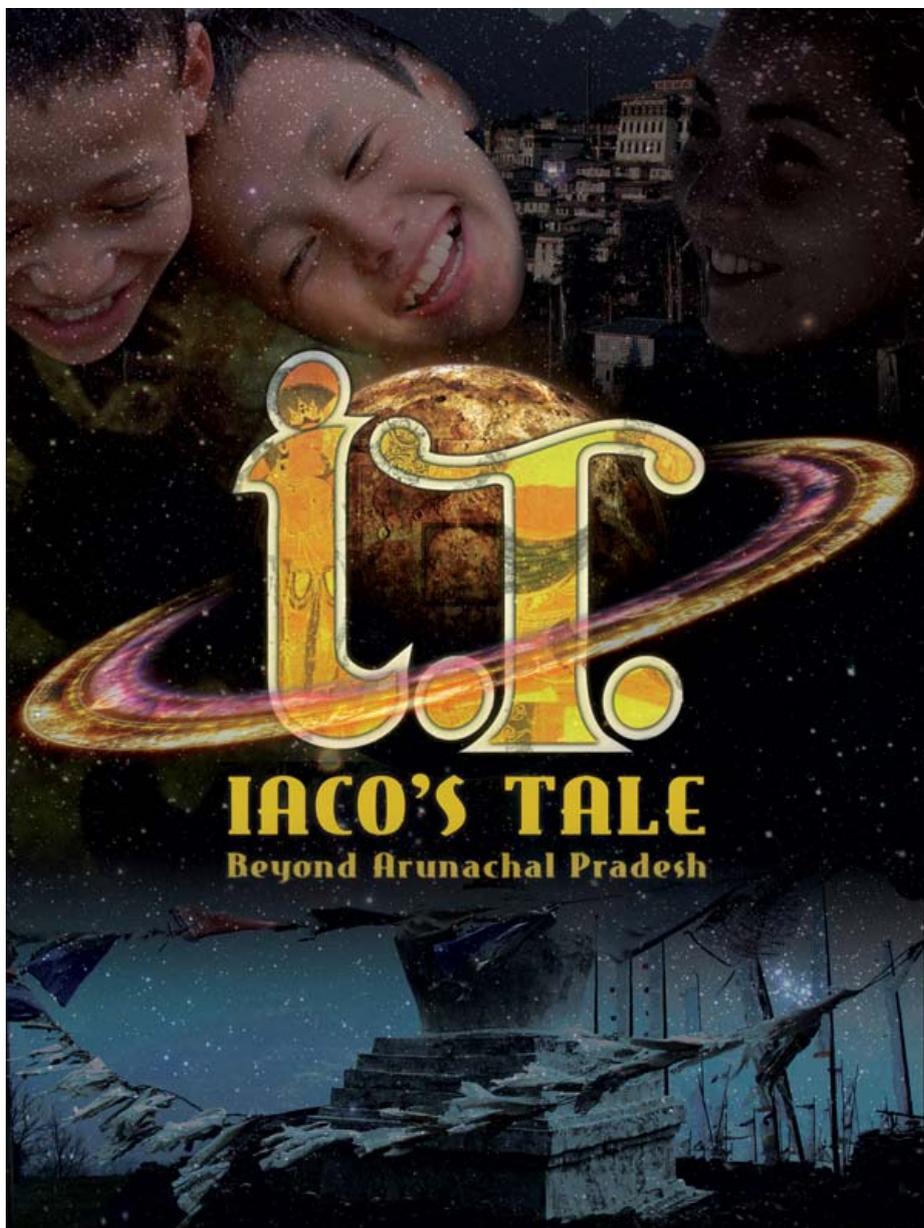




TO MARK THE END OF THE
INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF ASTRONOMY,
UNRIC HAS THE PLEASURE OF INVITING YOU TO THE
20TH EDITION OF CINE-ONU



BY GAIA CERIANA-FRANCHETTI (2009)

Gaia Ceriana Franchetti

Director

Born in Buonconvento, Siena, Italy, Gaia Franchetti graduated in philosophy at the University La Sapienza of Rome. Her passion for cinema prompted her to start making documentaries in the 70s. From 1985 to 1993 she was President of the Italia-India Association, which she founded.



