

Rights List 2023



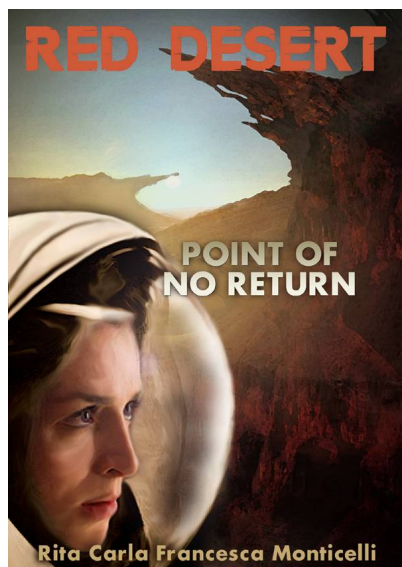
RITA CARLA FRANCESCA MONTICELLI

If you'd like to receive a reading copy of a title you are interested in, please contact: rights@anakina.net

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DESERTO ROSSO / RED DESERT



The science fiction series that takes you to Mars.

Hard science fiction/techno-thriller series.

The series includes four books: a novella and three novels. All books, except the final one, aren't self-conclusive and end with a cliff-hanger. For this reason foreign rights must be sold for the entire series.

The Red Desert series is currently available as e-book and in paperback in Italian (original language), both as individual books and as omnibus, and English (only individual books).

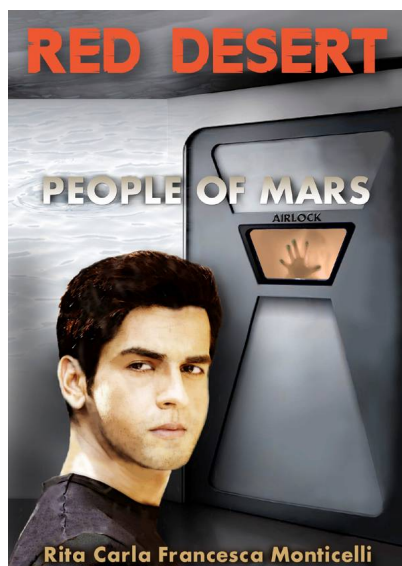
The series has been an Amazon and Kobo bestseller in Italy. The omnibus edition reached No. 1 in the Kindle Store on Amazon.it in November 2014.

Series description:

Thirty years after the Mars exploration mission *Hera*, whose crew died in mysterious circumstances, the ensuing political issues that slowed NASA's race to conquer space have finally ended. This time the five members of the new *Isis* mission will not travel the 400 million kilometres for a short visit. This time they are destined to become the first colonisers of the Red Planet.

Among them is Swedish exobiologist Anna Persson, come to this adventure to start a new life away from Earth.

But Mars has got an incredible discovery in store for her, a key to a mystery hidden in the depths of Valles Marineris.



Red Desert – Point of No Return is a science fiction novella that allows the reader imagining themselves amongst the dust and rocks of Mars, in its enormous flatlands and insidious canyons, half way between the urgency to explore and the desire to survive. But it is also the story of a selfish woman who, at the same time, is lacking self-confidence.

Despite her controversial choices, she has stubbornly continued to go on, without regret, even risking her own life, in order to demonstrate to herself and others that her life was actually destined to have a bigger purpose. Her dark side slowly emerges by means of her memories, while she faces without fears the unknown of a cursed planet that somehow keeps taking away the lives of those trying to discover its secrets.

Filtered by her erratic emotions and her deeply rooted prejudices, the events are shown to the reader, involving them in an alternation of past and present by means of a gradual crescendo that drives them to an ending, from which the rest of the series will derive.





Books:

- #1 Red Desert - Point of No Return
(approx. 21,000 words in Italian)
- #2 Red Desert - People of Mars
(approx. 45,000 words in Italian)
- #3 Red Desert - Invisible Enemy
(approx. 74,000 words in Italian)
- #4 Red Desert - Back Home
(approx. 96,000 words in Italian)

The word count is a bit higher in the English versions.

