



FARBEVIDEO PRESENTS A FILM BY **ANDRÉS RAFAEL ZABALA**



DAVID  
JONES JR

MICHAEL  
SCHERMI

MATT  
PATRESI

ROSANNA  
FEDELE

BRUCE  
McGUIRE

# A DARK ROME

IS A CONFESSION ENOUGH TO KEEP YOUR GHOSTS AT BAY?

JAMES BUTTERFIELD ALEXANDRA MOGOS IRINA FLOREA MICKY MARTIN ELIO CRIFÒ FEDERICA FLAVONI GIAMPIERO PUMO DAVIDE VALLICELLI  
GUIDO CUTRUZZULA GIANCARLO RUSSO KRZYSZTOF BULZACKI BOGUCKI VICTORIA CHAPMAN PETER ROSENGARD

WRITTEN, PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY **ANDRÉS RAFAEL ZABALA**, DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY AND ASSOCIATE PRODUCER **TOMMASO BICIOCCHI**,  
PRODUCTION CONSULTANT **ROBERTO BESSI**, MAKE UP ARTIST **DENISA GJAPI**, **ALESSIA GERARDI**, COSTUMES **FARAH KAROUTA**, MUSIC BY **ANDREA TOSI**,  
EDITED BY **A.R.ZABALA**, EDITOR SUPERVISOR **LORENZO D'AGOSTINI**, MIXED BY **ROBERTO PIERDICCHI** AT **VIDEOSOUND - ROME**

"A DARK ROME" (DUR. 98 MIN.) - 2014 COPYRIGHT FARBEVIDEO



## PRESS KIT

# A DARK ROME

Title: "A Dark Rome"

Production: Farbevideo (Italy)

Written, produced and directed by: Andrés Rafael Zabala

Duration: 93 min.

Genre: Thriller/Black Comedy

Format: Full HD 1920x1080 - (color - 16-9)

Audio: Stereo

Nationality: Italian

Original Language: English

Subtitles Languages : Italian, English, Spanish

Date of completion: January 2014

## "A Dark Rome"

"Is a confession enough to keep your ghosts at bay?"

### SYNOPSIS

"A Dark Rome" is the story of a young Welsh artist, Patrick Lewis, who comes to Rome for an apprenticeship as a tattoo artist with his friend Frank Bell, a professional tattooist that he met in the UK the year before.

Frank's tattoo studio is located inside a Beauty Center in Rome. It is a very particular Beauty Center because all its clients are priests. The Beauty Center is owned by Gabriele Messuti and his wife Greta. Both of them lead a double life: Greta is also a jazz singer, Gabriele is also a drug dealer.

Patrick starts to work at the Beauty Center and he enjoys the company of Tina and Olga, the two young Romanian estheticians, and of Lisa, the Chinese manicurist.

Being Frank's assistant isn't as easy as Patrick expected. Patrick doesn't like having to clean the floors of the Beauty Center, and, being an apprentice, he doesn't earn any money. After a few days Patrick feels he is already good at his job, and he just doesn't want to wait any longer to have a proper job.

One night Patrick sees Greta walk out of Frank's apartment. He thinks that his friend Frank is having an affair with the wife of the Beauty Center owner. So Patrick thinks this is a perfect opportunity to take over Frank's job, by telling Gabriele about Frank and Greta. Greta's husband, Gabriele, as well as being the owner of the Beauty Center is also a drug dealer; and instead of firing Frank, he takes things into his own hands and stabs the tattooist in front of Patrick. Gabriele, with the help of two Roman street cleaners, gets rid of Frank's body.

In Frank's apartment Gabriele and Patrick find out that Greta was there just to get a tattoo, which was meant to be a surprise for her husband. Gabriele gets very angry at Patrick, because he made him kill Frank, who wasn't having an affair with Greta.

The Ghost of Frank appears to Patrick urging him to go to the Police and tell them what happened. He wants his body to be found so Gabriele will be sent to prison for good. ... Gabriele instead wants Patrick to confess only to a priest in order to keep him from facing justice.

