

NICOLAS WINDING REFN PRESENTS

INFERNO ROSSO

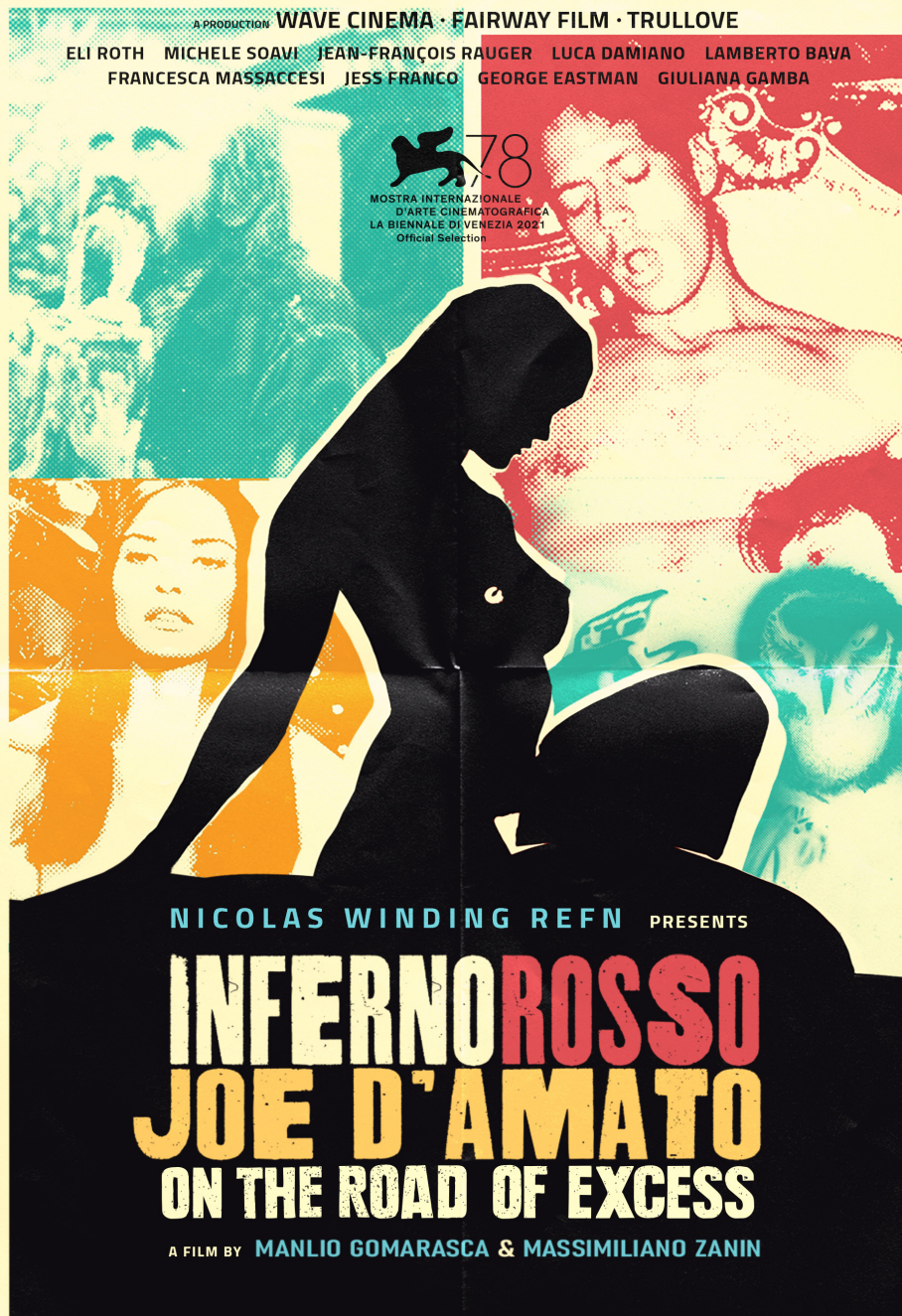
JOE D'AMATO

ON THE ROAD OF EXCESS

A FILM BY MANLIO GOMARASCA
MASSIMILIANO ZANIN

*"ORIGINALITY COMES IN MANY COLORS.
AND LIKE IT OR NOT,
JOE D'AMATO IS A **SUPERNOVA!**"*
NICOLAS WINDING REFN





Nicolas Winding Refn
presents



MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE
D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA 2021
Official Selection

INFERNO ROSSO JOE D'AMATO ON THE ROAD OF EXCESS

A film by
Manlio Gomasca and Massimiliano Zanin

70 min – Italy – 1.78 - 5.1 - 2021

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SYNOPSIS

Who was Aristide Massaccesi, aka Joe D'amato?

