

Francesco Dalli Cani Leads Supernatural Horror Film 'Fallen' Ahead of U.S. and International Festival Run

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Francesco Dalli Cani](#) is set to headline the upcoming supernatural horror film '[Fallen](#)', a thought-provoking genre project that blends psychological suspense, faith, and redemption into a deeply human story about belief, sacrifice, and the possibility of salvation.

Written and directed by Madison Champine and produced by Robert Hughes, 'Fallen' follows Father Antonio Luci, a devoted young priest who voluntarily exiles himself to a deconsecrated abbey in northern Italy after becoming haunted by a mysterious supernatural entity known only as a "Fallen." Unable to rid himself of the unwanted presence through repeated self-exorcisms, Antonio finds his faith tested in unexpected ways when the entity, Ugo, presents him with a seemingly impossible request.

As the two become locked in a battle of ideology rather than violence, both are forced to confront profound questions about forgiveness, redemption, and whether a soul, no matter how lost, can truly be saved.

For Dalli Cani, the project represented one of the most demanding creative challenges of his career. The Vicenza-born actor, who relocated to Los Angeles after graduating from the University of Padova and later earned his MFA in Acting for Film from the New York Film Academy, portrays both central characters in the film: the deeply faithful Father Antonio and the enigmatic Fallen known as Ugo.

Attached to the project from its earliest development stages, Dalli Cani became involved long before cameras rolled. While many aspects of the story evolved throughout development, one key creative decision remained unchanged: he would portray both sides of the film's central



Francesco Dalli Cani

conflict. Preparing for the dual role required extensive physical, vocal, and psychological transformation. To better understand Father Antonio's world, Dalli Cani worked closely with an ordained exorcist from Italy who consulted on the project. Their discussions ranged from exorcism practices and theology to broader conversations about faith, redemption, and the role belief plays in shaping identity.

The preparation extended well beyond character research. Over six months, Dalli Cani followed an intense fitness and nutrition program under the guidance of a personal trainer and his longtime Italian nutritionist. The regimen included weight training, cardio conditioning, swimming, and a strict ketogenic diet designed to help create the physical contrast needed for the two characters. The commitment became especially challenging during the Christmas season while visiting family in Italy, where holiday celebrations are often centered around food and tradition. Despite the temptation, he remained dedicated to the process, completing regular medical testing to ensure the demanding program remained safe and sustainable. His work with dialect coach Jessica Tolstiz also became an important part of the character development. Having spent years refining his American accent, Dalli Cani used those skills to further separate Father Antonio and Ugo, giving each character a distinct vocal identity and presence.

The physical transformation reached its peak during production. Father Antonio appears as a weary, isolated priest marked by years of self-imposed exile, while Ugo presents a strikingly different appearance. To achieve the contrast, Dalli Cani underwent a dramatic makeover that included shaving all body hair and spending hours in hair and makeup to create the final look for the supernatural entity.



Francesco Dalli Cani in "Fallen"



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Principal photography took place over three days at the Universal Unitarian Church and the historic Waite Mansion in Riverside, California. The production nearly faced a major setback when its original filming location became unavailable just one week before shooting. Through quick thinking and creative problem-solving, the producers secured the Riverside locations and arranged accommodations nearby for cast and crew, allowing the production to move forward smoothly.

One of the most unusual aspects of filming was the decision to keep Dalli Cani immersed in character throughout the shoot. On set, the cast and crew referred to him exclusively as "Father" while filming his Antonio character scenes. Beyond the physical demands, one of the most technically challenging sequences involved scenes where Antonio and Ugo appear together on screen. The performance required precise eyelines, timing, movement, and continuity to convincingly create the illusion of two distinct characters sharing the same space. For Dalli Cani, it became one of the most rewarding acting challenges he has tackled to date.

Known for his dedication to character work, Dalli Cani approached both roles through extensive physical and behavioral research. Drawing inspiration from animal studies, he viewed Father Antonio as possessing the cautious, withdrawn nature of a turtle, while Ugo embodied the cunning confidence of a fox. These contrasting foundations helped shape two distinctly different performances within the same film.

While 'Fallen' operates within the supernatural horror genre, its themes reach far beyond scares and suspense. At its core, the story examines faith, empathy, forgiveness, and the human need



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Waite Mansion in Riverside, California

for connection. Rather than presenting a traditional battle between good and evil, the film challenges audiences to consider whether redemption is possible even for those who seem beyond saving.

The project also marks another significant milestone for Dalli Cani, whose journey from Vicenza, Italy, to Los Angeles has been defined by an ongoing pursuit of storytelling. Before studying acting professionally, he trained in Classical Studies and Law, experiences that continue to influence his approach to character development and performance. His background in language, philosophy, and history proved particularly valuable on 'Fallen', where Latin prayers and theological discussions play an important role in the narrative.

With festival submissions planned in both the United States and Italy, 'Fallen' is preparing for its next chapter as it enters the international festival circuit.

As Dalli Cani continues to build his career across film, television, and independent productions, 'Fallen' stands as one of his most ambitious performances yet, a project that combines physical transformation, emotional complexity, and philosophical depth into a haunting exploration of faith and redemption.

Distribution plans for 'Fallen' will be announced following its festival run. For up-to-date information follow Francesco Dalli Cani on [Instagram](#).

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