. Until the day of the Feast, when everything melts into a riot of music and dance in order to achieve a catharsis and the birth of a new springtime.

Director's note

The idea of realize this movie comes from a search path between the popular traditions of South Italy, from the willingness to tell the transformation of an ancient religiosity that, even now, expresses herself through ritualistic way. In Campania's tradition continue to exist customs and practices of the ancient world, entwined in a symbology that binds together human life and natural elements, a symbology that express herself through contemporary devotion's form. What today is perceived as spectacular – folk dancing, trance and the vital importance given to the community – is the symbol of a strong sense of belonging to a place, of the resistance to the modern individualism and of a collective identity that survives in southern Italy thanks to the protection of mystery of the faith. The celebration of Virgin Mary as guarantee of a new life, the feeling for death and the interaction with the natural and supernatural forces are thongs that scare the contemporary man, that is weaned off to connect, spiritually and physically, to his own nature. At the time of mass medias, the features of a culture passed down by word of mouth are grafted by religious, social and communicative syncretisms that are constantly evolving. At that time it was necessary to pierce the veil of reality with the camera, a camera whose eye is internal and participatory, an eye that opens a path on the history of a country transmitting of immaterial and hidden treasure. The movie takes place in sites of Pompei's outskirts, where, after years of participation to the devotional events and rituals, I have chosen a story and characters. Fonzino, with his construction of *Tosello*, represents the backbone of the narrative structure. The *Tosello* is an *ara pacis*, ancient place of worship and aggregation, where misery is exorcised and the Mother is evocated by playing the drum.

Biagio embodies the *Tradition* transmitting ancient knowledge of Vesuvian rural life, knowledge that he keeps alive together with the elderly women of the community. With Ermanno, Bruno and Maurizio, he is part of a gay community of devout that reveals the figure of *femminiello* – a higher being closer to the earliest human condition of the androgynous. Masters of the cult, good at singing and dancing, they have a strong faith liable to support this particular destiny. *Pagani* is the story of this community during the time preceding the celebration of the Lady of the Hens, the most alive cult of Campania's Virgins, a feast celebrated seven days after the Spring Equinox.

The rite and the tradition

Spring Equinox is one of the two moments in a year during which day and night are in a perfect balance. In previous centuries it was linked to the Passover, that was celebrated during the first Spring's full moon. In this space-time some celebrations were going on in honor of pre-Christian gods to which people offered dances, hymns, music, libations and the best fruits of the earth. Dances and songs were prayers celebrating the prodigy of Spring by invoking its perpetuation with a practice now known as the *tammurriata* or (a *local folk music and dance tradition*), and these dances and songs took place through movements of meeting and falling love, that sometimes led to *enchantment*. These customs were very similar to those that were carried out in honor of the Great Mother – that because of syncretism became in the course of time Astarte, Cybele (that, according to Tito Livio, was taken to Rome from the sea), Ceres, Demeter, Juno and then the Holy Maryam Virgin and Mother of Jesus. The *Magna Mater* was the goddess of the heathens and she represented the Earth, the fecundity and the regeneration of the world, in a metaphysical link between human sexuality and vegetable fertility. Many trace the *tammurriata* to the cults in honor of Demeter – invoked in Homer's hymns as the "bringer of seasons". The rituals dedicated to her are better known as Elusinian Mysteries, during which songs and dances became prayer thanks to the use of a drum, depicted in the archaeological finds that are visible in Pompei and Herculaneum's archaeological dig. The goddesses assured the faithful health and prosperity in this life, and hopes of salvation in the afterlife through some rituals. The devoted had to eat a traditional meal, to enter in a place reserved to the rite (as the *Tosello*), to see the sacred signs and to receive the revelation: the truth about the world, about where we come from and where we are going to.