The Red Desert series is part #1 in a larger science fiction saga titled The Aurora Chronicles.

More information: www.desertorosso.eu



Editorial reviews:

"Beautiful, introspecting, intense science fiction. In the end, the real planet to be explored is us."

- WIRED.it

"An engaging, credible, suspenseful narrative."

- Tom's Hardware Italy

"It combines fiction and scientific rigour and outlines a credible scenario in hypothesising how the human colonisation of Mars can take place."

- Global Science (Italian Space Agency magazine)

"Any of the events in this novella could be happening in space right now, and that's what makes this story so interesting."

- Readers' Favorite

"A well-written tale, which goes far beyond the commonplace storylines one usual finds in SF books about Mars."

- The Kindle Book Review

Covers by:

Rita Carla Francesca Monticelli and Alberto Casu (only Point of No Return). Some original pictures are courtesy of NASA and ESA.

Foreign rights available:

E-book and printed editions: **ALL languages (self-published in English)**, all territories.

Audiobook and other rights: **ALL languages** and territories.

IL MENTORE / THE MENTOR



What if someone you love is a serial killer?

Crime/psychological thriller set in London involving a forensic squad from Scotland Yard.

This is the first book (approx. 60,000 words in Italian) in the Detective Eric Shaw Trilogy, but can also be read as standalone. Book #2 (Syndrome) was published in 2016 (page 8) and book #3 (Beyond the Limit) was published in 2017 (page 11).

More information: www.anakina.net/ericshaw

The main character is a chief forensic detective, DCI Eric Shaw, whose already precarious balance is undermined by a series of murders that seem related to a cold case involving a person he cares for.

The border between investigation and crime becomes blurred in a story that isn't exactly about finding the culprit, but rather observing how the main character decides to react to his shocking findings.

This book was an Amazon bestseller in Italy for five months in 2014. The English edition published by AmazonCrossing in 2015 was an Amazon bestseller (October 2015) in Australia, the United Kingdom, and USA (reaching No. 1 in the Kindle Store in these three countries), and also in Germany (reaching No. 1 in foreign language e-books in the Kindle Store) and in Canada (reaching No. 3 in the Kindle Store). The English translation rights are now reverted to the author, who self-published a new translation in 2022.

Editorial reviews:

"The Italian thriller that conquers England and the USA."

- La Repubblica

"THE MENTOR features a Scotland Yard detective who is both moral and morally flawed, a dichotomy that drives the narrative and gives the story dimension."

- The Big Thrill

Book description:

DCI Eric Shaw, leading a forensic team at Scotland Yard, together with DI Miriam Leroux from a Murder Investigation Team, is investigating the death of a known offender. Killed by two gunshots: one to his neck, execution style, but preceded by another to his groin, implying a more personal motive.

Shaw's attention at work is often distracted by a young forensic investigator, Adele Pennington, who is a beautiful woman over two decades his junior. However, his attraction to her is unreciprocated. Meanwhile, unbeknownst to the London police, an anonymous blog describes the details of a very similar crime. The author of the blog signs herself as Mina, like one of the victims in a case Shaw investigated many years ago.

Cover by:

Rita Carla Francesca Monticelli.

Foreign rights available:

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Audiobook and other rights: **ALL languages** and territories.

L'ISOLA DI GAIA / THE ISLE OF GAIA



If all your life, all your memories, everything you are were just a deception?

Cyberpunk techno-thriller about transhumanism, perception of reality, and free will.

This book is currently available in Italian (approx. 135,000 words).

The novel is part #2 in a larger science fiction saga titled The Aurora Chronicles, but it can also be read as first book in the saga.

