

Alla Salute

A FILM BY BRUNELLA FILÌ

*Can one be happy
despite being gravely ill?*



SYNOPSIS

Charismatic and handy with a persimmon, food presenter Nick Difino had a career that was taking off. His cooking series Breakfast Club, featuring vegan, vegetarian and traditional Italian dishes, had barely gone online when a most unexpected diagnosis hit: cancer. Food had already inspired his motto, "Happiness can be found everywhere...It's better if you find it at the table." But his recipes now had to guide the shell-shocked Difino on a deeper search for meaning. Part interview, part cooking lesson, part road trip, *Alla Salute* seeks out with 5 famous Italian chefs, poet and philosopher (friends of Nick) their thoughts about life's greater purpose— while cooking the dishes their dear friend craves, but can't eat. Combining their culinary demonstrations with Difino's video diary of cancer treatment, the film asks whether a person can be truly happy despite being gravely ill. Somewhere between plates of eggplant parmesan and golden panzerotti with wild broccoli, filmmaker Brunella Filì turns up unexpected answers.

OFFICIAL TRAILER * <https://vimeo.com/273780865>

CREDITS

PRODUZIONE/PRODUCED BY: **OFFICINEMA DOC e NIGHTSWIM**

PRODUCERS : Brunella Fili, Ines Vasiljevic, Nicola Lusuardi, Stefano Sardo

SUPPORTED BY : Istituto Tumori IRCSS Giovanni Paolo II Bari / Apulia Film Commission – Winner Apulia regional Film Fund / Assessorato all' Agricoltura - Regione Puglia

PREMIERE STATUS: North American Premiere

DIRECTED BY : Brunella Fili

COUNTRY: Italy - **DURATION** : 75 MIN **YEAR**: 2018

GENRE: FEATURE documentary

WRITTEN BY: Antonella Gaeta - Brunella Fili – Nicola Difino

WITH: Nicola Difino | **SPECIAL PARTICIPATION BY** Roy Paci, Simone Salvini, Paola Maugeri, Don Pasta, Diego Rossi | **AND** Nicola Ignomeriello, Lella Povia, Attilio Guarini, Vincenzo Deluci.

UNIT MANAGER: Fortuna Mosca **CINEMATOGRAPHY**: Davide Micocci

EDITING: Andrea Facchini con Alessandro Alliaudi **SOUND**: Tommaso Danisi.

SOUNDTRACK: Gabriele Panico, Vincenzo Deluci, con la partecipazione di Roy Paci

PRESS: Pooya **POST VIDEO**: OCTOPOST LAB POST **AUDIO**: ALESSANDRO FUSAROLI **FORMAT**: DCP

AWARDS AND SELECTIONS

- **WINNER** BIOGRAFILM INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2018 - Lifetales Award JURY PRIZE
- **WINNER** BIOGRAFILM INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2018 - AUDIENCE AWARD
- **WINNER** - Human Rights Award for Best Feature Film - Human Rights Film Festival Orvieto
- COMPETITION - TIRANA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2019 - Documentary
- OFFICIAL SELECTION THESSALONIKI INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL 2019
- OFFICIAL SELECTION WORLD FILM FESTIVAL TARTU 2019
- OFFICIAL SELECTION HOTDOCS INTERNATIONAL TORONTO 2019

LifeTales Award | Biografilm Italia 2018, motivations:

"To the most compelling story in competition. The award is given to a film that describes the dramatic story of his protagonist with an honest, light and humorous approach. Although the same subject has been dealt with in many other films, it manages to convey an optimistic and unexpected message of hope".

Best Feature Film Award - Human Right Film Festival 2018:

"With an ironic and sometimes cruel language, but never tragic, Alla Salute presents a world in which openness and community are an integral part of the therapy. Turning the aesthetics of selfie upside down, the author Brunella Fili tells us about cancer, a taboo that each of us knows, and that continues to arouse fear and shame. Last step of a road undertaken, with less levity, by Wenders and Moretti. It shows, with courage, realism and irony, the effort necessary to reach the other side of the sea and of evil. Difino, chef in TV and in daily life, reminds us that food is the primitive form of sharing, caring and integration of cultures".

