

DOMENICO PROCACCI e RAI CINEMA  
presentano

Elena COTTA

Federica ROSELLINI



# DOVE CADONO LE OMBRE

un film di  
VALENTINA PEDICINI



DOMENICO PROCACCI e RAI CINEMA presentano una produzione FANDANGO con RAI CINEMA "DOVE CADONO LE OMBRE" un film di VALENTINA PEDICINI  
ELENA COTTA FEDERICA ROSELLINI JOSAFAT VAGNI LUCREZIA GUIDONE  
SOGGETTO E SCENEGGIATURA FRANCESCA MANIERI VALENTINA PEDICINI CASTING ANNA MARIA SAMBUCCO AUTORE REGIA MARCELLA LIBONATI COSTUMI ANDREA CAVALLETTO SCENOGRAFIA CRISTINA DEL ZOTTO MUSICHE ALESSANDRO PAOLINI STEFANO GROSSO MONTAGGIO GIORGIO FRANCHINI FOTOGRAFIA VLADAN RADOVIC  
ORGANIZZATORE GENERALE IVAN FIORINI DELEGATO DI PRODUZIONE EMANUELE SCARINGI RESPONSABILE AMMINISTRATIVO CLAUDIO ZAMPETTI PRODUTTORE DELEGATO LAURA PAOLUCCI PRODOTTO DA DOMENICO PROCACCI REGIA DI VALENTINA PEDICINI  
FILM RICONOSCIUTO DI INTERESSE CULTURALE CON IL CONTRIBUTO ECONOMICO DEL MINISTERO DEI BENI E DELLE ATTIVITÀ CULTURALI E DEL TURISMO



REALIZZATO CON IL SOSTEGNO DELLA REGIONE LAZIO - FONDO REGIONALE PER IL CINEMA E L'AUDIOVISIVO



FANDANGO

DAL 6 SETTEMBRE AL CINEMA

Rai Cinema



**DOMENICO PROCACCI and RAI CINEMA**

present

# WHERE THE SHADOWS FALL

a film by

**VALENTINA PEDICINI**

with

**ELENA COTTA, FEDERICA ROSELLINI,  
JOSAFAT VAGNI and LUCREZIA GUIDONE**

Produced by **Domenico Procacci**

A **Fandango** production with **Rai Cinema**

**In cinemas from 6 September**

Distribution by **Fandango Distribuzione**

Film recognized as a work of cultural interest, with an economic contribution  
Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo Direzione Generale Cinema



Work produced with the support of **Regione Lazio**  
Fondo regionale per il cinema e l'audiovisivo



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## CREW

<b>DIRECTED BY</b>	VALENTINA PEDICINI
<b>STORY and SCREENPLAY</b>	FRANCESCA MANIERI VALENTINA PEDICINI
<b>DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY</b>	VLADAN RADOVIC
<b>EDITING</b>	GIOGIO' FRANCHINI
<b>MUSIC</b>	ALESSANDRO PAOLINI STEFANO GROSSO
<b>PRODUCTION DESIGNER</b>	CRISTINA DEL ZOTTO
<b>FLOOR SOUND ENGINEER</b>	ALESSANDRO ROLLA
<b>PRODUCTION CO-ORDINATOR</b>	IVAN FIORINI
<b>ASSISTANT DIRECTOR</b>	MARCELLA LIBONATI
<b>SOUND EDITING</b>	STEFANO GROSSO
<b>CASTING</b>	ANNA MARIA SAMBUCCO
<b>COSTUME DESIGNER</b>	ANDREA CAVALLETTO
<b>DELEGATE PRODUCER</b>	EMANUELE SCARINGI
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER</b>	CLAUDIO ZAMPETTI (As.n.a.c.)
<b>PRODUCTION MANAGER</b>	CHRISTIAN PERITORE