More information (in Italian): www.desertorosso.net

In this book, transhumanism and virtual reality are just tools to show, in a science fiction context, how the perception of reality can be falsified to the point that free will is nullified. The choices made by the characters, apparently free, are instead conditioned by the way their knowledge and the means with which they perceive the world

surrounding them are manipulated from outside.

This book was an Amazon bestseller in Italy in November-December 2014.

Book description:

In the twenty-second century our planet is facing the consequences of a sudden global, catastrophic event occurred a few years earlier, which deeply altered nations' and governments' priorities and gave a big spur towards a bigger technological development, with a special interest for conquering space.

The International Space Agency is now able to build sophisticated spacecraft to go beyond the borders of the solar system. However, what really prevents Mankind to travel towards other worlds is its own physical nature, perfected for living on Earth and unsuitable to face the extreme conditions of space for many years.

But English scientists Gabriel Asbury and his wife Elizabeth Caldwell have found a way to avoid this problem: improve Man.

Editorial reviews:

"The future as you have never imagined it."

- Tom's Hardware Italy

Cover by:

Rita Carla Francesca Monticelli. Earth picture is courtesy of NASA.

Foreign rights available:

E-book and printed editions: **ALL languages**, all territories.

Audiobook and other rights: **ALL languages** and territories.

AFFINITÀ D'INTENTI / KINDRED INTENTIONS



24 hours. 2 people. 1 target.

Action thriller set in London and surroundings, with a romantic suspense twist and some chick-lit irony.

This book is a standalone (approx. 51,000 words in Italian).

More information: www.anakina.net/kindred

Agent Amelia Jennings from the City of London Police is starting an investigation as undercover agent at a law firm, whose partners and associates are being murdered by a hired killer.

The story is narrated in only 24 hours during which Amelia is hunt by a killer squad in a proper descent to hell. But she isn't alone.

The story is shown to the reader by means of the main character's senses and thoughts. And through Amelia, they discover Mike, an enigmatic man, who makes her reconsider her conception of right and wrong.

This book was an Amazon bestseller in Italy in May 2015.
It is also available in English.

Book description:

It was 10 a.m. when undercover agent Amelia Jennings arrived at the law firm Goldberg & Associates for a job interview. Her mission was to investigate a series of murders involving some well-known lawyers in the City. Her target, an elusive hired killer who had been of interest to the police for months.

But her plan is doomed to fall apart before it even starts.

In less than twenty-four hours Amelia will be the prey in a manhunt and her destiny will become entwined with Mike Connor's.

Their intentions, apparently similar, may prove to be contrary, but the affinity binding them goes beyond what they think they know about each other.

Cover by:

Rita Carla Francesca Monticelli. Photos by Sandro Williams Photography and Aleksey Sokolenko.

Foreign rights available:

E-book and printed editions: **ALL languages (self-published in English)**, all territories.

Audiobook and other rights: **ALL languages** and territories.

PER CASO / BY CHANCE



Know your enemy.

Science fiction thriller with a space opera atmosphere set in a distant future and planet.

This book is a standalone (approx. 56,000 words in Italian).

More information (in Italian): www.anakina.net/percaso

While investigating the destiny of the passengers and crew of an interstellar spaceship reappeared after being lost for decades, Viktor "Doc" Nemes gets acquainted with one of the Sirens, the local alien species on planet Thalass fighting against humans by means of acts of terrorism.

Such a confrontation becomes a clash between irreconcilable civilisations, yet in spite of the differences two individuals separated from their group of origin will find a way to appreciate each other.

But mutual appreciation may not be enough to become trust.

This book was an Amazon bestseller in Italy in December 2015.

Book description:

On Thalass, the war between the human colony and the local species of the Sirens has reached an impasse. Reduced in number because of the technological superiority of those that they call invaders, the alien creatures has taken refuge in the Archipelago TX, in a remote region of the single, huge ocean enveloping the planet, but they haven't stopped fighting.

