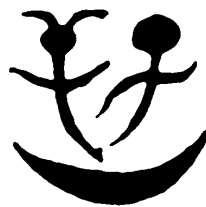


Adelphi Edizioni

Frankfurter Buchmesse 2019

Rights List



Fabio Bacà

Benevolenza cosmica

«Fabula», 192 pages



“The world’s a really weird place”.

Kurt O’Reilly just can’t catch a break. A flabbergasted eye specialist tells him that all the known cases of a slight ailment afflicting him have actually ended in tragedy – all, that is, except for his. As he’s stretched out in a tattoo parlour, a drop-dead-gorgeous porn star lets him catch a glimpse of heaven just waiting for him. His investments grow in leaps and bounds. Even the cabbie driving him back and forth in a future London insists the fare is on the house.

Yes – there’s definitely someone plotting against him; all Kurt can do is try to figure out who it is and why. Bit by bit, the machination emerges – and that’s all we can say here because the machination is in fact this unique, compelling and highly amusing novel itself.

Fabio Bacà was born in San Benedetto del Tronto in 1972. He lives in Alba Adriatica. After working as a journalist for a few years, he now teaches low-impact exercise. This is his first novel.

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Fabio Bacà

Benevolenza cosmica

«Fabula», February 2019

This is the chronicle of events that befell a person who could best be called a quiet man, a typical product of the affluent west, wealthy and uninvolved, whose upbringing was entrenched in the tenets of science and reason. Until, that is, something happened, as paradoxical as it was unexpected, that obliged him to reassess the element of surprise in life.

Brilliant, ironic, fast paced and moving.

Thirty six hours in the life of Kurt O'Reilly, brilliant London-born head of the National Statistics Bureau happily married to a successful novelist – “overly obsessed with women but fundamentally faithful” who every day for a hundred days is shackled to a never-ending run of good fortune that comes close to turning his very existence into a living nightmare.

At every turn, he is accosted by an endless stream of young women of manifest availability, his stocks and shares are on an upswing that knows no limit, he benefits from undeserved promotion, he is told that a serious eye condition has gone into total remission without treatment, and by a bizarre set of circumstances his taxi fares are quashed by the cabbies themselves. Culmination is reached when circumstances that ought to incur catastrophe instead lead to benefits that beggar belief.

“It’s as though God or the universe or some kind of supernatural power has decided that my life ought to follow some kind of order and timing. It’s torture; you see yourself powerless to stop running after a wish list of events which just keeps getting more unbearable by the day...”, Kurt confides to his close buddy, UN official Bob Lewis. Bob’s take on the matter, however, leaves no room for the fanciful. Fully convinced that his friend’s troubles are all in the mind, he insists that Kurt seek psychiatric help. Far from solving the problem, however, this sets Kurt headlong on a mission of initiation in which things go from bad to worse. A complete stranger dies in his arms in an exclusive club in Clapham, an armed robber tries to shoot him but botches it, an agent from Special Branch does actually shoot him in one of the narrow lanes of the City but by mistake and at every turn not only does Kurt come out unscathed but with some unexpected advantage or benefit also coming his way.

In the end it takes a woman – the ageing owner of a model agency and unexpected (and unsuspected) expert of the occult – to come to Kurt’s aid with the theory that since the end game is always zero sum there must be someone out there to whom Kurt is closely linked “someone you know or are about to know who is dogged by the negative mirror image