Patrick's dilemma: the Police or the Priests? How is Patrick going to deal with the Ghost of Frank? This very special Beauty Salon is the perfect frame for Patrick to look for the answer.

# A DARK ROME



## THE STORY

This story is about the way people deal - or refuse to deal with their sense of guilt.

The ghost of Frank represents Patrick's sense of guilt for being the cause of the death of his friend and tattoo master. He tries to fight against the need to confess his crime - having taken part in a murder - but the ghost is always there to remind him of his need to confess. The ghost also makes a point about the way some Roman Catholics deal with their sense of guilt, by confessing their sins to a priest. The ghost of Frank tells Patrick he has to go to the Police, so that they can retrieve his corpse from the garbage deposit where it has been hidden.

In the end Patrick takes a decision: not to confess to the police. But he underestimates the power of the ghost.

The priests, Don Paul, Don Carmine, Don Lorenzo are all represented as clients of the Beauty Center, more concerned about their own image than their spiritual duties. The only way they try to help us is by administering confession, but this also removes from the "sinner" the possibility of facing their real life responsibilities.

## THE GERNE: NEO-NOIR?

In "A Dark Rome" we can see elements of a thriller, such as a murder and then the appearance of a ghost, but it is also a black comedy, poking fun at the particular nature of the Beauty Salon, whose clients are all priests. The protagonist is not exactly the typical hero (...he betrays his friend Frank). Patrick is not a winner in any sense, like in most classical Noir films. In this Rome we will see drug dealers, knives, blood and ghosts scenes, mixed with moments in the Beauty Salon, as the beautiful Tina and Olga give massage to priests laying on colorful water beds.

## NOTES ON THE SERIES "A DARK ROME"

"A Dark Rome" is a film, but could be later developed in a tv series, using the set up of the film. Among the fix elements of the series, The beauty Centre with all the characters and the priests as clients would be one of the possible sets to use as environment for all stories. Each story would have something to do with arts and magic, not necessarily with religion like in the film.

The art gallery would also be one of the fix sets of the tv series, and Alex will become important in the developing of the series, him being external to the Beauty Center characters, but involved in the story. In line with this idea, in the film, we see Alex (Bruce McGuire) as the narrator of the story.

All stories would show magical the darker side of the Italian capital city: ghosts, magical potions, magical animals, statues and paintings changing shapes, magical places that turn crazy the unfortunate visitors, children who hear voices of dead people, et cetera.

The first episodes would still deal with Patrick and Frank, because his body hasn't yet been found and with Greta having left Gabriele and him trying to get her back. The other story to develop involves Don Carmine, who also has seen the ghost of Frank.



# A DARK ROME



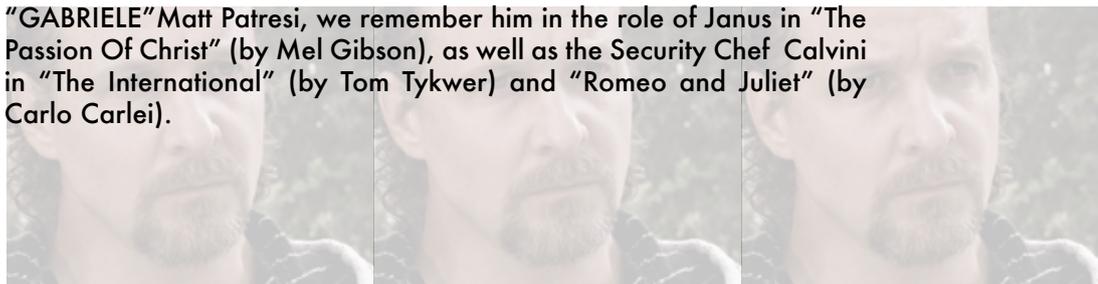
**"PATRICK"** David Jones Jr, is a young Welsh actor who has studied at the Rose Brudford College in Londra. He has worked mainly on stage and "A Dark Rome" is his fist full lenght movie as a protagonist.



