



La scuola di scrittura Belleville

præsenterer

UMBERTO ECO – MIT ITALIENSKE BIBLIOTEK

En film af

Davide Ferrario

En **Rossofuoco** produktion

i samarbejde med

Rai Cinema

med støtte fra

MiC – Direzione Generale Cinema e Audiovisivo

Piemonte Doc Film Fund – Film Commission Torino Piemonte, Regione Piemonte

Pressekontakt

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SYNOPSIS

Den verdensberømte forfatter og tænker Umberto Eco, har forført en hel verden med sine bestseller-romaner. Hans internationalt anerkendte debutroman Rosens navn er blev forevigt på det store lærredet med en enestående Sean Connery i hovedrollen. I tillæg til sine mange romaner, efterlod Eco også et omfattende bibliotek. En hel verden for sig selv, bestående af mere end 30.000 nutidige og gamle meget sjældne bøger.

Filminstruktøren Davide Ferrario var så fascineret af det eventyrlige bibliotek, at han ønskede at forevige det på film, inden det efter Ecos død, blev splittet op og videregivet til den italienske stat.

Det er blevet til spillefilmen ”Umberto Eco - Mit italienske bibliotek”. En intellektuel og visuel rejse gennem bøgernes forunderlige univers, en verden, der i følge Eco selv, er i færd med at forsvinde med den digitale udvikling. Filmen beskriver ikke kun hans ekstraordinære samling, men uddyber Ecos idé om biblioteket som "verdens kollektive hukommelse”.

CREDITS

Instruktør	DAVIDE FERRARIO
Klipper	CRISTINA SARDO
Fotograf	ANDREA ZAMBELLI, ANDREA ZANOLI
Musik	CARL ORFF
Original musik	FABIO BAROVERO
Lyd designer	VITO MARTINELLI
Executive producer	LADIS ZANINI
I samarbejde med	GIUSEPPE CEDERNA, NICCOLÒ FERRERO, PAOLO GIANGRASSO, WALTER LEONARDI, ZOE TAVARELLI, MARIELLA VALENTINI
Produceret af	DAVIDE FERRARIO, FRANCESCA BOCCA
Præsenteret af	scuola di scrittura BELLEVILLE
Produktion	ROSSOFUOCO
I samarbejde med	RAI CINEMA
Med støtte fra	MIC – DIREZIONE GENERALE CINEMA E AUDIOVISIVO PIEMONTE DOC FILM FUND – Film Commissin Torino Piemonte, Regione Piemonte
Spillelængde	82 min
Censur	Tilladt for alle

BAGGRUND

I filmen udtaler en af Ecos samarbejdspartnere og venner: "Jeg var en heldig mand, der fik arbejde sammen med Umberto". Jeg kan kun sige det samme, da jeg har samarbejdet med ham i 2015 i forbindelse med en video-installation til Biennalen i Venedig, med ham som protagonist. Det var i den forbindelse, at jeg fik mulighed for at se hans bibliotek. Jeg spurgte med det samme, om jeg fik filme en sekvens, hvor han går mellem bøgerne, og det er det, der nu er blevet filmens åbningssekvens.

Da Umberto Eco døde et år senere, blev den sekvens brugt i medier over hele verden. Jeg var både trist og stolt, fordi de billeder kunne fortælle historien om et liv på ikonisk vis. Jeg følte, at jeg og Umbero kunne have været samarbejdspartnere på andre projekter, men det var ikke længere muligt. Så denne dokumentar er på mange måder blevet til den film vi ikke kunne lave sammen. Tak til Renate, Stefano og Carlotta, der lod mig komme ind i deres hjem og hjalp mig med at beskrive et bibliotek, hvor ejerens ånd stadig er i live.

DAVIDE FERRARIO - BIOGRAPHY

Født i Lombardia i 1956 og bor i Torino. Han blev udeksamineret i amerikansk litteratur fra Universitetet i Milano i 1981. Han begyndte sin karriere som filmkritiker i 1970'erne, og skrev essays og bøger. Han etablerede også et distributionsselskab, der lancerede film af Wenders, Fassbinder og Waida i Italien. Senere blev han den italienske agent for uafhængige, amerikanske instruktører som John Sayles og Jim Jarmusch.

