

# TFF

27 TORINO FILM FESTIVAL

**Downtown Pictures and Kolam Productions**

**Present**

## **THE CAMBODIAN ROOM**

**Situations with Antoine D'Agata**

**In competition italiana.doc**

**A documentary by**

**Tommaso Lusena and Giuseppe Schillaci**

**Official screening**

**Sunday November 15<sup>th</sup> | h. 17.00 | Greenwich 1 |**

**Second and third screenings**

**Monday November 16<sup>th</sup> | h. 11.15 | Greenwich 1 |**

**Tuesday November 17<sup>th</sup> | h. 22.15 | Nazionale 1 |**

Written directed and edited by	Tommaso Lusena e Giuseppe Schillaci
With	Antoine D'Agata, Lee, Philippe Azoury
Director of photography	Tommaso Lusena
Music by	Nicola Tescari e Chris Tsoupas
Live recording	Sear Vissal
Sound editor	Riccardo Spagnol
Color correction	Ercole Cosmi
Graphic designer	Alessia Mastriforti
Production	Downtown Pictures and Kolam Productions
With the help of	CNC PPROCIREP e ANGOA
Producers	Viviana Queirolo Olga Proud'homme Farges Tommaso Lusena Giuseppe Schillaci
Country	Italy and France
Year	2009
Location	Roma - Phnom Penh
Runtime	55'
Format	Digi Beta – BN/color
Sound mix	Stereo
Press Agent	Lionella Bianca Fiorillo Storyfinders Via Nomentana 126. 00161. Roma ITALY +39.04.45436244 +39.340.7364203 press.agency@storyfinders.it

Antoine D'Agata, a photographer from Magnum Agency, is in Phom Penh (Cambodia). Drugs, sex and nights out are his autobiographical subjects, but in Cambodia his artistic trail seems to reach an utmost point.

After devoting his art to picture desolated landscapes and borderline realities all around the world, Antoine D'Agata focuses his art on body and flesh, in a narrow room.

In Cambodia he spends many weeks locked in Lee's room, a prostitute and pusher of Ice, a South East Asia drug similar to Crack. Antoine lives a kind of desperate and paradoxical « love story » with Lee, smoking dope and trying to take pictures of his intimate relationship with her.

This film catches the hidden part of his art-life; his choice of living sex and drugs as both cure and conviction. An apocalyptic and sublime course, similar to the ones of other heretic artists of contemporary culture, from Kerouac to Artaud, from Bacon to Pasolini.

Antoine D'Agata was born in Marseilles in 1961. In 1983 he left France and lived abroad for ten years. In 1990 he was in New York, where he studied at the International Center of Photography with Larry Clark and Nan Goldin. In the same period, D'Agata worked as an editorial assistant for the Magnum Agency in New York.

After his return to France in 1993 he took a break from photography until 1996. His first book of photographs, *De mala Muerte* was published in 1998 and the Galerie Vu in Paris began distributing his work the following year.

In 2001 he published *Hometown*, and won the Niépce Prize for young photographers. His exhibition *1001 Nuits* was held in 2003, the same year that he published "Vortex" and "Insomnia". In 2004 he joined the Magnum Photo Agency and published "Stigma." The same year saw his first short film, *Le Ventre du Monde*. This film making experience led to his first feature length film *Aka Ana*, shot in Tokyo in 2006.

Antoine D'Agata's art features a dualism and contraposition between dreams and reality, visionary nightmare and perception of the world, anguish and sexuality, poetry of the body and uncontrolled delirium of the mind, solitude and carnal sharing of pleasure, existential pain and vital eroticism. This artist's photography is extremely complex and reveals to the spectator his condition as a suffering individual, lost in a nothingness artificially created by man to deny the emptiness that surrounds him.

The aspect of Antoine D'Agata work which impressed us is his way of recording his extreme experiences of life through his pictures, as a way to find an escape to the unstoppable flow of time. His aim, which is common in the art of photography, is to fight death. But his awareness of death gives birth to the pictures' strength of expression.

Antoine D'Agata photos create an intimate and fragmented diary about the artist's relationships with his subjects – prostitutes and drug dealers - that he met during his nights out.

The Cambodian Room: Situations with Antoine D'Agata is a movie about his autobiographical art. The documentary has become a challenge made of characters, stories, experiences that needed to be found and lived with Antoine D'Agata to tell what is behind his work and his life. So we reached him in Phnom Penh and we left that the situations were told without any intermediary.

And the situations were about the deep, existential and artistic crisis of Antoine D'Agata. We can say that every documentary in cinema direct is “about situations” and at the same time we have to tell that the crisis is fundamental to the artist creation, and for Antoine D'Agata is a vital condition to “be an artist” and to “live”, it's the desperate need to hit bottom to challenge his limits.