In 1995 she created Indoroman for the collection and distribution of hand-woven materials which are still manually produced from the Mediterranean through to India. She traveled extensively searching for textile masterpieces both in Europe and Asia but predominantly in India. The work of Indoroman represents a kind of textile anthropology, with a profound and detailed research of textiles handmade in India. It is a means of providing economic resources to workers in order to enable them to preserve their cultural heritage from the uniformity of the globalised world

Documentaries:

“Ladakh Centro dei Passi” : on Tibetan Buddhism and the city of Leh.

Prize for best Documentary at the San Sebastian Film Festival, Spain, 1977, and Best Television work at MIFED TV (Milan Film Festival, Italy) 1978; shown at Asiatica Film Mediale, Rome, Italy 2007

“Le Crisalidi, donne in trasformazione” : Three episodes on Islamic women in North Africa, realised with Chantal Personé 1981

“Videodiario di viaggio con lettura”: a journey across America, Caribbean and Brazil 1983
Salso Maggiore Film Festival , Italy 1983.

“Ora che non siamo più bambini” : Eight Italian contemporary artists work for a day with the children of a Roman school 1991-1996

Shown at Madre (Museum of Modern Art, Naples, Italy) 2008

“Gaia in India” : journey to the textile villages of Andhra Pradesh, 2004

Shown at Indoroman “Kalamkari – colours from the earth” exhibition 2004

“Xinjiang Nodo dell’Asia” : two imaginary journeys in separate historical periods in the North West of China. Shown at Asiatica Film Mediale, Rome, Italy 2005

“Un safari tessile” : In the villages and textile laboratories of Gujarat e Rajasthan.

Gaia Franchetti on Iaco’s Tale – Beyond Arunachal Pradesh

I have been travelling to the north eastern states [the seven sisters as they are known by the locals] since my first visit to India. Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur were open to tourism, others such as Nagaland or Arunachal Pradesh were not, as they were frontier zones with China and Burma or had tribal problems with separatist movements. Only last year did I finally manage to fulfill my desire to shoot a documentary in Arunachal Pradesh, one of the most remote areas of India, inhabited by over 70 ethnic groups with different languages and religious beliefs.



The main actors in the film are a European woman who travels alone and a Buddhist boy of the Monpa tribe who is able to see the universe by closing his eyes. ‘Iaco’s Tale - beyond Arunachal Pradesh’ was released in Italy in October 2009. I attempted to describe the magical character and the natural beauty of this tropical Himalaya. Revealing it through the wide imagination of a young orphan boy, Tenzin Sherap from Manjushree Vidyapith, whose visions are shaped by the Buddhist teachings of Lama Thupten Puntsok, founder of the orphanage.

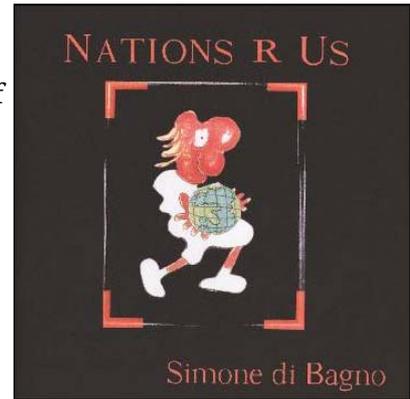
With this film I also wish to describe the growth of a very natural and friendly relationship among very different people travelling together in a shared journey. This is the real story.

Simone di Bagno

Former film producer for the United Nations Department of Public Information

Born and raised in Rome and trained as a painter and cinematographer, Simone di Bagno, worked in Italian feature films until 1974. From 1975 to 1995 he was producer/director in the Department of Public Information of the United Nations. Among his many award-winning films, "Footnotes to a war", on the plight of the Indochinese refugees, received the "Blue Ribbon" at the American Film Festival in 1981. It was only the second time this prestigious prize was awarded to the UN since its inception in 1948. The film was screened in 1997 at the Venice International Film Festival and introduced by the Secretary General as the best example of fifty years of United Nations films. His 1979 "Free Namibia", on the plight of the "last colony of Africa", is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern art in New York.

