

ATMO PRESENTS



# VIDEOCRACY



**6 th VENICE DAYS**



**24th INTERNATIONAL FILM CRITICS WEEK (SIC)**



**ITALIAN DISTRIBUTOR**

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# ATMO

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## **ATMO PRESENTS VIDEOCRACY**

A co-production with Zentropa Entertainment7 and SVT Sveriges Television

**Director** Erik Gandini

**Producer** Erik Gandini

**Cast** Ricky Canevali, Lele Mora, Marella Giovannelli, Silvio Berlusconi, Fabio Calvi, Fabrizio Corona

**Executive Producer** Kristina Åberg

**Producer Zentropa Entertainment7** Mikael Olsen

**Producer SVT Swedish Television** Axel Arnö

**Editing** Johan Söderberg

**Cinematography** Manuel Alberto Claro DFF /Lukas Eisenhauer FSF

**Assistant Director** Iacopo Patierno

**Associate Producer** Ann-Louise Dahlgren

**Music arranged and remixed** by Johan Söderberg

**Music produced by** Johan Söderberg and David Österberg

**Sound design and mix** Hans Møller, Mainstream ApS

**Graphics and Art Director** Martin Hultman

### **With the support of**

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## **VIDEOCRACY**

### **A film by Erik Gandini**

In a videocracy the key to power is the image.

In Italy one man only has kept the domination of the image over three entire decades. As a TV-magnate and then as Presidente, Silvio Berlusconi has created a perfect system of TV-entertainment and politics.

Like no one else he has influenced the content of commercial television in Italy. His TV-channels, known for their over-exposure of almost naked girls, are seen by many as a mirror of his own taste and personality.

Today 80 percent of the Italian population has television as their prime source of information.

Television has most consciously been turned into a marketing channel, bringing the message to the masses; "have fun and forget the harsh reality for a moment". The most important thing is to be noticed and seen; stardom, money and people's admiration then come automatically.

Director Erik Gandini lives in Sweden but was born and brought up in Italy. In "Videocracy" he returns to his country of birth portraying from the inside the consequences of a TV-experiment that Italians have been subjected to for 30 years. He gets a unique access to the most powerful spheres, even close to the President's summer resort in Sardinia. Unveiling a remarkable story, born out of the scary reality of TV-republic Italy, a country where the step from TV-showgirl to Minister for Gender Equality is only natural.

## **VIDEOCRACY**

### **Director's note**

Berlusconi's commercial television has been a strong experience for me and my generation. In the late 80s, at 20 years old, I moved from Bergamo to Sweden and encountered a very different TV climate. I still remember my astonishment when I realized that the Swedish national public service state broadcaster showed no advertising at all, very few undressed women dancing and undubbed foreign films.

There, I discovered "creative documentary," a genre which I soon fell in love with and that in Sweden is treated as a highly respected cinematic art form, widely present in both cinema and television.

Since then, I have been struck by the increasing power and unique role of television in Italy. There was the political implications; TV is mainly owned and controlled by Silvio Berlusconi, the one single person who more than anyone else has influenced the content of commercial television in Italy in the past 30 years. But there is also the impact on people's soul. For us Italians the word "television" does not anymore refer to the actual TV box. "Televisione" has become so much more, a powerful and mystified entity with a scary unknown power that has entered almost every aspect of life, dreams and of course politics. Almost like monster.

Returning to Italy I found a state of great tension, not so much between those who support Berlusconi and their opponents, but rather between the TV elite and the ordinary viewers, between those who belong and benefit from Television and all those who are doomed to just watch. Young people who see in their own image and their own body, or in the aggressive use of a hand held camera a way of empowering themselves.

After having spent the past 20 years in Sweden, I embarked on a journey in Italy and inside the world of Television. A world that although being very closely connected to il presidente, Silvio Berlusconi likes to present itself as harmless, "just entertaining" and for the sake of "having fun". A world that more than gladly exposes itself and by doing so has given me the privilege of a personal, sometimes scary and truly emotional experience of a possible new world order, "the rule of the image" - Videocracy.

**Erik Gandini**

## SHORT BIOGRAPHY

**Erik Gandini**  
**(born 1967)**

Director **Erik Gandini** was born in Bergamo, Italy and moved to Sweden at the age of 19 to attend Biskops Arnö documentary film school, proceeded by studies in Film Science at the University of Stockholm. Thereafter he worked as Director of Photography Assistant at Cinecitta' studios that brought him back to Italy for a while.

Back in Sweden, Erik Gandini made his first documentary in 1994 "**Raja Sarajevo**" that immediately got recognition worldwide.

Since then he has directed and produced for instance "**Not without Prijedor**", about young Bosnian refugees in Sweden returning to Bosnia to join the war, "**Amerasians**" about the 100.000 children of American soldiers in Vietnam and "**Sacrificio- Who betrayed Che Guevara?**" (co-directed by Tarik Saleh), that stirred an international debate and got worldwide TV and video distribution.

His hard-hitting look at the consumer society, "**Surplus – terrorized into being consumers**", is one of the most bestselling Nordic documentaries ever and has been screened at 71 film festivals worldwide. "**GITMO – The new rules of war**" (co-directed by Tarik Saleh), on the situation in the Guantanamo military base, has won prizes at the film festivals in Seattle and Miami.

Erik Gandini has over the years been nominated to and won prestigious awards like the Swedish Oscar "Guldbaggen" for best documentary, "the Oscar of documentaries", the Silver Wolf at IDFA in Amsterdam for "Surplus", and Silver Spire Award at the Golden Gate Int. Film Festival in San Francisco.