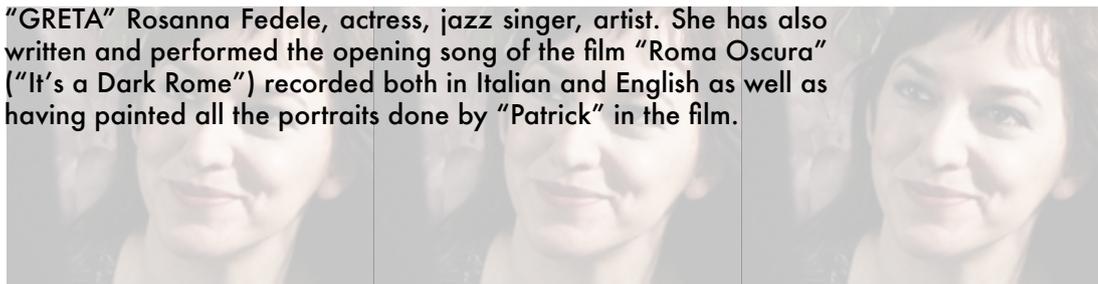
**"FRANK"** Michael Schermi, the Irish-Italian actor that we have recently seen in "At The End Of The Day" (by Cosimo Alemà) and several other Italian films.



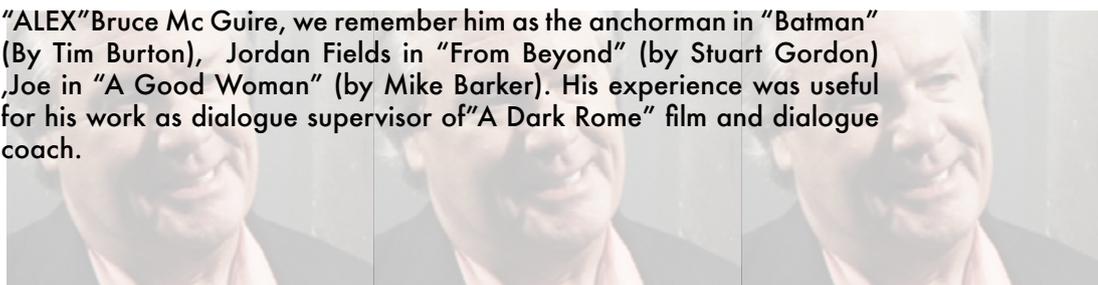
**"GABRIELE"** Matt Patresi, we remember him in the role of Janus in "The Passion Of Christ" (by Mel Gibson), as well as the Security Chef Calvini in "The International" (by Tom Tykwer) and "Romeo and Juliet" (by Carlo Carlei).



**"GRETA"** Rosanna Fedele, actress, jazz singer, artist. She has also written and performed the opening song of the film "Roma Oscura" ("It's a Dark Rome") recorded both in Italian and English as well as having painted all the portraits done by "Patrick" in the film.



**"ALEX"** Bruce Mc Guire, we remember him as the anchorman in "Batman" (By Tim Burton), Jordan Fields in "From Beyond" (by Stuart Gordon) ,Joe in "A Good Woman" (by Mike Barker). His experience was useful for his work as dialogue supervisor of "A Dark Rome" film and dialogue coach.



# A DARK ROME



## CAST (in order of appearance)

Gianni  
Gabriele Messuti  
Greta Messuti  
Don Paul  
Don Sirio  
Patrick Lewis  
Tina  
Lisa  
Don Raffaele  
Olga  
Uncle Greg  
Frank Bell  
Ada  
Piano player  
Bass player  
Drum player  
Patrizio  
Mauro  
Don Carmine  
Skateboarder  
Taxi Driver  
Fabio  
Pedestrian  
Don Lorenzo  
Mario  
Inspector Costantini  
Flower Girl  
Motorcyclist  
Alex De Lillo  
Dog  
Deejay  
Officer  
Cameraman  
Gallery Hostess  
Art Buyer  
Patrick's Mother  
Patrick's Father  
Filmmaker