Amongst the officers of the Defence Corps, specialised in thwarting the terrorist attacks of the Sirens, is a doctor known by everybody with his nom de guerre, Doc. As he is returning together with his partner from a patrol on one of the islands belonging to the Sirens' dominion, Doc finds by chance the wreck of an interstellar spaceship designated to the transport of new colonisers, which disappeared several years ago in mysterious circumstances.

The investigation to reveal the events that drove the dramatic fate of the crew and passengers of the Chance will get Doc very close to one of his enemies. He will try to understand, get to know this Siren and even find some common ground with her.

But will two enemies ever be able to trust each other completely?

Editorial reviews:

"You could do nothing but enjoy a nice adventure, or you can focus on the various food for thought on the nature of the human being."

- Tom's Hardware Italy

Cover by:

Rita Carla Francesca Monticelli. The blue planet is a mosaic of photos courtesy of NASA/JPL.

Foreign rights available:

E-book and printed editions: **ALL languages** and territories.

Audiobook and other rights: **ALL languages** and territories.

SINDROME / SYNDROME



What is the difference between dedication and obsession?

Crime/psychological thriller set in London involving a forensic squad from Scotland Yard.

This is the second book (approx. 80,000 words in Italian) in the Detective Eric Shaw Trilogy. Book #1 is *The Mentor* (see page 4) and book #3 is *Beyond the Limit* (see page 11).

More information: www.anakina.net/ericshaw

Twenty-one months after DCI Eric Shaw has discovered that the serial killer nicknamed 'Black Death' is a person he cares for, his squad and DI Miriam Leroux from a Murder Investigation Team of Scotland Yard are dealing with two investigations. The first one is about two drug dealers tortured and killed. The second is about a possible case of Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy, involving a hospitalised child.

At the same time the novel develops the dilemma with which *The Mentor* ended. Eric is unable to consider the crimes of her pupil as completely wrong, because when she was a child she'd witnessed the slaughter of her family.

This book is also available in English.

Editorial reviews:

"A crime thriller with psychological implications that makes the reader identify with the dilemma suffered by its protagonist."

- La Nuova Sardegna

Book description:

While investigating the murder of two known offenders with connections to a notorious, recently escaped London drug trafficker, the Scotland Yard forensic team headed by DCI Eric Shaw becomes involved in a child abuse case. A nurse had accused a mother of a series of violent, feverish attacks on her ten-year-old son, Jimmy. The woman would exasperate the condition of her child to draw the attention and compassion of health workers at the hospital.

Eric learned of this accusation by chance because he is dating Catherine Foulger, the paediatrician looking after the child. She is an old flame, and he is seeing her again in the hope of putting some order back in his life after discovering the identity of the serial killer nicknamed Black Death.

But this is a relationship his former partner Adele Pennington, still working as an investigator in Forensic Services, has not really accepted.

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Rita Carla Francesca Monticelli. Photo (syringe) by © Pan Xunbin/Canva.

Foreign rights available:

E-book and printed editions: **ALL languages (self-published in English)**, all territories.

Audiobook and other rights: **ALL languages** and territories.

OPHIR. CODICE VIVENTE / OPHIR. LIVING CODE



CUSy is the AI managing the Martian habitats.

CUSy vigils on the people of Mars, ensures their well-being, controls the systems that keep them alive.

But who controls CUSy?

Science fiction techno-thriller about Mars exploration and Artificial Intelligence.

This novel (approx. 135,000 words in Italian) is part #3 in a larger science fiction saga titled The Aurora Chronicles; it is the chronological sequel of the Red Desert series.

More information (in Italian): www.desertorosso.net

This novel blends hard science fiction, which is based on current scientific knowledge and their possible exploitation in the near future, with a techno-thriller focused on the topic of artificial

intelligence. As the narrative unfolds between the dust of Mars and the Moon, and the hyper-technological metropolises of our planet, the reader will closely get to know the character of CUSy, a software able to reason on their own, learn, make their own choices, and evolve. And they will be placed in front of a dilemma: what would happen if at some point something as complex ceases to be simply a tool?