His films have been selected to Berlin FF and awarded at international documentary festivals in Sao Paulo and Goias in Brazil, DocAviv in Tel Aviv Festival of Oporto, Portugal, Festival de Nuevo Cine in Havana, Cuba, Human Right Film Festival in Prague and many others.

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### Erik Gandini

- 1967** Born in Bergamo
- 1986** Moves to Sweden at age 19 to attend Biskops Arnö documentary film school
- 1987** Assistant Dir. of Photography in Cinecitta, Rome.
- 1988** Stockholm University -Film Science. Master degree.  
Granted by SIDA for still photography project in Central America.
- 1989** Co-producer on the Channel Four documentary film **“Black Hills Pilgrimage”** about the Sioux community in Rosebud, South Dakota, USA.
- 1990-93** Freelance work as still photographer, cinematographer.  
Works as assistant Director of Photography.
- 1994** Documentary film debut: **“Raja Sarajevo”** (Sarajevogänget) 58 min. directed and produced for SVT. A group of young friends trying to survive in Sarajevo under the siege. Shot on Hi-8 video and distributed on 35mm.  
**Awards:** Winner of Nöjesguidens Stockholm prize as Film of the Year 1994 and Nordvision-prize as best Nordic Documentary. Also selected at Berlin FF, Cinema du Reel, Paris, Amsterdam Documentary FF, Nordic Panorama and Göteborg FF.
- 1995-96** **“Not without Prijedor”**, 58 min. documentary for SVT1, about young Bosnian refugees in Sweden returning to Bosnia to join the war.
- 1996** Starts together with among other Tarik Saleh and Kristina Åberg **“Elbyl”**, a cutting edge format at SVT.
- 1998** **“Amerasians – the 100.000 children of American soldiers in Vietnam”** documentary film, director and producer. About the offspring of US soldiers left in Vietnam after the war.  
**Awards:** Silver Spire Award at the Golden Gate Int. Film Festival in San Francisco 1999. Guldantennen as SVTs best Doc. of the year, 1999.
- 1999** Finds **Atmo** together with Kristina Åberg. Later joined by Tarik Saleh.
- 2001** **“Sacrificio – Who betrayed Che Guevara?”** produced and co-directed with Tarik Saleh. Edited by Johan Söderberg. Shot in Sweden, Bolivia, France, US. The film sparks an international debate and finds worldwide TV and video distribution.  
**Awards:** First Prize at the 2001 International Documentary Film Festival “It’s all true”, Sao Paulo, Brazil. First Prize at the 2001 International

Documentary Film Festival of Oporto, Portugal. Best Non-Latin American Documentary at 2001 Festival de Nuevo Cine, Havana, Cuba. Best use of music and sound, Prague, 2002 "One World" Human Right Film Festival.

**2002**

Format developing of several SVT productions: Kobra, Nyfiken på Gud, Fläsk.

**2003**

Produces and directs "**Surplus – terrorized into being consumers**", edited by Johan Söderberg. Released theatrically in Sweden by Folkets Bio on March 22. Surplus is the 2nd. best selling SVT production after "Abba-The Movie". Also the Swedish documentary that tops the participation at international Film Festivals: 71 since it's premiere.

**Awards:** First prize at the 2003 IDFA-Amsterdam Silver Wolf Competition. Nominated for the 2003 Guldbaggen, the "Swedish Oscar", as best documentary film. Award for best use of sound and music at the 2004 One World documentary Film Festival, Prague Czech Republic. Jury's mention at the 2004 DocAviv, Documentary Film Festival, Tel Aviv, Israel. Second best short film at the 2004 Ecocinema International Film Festival, Rhodes, Greece. First prize as "greatest of all productions" at 2004 FICA, the International Festival of Environmental Film, Goias, Brazil. Audience Award at Vila do Conte, International Short Film Festival, Portugal, July 2004. Two Special Mentions at the Torino Environmental Film Festival, October 2004

Produces "**GITMO**" in it's initial phase. Later produced by Kristina Åberg, Atmo and Zentropa/Mikael Olsen

**2004**

Associate producer "**The Voice**", short film by Johan Söderberg

**2004-5**

"**GITMO – The new rules of war**", co-directed with Tarik Saleh. Broadcasted and distributed so far in Sweden, Norway, Canada, Finland, France, Italy, al Jazeera, USA, Ireland, Poland (theatrical release), Spain, Turkey and Korea etc. Premiere in Yoris Ivens competition at IDFA, November 2005. Awards: First prize at Seattle Int. Film Festival 2006. Special Jury Award at Miami International Film Festival, 2006. First prize at Festival of Liberties, Belgium. Best film music prize at Auxerre Music Film Festival 2006

**2006**

Produces the documentary film "**Like a pasha**" by Svante Tidholm/Atmo

**2007**

TV serial Europa, UR, Swedish broadcaster.



**2009**

TV serial "Välkomna nästan allihopa". Documentary Tv series

**2007-09**

Directs and produces "**Videocracy**". Feature documentary about Italy after 30 years of Berlusconi TV rule. In co-production with SVT, Zentropa. Supported by BBC, YLE, DR etc. World premiere 2009 Venice International Film festival. SIC& Venice Days joint event. Official selection at the 2009 Toronto International Film Festival. Swedish theatrical premiere Aug. 28. Theatrical release in Italy, Sept 4th.

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