Frank Messina  
Matt Patresi  
Rosanna Fedele  
James Butterfield  
Andrés Rafael Zabala  
David Jones Jr  
Irina Florea  
Francesca Fiume  
Giorgio Girelli  
Alexandra Mogos  
Micky Martin  
Michael Schermi  
Alessia Gerardi  
Riccardo Biseo  
Stefano Cantarano  
Lucio Turco  
Giancarlo Russo  
Krzysztof Bulzac Bogucki  
Elio Crifò  
Marco Proietti  
Mauro Comelli  
Davide Vallicelli  
Matteo Micheli  
Guido Cutruzzulà  
Gianpiero Pumo  
Federica Flavoni  
Francesca De Bernardis  
Alberto Marini  
Bruce McGuire  
Scout  
Giovanni Pietro Stella  
Federico Guerzoni  
Angelo Mattei  
Giorgia Serrao  
Gabrielle Seailles  
Victoria Chapman  
Peter Rosengard  
Michael Fitzpatrick

## MAIN CREDITS

Original Screenplay, Production and Directing: Andrés Rafael Zabala, Director of Photography and Associate Producer: Tommaso Biciocchi, Production Consultant: Roberto Bessi, Assistant Directors: Stefano Scamardella, Sara Mignona, Vittoria Citerni da Siena, Make up Artist: Denisa Gjapi, Alessia Gerardi, Costums: Farah Karouta, Musics by: Andrea Tosi, Editor: A.R.Zabala, Editor Supervisor and Colour Correction: Lorenzo D'Agostini, Sound Mix: Roberto Pierdicchi at VideoSound - Rome.

# A DARK ROME



**Andrés Rafael Zabala** - writer, producer, director

"A Dark Rome" is his first full length feature film. In the last 25 years he has worked for the following TV channels: RAI 2, CANALE 5, SEASONS (Canal+), GAMBERO ROSSO (RaiSat), STUDIO UNIVERSAL (Stream) POKERITALIA24 (Sky) directing external services, clips, documentaries, reality shows and live tv directing. He has worked for private companies and public institutions directing Corporate Communication, Spots, Videoclips as well as a theater play. He has written and directed 9 short films, many selected in Italian and international festivals.

He teaches directing and filmmaking at the RUFA - Rome University of Fine Arts

**Tommaso Biciocchi** - Director of Photography

He has credits both in television and cinema. His huge tv credits include having worked as DoP for all main Italian national tv channels RAI, MEDIASET, LA 7 and SKY. Tommaso Biciocchi is since many years the light designer of the show "Supermagic - International Illusionist Festival" at the Teatro Olimpico in Rome.

**Andrea Tosi** - Music Composer

Andrea Tosi has composed, arranged and conducted music for docu-films such as "Acquilone" (by Angelini) and the award winning tv movies "Il Maginco Natale di Rubert" (by F. Moretti) for RAI CINEMA. Andrea Tosi has written the music and conducted the orchestra of several main stream musicals such as "Chiara di Dio" (by C. Tedeschi) for the theater of Assisi.

**Roberto Bessi** - Consultant Producer

Producer of "Dieci Inverni" (by V. Mieli), Co-Producer of "Modigliani" (with Andy Garcia by Mike Davis), Co-Producer of "A Good Woman" (by Mike Barker). Roberto Bessi works internationally on the production of main stream film, but also loves to help out in the production of quality independent cinema.

**The young Filmmakers**

"A Dark Rome" is a very low budget film, however it has required 29 days of shooting in 40 different locations in Rome. This was possible thanks to 14 apprentices filmmakers, many of those were students of the Rome University of Fine Arts. Without their energy and commitment this production wouldn't have been possible.

