

Selezione Ufficiale - Fuori concorso
FCP
FESTIVAL DEL CINEMA
DI PORRETTA TERME

ITALIA FILM
FEDIC

MENTIONE
SPECIALE
CINEOFF
DI PORRETTA TERME
2021

QUEL CHE CONTA È IL **PENSIERO**

*(THE **THOUGHT** THAT COUNTS)*

A FILM BY **LUCA ZAMBIANCHI**



PRESS BOOK

FESTIVALS & AWARDS

19th Festival del Cinema di Porretta Terme: Première out of competition

71st Italia Film FEDIC: "Passo lungo" Award for debut filmmakers

"Directors of the future" Award by the Directorate of SediciCorto IFF

Honorable Mention by CineOff – Festival di cinema indipendente

THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS

IS INDEPENDENT CINEMA
AUTEUR CINEMA
REBEL CINEMA.

PRODUCTION NOTES

We had no money to make this film – only a few thousand Euros, the budget that a director who is less crazy than me would spend for half a short film; we had no tools, except for my camera, two portable Led lights and the live sound recording kit; and we did not have a real crew either: we were only two, sometimes three people.

No director of photography as such, no camera operator, no set designer, no makeup artist, no assistants, nothing formal at all. Whoever was available to move a light, a tripod, a piece of prop, or make coffee, he or she would simply do it. This is filmmaking for me.

LUCA ZAMBIANCHI

*(Writer, director, producer, actor, cinematographer, editor,
and catering provider)*



SYNOPSIS

Giovanni and Michele are university students looking for a sublet roommate. Instead of studying for his Medicine exams, Giovanni is devoting all his efforts to the setup of his student play titled "*Freud's Laundrette*"; while Michele is busy going to parties and changing girlfriends. Hindered by Giovanni's resistance, their roommate search efforts apparently lead nowhere – until, one day, Asia shows up at their door.

In the midst of postponed exams, ambitious discussions, peaks of nostalgia, slack generational conflicts and too many coffees, Giovanni, Asia and Michele stumble towards an uncertain future in the lines of their generation in eternal crisis, longing for an outburst which seems to invariably fade into irony.

Italy | 2020 | Comedy-drama | Colour | 88' | 1.85:1 | DCP |
Italian with English & French subtitles

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I wrote the first page of *"The Thought that Counts"* on a September afternoon during my university years.

I was twenty-two at the time, and I used to spend most of my free time after classes writing in my room and in bars.

Five years and five short films down the line, I finally realised that I had not changed much since I first typed on that blank page. Meanwhile, Giovanni's character had not changed either: he had aged a little, felt inadequate and reflected over life together with me, page after page. Perhaps he had also breathed in a few grams of that thin dust which – to avoid talking about age – we commonly refer to as "maturity", and which I am used to measuring by counting the rings of melancholy like a tree trunk.

I put it all in this film: the ideas, the unanswered questions, coffees, cinema, the lost and unborn loves, nostalgias and plenty of irony.

"The Thought that Counts" was born in 2020, it is 88 minutes' worth, and is the child of all of us that think that films could (should) be made in another way.

In one's own way.

LUCA ZAMBIANCHI



DIRECTOR'S BIO

LUCA ZAMBIANCHI (Bologna, 1992) is an award-winning Italian filmmaker and airline pilot, and holds a degree in Management. At university, he co-directed a student play of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by W. Shakespeare. His short films *Solitude On Demand*, *The Audience*, *The Dance* and *American Tales* were selected in national and international film festivals. *The Thought that Counts* is his debut feature film.

2020 *The Thought that Counts* | Feature film

2019 *American Tales* | Short film

2018 *The Dance* | Short film

2016 *The Audience* | Short film

2016 *Solitude On Demand* | Short film

2014 *Low Tide* | Short film

THE [REALLY] INDEPENDENT CREW

DIRECTOR / PRODUCER / CINEMATOGRAPHER / ACTOR

LUCA ZAMBIANCHI has obviously over-estimated his capabilities since 1992.

SOUND DESIGNER / CO-PRODUCER

ENRICO ZATTONI is an Italian sound engineer and recording studio owner. He graduated as sound engineer for films at the Academy of Cinema in Bologna, and then started his activity as a free-lancer live sound technician in 1996. In 2010, he founded and presently runs *L'Arcangelo Recording Studio*.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR / CAMERA

JESSICA MILARDO is an Italian assistant director and film festival programmer, and holds a degree in Law. She has been active in filmmaking as assistant director since 2014, and as programmer and member of the directorate of the SediciCorto International Short Film Festival (Italy) since 2017.

