



VINYLMANIA: When life runs at 33 revolutions per minute

PRESS KIT



"Vinylmania is a sheer joy to watch. It successfully taps into the cultural explosion surrounding the resurgence of vinyl but it is also about the passion and love of music. Every musician and serious music fan will want to see it." - Michael Kurtz, Record Store Day.

"A hypnotic trip into the limits of obsession..." - Guido Andruetto, Rolling Stone, Italy.

A DOCUMENTARY FILM BY PAOLO CAMPANA

ITALY, FRANCE, GERMANY 2011

54'/75' HD 16:9

LANGUAGES: ENGLISH, ITALIAN, FRENCH, JAPANESE, CZECH



Piemonte Doc Film Fund
Fondo regionale per il documentario

Genova > Liguria
FilmCommission

CINECITTÀ
LUCE



THE OFFICIAL FILM OF RECORD STORE DAY 2012



SYNOPSIS

In "Vinylmania" the director guides us through the grooves of an object that has never lost its soul. He investigates what makes it so legendary in a world dominated by liquid music: Nostalgia? Possession? The search for an identity?

MEMORABLE EXTRACTS

You've got your object, but what's important is what's inside, the immaterial.

CHRIS DE GAN, record collector

You don't own anything when you buy a download.

EDDIE PILLER, DJ ACID JAZZ producer

Analogue sound quality is better than digitalized because means natural. Listen to the analogue music makes me peaceful and relaxed.

SANJU CHIBA, creator of Laser Turntable

When you see a dj playing it's like watching a chef cooking.

DJ KENTARO DMC World DJ Championships 2002

Vinyl is like Jazz. Its sounds nuances are unique.

KEI KOBAYASHI – DJ Routine Jazz

It is like you have a personal relationship with the vinyl. It's a love affair.

JEROME SYDHENAM, DJ

It's my childhood, it's my whole history...

PHILIPPE COHEN SOLAL, Gotan Project

One day... when I die...I'd like a vinyl shaped coffin

DANIEL BINDER, record dealer

Record covers can be a mirror to society... Something you can sink your teeth into... you could bite into it... It's an opportunity for us to change the world.

WINSTON SMITH, sleeve artist (Dead Kennedys, Green Day)

It may get dirty, it may be hard to retrieve but it's always there and you can't count on that with any kind of electronic format.

BOB GEORGE, ARC - N.Y.

Showing my girlfriend a digital music collection would be like offering her a packet of crackers instead of a mouthwatering selection of chocolate truffles!

PAOLO CAMPANA, Director



FEATURING

CHRIS DE GAN (collector), SANJU CHIBA (Elp corp. Laser Turntable), PHILPPE COHEN SOLAL (Gotan Project), PETER SAVILLE (designer/art director), WINSTON SMITH (artist), DJ KENTARO, THE KARMINSKY EXPERIENCE INC. (DJS), EDDIE PILLER (producer Acid Jazz/DJ), JEROME SYDEHNAM (DJ), G.RINA producer/DJ KEY KOBAYASHI DJ, THE MILLIONAIRE, GZ, AMOEBA RECORDS, INTOXICA, PHONICA, 101RECORDS STORE, TROPICALIA IN FURS, JOEL STONES and DANIEL BINDER (record dealers), PHILIP JECK (music performer), BOB GEORGE (Archive of Contemporary Music, NY).



LONG SYNOPSIS

“My mother used to wake me up with a vinyl record. It’s the first thing I remember about life. Many years have passed but vinyl records have never abandoned me. And you? Have you ever listened to a vinyl record? With its unique sound and crackling that gives you butterflies. Have you ever plunged into the colours of the sleeves artwork? Have you smelled it? Music captures a unique taste, seductive.” In “Vinylmania” the director guides us through the grooves of an object that has never lost its soul. He investigates what makes it so legendary in a world dominated by liquid music: Simple nostalgia? Possession? The search for an identity? A cry against the fast food music? The digital river that has no heart or soul, just ones and zeros...

From Tokyo to New York, London, Paris and Prague we meet a tribe of collectors, Djs, musicians and artists. We explore the stores where passion is transformed into fever and the factories that have resumed stamping millions of copies. Vinyl records are back!

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Paolo Campana has a DJ as doppelganger who still plays music on vinyl records. His crazy selections have the power to empty the dancefloor or explode it, there's no in between! He also has a long experience on the independent local radio scene with his shows filled with film soundtracks and exotic-music. Born in 1968 in Turin, Italy, where he lives, Paolo graduated with a Bachelors degree in Cinema and a thesis on the cinema of Leos Carax. He completed his studies at the University of Paris-8 and in Northern Ireland. His first short film on 35mm, a tribute to Bloody Sunday, was presented at the New British Cinema in the Aix en Provence Film Fest in 1997. Paolo has worked for the Italian public broadcaster RAI TRE directing short films for children and as a reporter for McSat, a satellite channel in Montecarlo. *Vinylmania* is Paolo's first full-length film, a testament to the filmmaker's undying passion for music and his sweetheart, vinyl.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The first thing I remember in my life is my mother waking me up with an old Mozart record... I had my first experience as a DJ very young. The idea to make the film coincided with my return behind the turntable years later, but the truth is I'm not so sure anymore which began first. The core of the film lies in my desire to understand where my intense passion for music and records came from. So, I plunged myself into this world and went deep undercover. It took more than ten years to make the documentary. I needed to convince producers that vinyl wasn't just nostalgia but that records really were coming back on the scene! Today they represent a search for an identity, a cry against fast food music behind which stories filled with humanity are hidden. Stories that go beyond simple music.