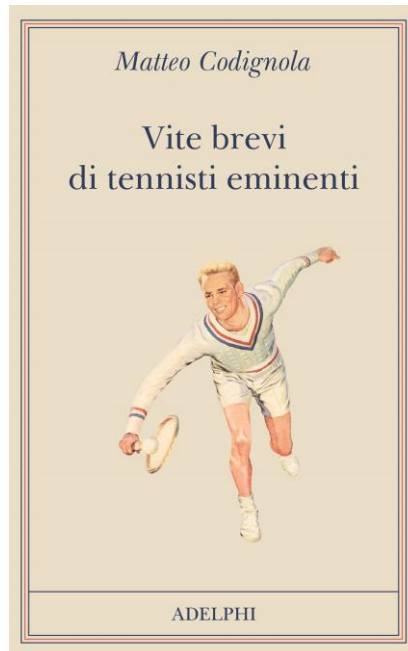
version of what happens to you". To begin with Kurt rejects the idea out of hand. Even if it were true how do you go about finding the person you're looking for among eight million fellow Londoners? In despair, however, he embarks on one last ditch attempt. Reaching out to ex-fellow students, retired teachers, friends and lovers from the past he makes a number of phone calls that range from the tragic to the comic, but all to no avail. By this time, Kurt is a nervous wreck. Any residual hope of ever being surprised again has vanished and any chance of ever meeting his alter ego looks even more remote. Starting to feel the inevitability of defeat he turns his footsteps homeward and as he approaches his own front door he narrowly misses being run over by an ambulance, lights flashing and sirens wailing. A couple of neighbours standing by tell him that they had called the ambulance to rush his wife, Elizabeth, to hospital because she was plainly very unwell. Kurt sets off in hot pursuit and gets to nearby Hammersmith General Hospital shortly after the ambulance. Elizabeth is being prepared for an ultrasound. Yes she was pregnant - fifteen weeks with a baby girl - and no she hadn't told him because the pregnancy was high-risk from the start. He was obviously under great stress and strain himself and she didn't want to add the prospect of losing the baby to his list of woes. "It's as though our little baby has run out of luck before she even gets started" she remarked. Kurt is thunderstruck, now realising the coincidence of his one hundred days of outrageous good fortune exactly matching his unborn child's fifteen week's outrageous lack of it. Is then his baby daughter his alter ego? his negative mirror image? Are then his and his daughter's destinies inextricably bound together? The ending does not reveal if the father's good luck will suffice to beat the daughter's bad luck into submission. Similarly the novel as a whole offers no explanation as to why Kurt should be subjected to the events described, save in the form of conjecture, more or less unlikely, expressed by the characters involved.

Fabio Bacà was born in San Benedetto del Tronto in 1972. He lives in Alba Adriatica, a small town on Italy's Adriatic coast. He studied journalism at the University of Macerata subsequently exercising the profession for short periods writing for local dailies and periodicals. In 2008 he began work as a low-impact gymnastics and functional fitness instructor, a period that coincided with writing works of fiction, two of which won awards in nationwide literary competitions. *Benevolenza cosmica*, forthcoming from Adelphi in early 2019, is his first novel.

Matteo Codignola

Vite brevi di tennisti eminenti

«Fabula», 304 pages



Tennis as an incitement to tell.

Before Jack Kramer, the strapping young lad on the cover, bound it forever in the straitjacket of professionalism, tennis was a free and mostly alien world, where everyone seemed to give the game their very own spin. Torben Ulrich pursued the perfect sound of the ball on the strings, whether he was playing indoors or outdoors; “Teach” Tennant, who had coached Carole Lombard and Joan Crawford, tried to turn his players into “tennis statues”; and Art Larsen – oh, Art only ever followed the advice of his imaginary coach, the golden eagle perched on his shoulder during his matches. That world comes alive again in these fifteen tales – fifteen extended captions to fifteen agency photos from the Fifties found in a collector’s suitcase. The discovery lies in how faces and names that have become exotic – Gottfried Von Cramm, Beppe Merlo, Pancho Gonzales – conceal something that was ingrained in early tennis and of which today’s superlative tennis seems to have lost even the scent: a wonderful jumble of stories.

Matteo Codignola has translated works by Patrick McGrath, Mordecai Richler, Patrick Dennis and John McPhee, among others. Adelphi has published his works *Un tentativo di balena* (2008) and *Mordecai* (with Mordecai Richler and Noah Richler, 2011).

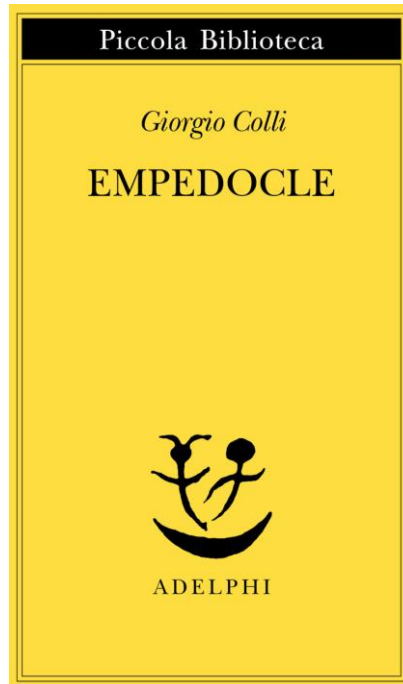
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Giorgio Colli