Ferrarios instruktørdebut var *La fine della notte* i 1989, der blev kåret til årets bedste uafhængige italienske film. Han har sidenhen instrueret fiktionsfilm og dokumentarfilm, der er blevet vist på internationale filmfestivaler som Berlin, Sundance, Venedig, Toronto og Locarno. Ferrario har en helt særlig plads på den italienske kulturscene. Han har etableret sit eget produktionsselskab, Rossofuoco, hvor han har produceret alle hans egne film siden 2002. Hans film *Dopo mezzanotte* (After Midnight) blev en stor succes under Berlinale og blev solgt til mere end 100 land. Dokumentarfilmen *La strada di Levi* (Primo Levi's Journey), var på listen over italienske kandidater til Oscar-prisen.

Hans nyeste film var *Blood on the Crown* med Harvey Keitel og Malcolm McDowell. Ferrario er også forfatter, og hans roman *Dissolvenza al nero* (Fade to Black) er blevet oversat til flere sprog og blev filmatiseret af Oliver Parker i 2006. Han bidrager jævnlige til Corriere della Sera og er også en aktiv visuel kunstner og fotograf.

EN NOTE FRA UMBERTO ECO'S FAMILIE

Supporting and being part of Davide's documentary was motivated by the desire to bear witness to the existence of Umberto's and Renate's home-library-studio, built by them through the years, where we, as a family, lived for such a long time. There are many books, yes. They fill up the shelves, they overflow on the tables, they occupy boxes and drawers and sometimes they just lie in piles on the floor: they are the "vegetal memory", in which Umberto's soul lives on.

To narrate his library means also to describe his passions, the vastness of his memory, his limitless curiosity, his sense of humor and irony, the concept of "encyclopedia" as all-around education; finally, his passion for an open knowledge.

After the agreement we signed with the Ministry of Culture, the books are to find a new home: the contemporary collection will go to Bologna, at the University; the rare book collection will be moved to the Biblioteca Braidense in Milan. Before they went, we felt necessary to share with others what it meant to have lived in such a place.

Davide Ferrario was the natural partner for this endeavor. The sequence of Umberto walking in his library has become viral and we found that Davide himself still wanted to film the library again and so we started sharing stories, photographs, memories...

Davide has come up with his personal view and a wonderful movie of which Umberto himself would be happy.

EN SAMTALE MED DAVIDE FERRARIO

How did the idea of this movie come about?

It started with something that happened in 2015, one year before Eco's death. Vincenzo Trione, the director of the Italian Pavillion at the Venice Art Biennale, asked me to work with Umberto Eco on a video on the theme of memory, which was based on an interview edited into a three-screen installation. That's how I met "the Professor". We shot the interview in the living room of his Milan home. When it was over, we started chatting informally and he asked me if I wanted to see his library. I said yes, of course. The feeling of surprise and admiration I had is the same I hope everybody experiences watching the opening sequence of the film, when we follow the Professor through his labyrinth of books. I could not resist the temptation to ask him if he would do the same thing for the camera. The thought amused him and he accepted. I also explained to him that it would be great if he went to look

for the most remote book and if he took the most devious route to get there... He did so. That's how we got that iconic sequence – with a sad side effect. When he died one year later, those images were used all over the world to describe his love for books. His death put also a stop to some thoughts we were exchanging about doing something else together. Years passed and one day a Spanish journalist who was writing a piece on the libraries of famous writers, asked me to talk about my experience with Eco. I called the family to check some information, and they told me that the library was being given to the Italian State. They said they would have liked a filmed memory of it and we started talking. From one conversation to the other, the very basic idea of filming the books developed into a full-fledged documentary.

Can you describe this documentary?

It's a film not only about the actual library, but about the general idea of libraries as memory of the world, according to Eco. That's why there are images of libraries from all the continents, both old and modern: fascinating, almost magical locations. Furthermore, using the books as a sort of *fil rouge*, the film is about Eco himself, the novelist and the intellectual. You cannot understand Eco without his library. That was the world where his ideas, his stories, his thoughts were born.