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENTS

"Hello, Nick, I'm replying just now because I needed time to process everything. I apologize for not saying much to you over the phone. With an instant flashback I recalled the time when it happened to my father.

I was 14 years old and he was everything to me. I was just a girl. I remember the hair in the sink, the labyrinth of white hospital corridors, the sign "visitors not allowed". I remember my father waving goodbye to me from a window of a sterilized room; I remember doctors talking above my head. I remember my mother talking on the phone and my grandmother cooking: because eating healthy was of the utmost importance. The outside world was fading. All that existed was the hospital room where our lives lingered suspended. After some time he finally had the marrow transplanted and started to get better. Seeing him struggle and overcome obstacles with a smile, coping with this process both physically and mentally, gave birth to a spring of energy that was vital for his recovery.

That is why I feel we have to document this and create a touching story that could, as I assume, help others too. I am very flattered that you chose me to direct it. I am at your disposal and will be by your side during your journey.

*What I ask of you is **to record everything in detail**: thoughts, activities, calls, moments of solitude, meetings with people and the hospital staff, the beginning of your treatment, your happy days and your bad days; starting from today. You can use any device you like, the quality of the video is not important. What matters is to maintain a connection between the emotions that you experience, in order to reconstruct them bit by bit and put the pieces of the puzzle together. I believe it's what you had in mind when you called me, and I am here".*

(Brunella Fili, director; e-mail from 14/5/2015)

It all started like this. I remember Nick calling me 3 years ago, the chills down my spine: "Brunella, I'm fighting a cancer", he confessed, *"I need to understand this and you must help me"*. I was speechless, it was a storm for me too, which brought back old family memories, which I didn't want to remember. Also: how could I turn on a camera, without knowing how it would end? I could never have done it. After metabolizing, I said *"Anyway, I'm with you"*. And I encouraged him to record his days. Interviewing him during the journey, fragile but smiling, weakened but centered, I understood with him that making that film could somehow give courage to others, be 'useful' to those who lived the same story and - perhaps - even to those who were not sick, to the "healthy" people. I understood it could be a film not about cancer, but about the love for life. I remember how, involved in that long journey towards a possible Happiness despite the fear of dying, I tried to get in depth, elaborate and expand what Nick and his pals had recorded, with new scenes, building a real film, through the tools of Cinema: directing, writing (with Antonella Gaeta), editing (with Andrea Facchini and A.Alliaudi), discovering other points of views. My best memories at all? When, showing Nick the final cut, he embraced me in tears of joy. Like he was healed for the second time. And me with him.



*"You asked me and I answer: yes, I have been struggling against cancer for five months, I can't hide it and I don't want to. All you are going to see now is a hairless, swollen being exhausted by medications who embodies Nick Difino; more or less with the same spirit, just a bit more focused and happy to be alive.
#BeHappyNowHere*



CREATIVE TEAM

BRUNELLA FILÌ - DIRECTOR AND PRODUCER



Director & visual artist, based in Milano, where she works also as a producer. She enrolls at the University of Bologna, where she obtains her Bachelor's Degree in Communication studies and her Master's degree in Cinema with a maximum score. She participated in directing and script-writing workshops (with G. Tornatore, A. Kiarostami), as well as in those dedicated to photography and production (with N. Giuliano producer of 'The Great beauty'). In 2011, the urge to portray the present situation of her own generation encouraged her to make her first feature documentary film about young Italians who emigrated to different parts of the world, searching for happiness and self-realization. The film, entitled "Emergency Exit - Young Italians Abroad", won numerous Awards at International festivals, such as Best Direction and Best Film. The rough-cut, which was among twenty film projects selected by the Italian Doc Screenings, was developed successfully with the help of crowdfunding, reaching BBC WORLD and The Guardian. The documentary was completed thanks to the American producer

