

giallomare film
presents



THE BAREFOOT PRINCESS

oriental bellydance



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CONTACTS

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title

THE BAREFOOT PRINCESS

subtitle

ORIENTAL BELLYDANCE

genre

BIOPIC

language

ENGLISH

running time – format

1x 54' - 1x 70'

COLOR – DIGITAL

produced by

GIALLOMARE FILM

directed by

SIMONA COCOZZA AND SAMANTHA CITO

starring

KAMELLIA

THE BAREFOOT PRINCESS feature documentary narrates the universal paradigm of the **personal journey** in search of oneself.

The symbol of this path is the real and metaphorical journey of a woman who, going through Asia, Africa and Europe over 40 years of difficult life experiences, was finally able to face some inner conflicts lying deep within the human heart. She found herself through the art of **dancing**, which gave her real **freedom**.

The protagonist is the japanese artist **Kamellia**, the first Far East belly dancer in the second half of the last century, who became a living legend in the Arab world, where the media named her the "Princess of Oriental Dance".

TARGET

PRIMARY: Adults, mostly women, with medium-high education, interested in documentaries or most generally in artistic and social issues, who are sensitive or empathetic towards positive and constructive real life experiences.

SECONDARY: Young/adult people with low, medium or high education, practicing belly dance (or any other kind of dancing) at beginner or professional level.

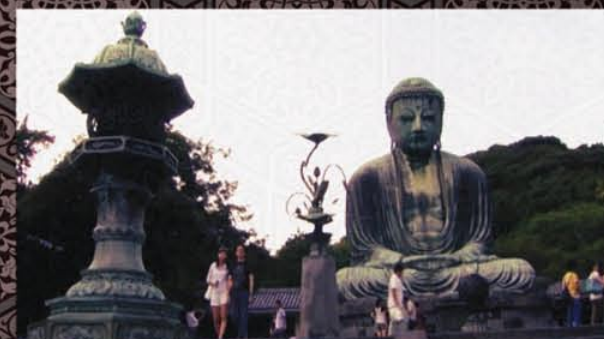
TERTIARY: Young/adult people with medium education, keen on Oriental culture and traditions, fascinated by far away Countries.

LOCATIONS

FRANCE:
Paris

JAPAN:
Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe, Kyoto, Kamakura, Chikura

SOUTH KOREA:
Seoul, Jeju Island





SYNOPSIS

Kamellia has been a great **belly dancing star**. In the '80s and '90s, she danced for the King Hassan II of Morocco, the Presidents Bourguiba and Ben Ali in Tunisia, and the Saudi Arabian Royal Family, becoming extremely popular in the Arab Countries despite – or maybe thanks to – her exotic, Asian appearance, so far from Middle-Eastern beauty standard. Today, she still charms with her dancing.

She is a mature artist now, the woman concealing something which is quietly unresolved, still needing to investigate her own deep self, facing fears that lie buried in a forgotten past in order to find her own inner balance. Kamellia has been living in Paris for some time now. One day, after 40 years of extraordinary career, she decides to leave for a journey in search of her origins.

This day is her sixtieth birthday, which has a strong symbolic meaning in Japanese culture. Sixty years are, in fact, the overall life cycle of human beings, based on the combination of 12 signs and 5 elements.



The time has come to come full circle somehow, to complete the path on this earth. It is a tricky moment of reflection and self-assessment, asking to face the distance between present results and past ambitions, projects and dreams. It is the moment to come to terms with oneself and try healing the wounds of life. A moment to prepare for peace, to be reconciled with the universe.

In such a meaningful moment, Kamellia decides to go back to her mother country Japan, in order to find the family she had left in her teenage years, trying to understand what she could not or did not want to understand at the time.

She is ready to go even further beyond, to her parents' native country South Korea, in an attempt to learn more about its traditions and find a name and a reason for the inappropriateness, rejection and loneliness feelings which had been accompanying her since her childhood. Which had been maybe her reason for leaving.

This **journey in the past** is bitter, though necessary. It is an immersion in her ancestors' culture, seeped through her experience and feelings as a daughter of the world, aware of what means to be a woman in the Arab countries, as well as in the western "Old" Europe.

Kamellia had left the reassuring Japanese culture, with its pre-organized schemes leaving little room for individuality, to find a dangerous and heady freedom, as fascinating as hard to handle.