It seems you developed a very peculiar relationship with the family...

It's true and it makes me smile a little bit, because it wasn't supposed to be like that in the beginning. Actually, we started imagining the film in a very formal and intellectual way: the original idea was to describe the library section by section, and each one of the sections would be explained by some important writer who had been a friend of Eco's. I felt right away it might become a very academic and boring documentary. So I proposed that these interview should at least be filmed as a conversation with members of the family, to make them less stiff. Then something happened, a sincere trust developed until I insisted that it should be them to talk about the library because there was nobody better to do it – those who had lived with Eco and the books. And so I filmed not only Renate, the widow, and Carlotta and Stefano, the daughter and the son, but also the grandsons; and even the little 8-year-old granddaughter has a part, using the library as her playground. It was essential to show the library not just as an archive, but as a living thing.

How did you work with the archival footage?

First of all, we used the long interview I had shot in 2015 and that I had used only in parts for the Venice installation. Then we went looking for interviews, conferences, speeches in which Eco's words had always some reference to books. Which turned out to be not a limitation, but the opposite: it became clear that all Eco's wisdom sprang from the books in the library. So we found ideas put forth 20 years ago that were unbelievably long-sighted. For instance, his provocative thoughts about the internet: he said that when the sharing of a "commonly accepted encyclopedia" fails, the web might give birth to 6 billion private truths, where everybody believes only what he wants to believe. Which is pretty much what we have seen happen with the widespread use of fake news, so that it's getting almost impossible to share the same idea of reality as it is. Another very contemporary theme is Eco's fascination for what is fake and for the power of language, which "can express not what is there, but what is not there". Besides, Eco was a great speaker, almost an entertainer, capable of charming his audience – and so I tried to exploit his "acting" talent.

What about the monologues?

That's an idea I got reading again and again certain essays he wrote on the love for books. I realized that they could be turned, with some adaptations, into theatre pieces. They are brilliant and full of irony as he could be. The pieces, performed by actors, also give a rhythm to the narration – and supply another chance to show wonderful libraries.

Music has a peculiar role in the film...

I have a story to tell on this. There is a piece by Carl Orff, *Gassenbauer*, which I always loved and wanted to use in a movie. I tried it on a montage of books in an early stage of the editing. It worked beautifully, so I wondered if Orff had written something else like it. I discovered that *Gassenbauer* was only the tip of the iceberg. It came from a collection of pieces written for his school of music that were recorded only once, in the mid-90's. It's a three-CD set that offers an incredible variety of sounds and arrangements. But there was something more, absolutely in tune with the spirit of the film: in these pieces Orff is both scholarly and entertaining, exactly as Eco's writing style was. It's very sophisticated music, but it's also childish, mysterious, esoteric. Just like in Eco's, you feel the author possesses a huge

culture but he knows how to put it to a simple and popular use. Finally, the soundtrack offers also three contemporary pieces by Fabio Barovero, a composer I usually work with.

Who do you expect is going to see this film?

Anybody. It's not an academic or celebratory film. Yes, it is about a motionless thing like a library but it finally shows how much life there is in a book. And it's a fascinating journey into the mind of one of the few Italian intellectuals who's known all over the world.

ROSSOFUOCO – PRODUCTION

Rossofuoco was founded in 2002 by film director Davide Ferrario as a tool to produce feature films and documentaries under a complete creative control, coupling independence with the market. This strategy proved to be very successful: starting with DOPO MEZZANOTTE (After Midnight), which was a big hit at home and was sold in over 100 territories, the company has been able to work with production/distribution partners such as Medusa, Rai Cinema, Warner Brothers.

In 2008 Rossofuoco started to produce films directed by filmmakers other than Ferrario, beginning with Andrea Zambelli's DI MADRE IN FIGLIA, a feature documentary. It premiered in Toronto in 2008 with enthusiastic reception and feedback in several festivals.

