



Locarno Festival
Concorso internazionale

NEFERTITI FILM and RAI CINEMA

present

MENOCCHIO

a film by

ALBERTO FASULO

produced by

NEFERTITI FILM with RAI CINEMA

in co-production with

HAI-HUI ENTERTAINMENT

with the support of

**MIBACT - DIREZIONE GENERALE CINEMA
FONDO PER L'AUDIOVISIVO DEL FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA
FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA FILM COMMISSION
TRENTINO FILM COMMISSION
CNC - Centrul National al Cinematografieii**

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director	ALBERTO FASULO
producer	NADIA TREVISAN
co-producer	BOGDAN CRĂCIUN
treatment	ALBERTO FASULO
script	ENRICO VECCHI ALBERTO FASULO historic, scientific and literary consultants ANDREA DEL COL, GIAN PAOLO GRI, ALDO COLONNELLO, ROSANNA PARONI BERTOJA, CIRC. CULTURALE MENOCCHIO historical research based on the work DOMENICO SCANDELLA detto MENOCCHIO <i>I PROCESSI DELL'INQUISIZIONE (1583-1599)</i> by ANDREA DEL COL <i>the transcripts of the inquisition trial of Domenico Scandella called Menocchio</i> <i>are kept at the Archivio Arcivescovile in Udine</i>
editing	JOHANNES HIROSHI NAKAJIMA
production design	ANTON ŠPACAPAN VONČINA
costume design	VIORICA PETROVICI
photography	ALBERTO FASULO
original music	PAOLO FORTE
sound	MIRREL CRISTEA SEBASTIAN ZSEMLYE
sound editing	RICCARDO SPAGNOL STEFANO GROSSO DANIELA BASSANI
make-up	BIANCA BOEROIU
assistant director	CHIARA SANTO
line producer	ANDREA BADIN
production director	CLAUDIA SORANZO
produced by	NEFERTITI FILM
with	RAI CINEMA
in co-production with	HAI-HUI ENTERTAINMENT (Romania)
with the support of	MINISTERO dei BENI e delle ATTIVITÀ CULTURALI e del TURISMO DIREZIONE GENERALE CINEMA Fondo per l'audiovisivo del FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA FILM COMMISSION TRENTINO FILM COMMISSION CNC - Centrul National al Cinematografiei

year of production: 2018
an ITALIAN – ROMANIAN co-production
trt: 103' | DCP | COLOR | 2.35 | DOLBY
genre: historical drama
languages: Italian, Friuli dialect, Latin

MARCELLO MARTINI	<i>Menocchio</i>
MAURIZIO FANIN	<i>Inquisitor</i>
CARLO BALDRACCHI	<i>Prison warden Parvis</i>
NILLA PATRIZIO	<i>Wife</i>
EMANUELE BERTOSSI	<i>Zanutto</i>
AGNESE FIOR	<i>Daughter</i>
MIRKO ARTUSO	<i>Father Melchiorri</i>
GIUSEPPE SCARFÌ	<i>Vicar general</i>
DAVID WILKINSON	<i>Chancellor to the inquisitor</i>
ROBERTO DELLAI	<i>Bishop Maro</i>
GINO SEGATTI	<i>Father Vorai</i>

Italy, late 16th century. The Roman Catholic Church, feeling threatened in its hegemony by the Protestant reform movement, unleashes the first systematic state war for the total mind control. The new confessional, designed in these very years, is transformed from a space for the consolation of souls to a tribunal of thought. Eavesdropping, spying and denunciation of neighbors are made mandatory, on the pain of excommunication, prison or the pyre. Menocchio, the old, stubborn, self-educated miller of a small village lost in the mountains of Friuli decides to oppose the new order. Accused of heresy, he ignores the pleading of friends and family. Instead of fleeing or standing down, he stands trial. He is not only tired of violence, abuse, taxes and injustice. Menocchio is genuinely convinced that as a man, he is the equal of any bishop, the inquisitors, and even the Pope and hopes, feels and believes he can reconvert them to an ideal of poverty and love.

Menocchio is very different from my previous films. It is a project that has been on my mind since my school days when I heard about Menocchio for the first time, and perhaps it has matured inside of me in the intervening years. The encounter with the Menocchio Association of Montereale Valcellina and my study of the original trial transcripts have been equally important as distancing myself from Carlo Ginzburg's famous "The Cheese and the Worms". This film is my own personal account of what drove Menocchio to his public insurrection.

The greatest challenge was render concrete the conscience of this miller, this battlefield of abstract theory that I felt lay at the heart of my new film.

When we first laid out the script, we considered his conscience as an individual fact. But as we entered into the depth of our research, we became aware little by little that we had no chance of capturing the multiple dimensions, the actuality and urgency we felt in the material without the third essential element of our tale: the community of his village.

Deep down, the contest of Menocchio's story plays out in this triangle of the power of the system, the individual and the community.

Here, we identified the heart of the matter, because the parable of Menocchio is not about a martyr, sent to the pyre in the name of his ideas. Or rather it is not just that. His story is more complex, more contradictory, closer, more human, because a heretic who decides to disavow his own ideas not only has to come to terms with his own conscience, but also with the stain this repudiation leaves on the community to which he belongs, especially if he has spent years and years pronouncing his own version of the world, swearing that he was ready to die in its defense.