**Tommaso Lusena** was born in Milan in 1977. He approaches photography and video in 1998. In 2000 he attends the Saint Lucas Film School in Bruxelles following the documentary course. He moves to Berlin where he produces and directs four short-films. With *Il ritorno di Cagliostro* and *Come inguaiammo il cinema italiano* by Cipri and Maresco he starts to work as assistant camera for cinema: *Cuore sacro* by Ferzan Ozpetek, *Nuovo mondo* by Emanuele Crialese, *Il dolce e l'amaro* by Andre Porporati, *Caos calmo* by Antonello Grimaldi, *La straniera* by Marco Turco and *La Sicilia* by John Turturro. He is d.o.p. for tv: *La storia siamo noi*, *Ritratti* and programmes of Tatti sanguinetti and Achille Bonito Oliva for Cult Network Sky and for other TV productions (Endemol, La7, Raisat cinema).

In 2007 he participates to DOCS Barcelona Pitching Forum and in the same year to Eurodoc media programme. In 2008 to the Workshop by Werner Herzog(Holden School,Turin). Since 2002 he lives in Roma where he works as filmmaker.

## FILMOGRAPHY

2008: *Metropolis Now*, in development/docu-serial. This film is an investigation on contemporary big cities involving people who create and inhabit urban areas. 2003: *Momó*, 25 min. documentary about the strange exhibition of the Sicilian painter Antonio Calascibetta. 2002: *Yol*, short film about a boy from Poland who is intended to travel to Berlin. 2001: *Il libro ubriaco/Caos Communication/Rotondo*, experimental short-films about the story telling.

**Giuseppe Schillaci** was born in Palermo in 1978. Graduated in Communication Studies; Master in Show Business Management at the University of Bologna on 2002. Cultural journalist since 2005.

Since 2004 he works as a free-lance producer and director for documentary films. He is member of EURODOC, Doc It and participated to many pitching forum (Docs Barcelona and Thessaloniki). He directed the documentary *Cosmic Energy Inc.* produced by EIE and funded by Piemonte Film Commission.

He produced the documentary "The Island Inside" by Arapan Cinema, 75 min (release in December 2008). He worked as location manager for the docu-fiction "Prove per una tragedia siciliana" by John Turturro (2008); production assistant for the feature film *The Palermo Shooting* by Wim Wenders (2007). Script-writer and project development manager for the film production company Eurofilm and Cinemare (2006-2007). Production assistant for many feature films *and* executive producer for many short films.

## **Downtown Pictures**

Downtown Pictures is a company based in Italy. It has been founded in Bologna in 2002 and it started working on new talents and exploring new territories, in Italy and abroad. It produces or co-produces fiction, documentary and animation films from Europe, Middle East and Asia. It focuses on both artistic quality and commercial appeal. All its films have premiered at major European film festivals.

Downtown's first movie is *Fango* by Dervis Zaim, first Turkish and Cypriot co-production. *Fango* was selected in 2003 at Venice Film Festival in competition *Controcorrente*.

In 2004 *Dated* by Edo Bertoglio, a Italy/Switzerland/USA co-production, selected at Locarno Film Festival, at Alba Infinity Festival in 2006 and it won the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance Festival in 2006.

*Il Sole* by Aleksandr Sokurov, in competition at the 55° Festival of Berlin and it got a nomination for the Nastro d'Argento in 2006. *Face Addict* by Edo Bertoglio, selected at Locarno Film Festival in 2007. Finally *La Valle delle Ombre* by Mihály Györik, that has been selected for the Piazza Grande at Locarno Film Festival in 2009.



## **Kolam Productions**

Kolam is an independent film production company, based in Paris, created in 2003. Kolam's editorial line focuses on art, culture, history, travel and horse stories. Mrs Olga Prud'homme Farges works full time on developing projects and producing films. From 2003 to 2005, Kolam has produced two original series of sixteen and six 26 minutes documentaries. They are internationally distributed by the Paris based seller 10 francs ([www.10francs.fr](http://www.10francs.fr)). The series have been sold to, among other broadcasters, Australia (SBS), Mexico (Canal 22), Spain (Libertad TV), CFI and TV5. Since 2005, Kolam has achieved the production of 5 documentaries of 52 minutes each. Kolam has multiplied its co-production with different broadcasters : Equidia, Planète, Voyage and KTO. Most of Kolam productions are also helped by CNC. Kolam has also obtained financing from Procirep & Angoa, DMDTS (Direction Musique Danse Théâtre, Spectacle de rue), SCAM (Société Civile des Auteurs Multimedia –"Brouillon d'un rêve"), CRRAV (Centre Régional de Ressources Audiovisuelles), and Région Poitou Charentes. Kolam has worked, occasionally, for La Bibliothèque Nationale de France. In June 2006, Kolam trained students at the SMS (Summer Media Studio), in Lithuania. This programme, sponsored by MEDIA, was organized by the Educational Film and TV Studio of the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (Vilnius). Kolam trained students in documentary script writing. In 2007, Kolam participated to the EURODOC programme, sponsored by MEDIA.