

Symposium Italy's Contemporary Cinema of Migration

In recent years, Italy has undergone a significant transformation from a country of emigrants to a nation of immigrants from all over the world. The symposium focusses on Italy's contemporary culture and representation of migration as well as on reflecting the practices of contemporary filmmaking. It will delve into the intermedial dimension of contemporary experimental cinema, encompassing various forms such as spatial installations and art books, which circulate across different media. Additionally, it will reflect on and probe ideas concerning embodied experience, memory, the diasporic imagination, and human experience amidst political, social, and technological changes.

Image credit: film still from *Still Here* by Suranga Katugampala, 2023
An ICI Event in cooperation with the Italian Council

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Symposium
1 July 2024 16:00-21:00
ICI Berlin, in English

Italy's Contemporary Cinema of Migration

With
Simone Brioni
Suranga Katugampala
Rosa Barotsi

Programme

- 16:00 Introduction
16:15 Screening *For a Son* (Suranga Katugampala, 2016, 75 min)

Sunita, a middle-aged Sri Lankan woman, lives with her teenage son on the outskirts of a northern Italian city where she works as a caregiver. The relationship between mother and son is fraught with tension and silence. Having grown up in Italy, the boy is a cultural hybrid his mother struggles to understand, as she fights to live in a country to which she does not want to belong. https://www.katugampala.com/per_un_figlio_en/

Followed by Q&A with film director Suranga Katugampala

- 18:00-18:30 Break
19:00 Discussion and Book Presentation
Crazy Fish Sing
with Suranga Katugampala and Simone Brioni
moderated by Rosa Barotsi

Crazy Fish Sing is a visual art book inspired by Suranga Katugampala's film *Still Here* (2023, 90 min), which received the Italian Council Award in 2023. The book includes reflections on creative practices by professionals working in the film industry and explores the broader cultural and cinematic questions from which the film has emerged. Both Simone Brioni and Suranga Katugampala have extensive experience and research in contemporary filmmaking practices and theories. Transporting the reader through its real, imagined, and affective geographies, *Crazy Fish Sing* offers a unique behind-the-scenes perspective on the making of *Still Here* and the questions this film raises about cultural hybridity, urbanization, and realism. <https://yogurtmagazine.com/portfolio/crazy-fish-sing/>

Simone Brioni is Associate Professor in the Department of English at Stony Brook University. He specializes in the literary and cinematic representation and self-representation of migrants, and the legacy and memory of Italian colonialism. On these topics, he wrote four documentaries: *The Fourth Road* (2009; with/about Kaha Mohamed Aden), *Aulò* (2009; with/about Ribka Sibhatu), *Maka* (2023; with/about Geneviève Makaping) and *Beyond the Frame* (2023). Publications in this area also include *The Somali Within* (2015), *Scrivere di Islam* (co-authored with Shirin Ramzanali Fazel, 2020), *The Horn of Africa and Italy* (co-edited with Shimelis Bonsa Gulema, 2018), and *L'Italia, l'altrove* (2022).

Suranga Katugampala is an Italian/Sri Lankan filmmaker who explores hybrid visual languages between fiction and documentary. After numerous short films, he made his first feature film *For a Son* in 2017, which tells of the fragile relationship between a Sri Lankan mother, coming to Italy to work and her teenage son. The movie has as the star of Sri Lanka's Kaushalya Fernando and is considered by critics a milestone for the cultural and artistic recognition of the second-generation Italians. Together with fellow adventurers, Suranga founded the collective / production house, *Kaiya Collective* in Sri Lanka with the ambition of exploring cinematographic practices that constantly question the contemporary sense of image and sound. He develops several video-installation projects, such as *A City Born From the Indian Ocean*, and *The Season of Great Hunts*. He has just finished post-producing his new film *Still Here*, which will be released in 2024.

Rosa Barotsi is a lecturer at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia. She is currently heading a project on filmmaking cultures at the margins of the industry in Italy and beyond (IMFilm – NextGeneration EU) and was previously a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow with CineAF: *Women's Films in Italy 1965-2015*, a project on gender inequality in the Italian film industry. Her research and curatorial work focuses on the intersections between gender and labour in film. Her monograph entitled *Time and the Everyday in Contemporary Slow Cinema* is forthcoming with ICI Berlin Press.