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CATTLEVA AND RAI CINEMA PRESENT

# THOSE HAPPY YEARS

A DANIELE LUCHETTI FILM

**KIM ROSSI STUART**  
**MICAELA RAMAZZOTTI**  
**MARTINA FRIEDERIKE GEDECK**

## SYNOPSIS

Rome, 1974. Guido is a wannabe avant-garde artist who feels trapped by his conventional and intrusive middle-class family. Serena, his wife, is no art lover, but she adores her artist and can't resist interfering in his life. Their young sons, Dario and Paolo, are the unwilling witnesses of their parents' passion, their fights and reconciliations, their infidelities and constant bargaining for affection. Taking in artistic 'happenings', flights of fancy, super 8 movies, lazy summer vacations, and secret confessions, the film recounts the happy years – which seemed so unhappy at the time – of a family that, in trying to be free, finds itself caught in a prison of its own making.

### KIM ROSSI STUART ON GUIDO:

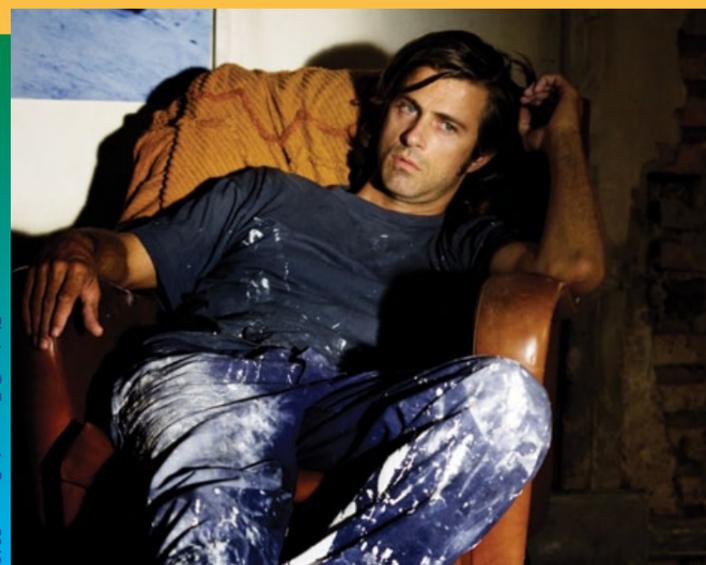
"Guido is a rather childish and self-centred parent: he loves his family but tends to withdraw, focusing on his own interests and needs. When his previously submissive mate strikes out on her own path of independence, opening up to emancipation and personal growth, the risk is that he will remain too stuck in his habitual perceptions to save the situation. An interesting character, who intrigued me. His attempt truly to live the zeitgeist, to follow the attitudes and fashions of the 70s were potentially ironic. I saw both funny and tragi-comic sides to him. For this reason we shot, on more than one occasion, the same sequence both in a serious version, and a more lighthearted one."

### MICAELA RAMAZZOTTI ON SERENA:

"Serena is a very human character, who experiences love as a struggle and who's always seeking reassurance. Her husband Guido is her very reason for living, the only source of her self-esteem. She sinks into despair if they have a fight, and she beams if he gives her a compliment. She seduces him when she wants something from him and plays hard to get when she wants to grab his attention. Serena is an unpredictable child with the courage (or recklessness) to abandon her role as the safe little middle-class housewife, so as not to turn away when love unexpectedly crosses her path."

### MARTINA FRIEDERIKE GEDECK ON HELKE:

"Helke is a very positive, free-spirited character, the counterpart to all the other characters in the film. She is independent and playful, a rare and explosive mixture in women's role models. To me, Helke's attitude towards life is not specifically 68ish but belongs to any free-spirited human being at any time, any place."



## DANIELE LUCHETTI - DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Following "My Brother is an Only Child" and "La nostra vita", I find myself for a third time dealing with a story about family life. In the first instance, I told the story of someone else's family, and in the second, that of one of my contemporaries. Only in telling this third tale do I realize that I've been homing in more and more on the need to tell my own story.

So what is true and what is made up? The facts are, in part, the fruit of the imagination, although the feelings are utterly authentic. Oddly, it was necessary to invent a lot of lies in order to arrive at what I humbly define as the truth.