Racial discrimination, female marginalization: she knows how to name things now, she gathers the pieces of her life. She is finally ready to go back to Paris, where she can focus on her new mission: transmitting her professional and personal experiences to children. Human beings are in fact still pure in their early years of life, they do not care about skin color or body appearance and preserve a solid connection between inner and outer self.

Through dancing, Kamellia teaches children not to lose this balance, that she has been looking for years and she has maybe finally taken back.



the CHARACTER

THE BAREFOOT PRINCESS arises from the will to discover the exceptional life of one of the most appreciated oriental dancers in the world.

Kamellia is probably the only one, among today belly dancers, who has lived in the Arab Countries in order to discover their traditions, breath their culture, study their language and music: there is no other way to plunge into the depths of oriental dance.

This makes the difference between Kamellia and other contemporary stars of belly dance, an art which today usually enhances technical, exterior aspects linked to body and scene, without drawing on the deep roots of Arab culture.

Kamellia's expressive dance establishes an indissoluble bond between shape and content, inner and outer world, feeling and movement.

She has the merit of having been the first Far East woman practicing oriental dance in the '70s and exporting it to her mother land.

In the '80s, she managed to be accepted by Arab people in spite of her exotic features, and she also enriched oriental dancing with elements from the Korean and Japanese culture.

Kamellia's innovative while traditional dance was widely appreciated in the Arab Countries, where people named her the "Princess of Oriental Dance".

Today, after 40 years of extraordinary career, Kamellia lives in the heart of Europe and still travels to perform and pass on her art to younger generations.







DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

When we heard Kamellia's story, we felt we came across an extraordinary life, transcending the private sphere and rising to a higher value of universal metaphor.

This woman, while unique in many ways, has something in common with all those who, in different times and parts of the world, do not accept rules or orders. Those who want to discover their own personal mission and find their place in the world, refusing to accept cultural and religious impositions that simply depend on the place of birth. Those who escape from rules, searching for the essence of life. Those who approach this search, which is not free from contradictions, as a crucial step in the endless **fight for freedom**.

From a stylistic point of view, we gave our story a purely film, documentary style, without fictional embellishment.

The documentary scenes are only supported by the interviews to the protagonist, reflecting on her life with a new-found serenity.

We assign a particular value to **archive footage**, in which a young Kamellia dances for common audiences as well as for Kings and Presidents of Arab Countries. The intrinsic value of any historical document is even higher here, due to the importance of image and representation in Arab culture, which is pervaded by a widespread iconoclasm.

Most of Kamellia's performances in official contests are enshrined in the memory of royal palaces and boundless deserts, as she made private shows, where even taking pictures was strictly forbidden.

For this reason, the rare archive footage, in this case not only has the patina of age, but also the charm of the forbidden.

THE BAREFOOT PRINCESS is a **made-in-Italy** movie that immediately looks to have an international nature.

First of all for the choice of English, which sets it apart from most Italian productions, and then for **transmediality**, which throws it in a more modern dimension, with contents available to everyone. In the same way, the cosmopolitan protagonist and the exotic locations (at least for much of the audience) are coherent with the movie international appeal.



DIRECTORS' BIOGRAPHIES

SIMONA COCOZZA was born in Naples in 1976, she has been working in audiovisual production for 13 years. In 2000, she graduated in History and Criticism of the Cinema at DAMS, at the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy of the University of Bologna. After the years spent on film sets in the direction division as script girl, she finally debuted as an author with the short film "Fresca di bucato". It has been in competition in foreign and Italian festivals, winning numerous prizes and awards.

In 2007, she founded Giallomare Film in Rome, an independent film production company which realized about a hundred of audiovisual works, over 70 official video reportages for Greenpeace Italy, and many other collaborations (RAI, Repubblica.it, Istituto Italiano per il Credito Sportivo, FIDAS, Lega Ambiente etc.).

She also realized authorial projects, writing 3 full-length documentary films and 7 short fiction films entered in competition in over 200 world festivals, winning 13 national and international awards. In 2010, ten of her works were presented at the Italian Film & Art Festival of Seoul, the first contemporary Italian film festival in South Korea.

SAMANTHA CITO was born in Apulia, Southern Italy, in 1979. She attended the University of Bologna, where she graduated in History and Criticism of the Cinema at DAMS, at the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, and the University of Ramon Lull, in Barcelona, where she attended an Official Master in Production and Direction for Cinema and Television at the Blanquerna Faculty of Communication.