Beth Di Santo. In 2014 it was screened also at European Parliament in Brussels, and in more than 100 venues in the world. Nowadays, 'Emergency Exit' has been distributed on Netflix, iTunes and Google Play. After winning the Principi Attivi Competition in 2013, Brunella founded, together with her team, an independent production house based in Apulia named Officinema Doc. In 2015, she won the Apulia Film Commission's Regional Film Fund and subsequently directed and produced "Emergency Exit - Web-series", a web series based on the namesake film, consisting of five episodes. Her second documentary 'Alla Salute' presented at Biografilm Festival in competition, won the Lifetales Award for Best Film and the Audience Award 2018. Today she is working on her next documentary film, "Sea Sisters", selected at the Pitching of LisbonDocs, MIA MARKET, APULIA FORUM and Antipitch Medimed 2016.

ANTONELLA GAETA - SCRIPTWRITER

Film journalist and script-writer. From 2000 she has been working for "Repubblica", curating the section dedicated to culture. She collaborated with the director Pippo Mezzapesa on his film "Il paese delle spose infelici" (in competition at the Festival di Roma, 2011), his docufilm "Pinuccio Lovero. Sogno di una morte di mezza estate" (Settimana della Critica, Venezia 2008) as well as on his short films "Zinanà" (David's Donatello, 2004) and "Settanta" (Nastro d'argento, 2014). She collaborated with Paolo Sassanelli on his debut short film "Uerra" (Corto-Cortissimo, Mostra di Venezia, 2009). She wrote scripts for documentary films such as "La nave dolce", directed by Daniele Vicari (Evento Speciale, Mostra di Venezia 2012 and Premio Pasinetti) and "Housing", directed by Federica Di Giacomo (in competition at the Locarno Film Festival and Torino Film Festival, 2009).

She worked on the film selection at the Venice Film Festival (ed. 67th and 68th), together with Marco Müller. From November 2011 until February 2015 she was president of the Apulia Film Commission.



STILLS







SPECIAL ITALIAN CHEFS PARTICIPATION



ROY PACI is a famous singer-songwriter, trumpet player and musician who played with internationally acclaimed performers like Manu Chao and Mike Patton. He also established a record label, Etnagigante; was awarded the Nastro d'Argento in 2005 for the soundtrack of the movie "La Febbre", directed by Alessandro D'Alatri, and an honorary degree by the Accademia del Peperoncino. Furthermore, he is a Slow Food ambassador and he created an unusual discipline called Gastrofonia where chefs, musicians and sommeliers work together in order to connect our two most important senses, hearing and taste. For these reasons he is a great friend of Nick's and was one of the first persons Nick wanted to share his condition with.



PAOLA MAUGERI hosts "Long Playing Stories" on Virgin Radio. As MTV's historical figure she has linked her name to more than 1200 interviews with great rock stars from all around the world. In her books and talks she deals with topics relating to veganism and healthy lifestyle; she has been a vegan for 17 years. She wrote best sellers such as "La mia vita a impatto zero", "Las Vegas" and the new "Alla salute!". A great friend of Nick's, she was by his side during the chemotherapy, giving him advice on how to eat



SIMONE SALVINI is a worldwide known chef and represents the avant-garde of natural gourmet food. After a degree in Psychology, he moved to India where he specialized in Ayurvedic cooking. In 2005 he became executive chef at Pietro Leemann's restaurant "Joia", where he created vegetarian dishes awarded a Michelin star. In 2015 he was at the Expo and, the same year, he hosted "Vegetale" with Nick, a cooking show on "Gambero Rosso" TV, later mocked by the comedian Maurizio Crozza, who gave him the nickname Germidi Soia (which in Italian sounds like "soy sprouts").



DON PASTA is an activist and an economist from Salento, and an old friend of Nick's. Don Pasta mixes up food, music and soul, between a sauté and a DJ mix set. Long before it became trendy, he combined music and food, bringing DJ mix sets and culinary performances to music, food and culture festivals around Italy. His last show is "Artusi Remix", which has also become a book.