It was a challenge to hold simultaneously feelings of both affection and spite toward my characters, who are both imaginary and yet inspired by my actual parents. Being both the "father" and at the same time the "son" of these characters placed me in a peculiar psychological state. At the end of a day's work, I had to try and remember what we had shot, because I had the strange impression that the film was making itself. It was as if the characters were deciding what should be recounted. Who was telling whose story? Who was filming whom? Being both father and son in the movie, I was filming another "me" who was, in turn, filming my parents. I had re-imagined my family, but I had the impression that, out of some sort of revenge, the characters were making the film as they saw fit. Guido is a young artist who has grown up with the notion that an artist must be absolutely outrageous, discomfiting, and naughty. However, he fails in all those aspects. He loves bourgeois comfort and a peaceful life. He is an artist without compulsion, who loves art but lacks an artistic obsession. He possesses no personal theme, only the desire to be an artistic insider of his era, though it seems to him muffled, distant, and alien. However, surrounded by his average family, in an average neighborhood, he can be nothing but an artistic outsider. Is his family his limiting factor, or is it his alibi? Is his family the cause of his artistic weakness, or a rationalization for his failure? Doesn't the fact that he seeks non-conformity mean that he is, in fact, a conformist? For Guido, his wife Serena serves as his support, his alibi, and the body that belongs to him. He loves her without knowing it; he needs her without being able to accept her.

Serena grew up in a Roman petit bourgeois family, where warmth and tight surveillance of the children is the norm. It was not merely a united family, but a fused one. For her it's normal to stick to Guido like glue. But then the closer she gets, the more he feels both attracted and imprisoned by her warmth. Serena doesn't particularly like art, but she loves the artist a great deal.

Between the two of them, who will be the first to be liberated, thus freeing everyone else?

And then there are the children, Dario and Paolo. As was the rule in the 70s, they're always with their parents, taking part in everything: betrayals, confessions, and fights. They're mute spectators to grown-up dynamics that fly over their heads. Dario's filming is his way of looking without being wounded by what he sees, a filter between him and reality.

This was most likely one of the last movies I'll be able to shoot on film, so I wanted to use 35mm, 16, and super-8, with the same super-8 camera my parents gave me as a graduation gift. I realized how fascinating it still is for me to use a negative and a positive, as well as how much sensitivity, depth of color, and charm will inevitably be lost when that choice is no longer an option. Shooting in digital, for all its advantages and disadvantages, will remain simply "something else".

So in the final analysis, I consider this film to embody a sort of homage to celluloid and its particular scent. I remember my emotion in dealing with Kodak super-8 reels, their actual smell. When I dusted off my 40-year-old Canon camera, I tried putting my nose inside the cartridge, in the hope of catching a whiff of those happy years, which we lived through all unawares.

## DANIELE LUCHETTI FILMOGRAPHY

2013 ANNI FELICI  
(Those Happy Years)

2010 LA NOSTRA VITA  
(Our Life)

2007 MIO FRATELLO E FIGLIO UNICO  
(My Brother Is An Only Child)

2003 DILLO CON PAROLE MIE  
(Ginger and Cinnamon)

1998 I PICCOLI MAESTRI  
(Little Teachers)

1995 LA SCUOLA  
(The School)

1994 THE ONLY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD

1993 ARRIVA LA BUFERA

1991 IL PORTABORSE  
(The Yes Man)

1990 LA SETTIMANA DELLA SFINGE  
(The Week of the Sphinx)

1988 DOMANI ACCADRA  
(It's Happening Tomorrow)



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## CAST

Guido  
Serena  
Helke  
Dario  
Paolo  
Grandmother Marcella  
Grandmother Marina

KIM ROSSI STUART  
MICAELA RAMAZZOTTI  
MARTINA FRIEDERIKE GEDECK  
SAMUEL GAROFALO  
NICCOLÒ CALVAGNA  
BENEDETTA BUCCELLATO  
PIA ENGLEBERTH

## CREW

DIRECTOR  
STORY and SCREENPLAY

DANIELE LUCHETTI  
SANDRO PETRAGLIA  
STEFANO RULLI  
CATERINA VENTURINI  
DANIELE LUCHETTI

CASTING DIRECTOR  
and ASSISTANT DIRECTOR  
SET DESIGNER  
COSTUME DESIGNER  
SOUND  
EDITING

GIANNI COSTANTINO  
GIANCARLO BASILI  
MARIA RITA BARBERA  
MAURIZIO ARGENTIERI  
MIRCO GARRONE  
FRANCESCO GARRONE

LINE PRODUCER  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY  
MUSIC  
LINE PRODUCER FOR CATTLEYA  
PRODUCED BY  
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER  
PRODUCED BY

SANDRA BONACCHI  
CLAUDIO COLLEPICCOLO  
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CATTLEYA with RAI CINEMA  
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RICCARDO TOZZI  
GIOVANNI STABILINI  
MARCO CHIMENZ

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