PAOLO CAMPANA INTERVIEW WITH GOLDMINE MAGAZINE (USA)

1 November 2011. By Susan Sliwicki

Goldmine: What do you do for a living?

Paolo Campana: I'm a filmmaker and a DJ, as well. Over the last couple of years, I've spent most of my time working on "Vinylmania," my first feature-length documentary. It's been great because I've got to mix

both my passions, film and music, together! When I DJ I play exotic, lounge and Latin music from the '50s up until today. I play in all kinds of clubs, bars and parties.

GM: What attracted you to do a documentary about vinyl records?

PC: When I was a child, my mother would wake me up with an old Mozart vinyl. It played every morning. I stood for hours looking at the black surface turn on my mother's turntable. I would get lost in space. We talk about kids and their imagination, but these records would just take me into another universe. I took pleasure in watching the record spin, fixing my eyes on the microgrooves until they were close to watering, a habit that still accompanies me today in my adult life. My love of vinyl started to get me thinking about a story for a fiction film involving records. Suddenly, I realized the reality I had in front of me was much more interesting. I was frequently DJ-ing and continually visiting record stores and clubs and there was this moment when it just hit me, "Oh, there you are!" It was a couple of years before Nick Hornby released his novel "High Fidelity." I wanted to know more about what it was about vinyl records that made it such a cultural phenomenon, so I decided to make a documentary.



GM: What did you learn about vinyl records that surprised you the most during the course of making of "Vinylmania"?

PC: Behind every vinyl record, every cover, every song, every groove, there is always a personal story that can be shared. When I was in Prague, I met people that, at the end of the '60s, were arrested just because they had a Frank Zappa or a Rolling Stones record ... Vinyl records hold a locker of memories. I'd always been aware of my own locker, but, wow, was I blown away by others!

GM: What do you, personally, love most about vinyl records? Why?

PC: The sound? The cover? The shape? Even the smell? I don't know exactly what it is that I love most about vinyl records ... They activate a whole world of senses. Maybe it's the fact that you're looking for a record for years and then you find it, you touch it, you look at it, and it's pure and simple devotion. You can finally taste the music, hear its deep, crackling sound. I think the most important thing with records is that you get to live the absolute physical experience of music.

GM: What annoys you (or what do you wish that you could change) about vinyl records?

PC: How much they cost! That was the hardest thing about filming "Vinylmania." We filmed in seven different countries, and just when you thought you couldn't spend any more on records, a rare piece would fall into your hands. I'm just joking; the fact that prices can reach hundreds and thousands of dollars for a single record just reiterates how precious they are, and you can't mess with that. The truth is, I wouldn't change a thing. There are problems that come with vinyl; they're heavy and can get scratched relatively easily, but just like with people, you accept them faults and all. Just because they have failings doesn't mean you stop loving them, and, actually, more often than not, their failings become the thing you love most. I probably annoy them as much as they annoy me, if not more.

GM: Where do you weigh in on other formats — CDs, 24-karat gold CDs, cassettes, 8-tracks, MP3s? How do they compare to vinyl?

PC: Depending upon the situation, all formats can be handy. I've got CDs and MP3s, and sometimes I use them precisely because of the situation I find myself in, but that doesn't mean I enjoy it. Digital bothers me because of the sound. For me, vinyl is absolutely the best format for listening to recorded music. Not a string of ones and zeros, vinyl is pure analog, just like real life. I like cassettes and 8-tracks, but I don't use them, though they are just beautiful objects. 24-karat gold CDs or similar? For my ears, vinyl is still superior.

GM: How long has this documentary been in the making? What has been the best part of working on this "Vinylmania?"

PC: I began to work on this idea more than 10 years ago when nobody talked vinyl. During these years, I wrote and rewrote the project, fighting to find producers interested in it. There was this obscure moment when they would say, "Vinyl records? They are just a nostalgia ... too niche." Finally, five or six years later, vinyl was back in the tabloids because of increased sales, and finally I found money to make my film. The best part of working on "Vinylmania" was definitely during shooting. Having the possibility to fly out of Italy where I live and meet people I'd dreamed of meeting for years was surreal. In Japan, for example, near Tokyo, after years of e-mailing, I finally met the producer of the laser turntable, a 70-year-old quiet and simple man. What emotion! After we finished filming in his lab, we went to drink a couple of beers in a pub, in secret from his wife. It was four in the afternoon, and we didn't even mention records!