CAMERA / ALL THE REST

HENRY WHITES is the joint pseudonym of Luca Zambianchi and Enrico Zattoni.

written, directed & produced by
LUCA ZAMBIANCHI

co-produced by
ENRICO ZATTONI

starring

LUCA ZAMBIANCHI
MICHELE PETRINI
ALESSANDRA RONTINI
ENRICO ZAMBIANCHI
MATTEO CELLI
JAMES FOSCHI
LUCIANO BALDAN
GIANFRANCO BOATTINI
ALEX RAVAGLIA
FRANCESCO LEGA
GIULIANO GAVAGNA
FRANCESCA RAGNI
LAURA ZECCHINI

cinematography & editing
LUCA ZAMBIANCHI

sound design & mix
ENRICO ZATTONI

camera operators
HENRY WHITES
JESSICA MILARDO

colourist
ALBERTO BANDINI

also starring

LICIA NAVARRINI

music by

EQU
CORNER IN BLOOM
LINEAMAGINOT



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF LUCA ZAMBIANCHI ON THE MAKING OF “THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS”

1. How did you make this film with only a few thousand Euros?

I rejected the widespread misconception that you can only make a film with a “standard” crew – in other words, a crew composed of all the functions and people which are usually seen on film end credits and in filmmaking books. Would have I fancied a cinematographer on my film? Sure. But I could not afford the rental of the equipment and the related setup time on the day, so I avoided the embarrassment and did it by myself using only natural light, two portable Led lights and a few tricks. And that is the reasoning I applied to all the functions I could not afford, until I found myself with a crew made of just two or three people, including myself. Nobody ever teaches you how to make a film like that; it rests all in your inventiveness.



2. How was a typical day on your film set?

Most of the time it was only the two of us – Enrico and myself – to work as film crew. We usually arrived on location two hours before shooting. While Enrico prepared his sound recording tools, I took care of camera and cinematography. When the actors came, we usually had a coffee, then we blocked the scene and I finalised the framing. Enrico was essential, as he was often the only person behind the camera line. He pressed “rec”, worked as boom and recording operator, and helped me as a kind of assistant director. On average, we shot three scenes a day, including a lunch break organised by the catering staff – which was me.

3. How did you choose the actors?

Almost all of them were old friends. Some were experienced actors, while others had never acted before. I didn't hold standard auditions, firstly because I don't believe in instant talent, and secondly because I had gradually superimposed faces of people I knew to all characters during the writing stage. Regarding the character of Giovanni, I thought it over and then decided that he would be easier to play than to explain.





4. What is your relationship with the camera like?

I have a very personal relationship with the camera. I have to be the one to move it and to find my way to the final frame. I have a kind of internal tension that makes me understand instinctively if I like the frame, if the frame is really “mine”. As for camera movements, I prefer static shots. I’m tired of watching the usual, unjustified camera movements made to convince people (and yourself) that you are a real “director”. To me, static shots mean responsibility: the plot takes place within the boundaries I defined, yet the audience is free to choose where to look.

5. What is your favourite stage of filmmaking?

Writing is my favourite stage. During writing, I live with my idea, my sentiment, my characters and my delusions. I take them with me all the time. Then, perhaps due to the fear of seeing the screenplay die on paper, or perhaps in an effort to protect it from reality, I end up extending my duties to directing, producing, acting, cinematography, editing, music and English subtitling. In short – for better or for worse – my films are all my fault.

6. How is your film different from usual comedies?

We've got to be careful and draw a line between "comedy" and "comic" film. Comedy is made of humour, curiosity and a substrate of melancholy; whereas comic films are quite the opposite – they are based on stereotypes placed in absurd situations, they trivialise instead of analysing, and there is simply no ambition beyond easy laughter. Many comic films and very few comedies get made in Italy. My film is different because it is a comedy, because there are thoughts beneath the laughter. As for the rest, we'll see – in fact, we'll watch.

7. Do you think there is room for a different kind of cinema?

I think people of my generation should make the films they wish and as they wish, revolting against filmmaking lectures, against technological slavery and against the term "video maker". We all have to complain less; read, write, reflect and experiment more, accepting the lack of funds and tools and, in fact, transform it into a creative opportunity. A different kind of cinema cannot take place, unless we begin – or return – to putting thought before technique, the ambition of the sentiment before the humiliating race for funding.



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Henry Whites
F I L M