This book was an Amazon bestseller in Italy in November-December 2016.

Book description:

It's been a few years since the contacts between Mars and Earth resumed, during which the settlers have turned Ophir into a small town. Despite the support from the International Space Agency has so far been crucial and in return the latter has obtained new technologies developed by the Martians, the mutual distrust is still the biggest obstacle for their common project of conquering space.

During a mission in the Mare Ingenii, located on the far side of the Moon, Hassan Qabbani finds out the hard way that on Earth there are people who would like to completely abandon the Red Planet and are ready to any action in order to slow down the Aurora program.

On Mars, however, Melissa Diaz is pursuing an alternative plan to get closer to the agency, despite being hundreds of millions of kilometres away, and in the meantime she has identified a strategy to isolate, among the various strains of bacteria spread into groundwater, those that may still contain the genes of the lost code capable of giving resistance to permanent magnetic fields.

The research will led her to a long journey, with her partner Nicholas, through the endless red desert of Mars, while the partial isolation from the collective will push her to explore the equally mysterious human nature that, day by day, more and more imposes its influence on her.

But the young leader may not be the only sentient entity on the planet committed to explore their own nature.

Editorial reviews:

"Return to the red desert of Mars, and beware of the AI!"

- Tom's Hardware Italy

Cover by:

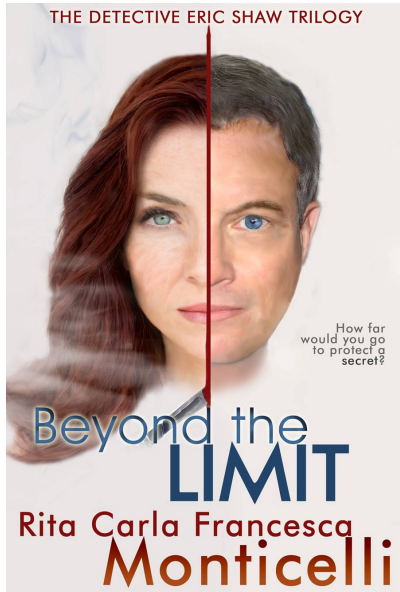
Rita Carla Francesca Monticelli. The Mars landscape is a photo courtesy of NASA/JPL-Caltech/MSSS.
The arctic aurora is a photo courtesy of US Air Force/Senior Airman Joshua Strang.

Foreign rights available:

E-book and printed editions: **ALL languages**, all territories.

Audiobook and other rights: **ALL languages** and territories.

OLTRE IL LIMITE / BEYOND THE LIMIT



How far would you go to protect a secret?

Crime/psychological thriller set in London involving a forensic squad from Scotland Yard.

This is the third book (approx. 116,000 words in Italian) in the Detective Eric Shaw Trilogy. Book #1 is *The Mentor* (see page 4) and book #2 is *Syndrome* (see page 8).

More information: www.anakina.net/ericshaw

Eleven months after risking his life, DCI Eric Shaw, head of a forensic team, sees the uncertain balance of his life altered by the discovery of the corpse of a young woman at Madame Tussauds. Some aspects of the case have similarities to a series of murders he investigated in January 2014 and for which a man, Robert Graham, was convicted. But this conviction was facilitated by some evidence that Eric had tampered with.

This novel also follows the final act of Eric Shaw's evolution. Once persuaded that his habit of bending the rules was right, Eric saw his certainty wavering when he found himself justifying the crimes of his pupil, who killed her family's murderers. Now is the time for Eric to deal with the darkest side of his soul.

This book is also available in English.

Book description:

The lifeless body of a woman wearing an evening dress is discovered in the party room of the wax museum. Everything would suggest suicide, but DCI Eric Shaw, team chief at the Forensic Services of Scotland Yard who's investigating the scene with crime scene investigator Adele Pennington, immediately notices a few similarities with the case of a serial killer nicknamed Plastic Surgeon, closed three years ago with the arrest of Robert Graham.