A genius of horror in the USA, a master of eroticism in France, the king of porn in Italy. In his immense filmography, cult films appear such as *Antropophagus*, *Buio omega*, *Emanuelle in America*, *Emanuelle Around the World*, *The Arena*, *Death Smiles on a Murder*, *Eleven Days*, *Eleven Nights*, *Black Sex*, *Porno Holocaust*, *Erotic Nights of the Living Dead*, *Endgame*, *Caligula... The Untold Story*. A man with a thousand pseudonyms and many facets, capable of making over 200 films while simultaneously holding the roles of producer, director, author, director of photography and even camera operator. An artisan of cinema, as he liked to define himself, capable of ranging between all film genres. From spaghetti western to post-atomic, from decamerotic to glossy eroticism, from blockbuster porn to bloody horror. Guided by the aesthetics of the extreme and supported by an undeniable technical ability, Aristide Massaccesi pushed himself and the viewer beyond all limits, following, with commitment, three rigid dictates that have become his stylistic code: Surprise, Shock, Scandalize.

One, none, one hundred genres enclosed in a single author. And this film tells the story of his courageous, crazy, reckless life, dedicated to a single, unique, uncontrollable and catastrophic obsession: the film set.



ABOUT THE DIRECTORS

Manlio Gomasasca

Born in Milan on December 21st, 1972, Manlio Gomasasca founded the Nocturno Cinema magazine in 1994 of which he is, to date, editor and chief editor. He has published the books *99 Donne* and *lo Emanuelle* for Mediaword, *Stelle e stelline del cinema italiano* for CinemaBis Communication and *La piccola cineteca degli orrori* and *Monnezza amore mio* for Rizzoli. He was curator of the retrospectives Italian King of the B's and Spaghetti Western for the Venice International Film Festival and was part, as a member or consultant, of the selection committees of the Rome Film Festival for the NIFFF - Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival, the Locarno Film Festival and the Quinzaine des réalisateurs of Cannes. Since 2015 he has been involved in film distribution at Koch Media, for which he founded Midnight Factory label where he is artistic director. He directed the documentaries *Totally Uncut*, *Fernando di Leo: La morale del cinema*, *I Tarantiniani* (with Stefano Della Casa) and in 2013 he produced the film *Il notturno di Chopin* directed by Aldo Lado.



Massimiliano Zanin

Born in Vicenza on April 2nd 1971, Massimiliano Zanin is an Italian screenwriter, producer and director. For over 15 years he has been the trusted scriptwriter and assistant on set of director Tinto Brass. He directed the documentary *Istintobrass*, about the life and career of one of the most important authors of Italian cinema which earned him the official selection at the 70th Venice Film Festival and within the five finalists at the Nastri d'Argento 2014 for Best Documentary on Cinema. He produced the documentary *Salvatrice, Sandra Milo si racconta* with Federico Lami in the official selection at the Rome Film Festival and the short film *Inverno (Timo's winter)* by Giulio Mastromauro, winner of the David di Donatello 2020.



DIRECTORS' NOTES

The first person to get excited and encourage us to tell the epic story of Joe D'Amato in the film *INFERNO ROSSO*. JOE D'AMATO ON THE ROAD OF EXCESS was Nicolas Winding Refn. He has always been passionate about stories of a forgotten complicated and controversial cinema, and celebrated, in the cultural operation of his website bynwr.com, where he resurrected invisible films from filmmakers like Andy Milligan and Curtis Harrington from oblivion. For the director of *Drive*, *Bronson*, *Valhalla Rising* and *Neon Demon*: "Originality manifests itself in many ways, and whether you like it or not, Joe D'Amato is a SUPERNOVA!". He is right.

Joe D'Amato is probably the most controversial and obscure figure in Italian genre cinema. He made his debut as an electrician on important sets such as Jean Renoir's *Le Carrosse d'or* and Jean-Luc Godard's *Le Mépris*. In short, he became one of the most requested cinematographers of the 1960s because as director, Lamberto Bava explains in the film: "in addition to shooting beautiful photography, he was very fast". On the set he did everything: director of photography, lights, camera operator, "he was at very high levels, like Tonino Delli Colli" confesses the director of *Cannibal Holocaust*, Ruggero Deodato.

He then took the painful but inevitable decision to continue as a director. During his career he shot more than 200 films exploring and revolutionizing all genres, from spaghetti westerns to peplum, from erotic to adult cinema, from horror to post-atomic. He was unstoppable because, as the programmer of Cinémathèque française and French critic of *Le Monde*, Jean-François Rauger, tells us in the documentary: «He was one of those directors for whom directing was like breathing, a bit like the Spanish Jess Franco or even Woody Allen». Joe D'Amato, aka Aristide Massaccesi, cinematically speaking, has lived as many lives as the infinite pseudonyms he used during his career. One, none, one hundred thousand. Films made in a hurry, often chasing the fashion of the moment, but always with an unmistakable "D'Amato Touch". The definition is always of Rouge, that is a formal elegance that pleasantly contrasts with the crudeness of the images.