## PRODUCTION

<b>PRODUCTION</b>	FANDANGO with RAI CINEMA
<b>PRODUCED BY</b>	DOMENICO PROCACCI
<b>DELEGATE PRODUCER</b>	LAURA PAOLUCCI
<b>WITH A CONTRIBUTION BY</b>	MIBACT
<b>WITH SUPPORT FROM</b>	REGIONE LAZIO
<b>RUNTIME</b>	103'
<b>COUNTRY</b>	ITALIA

## CAST ARTISTICO

**GERTRUD**

ELENA COTTA

**ANNA**

FEDERICA ROSELLINI

**HANS**

JOSAFAT VAGNI

**FRANSISKA**

LUCREZIA GUIDONE

**ANNA (CHILD)**

DANILA DI SIMIO

**FRANSISKA (CHILD)**

ELENA DE LUCA

**HANS (CHILD)**

FEDERICO MARTINI

**ILSE**

RAFFAELLA PANICHI

**MATHIAS**

FEDERICO TOCCI

**ARTHUR**

ALBERTO CRACCO

**PAUL**

PIETRO BIONDI

**THOMAS**

UGO INNAMORATI

**MARIO**

ALESSANDRO BRESSANELLO

**ARTHUR**

ALBERTO CRACCO

**KATARINA**

LAURA MAZZI

## SYNOPSIS

Anna and Hans, a nurse and her assistant in an old nursing home, have the souls of two "children" trapped in adults' bodies.

Trapped in time and space, they move about the rooms and gardens of what was once an orphanage, as if leading a complete life from childhood to death; as if there were no more welcoming place on earth than the one that imprisoned them in childhood.

From the past, Gertrud reappears – an old woman with a kind manner. Everything seems to precipitate; the ribbon of horror appears to be rewound.

The evil is white, like Gertrud's gown, like the walls of the western wing, the torture area. The facility then loses its current shape and goes back to being what it was: a cruel shelter for Yenish children taken away from their families, the temple of a eugenics project spearheaded by Gertrud herself.

Anna, a slave to that place and to a painful childhood that never ends, forcefully resumes her search for Franziska, her beloved friend from a life she has long ago lost all traces of, and that she searches for everywhere, ceaselessly.

Inspired by a true story – by seven hundred true stories.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

The cinematographic project *Dove cadono le ombre* [*Where the shadows fall*] is the result of a documentary project based on a true and little-known story that I had been following for four years. From 1926 to 1986 in Switzerland, between six hundred and two thousand Yenish children (a nomadic population of Germanic origin) were taken by force from their families with a single purpose: the cancellation of their identity in order to uproot the nomadic phenomenon. Placed in orphanages and psychiatric hospitals, these children were subject to abuse and maltreatment. The “little Swiss genocide” has never been attributed to a single guilty party: the doctors, politicians and bureaucrats involved have never been convicted.

The first time I met Mariella Mehr, a Yenish poet and writer, one of the very few to have survived, there was one question which began to torment me. How much suffering can a human being withstand? Is there a life-time quantity, a limit beyond which a person breaks down? Is it possible to pardon one's torturer? In order to tell such a difficult story, I immediately felt that the best choice would be to use the language of fiction, something which I had wanted to experiment for some time. Thanks to the screenplay by Francesca Manieri, *Dove cadono le ombre* turned into a dark fable, a reflection on revenge and pardon, an examination of love lived and a kind of love which consumes, of feelings which exist over time and space in a closed universe which is visionary, yet realistic.

Shadows and light, abstract atmospheres, the sound of earth being dug and nursery rhymes, the bodies of the old, and of children who never grew up. All presented as though in a dream, where the horror is never explicit, but is lived, felt, and hinted at.

The protagonists of the film are all prisoners in some way: prisoners of the past, of memories, of ideology, of lies.

Anna, Hans and Gertrud are the points of a triangle of suffering, protagonists in a closed and claustrophobic universe where repeated injustice and physical and psychological violence are the only dynamic acts capable of provoking sentimental contact between victims and torturers.

