

PLAYING HISTORY

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Interviews



Daniele Pecci
Actor

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Hello Daniele,

I start by thanking you for this interview. The day I sent you the message I had just turned 50 and I felt very unprejudiced and I said to myself ... What can he answer me?

Yes, no or not at all.

But you were extremely available to give me this interview.

It's trivial to say, but the first memory I have of you is in the costume TV screenplay "Pride" (2004-2006) produced by Rai Fiction and Titanus on the occasion of the centenary of the latter.

This series, much loved by the public, has seen a great use of actors and means, the use of beautiful locations such as Palazzo Chigi in Ariccia (formerly home to the set Visconti's gattopardo), Villa Falconieri, Palazzo Brancaccio and many others and the meticulous work of tailoring that has produced costumes of the time awarded with several awards.

1) What do you remember with more pleasure than that of your work?

I remember a nice atmosphere, some colleagues who became friends, the great Titanus and the certainty that we were writing a page of the Italian screenplay.

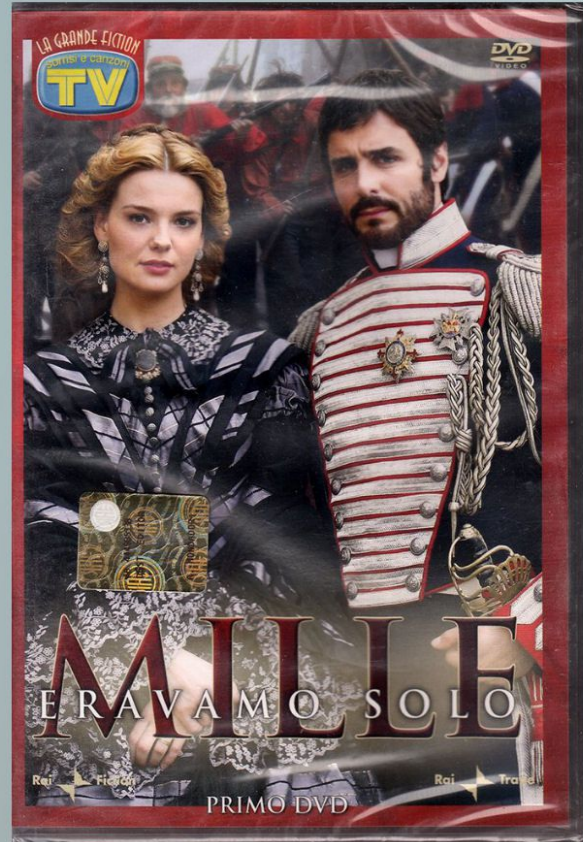
2) How important, for a representation in period costume, are the historical contextualization, the historical accuracy of the clothes and means? In order to



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give your character an imprint, have you also documented yourself on a personal level on the early twentieth century, a period represented in the screenplay?

Of course, in a television or film product that aims to tell a historical period is essential to study the research and attention to detail.



3) Since then, you have worked on many of your works in which you have interpreted "historical" characters that really exist rather than literary subjects, both on TV and in the theatre. I'll mention just a few: in the miniseries aired on RAI in 2007 "Eravamo solo mille" directed by Stefano Reali about Garibaldi's company and his thousand red shirts, you played Francesco Malaspina. At the Greek Theatre of Syracuse you became Oedipus for the tragedy of Sophocles "Oedipus the King" (496 BC - 406 BC)*. Obviously your passion for Shakespeare, which you also particularly prefer, with "Henry V" and "Hamlet"*** and of which you were also Director at the Globe Theatre in Rome. How can we not also mention "Medea" by Euripides**** while lately we can see you in the role of "the Fu Mattia Pascal" by Luigi Pirandello *****.**

Note:*

Oedipus is a charismatic king and loved by his people who had been offered the throne of Thebes because, responding correctly to the enigma posed by the Sphinx, he had freed the city from that terrible monster. At the height of his fortune, however, he discovers that he is the murderer of his own father and incestuous

husband of his mother, losing in this way not only the esteem of others but also his own and blinds himself to no longer see the sun, witness of his crime. In these terms the Oedipus reveals the fragility of human experience, which can pass, in a short time, from the maximum of splendor to the most abysmal of abjection

Note **:

With *Henry V*, written and represented in 1599, Shakespeare's cycle of historical dramas is almost complete. First appeared: the three parts of *Henry VI* (1588-92); the *Richard III* (between 1591 and '94); *Richard II* (1595); *King John* (between 1590 and '97); and the two parts of *Henry IV* (between 1596 and '99). The last piece of the mosaic, *Henry VIII*, will appear in 1613: it is said that Shakespeare wrote it at the express request of the Court of England, when the dramatist had already said goodbye to the scenes. Evidently, even the contemporaries of William Shakespeare (1564-1616) were aware of the importance, even ideological, of the great fresco that the playwright had gradually realized. Many of Shakespeare's historical plays take place in the fifteenth century, the era in which the ancient feudal nobility self-destructed in a bloody war of succession (the "two roses" war), while the absolute monarchy was affirmed, with the support of a new class of landowners and a rapidly growing mercantile bourgeoisie (Source www.shakespeareitalia.com).

Note ***:

Written probably between 1600 and 1602 based on previous writings. The origin of the legend of *Amlodhi* (which in ancient Norwegian means "deficient") dates back to at least the ninth century, and at the end of the twelfth century the Danish *Saxo Grammaticus* exhibited it in books III and IV of his *Historia Danica*, printed in 1514. *Saxo*, which perhaps has the *Livian* story of *Lucio Giunio Bruto* (also *brutus vale "deficiente"*) who chased the Tarquins from Rome, tells a left Viking saga. (Source www.shakespeareitalia.com).

Note ****:

It was staged for the first time in Athens, at the Great Dionysia (first official set-up of dramatic events) of 431 BC.

Note *****:

Written in 1903, it was published in 1904, first in episodes of the magazine *Nuova Antologia* and then as a whole volume. The novel revolves around the theme of individual identity: that of *Mattia Pascal* and his alter ego, *Adriano Meis*. The novel, written in the first person, is in fact the story of the protagonist of his life and of the events that led him to be the "fu" of himself. The story is set between the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, not because the author

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quotes this in the book but because from information on Rome, which became the capital of the Kingdom of Italy, he talks about trains and electricity and the bridge *Umberto I* in Rome, as of *Pope Leo XIII*.



In your theatrical choices you seem more projected towards the past than towards the contemporary. What is the link between these ancient texts and today's world? And why do you prefer dramatic texts instead of comedies?

Those texts are neither historical nor ancient. They are contemporary because they still speak to us today. They are the first, they are original, and therefore original.

I prefer tragedy, there is catharsis.



4) From the interviews I've read, it seems that you have a preference for theatre over cinema. To revive a historical text, written is true for theatre, don't you think that Cinema or TV can make a greater impact?

For the philology of the historical 'reconstruction' perhaps yes. But art does not deal with this. On the contrary, it is often a stumbling block. One documents, yes, but then, above all, one imagines.



5) How much does a literary work from the past change in theatre adaptation? Do you like adaptations more faithful to the original idea of the author or do you prefer more contemporary versions, which may be closer to the understanding of the public?

No one knows what the author's intentions were. Nobody. So interpreting a text is always inventing it. The work once written is no longer the author's. It's ours. And who knows if the staging is distorted in the ways, times and customs there is no sense and juice closer to the intentions of the author?



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6) Can you tell us which is your favourite historical character and why?

William Shakespeare. He changed my life.



7) What story are you in love with and have not yet told?

Being mainly involved in theatre, I'm not very attached to 'stories'. For those there is the cinema. Theatre is more focused on 'how'. Everyone knows that Romeo and Juliet will die, if it were for the story no one would go to see it anymore (among other things there is one who says so at the beginning of the text) to the theater instead we go to see 'how' that actor lends himself to the interpretation of that role.



Franca Centaro Pk



8) Do you know that many of us would see you very well in a classic of 19th century literature? For example, in Mr. Darcy of "Pride and Prejudice" rather than Colonel Brandon of "Reason and Feeling", both by Jane Austen? Promise us that if they send you a script you will accept it!

I promise!



**Thank you Daniele Pecci
for replying to our
interview, despite his
commitments.**

**Appointment to next month
with all the secrets of the parasol,
thanks to the restorer,
Brandon McKinney.**