Empedocle

«Piccola Biblioteca Adelphi», 208 pages

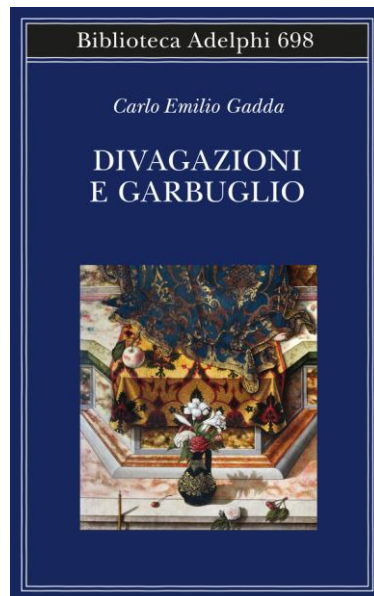


Two previously unpublished studies featuring Colli's reflections on a crucially influential thinker

As shown by these two studies, Giorgio Colli has always considered philological research on texts about Greek thought to be inseparable from theoretical reflection, in keeping with Nietzsche's teachings. A central figure to his speculation is Empedocles, who was the focus of Colli's graduation thesis as well as many of his successive writings. Building on the complex relationship between substance and becoming as well as between unity and multiplicity – a crucial metaphysical crux to Graecism and Greek thought – Colli shows how Empedocles did not believe there were two realities with one transcending the other, but rather an intertwining of noumenon and phenomenon; he shows how the metaphysical root, the interiority of every individual reality consists of its vital urge to connect with everything and find itself in it. Empedocles, then, is a mystic who lives the mortal and immortal dimensions and considers them as one, as they are polar aspects of the same nature whose transcendence cannot be reduced to a rational explanation.

Adelphi has published many works by Giorgio Colli (1917-1979), the latest being *Apollineo e dionisiaco* (2010). This volume features previously unpublished material, the essay *Anima e immortalità in Empedocle* (1939) and a study consisting of the hand-outs from Colli's classes at the University of Pisa in 1948-49.

Carlo Emilio Gadda
Divagazioni e garbuglio
«Biblioteca Adelphi», 553 pages



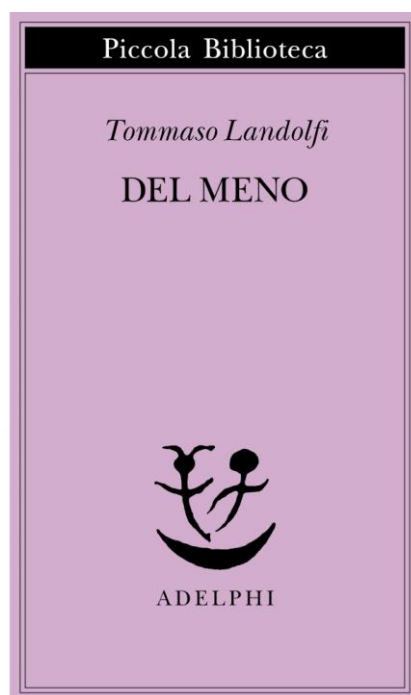
Gadda's eccentric, dazzling “entretiens”

Gadda had always written *elzeviri*, ever since he began writing for *Ambrosiano* in 1931. He did it to make ends meet but most of all he did it to feed his passion for *vient de paraître* (Paul Morand, Gianna Manzini, a new commented translation of *Faust*, Bacchelli, Montale, Palazzeschi, Giorgio Pasquali), his venerated masters (Porta, Belli, Manzoni), the language question, painting, drama (De Chirico, De Pisis, Crivelli, Chekov, Machiavelli's *The Mandrake*), science and technology. The problem is that his short essays (or *entretiens*, as he would call them), as they were born of thorough documentation, tormented processing and obsessive linguistic research, were bound to diverge “from the most accredited lines”. And thus, with their exorbitant length and their “baroque” brilliance, they would spread panic among newspaper editors, who were hesitant to publish pieces designed for readers who didn't want to wallow in the “same handful of old ideas expressed like the average Italian family would.” “Gadda is heavy-handed” Croce is rumoured to have said. And all an embittered Gadda could do was take it out on Buzzati, the star of the “great ‘Corriere’”: “Kafka + a rancid Landolfi... and boring, and inconclusive, and a prick.” That “heavy hand” was in fact a strong aversion to the “edifying lies” used to mask the truth, to the “pharaoh-y cleanliness” of a priggish, prudish “monolanguage”, the search for the “necessary style”, and obedience to the inspiration coming from “proper gnosis”. Here we find a vast selection of long-lost articles and critiques published by Gadda in newspapers and magazines from 1927 to 1968. His latest work published by Adelphi is *That Awful Mess on Via Merulana* (2018).