The idea of the prison, the captivity to which the children were subject and the principles of Eugenics which drive Gertrud, conditioned the visual choices for the film.

Everything is obsessively concentrated within the enclosed spaces of the corridors and sparsely furnished rooms, of the barred windows which let light in but from which it is impossible to see the world outside. Filmed entirely with natural light, *Dove cadono le ombre* is therefore constructed through fixed framings. I wanted to lead the spectator to “feel” and perceive, in an almost sensorial manner, this strange condition of immobilised humanity, of drained identity, of imprisoned bodies.

Vladan Radovic's camera obsessively follows the face and body of Anna, marking her progressive awakening from a fourteen year-long nightmare. Anna of the un-archivable identity, Anna the resistant, Anna the cold character, is the star around which the other characters orbit: Ilse, the old child; Hans, the gravedigger; Franziska, the ghost and beating heart of an obsession, of the sense of guilt which moves through all of the rooms and souls of this story; Gertrud, the wicked stepmother and torturer.

I have always imagined the relationship between Anna and Gertrud as a long chess game which can suddenly turn into something not dissimilar from a boxing match. From silence to controlled violence, from the movement of one's chess piece to a blow to the face. No blood, however, no red. There are no visible “humours” in the film: neither the sores on Gertrud's body, nor the wounds inflicted on Hans, nor the signs of the corporal punishment than Anna was subjected to as a child.

Evil is ice-cold here.

Evil is white, just like Gertrud's coat, like the walls of the “west wing”, the torture area.

White and speechless, like a past that is too hard to face.

The present is blue, an endless blue like the sky which these prisoners are not allowed to see, like the reflection in a lake behind which nothingness lies.

A tale of loss, of abandonment, of the “faults” of mothers, the consequences of which fall on their children. A story, above all, of children: taken away, abused, removed, and cancelled from history.

*Valentina Pedicini*

## “THE LITTLE SWISS GENOCIDE”

An unknown story which took place not far away and not so long ago. In Switzerland, in the period from 1926 to 1986, a philanthropic association, the Pro Juventute (similar to the Red Cross) took away 2000 children from Yenish families (the third largest nomadic population after the Romani and the Sinti) in order to eradicate the phenomenon of nomadism. The children were locked away in psychiatric hospitals, orphanages and prisons. They were subjected to scientific experiments and violent medical practices, such as sterilisation, in order to cancel their identity and transform them into “honest Swiss citizens”. Many were never heard of again. A “little genocide” which has never been spoken of, and which continued right up to modern times.

One survivor, Mariella Mehr, a child taken away from her mother, a woman and mother who in turn was violated, found salvation in poetry and literature. Her novels (*The trilogy of violence: Daskind [The child], Brandzauber [Magic Fire], Angeklagt [Accused]*) and her poetry have made her famous throughout Europe. Mariella has also become an important witness of the persecution suffered by the Yenish; her long battle for public accusation against the Pro Juventute began in 1972, when Mehr brought together Yenish families who had suffered the same fate, creating a protest association and publicly fighting via the press. Invited by media organisations throughout Europe to participate in radio and television transmissions to speak about her writing, which many compare to Paul Celan or Nelly Sachs, making her one of the most intense authors of the twentieth century, she uses the greatness of her poetry to denounce one of the darkest moments in twentieth-century Swiss history.