She started working in film industry in 1999, as production assistant and second director assistant. Since 2003, she worked as first director assistant in full-length films, sitcoms, tv drama productions and, in 2008, she joined Giallomare Film as executive producer, actively participating to all its projects.

Director and scriptwriter, she mostly wrote and directed short films and commercials, which were showed in national and international festivals. One of her main success as an author is the 35 mm short film "Il dio della pioggia" (written in collaboration with the director A. d'Aragona), which was in the official selection at the 61st Venice Film Festival in 2004, and won the New York Short Film Festival.

PRODUCTION



GIALLOMARE FILM is an independent production company based in Rome. From the very beginning, it was true to its nature and purposes.

In particular, Giallomare Film stands out for its very female perspective, in all its facets.

Besides, it has always been supporting green projects and campaigns, as attested by its collaboration with numerous environmental organizations, especially GREENPEACE, with 70 reportages and 2 ads produced over the last two years.

Giallomare Film, though producing ads, short films and audiovisual projects of every kind, is actually specialized in producing reportages and documentaries, which are broadcasted on the most important Italian TV channels and on line platforms (RAI, La Repubblica, Current Tv etc.)

Previous to **THE BAREFOOT PRINCESS**, Giallomare film produced two full-length documentary films, collaborating with other production companies: "Over The Rainbow" (written by Simona Coccozza and M. Martinelli, awarded with the prize Schermo Napoli Doc at the Napoli Film Festival as Best professional production, broadcasted on DOC 3 – RAI 3 in 2009, and distributed in the cinema in February 2012,

with a special projection at the Senate of the Italian Republic, due to the crucial social issue addressed in the film) and "Our Daily Bad" (written by Simona Coccozza and V. Iacovella, competing in numerous festivals and broadcasted on RAI NEWS).



PRINCESS OF ORIENTAL DANCE

The decision to produce **THE BAREFOOT PRINCESS** was prompted by the success of the "Princess of Oriental Dance" short documentary film, made by the same authors. It is a short portrait of the dancer Kamellia lasting 13 minutes, which had great success since it was first released at the Milan female film festival **Sguardi Altrove** in 2009, where it won the first prize in the **Playing Female** competition, for the following reasons: "For the quality of the communicative style which images and music can give to this simple but intense story of a life dedicated to dancing. For the ability to let the audience feel the lights and shadows of an extraordinary artistic career."

The "Princess of Oriental Dance" 90 second trailer alone had more than 20.000 visits on YouTube, thus demonstrating the real existence of a wide audience willing to embrace stories like this.



BELLYDANCE YESTERDAY and TODAY

Belly dance is a traditional Middle Eastern dance, whose first traces date back to 5,000 B.C., in Greek tomb paintings and ancient sculptures. This dance was popularized in the West during the Romantic movement of the 18th and 19th centuries, when Orientalist artists depicted romanticized images of harem life in the Ottoman Empire.

Belly dancing has recently been repopularized by Latin American superstar Shakira. Although she is Colombian, her part-Lebanese background has influenced her style. Other singers and actresses who have performed belly dance moves include Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera, Jessica Simpson, Beyoncé and Hilary Duff. This is a demonstration that nowadays belly dancing is very popular and cool.

Probably the most famous belly dance troupe is Bellydance Superstars who tours internationally since 2003, furthering the popularity of bellydance around the world by performing almost 1000 shows in over 25 countries.

There are many famous movies about belly dance, and also several James Bond films have featured belly dancers.

Today, belly dance itself has become a big industry, with numerous weekly classes, special stages and festivals around the world generating a real business.





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A GIALLOMARE FILM PRODUCTION "THE BAREFOOT PRINCESS - ORIENTAL BELLYDANCE" A FILM BY SIMONA COCOZZA AND SAMANTHA CITO STARRING KAMELLIA
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER/TRANSMEDIA PROJECT SAMANTHA CITO CINEMATOGRAPHY/EDITING BY SIMONA COCOZZA ORIGINAL MUSIC BY CARMINE TERRACCIANO SOUND DESIGNER SIMONE MARTINELLI
ASSISTANT EDITOR UGO P. ESPOSITO BOOM OPERATOR TONY CLIFTON PRODUCTION ASSISTANT ELOISA CARAPACE TRANSLATIONS CLAUDIA GOMEZ DE AYALA GRAPHIC DESIGNER GIULIA CAMOGLIO
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY SIMONA COCOZZA AND SAMANTHA CITO

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