GM: What's the first record you ever bought?

PC: With my own pocket money ... I remember the "Video Killed the Radio Star" single by The Buggles. I was 8. I bought my first album when I was 12 ... the "Flash Gordon" original soundtrack by Queen — not really because of the band, but because I really liked soundtracks.

GM: Do you collect records? If so, how big is your collection? What artists/themes dominate it?

PC: I do collect records, but not in a "traditional way." I like originals, but I don't mind if I don't find them. I had approximately 3,500 records, a little wall in my room. For years it was dominated by trip-hop, exotic and lounge music, Latin bossa boogaloo and post-punk and new wave, the music of my generation. The last one dominates again in my collection.

GM: What's your favorite record format (33-1/3, 45, 78) and why?

PC: For a long time I preferred the 33; now I'm rediscovering the 45. They are compact and more practical for gigging. I'm also really surprised about the quantity of good music you can find on 78 and how many people like dee-jaying with them ... maybe it's the future?

GM: If money and availability were not factors, which record would you most want to enjoy in your collection?

PC: A classic one: "The Velvet Underground And Nico" (Andy Warhol) by Velvet Underground, the original press with the banana sticker.

GM: What are your passions/hobbies besides vinyl records?

PC: Concerts, dancing in a club ... cooking for someone else while listening to a good record with a good glass of wine from Piemonte, Italy, where I'm from.

GM: What records are currently on your want list? How long have you been seeking them?

PC: The first album of the Associates and X-traordinare by Gina X Performance, a German woman who made electronic music in the '80s ... simple things, but hard to find with a good price. I've been looking for them for over two years at the flea markets.

GM: What differences can you detect between music played back on vinyl records (sound "warmer") vs. the same music played via CD or MP3?

PC: Vinyl's sound makes me relaxed. It's a more peaceful experience and definitely warmer than those frosty zeros and ones, no doubt! The digital sound penetrates my ears too much. It's too sharp. The first time I played a CD at home, I got a huge headache. Vinyl is a natural sound, analog that conforms to our analog ears! MP3 is ... no comment. I couldn't use an iPod for more than 10 or 15 minutes ... I prefer listening to the radio ... analog radio!

GM: Do you think vinyl's resurgence is here to stay? Why or why not?

PC: Yes, I think so. I think vinyl is here to stay for many years to come. We need it to. Human beings need it to. Definitely my generation will keep buying vinyl, because it's linked to our memories, but I think today's generation, the young people, the teenagers, will help vinyl stick around more than anyone. After all, they're the ones principally responsible for today's vinyl resurgence. Maybe it's because they want a concrete experience in front of a world that is going dematerialize. Maybe it's because they finally want to be part of the physical experience of music, too! Either way it's today's youth more than anyone who have brought vinyl back into vogue today.

GM: What's your favorite cover art/picture sleeve of all time?

PC: Wow, the toughest question! My favourite record sleeve is... there are too many ... I think Joy Division "Unknown Pleasures" cover design by Peter Saville. For years, the small white and stylized graphic that represents a pulsar death on a black field was a big mystery to me. It really touched. So obscure, introspective... this coldness ... This cover made me really feel the music. I bought the LP at 15 in 1983.



CREDITS

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Written, directed and filmed by Paolo Campana

Additional Camera: Federico Tonozzi, Joshua Weinstein

Sound: Marco Torrissi

Editor: Andrea Pierri

Editor assistant: Marco Torrissi

Narration: Julie D'Adamo, Paolo Campana

Music Consultant: Gabriele Bramante

Producer: Edoardo Fracchia

Co-Producer: Muriel Barra (Lato Senu), Sabine Bubeck-Paaz (ZDF/Arte)

Executive Producer: Elena Filippini and Stefano Tealdi

Production Assistant: Giorgia Fassiano, Christophe Granger

Archive Research: Julie D'Adamo

OST: Fa Ventilato performed and recorded by Fuckintosh

Additional music sources: DÜ, The Valets, Painhead, Lorenzi-Ventilato, Flavia Mami Lounge

Additional music advisor: François Rousset

Music clearance supervisor: Machiavelli Music Publishing – Torino

Web: Pongofilm, Daniele Ferrari

Colour Grading: Pierre-Loïc Précausta, Lato Senu Productions – Lyon

Post production supervisor: Pascal Fayolle

Title and Graphic: François Rousset

Sound design & mixing: Greenfog Studio - Genova

With the participation of:

Chris De Gan, Eddie Piller, Sanju Chiba, DJ Kentaro, Rich Medina, Jerome Sydenham, G. Rina, Kei Kobayashi, The Millionaire, The Karminski Experience, Joel Stones, Philippe Chen Solal and Gotan Project, Peter Saville, Winston Smith, Daniel Binder, Philip Jeck, Bob George.

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