# A DARK ROME

## CINEMA ITALIANO

- A dark and mysterious Rome is where Andrés Rafael Zabala sets his "A Dark Rome", in the purpose of finding out what's behind the facade of a large part of the city.
- All those priests we see walking around in the center, what do they do when they disappear from our sight? Certainly in Zabala's film, they enter in a dark world that we are usually not allowed to see.
- In order to do so, the filmmaker uses the Noir genre, that seems to be the right choice to develop such a story.
- The characters and the situations of a mysterious Rome, dirty in their intentions and in their solutions, able to entice even the strangers that came with best intentions.
- Andrés Rafael Zabala's, debut film...is a truly original piece in the far too repetitive Italian cinema, even among the independents.

Stefano Amadio - Italy [www.cinemaitaliano.info](http://www.cinemaitaliano.info)

## NONSOLOGORE

- "It never has been a more appropriate title, because the atmosphere of the film is essential the setting: "A Dark Rome" - as the original song sung by Rosanna Fedele - tones of this film are grotesque and surreal, the city especially by night where the fantastic almost meets pulp."
- "A Dark Rome" is constantly moving between different film styles, which mingle creatively: black comedy, the pulp / noir thriller and a fantastic component. Zabala then combines humor, gags, alienating characters and grotesque murders and also supernatural apparitions.

Davide Comotti - Italy [www.nonsologore.it](http://www.nonsologore.it)

## ART A PART OF CULTURE

- "The reasons to see "A DARK ROME", a thriller and black comedy, are certainly the night settings in the most beautiful places of the Italian capital and the original plot, the beauty salons for priests who love more the worship of one's body than the souls of their parishioners."
- "A DARK ROME" never turns into splatter, horror vulgar fashion, in the paranormal, but is held in line as a psychological or parapsychological crime story. A wise idea to balance on a trivial crime without punishment, with a bulky but rewarding guilt feeling. A DARK ROME is full of notations on the Roman art world."
- "Good the original soundtrack by Andrea Tosi that weaves Gregorian chants, Roman songs and disco music."

Pino Moroni - Italy [www.artapartofculture.net](http://www.artapartofculture.net)

## HORROR NERD

- "The Horror Nerd loves a good dark drama or black comedy as much as any horror film that might come along. Thankfully, "A Dark Rome", directed by Italian film maker Andres Rafael Zabala, is one of the best he's ever seen in the indie filmmaking world."
- "Actually, "A Dark Rome" is not too easy to classify. It's a mix of thriller, dark drama and black comedy, with some of the best elements of both. "
- "A Dark Rome" is one of those rare indie films where you don't really know what to expect, and then end up completely and pleasantly surprised. "
- "Overall, I thought the entire movie was excellent. When acting, cinematography and script all come together as well as they do in "A Dark Rome", it makes for a great film. As I mentioned before, European filmmakers such as director Andres R. Zabala seem to have quite a hand on cinematography and camera work. "

Horror Nerd's Rating: 4.5 out of 5 Broken Eyeglasses!

Todd Staruch- New York [www.horrornerd.net](http://www.horrornerd.net)

## BUFFALO FILM FESTIVAL

- "A thriller/black comedy about an ambitious tattoo artist who gets a job in a special beauty salon in Rome which caters to priests from the Vatican. Could any film be more timely? Some of the priests who go there even get tattoos.
- "A DARK ROME" has a unique tone and exquisite location cinematography.
- "We particularly enjoyed its look at the Italian art scene, and some of its Cohen brothers like twists."

Chris Scioli and Gregory Lamberson - Buffalo USA [www.buffalodreamsfilmfest.com](http://www.buffalodreamsfilmfest.com)

## THE HORROR HAPPENS RADIO SHOW

"A Dark Rome" is the film that takes the fluid concept of comedy/horror and turns it into a devilish delight... Humor as dark and sharp as the guilty pleasure classics blended with a sexy style makes for a great time. Music, madness and Culture with a twist of intrigue is what can be found down the winding street of "A Dark Rome"!

Jay Kay - New York [www.horrorhappens.com](http://www.horrorhappens.com)



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