Since leaving the UN in 1995 he has produced a film on the struggle for democracy in Burma, co-produced a film on peace-making operations in Haiti - "A work in progress"- and has created a book of drawings, "Nations R Us", that explains the UN to children. The book is going to be presented at the UN Bookstore in NY on 17th December. His last exhibition was in 2009 at Governors Island, in NYC.



Documentaries:

1987. "Palestinian portraits", documentary on the little known Palestinian middle class.

Awards: Finalist, Houston Film Festival, USA, 1988; Finalist American Film Festival, USA, 1988

1985. "The Women of Gyryloyou", documentary on the pivotal role of women in rural Indonesia.

1983. "Galapagos, my special land", documentary on the preservation of a fragile ecosystem.

Awards: Finalist, American Film Festival, USA, 1984.

1986. "Shelter for the homeless", documentary on solutions to the global problem of shelter.

Awards: First Prize, Eko Film Festival, 1987

1982. "The delicate giant", documentary on forest management in the Amazon rain forest.

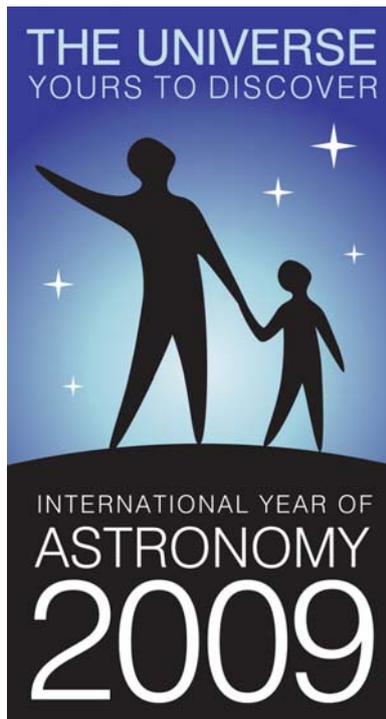
Awards: First Prize, Eko Film Festival, 1986; Diploma, Agrofilm Festival, 1985.

1979. "Footnotes to a war", documentary on the resettlement of Indochinese refugees.

Awards: Blue Ribbon Award, American Film Festival, USA, 1981; Lille Film Festival, France, 1981.

1978. "Free Namibia", documentary on the 100 years struggle for independence of the last colony of Africa.

Awards: Tashkent Film Festival, USSR, 1980; Leipzig Film Festival, East Germany, 1981; Inducted into the Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA, 1984.



The International Astronomical Union (IAU) launched 2009 as the International Year of Astronomy (IYA2009) under the theme, The Universe, Yours to Discover. IYA2009 marks the 400th anniversary of the first astronomical observation through a telescope by Galileo Galilei. 2009 was a global celebration of astronomy and its contributions to society and culture, with a strong emphasis on education, public engagement and the involvement of young people, with events at national, regional and global levels throughout the whole of 2009. UNESCO has endorsed the IYA2009 and the United Nations proclaimed the year 2009 as the International Year of Astronomy .

Astronomy is one of the oldest fundamental sciences. It continues to make a profound impact on our culture and is a powerful expression of the human intellect. Huge progress has been made in the last few decades. One hundred years ago we barely knew of the existence of our own Milky Way. Today we know that many billions of galaxies make up our Universe and that it originated approximately 13.7 billion years ago. One hundred years ago we had no means of knowing whether there were other solar systems in the Universe. Today we know of more than 200 planets around other stars in our galaxy and we are moving towards an understanding of how life might have first appeared. One hundred years ago we studied the sky using only optical telescopes and photographic plates. Today we observe the Universe from Earth and from space, from radio waves to gamma rays, using cutting edge technology. Media and public interest in astronomy have never been higher and major discoveries are frontpage news throughout the world. The IYA2009 met public demand for both information and involvement.

Catherine Cesarsky
IAU President