DIEGO ROSSI Giovane chef, fondatore della trattoria TRIPPA a Milano nonché caro amico di Nick: durante la sua malattia ha organizzato, insieme al suo socio Pietro Caroli, una raccolta fondi da destinare alla causa dei malati oncologici e all'associazione di Nick. La sua particolarità? Pur essendo un esperto di trippa, Diego preparerà un piatto vegano dedicato a Nick e alla sua guarigione.

The Chef protagonists in "Alla Salute" cooks the recipes of Nick's story, while they ponder over the role of Food as idea of happiness and therapeutic collective ritual.

COMPANY PROFILE

OFFICINEMA DOC SRLS

OFFICINEMA DOC Is a young film production company based in Milano and Bari, founded by Brunella Fili, after the realization of the documentary feature "Emergency Exit", thanks to the victory of the call from Apulia Region for startup "Principi Attivi". Officinema produced, in addition to Emergency Exit (**DISTRIBUTED BY Netflix and Itunes**), also the namesake web series distributed in various festivals, financed by Apulia Film Commission. Today Officinema is working on the development of two new projects both selected to pitching MediMed and Lisbondocs 2016, so that their presence in an international network is always confirmed. The passion and professionalism, linked to years of experience in documentary-film productions, is a guarantee of high technical and artistic quality products, thanks to the creation of a network of collaborators that will ensure the utmost attention to every aspect of production. Our mission: to be proactive and innovative, encouraging international co-productions and independent projects - documentaries or fiction - involving young talented people and having an ethical impact on society. **Contacts: Brunella Fili: +39 3409138363**
Fortuna Mosca: +39 330799172 Email: officinema.produzioni@gmail.com

CONTATTI:

OFFICINEMA DOC PRODUZIONI

Via Vaccarella, 52/4 - 70020, Bari (ITALIA)

www.officinemadoc.com

- www.emergencyexit.it

E-mail: officinema.produzioni@gmail.com

FACEBOOK:

<https://www.facebook.com/allasaluteilfilm>



NIGHTSWIM

Nightswim Is a production company founded in 2015 by three professionals in the audiovisual sector: Nicola Lusuardi and Stefano Sardo, writers, story-editor, creative producers, always alert to new forms of storytelling and production patterns evolving in the panorama of international audiovisual; Ines Vasiljevic, producer of long experience in Italy and abroad. Nightswim is born for research, development and production of audio-visual narratives with the aim of enhancing talents and languages, developing original stories with a strong visual personality: from art films and genre fiction or documentary, animated and live up to all television formats and new frontiers of transmedia. For swimming at night you have to be in good company. Nightswim implies audacity, passion for mystery and a certain dose of unconsciousness, but also intuition and security objectives.

Their documentary feature "Slow Food Story" was selected by Berlinale Culinary Cinema 2013.

PRODUCTION NOTES



The documentary "ALLA SALUTE!" is a co-production between Officinema Doc SRLS and Nightswim. We are looking for international distributors and sales, after our international premieres in Thessaloniki and HotDocs Toronto, for planning a theatrical distribution WORLDWIDE.

Our previous documentary - EMERGENCY EXIT - has been aired on Netflix, Itunes and Google.

The project benefits from the support and contribution of Onchological Hospital John Paul II in Bari, Apulia Film Commission, Department of Agriculture - Region Puglia, whose presence confirms the strong social and cultural impact that the story of Nick Difino had in national territory.

INDEPENDENT DISTRIBUTION

After the awards at the Biografilm, ALLA SALUTE was immediately requested in many special events and other festivals. 'Alla Salute' is collecting reviews, participating in festivals, other awards (including Human Rights Award for Best Film) and excellent public involvement. Following an independent distribution it has been screened in the most important cities and cinemas of Italy, with several sold out. It has been screened also at schools and hospitals, devolving its fees to the Fondazione Italiana Linfomi, an association to raise money for research about cancer and quality of life of patients.

THE PHOTOCALL