Tommaso Landolfi

Del meno

«Piccola Biblioteca Adelphi», 352 pages



The eccentric literary articles known as *elzeviri* with Landolfi at his “purest”.

“Indeed: how can you make a living by cooking up *elzeviri*?” wonders Landolfi in a note to *Des mois*. After *Un amore del nostro tempo* (1965) he had given in to the “folly” of storytelling, but now he had no choice – it was a matter of survival. That’s not the point, though: Landolfi’s so-called “harmless stories” have nothing to do with others’ *elzeviri*. They are cutting, vertiginous apologues, anecdotes, memoirs, moral dialogues, apocalyptic visions and murky mysteries – like the unforgettable story about the writer who is ready to die for his son but then, horrified at the thought of leaving his work unaccomplished, gives in to “the most outrageous ignominy” and lets his son die. These highly eccentric *elzeviri* showcase everything about Landolfi in a protective – or reflective, perhaps – language that is extraneous, dazzling and rock-hard: the complicated “machines of appearances” devised by men; the fate that harasses us in an “elusive, mocking” manner; the burdensome yet unavoidable duties towards people that “some sick fortune has cast into your dire lap”; life as a couple as “a perpetual, necessary disagreement”; the “vanity of every kind of agitation” that reveals itself once we have experienced “the grim taste of... achieved happiness”; the right to end an “abject calvary” through suicide. And it couldn’t be otherwise: other writers “adorn themselves with what is, judging it really necessary or at least convenient to admit” – in other words, they acquiesce to the “generally accepted imaginary reality”. Not the radical, disenchanted, reckless Landolfi.

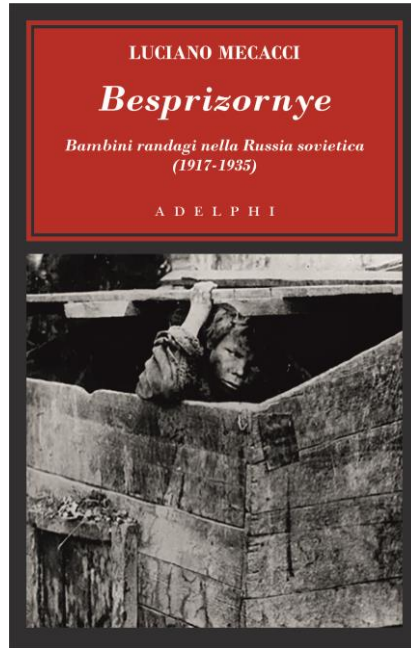
All the works and translations by Tommaso Landolfi (1908-1979) are being published by Adelphi, the latest being *A caso* (2018). *Del meno* first came out in 1978.

Luciano Mecacci

Besprizornye

Homeless children in Soviet Russia (1917-1935)

«L'oceano delle storie», 240 pages - 42 illustrations



Children’s hell in Soviet society’s “heaven”

Of all the horrors that plagued the 20th century, few can compare with the condition of *besprizornye*, post-revolutionary Russia’s label for the countless children and teenagers orphaned by war or famine. Estimated at six or seven million in 1921, dirty and dressed in rags, they wandered on their own or in groups through the cities and countryside in search for food; they clung to the underside of train carriages to travel around the country; they sought shelter from the cold in station basements and rubbish containers; and their hunger made them so aggressive it even drove them to cannibalism. Public orphanages were not an option, as children reduced to skin and bones were packed together in appalling conditions – a dark omen of the future lagers built for other purposes. In the Twenties the issue was studied in social, political, legal, psychological and educational terms; later, however, silence and censorship would be imposed by a State that could never admit to such a stain on the “heaven” of Soviet society.

In the last thirty years, *besprizornye* have come under rigorous historical scrutiny. Only Luciano Mecacci, though, has been able to fully reconstruct the phenomenon, even from within; he has thoroughly studied direct testimonies and often-overlooked period documents. Thanks to his work, he has been able to immerse himself – and, by the same token, his readers – into the human and psychological abyss of the protagonists of events that, today, might appear simply impossible.

A former full professor of General Psychology at the University of Florence and a member of the Italian Association of Slavic Studies, Luciano Mecacci has published *La Ghirlanda fiorentina e la morte di Giovanni Gentile* with Adelphi (2014, Viareggio Prize).