Yes, Aristide Massaccesi was a great director of photography but with a taste for the morbid and unhealthy, that intrigued and made people uncomfortable. Guided by the aesthetics of the extreme and supported by an undeniable technical ability, Joe D'Amato pushed himself and the viewer beyond all limits following, with dedication, the rule of the three S's, which later became his stylistic code: Surprise,





Shock, Scandalize. In America Joe D'Amato is considered a genius of horror, with cult films such as *Antropophagus* and *Buio omega*, in France a master of eroticism thanks, above all, to the series of *Black Emanuelle*, in Italy the king of porn, with the films of Rocco Siffredi and Eva Henger. But he was much more than that. For Aristide Massaccesi, stopping was impossible, so at the end of the 1980s he turned into a courageous producer who discovered talented young authors such as Michele Soavi and Fabrizio Laurenti, and offered their last chance to directors who were his early masters, such as Lucio Fulci and Umberto Lenzi.

Much like Andy Warhol, Joe D'Amato built his own factory with the dream of making a cinema that would go beyond the borders of the Bel Paese. By itself, this would be enough to explain the desire to tell this incredible story within our film, but *INFERNO ROSSO: JOE D'AMATO ON THE ROAD OF EXCESS* is much more. It is the story of an obsession. The obsession with living the world of cinema and the set as the purpose of one's existence. An obsession for which Aristide Massaccesi was willing to sacrifice everything: earnings, family, reputation and even his own life.

He paid very dearly for it and on the other hand this obsession found him embroiled in the world of red lights which, as Luca Damiano says in the film: "he did it only for food reasons, a little ashamed, wanting to do something else". Porn has become an indelible stain for him from which he has never been able to redeem himself. Eli Roth, director of *Hostel* and *Death Wish*, a great admirer of Aristide Massaccesi's cinema is right when he says in *INFERNO ROSSO*: "if you disown Joe D'Amato just because he made hard films, you lie to yourself and you lose an opportunity to discover a great filmmaker. Look at the sets, the costumes, the incredible music... If you want to learn how to make films, watch Joe D'Amato's films".

This is echoed by Michele Soavi, director of the box office hit *La Befana vien di notte* and of the last great Italian horror *Dellamorte Dellamore*: "for me Aristide Massaccesi was the greatest teacher of life and cinema and I speak, without referring to much more popular and famous directors than him. Porn doesn't exist!".

INFERNO ROSSO is also a journey through genres and into the Italian film industry which in those years was among the most important in the world, second only to Hollywood. Telling Joe D'Amato's story is telling the parable of Italian cinema and, above all, telling about a free artist or, better still, an artist who has strongly wanted to be free all of his life. A filmmaker who understood life as cinema and cinema as the only weapon capable of shaking bodies and, through them, consciences, emerging on the international film scene. Joe D'Amato's cinema is body, blood and desires, it is the desire to amaze and shock at all costs. Joe D'Amato has contributed, more than anyone else, to breaking down the boundaries of morality, exaggerating everything, raping the viewer to become that *SUPERNOVA* that Nicolas Winding Refn talks about.

CAST

Aristide Massaccesi aka Joe D'amato
Eli Roth
Michele Soavi
Claudio Fragasso
Ruggero Deodato
Jess Franco
Tinto Brass
Lamberto Bava
Jean-François Rauger
Luigi Montefiori alias George Eastman
Franco Gaudenzi
Roberto Di Girolamo
Franco Lo Cascio aka Luca Damiano
Giuliana Gamba
Manlio Cersosimo aka Mark Shannon
Barbara Cupisti
Alberto De Martino
Daniele Stroppa
Francesca Massaccesi
Fabrizio Laurenti
Gianlorenzo Battaglia

CREW

Directors

Manlio Gomasca
Massimiliano Zanin

Screenplay

Manlio Gomasca
Massimiliano Zanin

Cinematography

Carlo Rinaldi
Gemma Doll Grossman
Gianluca Costamagna

Sound

Editing

Music

Alessandro Calevro
Beat Records

Post production

Opening Titles and Graphic Design

Laser Digital Film
Francesco Tortorella
Simone Gottardo

Production

Wave Cinema
Fairway Film
Trullove

Producers

Federico Lami
Massimiliano Zanin

Associated producers

Micaela Di Nardo
Andrea Di Nardo

Executive producer

Manlio Gomasca

International sales

Le Pacte