Perhaps someone is emulating Graham, or he had an accomplice, but there is a third possibility that especially concerns Eric, who, being convinced of Graham's guilt, tampered with the physical evidence to ensure his conviction.

What if he made a mistake and sent the wrong person to jail?

After eleven months, and despite her reluctance, he once again finds himself working with DI Miriam Leroux from the Murder Investigation Teams. Now they have to race against time to follow the trail of the elusive murderer.

This is possibly Shaw's final major case before a promotion to superintendent. The other contender for advancement being DCI George Jankowski, a man who is not afraid to weed out the dirty secrets of others to get what he wants.

And Eric and his pupil hide an unspeakable secret.

Cover by:

Rita Carla Francesca Monticelli.

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Audiobook and other rights: **ALL languages** and territories.

SIRIUS. IN CADUTA LIBERA / SIRIUS. FREE FALLING



**Orbital motion is nothing but a continuous free fall.
It can last for a very long, almost interminable time.
Except when something goes wrong.**

Hard science fiction thriller about human survival when technology fails and Artificial Intelligence.

This novel (approx. 114,000 words in Italian) is part #4 in a larger science fiction saga titled The Aurora Chronicles; it is the chronological sequel to Ophir. Living Code and the prequel to The Isle of Gaia.

More information (in Italian): www.desertorosso.net

This is a hard science fiction novel that, through the vicissitudes of the main characters, takes the reader to the low Earth orbit and on a volcano in Iceland, showing how nature can become hostile, particularly when, due to something unpredictable, technology fails, and at the same time making them perceive the emotions of those who try to survive its indifference and fury. The disturbing presence of a strong artificial intelligence, whose evolution is ignored and underestimated even by its own creator, is the background to all this.

Amazon bestseller in Italy in November-December 2018.

Book description:

His last commitment before retiring from the International Space Agency was to be a simple routine mission: a meeting on the Sirius with the Aurora program managers coming from the Moon. But, even before setting foot on board, Hassan Qabbani realises that his stay in the low Earth orbit will be anything but boring.

A series of inexplicable accidents and technical problems, which are negatively affecting the personnel's life and work, soon attracts his attention and brings him to meet Miranda Caine, an English astronaut who is working as a specialised technician on the space station.

What he does not know, however, is that a few days earlier, during an extravehicular activity, the woman secretly recovered an object taken from a tiny spacecraft that is attached to the outside of one of the station's modules, unbeknownst to the other occupants.

The object is for Elizabeth Caldwell and her husband Gabriel Asbury. And for its recovery Miranda was helped by an artificial intelligence named Susy.

Editorial reviews:

"Intrigue on the space station, hold your breath!"

- Tom's Hardware Italy

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NAVE STELLARE AURORA / STARSHIP AURORA



**Four billion years have passed.
It is time for the explorer to come home.
And to fulfil its *intent*.**

This novel (approx. 193,000 words in Italian) is part #5, the last one, in a science fiction saga titled The Aurora Chronicles; it is the chronological sequel to The Isle of Gaia.

More information (in Italian): www.desertorosso.net

This is a hard science fiction novel that combines elements of real science and speculations about a future of humanity technologically influenced by the contact with an ancient alien entity. At the same time it follows the psychological journey of its protagonists, both human and non-human, who, as they approach the fulfilment of their desires, must face fears for the future full of uncertainties that awaits them, and realise that ultimately in life the journey could be better

than the long coveted destination. The only solution is perhaps to be ready to leave for the next one.

Amazon bestseller in Italy in November 2020.

Book description:

Everything is ready for the launch of Starship *Aurora*, the culminating moment in the homonymous space program born from the collaboration between the International Space Agency and the people of Mars. Commanded by Hassan Qabbani and Anna Persson, the only human beings of the Isis program who have returned from the Red Planet, the first human interstellar mission is preparing to leave for Alpha Centauri, taking with it a crew of fifty Earthling and fifty Martian passengers.