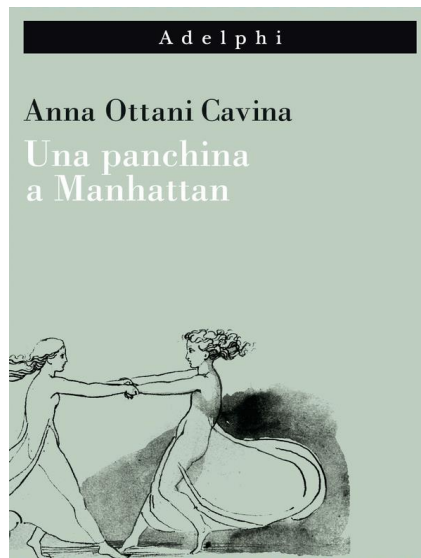
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Anna Ottani Cavina

Una panchina a Manhattan

« Imago », 480 pages - illustrated



A journey across the overlapping maps of art.

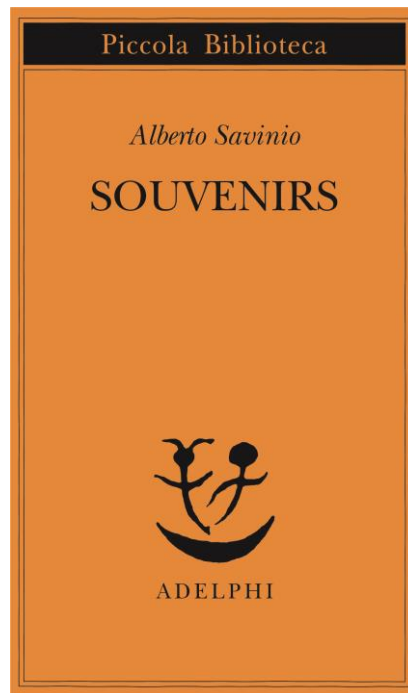
We may have forgotten, but there was a time when great international exhibitions revolutionised the world of art and what we knew about it; they let us make new discoveries and gave us sudden happiness; they were a crucial guide. Anna Ottani Cavina's unconventional and brilliant reports have been gathered here, coming even from far-off, peripheral towns; they take us back to a golden age when exhibitions shunned the canons of established art history and didn't just create a pantheon of actors who were previously just extras, but enabled them to offer bright new perspectives on the heroes and the spotlight chasers of old. From Bramantino to Watteau, from Pietro da Rimino to Leonardo to Vermeer, from Georges de la Tour to Hammershøi, the book tells us about the magical constellations where, due to the combination of clustered works and time constraints – because, much like in Cinderella, midnight would come and the works on loan would be whisked away –, a sudden, dramaturgical moment of recognition, an interpretative turning point, a new (temporary) truth was experienced.

Anna Ottani Cavina teaches Art History at Johns Hopkins University and is professor emeritus at the University of Bologna. She has founded and managed Fondazione Federico Zeri, of which she is the honorary president. Her books include *Paesaggi della ragione* (1994), *Geometries of Silence* (2004) and *Terre senz'ombra* (2015, published by Adelphi).

Alberto Savinio

Souvenirs

«Piccola Biblioteca Adelphi», 240 pages



Savinio's impudent, dazzling Paris letters

“What’s sadder than memories?” wrote Savinio just before publishing *Souvenirs*.

It is, in fact, pessimism born of hindsight – the pessimism of those who look back resentfully on everything that was blown away by the war. When we read them today, the most striking thing about Savinio’s words is the insolent irony and biting humour infused into his view of Paris – “a dame with a dazzling past” that just won’t give in and believes that beyond its walls there are still men “dressed in tattered leather” and fighting wild beasts “with silica assegais” – and its gods old and new. With the exception of Apollinaire, “the most profoundly classical poet who honours the first quarter of our century”, and Georges Simenon, a “lesser Dostoevsky”, Savinio’s indomitable impertinence does not spare anyone, from Max Jacob to Colette, from Jean Cocteau to René Clair, from the Opéra to the Salons d’Automne. Not even the surrealists get a pass, their dominant trait defined as “puerility, which extended beyond childhood is called stupidity” and not satanic intelligence. The most striking and captivating part of it all, though, is Savinio’s digressive talent, his nonchalant erudition and a style that is both classic and acutely inventive, enabling him to depict men and landscapes with visionary precision. See, for instance, the splendid description of the bay of Mont-Saint-Michel, where the sea “invades meadows of stocky, salty grass, whence ferocious, pearly-eyed rams flee in fear, galloping in taut arches.”