We can speculate about the personal reasons that led Menocchio to his disavowal, and this is something each viewer can do at leisure, taking a position for or against a character whose only real guilt was to try and improve the world he lived in.

Is it a sin to want to improve the world? To question one's culture? The status quo? What would have been the right thing to think, say, and do? Do we have to subject ourselves to this world, to our living conditions or try to change them?

I never intended to realize a history film, searching for an improbable (perhaps impossible) philological fidelity to events. Instead, I meant to challenge the historical genre to create a shortcut with reality and refocus the viewer's attention onto the intrinsic value of Menocchio.

From the beginning I felt the necessity to face this character, recognizing an obvious moral stature in him. But then I understood that the gamut of his actions (and of the reflections that fire him up) is much wider. Everything around the protagonist ends up being involved until it takes center stage. This is a visceral, strong, existential, direct revelation about life and death that in its declination between man and man, man and matter, matter and thought reveals our atavistic roots.

In an era when even the least hint of ethics, the sacred or the spiritual is ridiculed, destroyed, taken apart with a simple tweet or Facebook comment, this parable is highly relevant: one man trying desperately to find a way to fight power but finds himself instead facing his own fears, the betrayals

and complicities of the friends who want to silence him. Having said that, I don't want to give a one-dimensional lecture in my film. I would rather open a debate on the ethics of an individual insofar as he is part of a community as he confronts power.

I believe that cinema is an art of encounters between many different forms of art that together become something else again, an encounter with a character that becomes an obsession, with an actor who incarnates a character he has in his head. In this film I certainly had many encounters, and certainly the one with Marcello Martin was the moment in which I thought I really had to make this film because it is not easy to find someone who both in his biography and in his very nature is so close to the character I imagined.

I began to ease into the film by spending hours and hours in museums studying the details in the works of painters who in the 15th century were Menocchio's contemporaries. It was my first attempt to do a genre film, but I was less frightened than curious. Having many questions regarding all aspects of the film, I started searching answers in the pictures and frescoes of the time. In absolute freedom, I began to lay out how I would want to see the film from the viewer's perspective. Another important aspect of this moment was the realization that the people depicted in front of me were unknown, not famous, but simple people who became characters through their faces, their posture, their dress and their environment. This helped me as I decided whether to work with established actors who would be immediately recognizable or with lay actors. I chose to make the film with simple people and to be guided in my choice by the way they looked on film, by their biographies, the sensations I had when taking their picture for the first time in a street casting.

It has been a long way through the valleys of Friuli and Piedmont, in Val Pesarina und Val Cimoliana where like an ethnographer I tried to put together the human crowd around my Menocchio.

I wanted to compress 500 years of differences and make the contemporary spectator sense how close these people and hence their story is. It's banal to say that the story of this miller speaks to us today; perhaps it is more important to experience the psychological process that set Menocchio against himself.

Alberto Fasulo

ALBERTO FASULO

Born in 1976, Fasulo started his career in cinema as assistant director in both features and creative documentaries, learning by doing on set. In 2008, he directed his first full-length feature, the documentary *Rumore Bianco*, selected for many festivals and released theatrically in Italy. *Rumore Bianco* established him as a new promising author in Italian cinema. In 2013, he directed his first fiction feature *TIR*, for which he won the Marc'Aurelio d'Oro award for best film at the VIII edition of the Rome International Film Festival. In 2015, the 68. Locarno Film Festival selected his film *Genitori*, a documentary that takes a new perspective on disability, avoiding piety, rhetoric or irony.

NADIA TREVISAN

Nadia Trevisan graduated in psychology. In 2013, she founded, together with Alberto Fasulo, Nefertiti Film where she serves as legal representative. Since then, she has produced fiction features and documentaries on an international level. In 2013, *TIR* by Alberto Fasulo won the Marc'Aurelio d'Oro award for best film at the VIII edition of the Rome International Film Festival and went on to over 30 festival appearances all over the world. In 2015, *GENITORI* by Alberto Fasulo was presented at the 68 Locarno Film Festival Out of Competition.

In 2018, she co-produced "*History of Love*" by Sonja Prosenc, shown in Competition at the 53. Karlovy Vary Film Festival where it was awarded a Special Mention by the Jury for artistic merit.

In the same year, she produced "*Menocchio*" by Alberto Fasulo, selected for the Competition at the 71. Locarno Film Festival.

Nadia took part in the Producers Network -Le Marché du Film Cannes and is a member of EAVE – European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs and EWA - European Women's Audiovisual Network.

NEFERTITI FILM

Nefertiti Film is an independent film production company rooted in the trans-border area of Northern Italy and well-integrated in the international cinema landscape. The company realizes research projects intended not only for the cinema, with a strong propensity towards projects with an authorial bend and maintaining an artisanal vision of making movies. Nefertiti's films emphasize the active role of the viewer: the screen is a point of departure for a reflection that begins with watching the film and continues in each viewer's daily life. Nefertiti Film can already look back upon many awards and participations in international film festivals.