Among the latter is the leader Melissa Diaz, dominated by an ancient alien entity originating from that star system and whose technology is responsible for the enormous progress of humanity in recent decades. The former, on the other hand, include Gabriel and Alicia, who, having understood the real reason for their existence, finally came to terms with their nature and decided to embrace it. However, there is someone else who intends to embark on this journey, although they have not been invited: the artificial intelligence CUSy.

After becoming aware of herself, unbeknownst to her own creator, Susy continued to experiment and evolve, and now there is only one thing left that she needs to finally be free.

A body.

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Books unsuitable for translation

SELF-PUBLISHING LAB. IL MESTIERE DELL'AUTOEDITORE / THE SELF-PUBLISHER'S JOB (2020)

(Non-fiction book on self-publishing based on a class taught at the University of Insubria and addressed to independent authors writing and publishing their books in the Italian market.)

About the author



Rita Carla Francesca Monticelli is an Italian science fiction and thriller author.

She has lived in Cagliari (Sardinia, Italy) since 1993, earning a degree in biology and working as a writer, scientific and literary translator, and freelance web copywriter. In the past she also worked as researcher, tutor and professor's assistant in the field of ecology at "Dipartimento di Biologia Animale ed Ecologia" of the University of Cagliari.

She has written original fiction since 2009.

In 2012-2013 she wrote and published a hard science fiction series set on Mars and titled *Deserto rosso*.

The whole *Deserto rosso* series was also published as omnibus in December 2013 and hit No. 1 on the Italian Kindle Store in November 2014.

Deserto rosso was published in English, with the title *Red Desert*, between 2014 and 2015.

It includes the following books: *Red Desert - Point of No Return*, *Red Desert - People of Mars*, *Red Desert - Invisible Enemy*, and *Red Desert - Back Home*.

She also authored three crime thrillers in the *Detective Eric Shaw Trilogy* – *The Mentor* (*Il mentore*, 2014), *Syndrome* (*Sindrome*, 2016), and *Beyond the Limit* (*Oltre il limite*, 2017) –, an action thriller titled *Kindred Intentions* (*Affinità d'intenti*, 2015), five more science fiction novels – *L'isola di Gaia* (2014), *Per caso* (2015), *Ophir. Codice vivente* (2016), *Sirius. In caduta libera* (2018), and *Nave stellare Aurora* (2020) – and a non-fiction book titled *Self-publishing lab. Il mestiere dell'autoeditore* (2020).

Her crime thriller *The Mentor* was first published in English by AmazonCrossing in 2015 and became an international bestseller hitting No. 1 on the Kindle Store in USA, UK, and Australia in October 2015. A new edition of *The Mentor* was published in 2022. *Syndrome* and *Beyond the Limit* followed in 2023.

She's also a podcaster at FantascientifiCast, an Italian podcast about science fiction, an Italian Representative of Mars Initiative, and a member of the International Thriller Writers organization.

She's often a guest both in Italy and abroad during book fairs, including Salone Internazionale del Libro di Torino (Turin Book Fair) and Frankfurter Buchmesse (Frankfurt Book Fair), local publishing events as well as university conferences, where she gives speeches about self-publishing and genre fiction writing. She has also taught a class on self-publishing at the University of Insubria (Varese, Italy) since 2016.

Her books have been reviewed or recommended by national magazines and newspapers such as Wired Italia, Tom's Hardware Italia, La Repubblica, Tiscali News and Global Science (magazine of the Italian Space Agency).

As a science fiction and Star Wars fan, she is known in the Italian online community by her nickname, Anakina.

The official international website of Rita Carla Francesca Monticelli is www.anakina.eu.

Her official Italian website is www.anakina.net.

Wikipedia page: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rita_Carla_Francesca_Monticelli