First published in 1945, *Souvenirs* brings together newspaper reports originally published between 1926 and 1945. The works of Alberto Savinio (Athens, 1891 – Rome, 1952) have been published by Adelphi since 1975.

Ettore Sottsass

Molto difficile da dire

«Piccola Biblioteca Adelphi», 288 pages



“There’s not much to take seriously”.

Communists, Africans and hangers-on; The china of darkness; Stones fallen in the meadows; Soft Typewriter. The titles of his hilarious works speak volumes about Ettore Sottsass’ world. And while it would be quite normal to speak about any other author’s writings thirty years later as their passage to maturity, in his case the statement falls flat. True, beginning in the Sixties Sottsass started thinking and writing like the great architect and designer he was, describing his many loves from Le Corbusier to the Dadaists, his trade, and the restless world he practiced in. At the same time he travelled to Greece, India and Egypt; he designed, experimented and took pictures, always moving as if it were the first time, always headed in an irresistibly eccentric direction.

For numerous enthusiasts of the obvious, the programmatic and the ritualistic, travelling with him cannot be easy. For everyone else, it’s an unforgettable experience.

Ettore Sottsass (1917-2007) is one of the most prominent figures of contemporary design. His publications with Adelphi are *Foto dal finestrino* (2009), *Scritto di notte* (2010) and *Per qualcuno può essere lo spazio* (2017).

J. Rodolfo Wilcock

Il libro dei mostri

«Fabula», 160 pages



“[...] one of the greatest and strangest (with everything revolutionary this word has absorbed) writers of this century that no good reader should miss out on” (Roberto Bolaño).

Wilcock’s last book is one of his happiest and most unrelenting journeys into the fantastic; it is an accurate, exhilarating and repulsive exploration of a “monstrous little world” teeming not with mermaids and onocentaurs but an array of unlikely characters we seem to meet every day. “A caustic mindset and an ulcerating imagination: Wilcock had the fibre of a moralist” wrote Enzo Siciliano. “He let himself be enveloped by the spires of imagination; and as if by sheer alchemy, moralism morphs into comedy – an acrid comedy where a thorough understanding of people and things has been sealed.” The following works of J. Rodolpho Wilcock (Buenos Aires, 1919 – Lubriano, 1978) have been published by Adelphi: *La sinagoga degli iconoclasti* (1972; new edition, 1990), *Lo stereoscopio dei solitari* (1972; new edition, 1989), *I due allegri indiani* (1973; new edition, 2011), *Parsifal* (1974), *Frau Teleprocu* (with F. Fantasia, 1976), *Poesie* (1980), *L’abominevole donna delle nevi e altre commedie* (1982), *Fatti inquietanti* (1992) and *Il reato di scrivere* (2009). *Il libro dei mostri* came out in 1978.

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Guido Vitiello

Una visita al Bates Motel

«Imago», 250 pages - illustrated



Inside the infernal reign of *Psycho*: an investigation into the most secret recesses of Alfred Hitchcock's masterpiece

This investigation is inspired by a series of odd clues: a revealing misprint – *Psyche* instead of *Psycho* – in the first article on Hitchcock's latest project; a scene with Canova's *Psyche Revived by Cupid's Kiss*; Hitchcock's cryptic description of *Psycho* to the press as an excursion into "metaphysical sex". The book explores the abandoned scenes of the crime: Bates Motel and the unforgiving house on the hill that Hitchcock wanted to set up to look like art galleries or *Wunderkammern*. Then we go on a thrilling tour among the bits and bobs of the grim decorations, under the soulless eyes of stuffed birds. Room by room, Inspector Vitiello – and, behind him, the ghost of a sly, mystagogue Hitchcock – help us see the Victorian house of *Psycho* as a *musée imaginaire* of mystery eroticism, where the rooms follow three infernal mythological cycles: Love and Psyche, Orpheus and Eurydice, Demeter and Persephone. It is a stunning and somehow sinister discovery we might feel urged to back away from. But it may be too late: as we should have known before even opening the book, getting out of Norman Bates' infernal reign isn't as easy as getting in.

Guido Vitiello was born in Naples in 1975. He writes for a number of newspapers and magazines. He teaches Film Theory at Università La Sapienza, Rome.