The cycle of mysteries started in February with the Lesser Mysteries (with the rite of Candlemas in Montevergine) and lasted until September (Greater Mysteries) when started the pilgrimage of Nymphs to Eleusis (just like the *juta* to Montevergine). The Phrygian mysteries started in the spring with two processions to the temple of Cibele: the second (22th March) was the most important and consisted of take a procession with a pine cut and without branches, wrapped in red bandages of wool and decorated with flowers and musical instruments. The ceremony was known as *Arbor Intrat* and, according to some sources, over the time pine trees have been replaced by palm trees and the celebration have been renamed, with the advent of Jesus Christ, the Palm Sunday. On 25th March, a day named *Hilaria* that means Joy (the period of the year when is celebrated the Lady of the Hens), was celebrated the symbolic rebirth of the god Attis (the goatherd loved by Cybele that cheated on her and, for fear, emasculated himself with his own hands bleeding to death) and the joyous assertion of Spring (renamed Easter by Catholic Christians). The cycle ended with dances and songs, and the statue of Cybele was brought back to the temple.

Sometimes, during the ritual, the priests of Cybele – named also Korybantēs – praying, screaming and dancing with obsessive rhythms and mystical exaltation, hurt themselves till the emasculation in order to ensure their devotion to the Great Mother. The emasculation was also an act made in order to look like Cybele and, in this way, to acquire a superior power. To these priests was attributed the power of interpret dreams and to guess the future through hens, birds' flight and the progress of the stars. The eunuch priests wore feminine clothes that in the majority of shamanic cultures give a sacral value to men that dress up and act like women: this thing links shamanic faculty, ritual emasculation and homosexuality.



Director's biography

Elisa Flaminia Inno was born in Naples. She holds a degree in documentary cinematography from the DAMS of Rome and a Diploma in direction of documentary format from the INIS – Institut National de l'Image et du son, in Montreal. Since 2006 she works in Rome as freelance filmmaker and cooperates with various production companies into direction and production departments. In 2009 she directs *A Stefano*, her first documentary short film, that was shown during various festivals in Europe and Canada. In 2014 she took a degree in international co-production of documentary and started to work as producer too.

Filmography

- "PAGANI" doc – 52" – Parallelo41, Italy
- "COSTA D'ANGOLO" doc – 30" - 15Zerosei, Italy
- "MAINDOEUVRE" doc – 8" – INIS, Canada
- "A STEFANO" doc - 5" – INIS, Canada



Producer's biography

Antonella Di Nocera founded in 2002 Parallelo 41 produzioni, an independent production company producing and promoting films and culture, particularly with talents and potential of emerging filmmakers. Parallelo 41 produces primarily social and creative documentaries, distributed and awarded in several festivals in Europe. Among many others, *Corde* awarded in Torino, *Il segreto* by Cyp and kaf awarded with Joris Ivens Award and Best First film Mention at Cinema du Reel 2014 and best Italian documentary 2014 for *Le Cose Belle*. In 2014 she founds and directs a centre for film education and production in documentaries Filmap – Atelier di cinema del reale in Napoli where she produces short and long documentary projects from young directors.

Filmography as producer

- "PAGANI", 2016, 52'
- "UNI INFERNO", 2016, 15 m
- "A MAZZAMMA", 2016, 13 m
- "IL FOGLIO", 2015, 20'
- "LE COSE BELLE", 2013, 88'
- "IL SEGRETO", 2013, 89'
- "LA SECONDA NATURA", 2012, 58'
- "CORDE", 2010, 55'
- "LA FABBRICA INCERTA", 2009, 50'
- "RENATO BARISANI . ASTRAZIONE NAPOLETANA", 2007, 25'

The production company

Parallelo 41 produzioni was founded in 2002 with the goal of developing young talent and independent contents, as well as promoting international output and relations from Naples in audiovisuals. A notional bridge spanning geographic distances to seek out opportunities for collaboration and creativity based on local expertise and professionalism, looking towards unexplored potential for production, workshops, educational and cultural events. The company's fundamental asset is the twenty-year experience of Arci Movie in the promotion of film, education and culture. The work enhanced by encounters with writing and film creatives, artists and professionals and the establishment of new partnerships. Aesthetic principles are informed by digital technologies, minimal crews, street locations, characters and stories that originate in reality and narratives that question and recount it. Since 2013 the cooperative is a partner of FILMAP, training and production centre located in Naples, and it coordinates the productions of the *Atelier di cinema del reale* directed by Leonardo Di Costanzo. Among the projects produced by Antonella Di Nocera for Parallelo 41:

***Le cose belle* by Agostino Ferrente e Giovanni Piperno (2013, 88 m.)**

Best film | VI edition SalinaDocFest 2013; BEST ITALIAN DOCUMENTARY 2013 | Doc/it Professional Award 2013 and Italian Audience Award and International Audience Award; SPECIAL MENTION | XVIII edition MedFilm Festival; AZZEDDINE MEDDOUR AWARD | International Festival of Mediterranean Film in Tetouan 2013; SPECIAL MENTION ITALIA DOC FESTIVAL | Bellaria Film Festival 2013; SPECIAL MENTION | CASA ROSSA DOC; SPECIAL MENTION | Visioni Fuori Raccordo Film Festival 2013; YOUNG JURY PRIZE | Annecy Cinéma Italien 2013; BEST DOCUMENTARY | Festival dei Popoli e delle Religioni 2013; SPECIAL MENTION | Rencontres du Cinéma Italien à Toulouse 2013; SCHOOL OF CINEMA'S AWARD | Festival del Cinema Italiano di Como 2014; CARIDDI AWARD FOR BEST ITALIAN DOCUMENTARY OF THE YEAR and GOLDEN CARIDDINO AWARD Students Jury Agiscuola – Anec | Taormina Film Fest 2014; BEST PRODUCTION AWARD to Antonella Di Nocera; GRAND PRIX | Fauto Doc Fest 2014; AUDIENCE AWARD and SPECIAL PRIZE "OWN AIR" | Siciliambiente Documentary Film Festival 2014.

***Il Segreto* by Cyop&kaf (2013, 89 m.)**

NOMINATION BEST DOCUMENTARY 2014 | David di Donatello; JURY SPECIAL MENTION TFF 2013 AND SPECIAL MENTION -JORIS IVENS PRIZE | Best Debut Film Cinema du reel 2014; YOUNG JURY SPECIAL MENTION | Cinema du reel 2014; BEST FILM FESTIVAL TERRA DI CINEMA | Tremblay in France 2014; JURY SPECIAL MENTION | Bellaria Film Festival 2014; SPECIAL MENTION | Doc Lisboa; SPECIAL PRIZE OF THE JURY | 1st Fronteira - International Festival of Documentary and Experimental Film; BEST FILM Napoli Film Festival 2014.

***La seconda natura* by Marcello Sannino (2012 58 m.)**

ITALIAN DOC JURY SPECIAL MENTION | Torino Film Festival 2012; UCCA VENTI CITTÀ AWARD | Torino Film Festival 2012; FIRST PRIZE OF THE JURY | Territori-Contest 013 Nuovo Cinema Aquila Roma.

***Corde* by Marcello Sannino (2009, 62 m.)**

SPECIAL PRIZE OF THE JURY | 28° Bellaria Film Festival; "Casa Rossa Doc" BEST DOCUMENTARY | Bellaria Film festival 2010; SPECIAL PRIZE OF THE JURY | Italiana Doc - 27° Torino Film Festival; AVANTI AWARD (Agency for the valorization of the new italian authors) | 27° Torino Film Festival; SPECIAL MENTION UCCA | 27° Torino Film Festival; SECOND PRIZE | INDOX 2010 Festival; "Casa Rossa Doc" - VESUVIO AWARD FOR BEST DIRECTOR – *Napoli film festival 2010*; SPECIAL PRIZE OF THE JURY | Euganea film festival 2010; "Tasca d'Almerita" AWARD FOR THE BEST DOCUMENTARY FILM | SalinaDocFest 2010; "Selection Award – Documentary in theatres" [CINEMA.DOC] | SalinaDocFest 2010; SPECIAL MENTION | Obiettivi sul lavoro 2010 ; SPECIAL PRIZE OF THE JURY FOR THE BEST FILM | Festival Terra di Cinema 2011-Tremblay-en-France.