## VALENTINA PEDICINI

### **Short film**

2016 - Era Ieri

### **Documentary**

2013 - Dal Profondo

2011 - My Marlboro City

2010 - Mio Sovversivo amore

2009 - Pater Noster

## FEDERICA ROSELLINI

### **Cinema**

2015 - Il manoscritto di A. Rondalli

### **Television**

2017 - Non uccidere 2 di C. Noce

2015 - Grand Hotel di L. Ribuoli

2014 - 1992 di G Gagliardi

## ELENA COTTA

### **Cinema**

2016 - Il Camionista di L.Gaudino

2013 - Via Castellana Bandiera di E. Dante

2000 - Terza Generazione di K.Wood

1970 - Le tue mani sul mio corpo di B. Rondi

1959 - Arriva la banda di T. Boccia

1952 - La leggende del Piave di R. Freda

### **Television**

1970 - Diversamente dagli altri di L. Perelli

1959 - Giulietta e Romeo di F. Enriquez

1957 - Tessa la Ninfa Fedele di M. Ferrero

1951 - Le due verità di G. Fina



## JOSAFAT VAGNI

### **Cinema**

2017/2016 - Una questione privata di P. e V. Taviani  
2015 - Pecore in erba di A. Caviglia  
2015/2014 - Maraviglioso Boccaccio di P. e V. Taviani  
2013 - Arance e martello di D. Bianchi  
2012 - Come non detto di I. Silvestrini  
2012 - Acab di S. Sollima

### **Television**

2016 - Matrimoni e altre follie di L. Muscardin  
2013 - The Borgias 3 di M. Huseiyn  
2010 - Romanzo Criminale 2 - La serie - di S. Sollima  
2010 - Ho sposato uno sbirro di A. Barzini  
2009 - Boris III Serie di D. Marengo  
2009 - Preferisco il paradiso di G. Campiotti  
2009 - Rex III Serie di M. Serafini

## THE TRILOGY OF VIOLENCE

Mariella Mehr

Mariella Mehr has written numerous novels, four collections of poetry (in 2014 Einaudi published an anthology of poetry by Mariella Mehr entitled *Ognuno incatenato alla sua ora* [Everyone chained to their hour], curated and translated by Anna Ruchat) as well as various theatrical works.

**Fandango Libri has purchased the Italian rights to the novels which make up the “trilogy of violence”, and they intend to publish the books, starting in 2018.** The publication will be curated by Anna Ruchat, who also handled the first publication of the works in Italy for the publishing house Effigie.

### Das kind

If there is a trace of autobiography in this novel, it is not so much in the story that is told, but rather in the way that the characters interact, and in particular in the primary relationship between the child and the world: “The child has no name.” Without a name or a voice, the child adopted in a village, which is also nameless, is the hard core, the stone nucleus of this novel. We are in a situation of repeated abuse, where physical and psychological violence is the only dynamic element capable of provoking occasional contact between victims and torturers. The roles are exchanged and at times it almost seems as if the child, with her bitter and resistant presence, is able to bring back to the surface a trace of tenderness in a number of those cancelled individuals, and to return to them the movement they have lost. But oppression prevails, the mass sanctimoniousness of the village reabsorbs all attempts to escape from the group, and responds by reinforcing that empty circularity which rejects anything which does not adapt.

### Brandzauber

Anna Kreuz is an orderly in a Swiss hotel-nursing home. She has an unhealthy relationship with plants and insects. She is meticulous in her work. The arrival of a new patient which reminds her of a past friendship leads Anna to relive the loving relationship which bound her to a school companion. Little by little we see the emergence of the imaginary or real past story of the tormented bond between the two girls, a Nomad and a Jew, united by their common condition of outcasts. The story is revealed to us through illuminations and sudden images which provide suggestions of what happened, or more precisely of that which the narrator feels to be the truth in a story in which reality and imagination, or nightmare, intertwine, evoked with a crude and fragmented language.

### Angeklagt

Accused of murder and arson, Kari Selb battles with the court psychologist to prove, though an unrelenting monologue, the full possession of her faculties, her past and her life. In the heated speech, which brings out both herself and her alter-ego Malik - her other self, the one that acts - Kari Selb gradually develops the fantasies of a serial killer. Without ever falling into the categories of justice and guilt, Kari-Malik plays out the crimes on the stage of her mutilated and eroded mind, thus finding confirmation of herself, in the moment in which all other identity is denied her.

### Fandango Libri press office

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