



**VIVO FILM and RAI CINEMA**  
present

# DAFNE

by **FEDERICO BONDI**

with

**CAROLINA RASPANTI**

**ANTONIO PIOVANELLI**

and with **STEFANIA CASINI**

**2019 – 94 min – Italy**  
**world premiere**

**International Press**

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## SYNOPSIS

Dafne (Carolina Raspanti) is 35 years old, she loves her job and she has many friends and colleagues who love her dearly. She has Down syndrome and she lives with her parents, Luigi (Antonio Piovanelli) and Maria (Stefania Casini). Suddenly Maria dies and the family's balance is shattered.

Dafne is not only forced to deal with the loss, but also to stand by Luigi, who has fallen into depression. Thanks to the affection of her loved ones, to her bravery and to her self-awareness, Dafne finds the strength to react and tries to shake her father up. Until something unexpected happens: they decide to leave together for a hike in the mountains to the town where Maria was born. Along the walk, trying to look ahead to the future, they will discover a lot about each other.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

A few years ago, I saw an old father and his daughter with Down syndrome holding hands at a bus stop. Standing still among the speeding cars and passersby, they looked like heroes, survivors.

*Dafne* was inspired by this image and the feeling accompanying it, it was the spark that pushed me to go deeper in the story. I entered with curiosity a world that I didn't know before, until I had the chance to meet Carolina Raspanti, and become her friend. Meeting her was essential not only for the film, but also for my life.

On set, her presence was an inspiration to us all. Carolina is not affected by her diversity, she accepts it, she is in constant discussion with it and she lives her condition with mature serenity. While the world nowadays "forces" us to be fully efficient and to overcome emotional pain in a heartbeat (there is **even** a pill for mourning!) Carolina/Dafne reminds us to accept the situations we find ourselves in and live them at the fullest.

The sudden loss of her mother marks a point of no return in Dafne's life, since she has to face both her problems and those of her father. From their complementary needs, in such a dramatic and painful moment, the evolution of Dafne and Luigi's relationship offers an opportunity for both of them: *Dafne* is the story of an "overcoming", of the optimistic will to get over difficulties.

My intention behind the film is to invite the audience to leave behind the rigid attitudes of prejudice, fear, in certain cases even horror or more often compassion, that we might feel when confronted with someone "different". Carolina shows us what I believe should be the right attitude to adopt through her irony (which is the

clearest strength of her personality, since her humour is sharp and unpredictable) and her great seriousness: to her, life is a challenge that should be faced fearlessly. Mixing genres and without using disability as entertainment, *Dafne* is a comedy drama or a drama told through comedy: a *dramedy* which, I hope, will make audiences laugh and cry at the same time.

Nowadays there are nearly 40.000 people with Down syndrome in Italy. It is not an illness, it is a genetic condition that accompanies people with an additional chromosome for their whole life. However, each person with Down syndrome is unique, just as any other person. Carolina is Dafne. "Reality" was my main inspiration while I was writing and filming. It was not Carolina who had to adapt to the film (she has not even read a single page of the script), but it was the film that had to adapt to Carolina. I could actually "betray" the original script, but not Carolina's trust, which has demanded accuracy, respect and listening... Those have been the best incentives to give dignity to her story, to her gaze and to that father and daughter holding hands at the bus stop.

## Federico Bondi

Federico Bondi is a director and author from Florence.

After graduating in Film Studies at the University of Florence he wrote and directed his first feature film *Mar Nero* (2008), which was the only Italian film in Competition at the 61<sup>st</sup> Locarno Film Festival, where it won three prizes (Golden Leoard for Best Actress, Ecumenical Jury Award, Young Jury Award). The film was nominated to the David di Donatello Awards (Best Actress) and Federico Bondi was nominated at the Silver Ribbon Awards as "Best New Director". Federico has also directed many advertisements and documentaries including *Soste* (2001), *Soste Japan* (2002), *L'uomo planetario. L'utopia di Ernesto Balducci* (2005), *Educazione affettiva* (2014). *Dafne* is his second feature film.

## Carolina Raspanti

Dafne is interpreted by Carolina Raspanti, the girl who inspired the character.

Carolina was born on January 10th 1984 in Emilia Romagna. After graduating with excellence, she was hired by the Coop supermarket in her town, where she is still working. She wrote two autobiographical novels, *This is my life* and *Carolina's world*, that she often presents all around Italy.

## Vivo film

Vivo film, established in Rome at the beginning of 2004 by Gregorio Paonessa and Marta Donzelli, is an independent production company with a catalogue of over 40 films, presented and awarded at the most prestigious festivals worldwide.

In 2007 *Il mio paese* by Daniele Vicari won a David di Donatello Award as Best Documentary and Corso Salani's *Imatra* received the Golden Leopard – Special Jury Prize in the Cineasti del Presente Competition at the 60<sup>th</sup> Locarno Festival.

Vivo Film's credits include Michelangelo Frammartino's *Le Quattro Volte*, winner of the Europa Cinemas Label Award at Cannes' Directors' Fortnight in 2010; Emma Dante's *A Street in Palermo*, thanks to which Elena Cotta won the Coppa Volpi at the Venice Film Festival in 2013; *Sangue* by Pippo Del Bono which premiered in Competition at the Locarno Film Festival in 2013; *Sworn Virgin* by Laura Bispuri, which premiered in Competition at the Berlinale in 2015; Andrea De Sica's first feature film, *Children of the Night*, which premiered at the 2016 Torino Film Festival and won a Silver Ribbon Award for Best New Director; *Nico, 1988* by Susanna Nicchiarelli, Best Film of Orizzonti at the 2017 Venice Film Festival and winner of 4 David di Donatello awards, including Best Original Screenplay; *Lorello e Brunello* by Jacopo Quadri, winner of a Special Mention of the Jury and the Cipputi Award at the 2017 Torino Film Festival; *Daughter of Mine* by Laura Bispuri, the only Italian film presented in Competition at the 2018 Berlinale and winner of various awards in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Haifa Film Festivals.

Vivo film is presenting two films in the Panorama section of the 2019 Berlinale: *Dafne* by Federico Bondi and *Flesh Out* by Michela Occhipinti. It is also currently committed in the production of *Simple Women* by Chiara Malta and *Siberia* by Abel Ferrara and in the development of, among others, *Miss Marx* by Susanna Nicchiarelli and *Arturo's Voice* by Irene Dionisio, selected at Berlinale Talents and ScriptStation!.

## CAST

*Dafne* Carolina Raspanti  
*Luigi* Antonio Piovanelli  
*Maria* Stefania Casini

## CREW

*written and directed by* Federico Bondi  
*story* Federico Bondi *and* Simona Baldanzi  
*cinematography* Piero Basso  
*editing* Stefano Cravero  
*music* Saverio Lanza  
*sound engineering* Mirko Guerra  
*production design* Alessandra Mura  
Cristina Del Zotto  
*costumes* Massimo Cantini Parrini  
*sound editing and mixing* Daniela Bassani, Marzia Cordò  
Stefano Grosso *and* Giancarlo Rutigliano  
  
*produced by* Marta Donzelli *and* Gregorio Paonessa  
  
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