

FOLLOWING THE FOOTSTEPS OF DANTE FERRETTI: INTERVIEW WITH SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER ROBERTO CONFORTI

A degree in architecture and an unbridled love for color that takes him to move to Rome to attend the European Masters in design and costumes at the IED European Institute of Design.

Roberto Conforti, after years of working his way up the ladder as assistant to Paola Bonucci, since 2010 has placed his signature as film scenic and costume designer, and short films, music videos and advertising.

He collaborates as production and costume designer in works distributed around the world like *Zombie Massacre* (2013), *Morning Star* (2014) and *ZM2 Reich of the Dead* (2015) directed by the talented duo: Marco Ristori and Luca Boni.

This past year he went overseas for "*Calico Skies*" by Valerio Esposito, works for *La Nostra Quarantena* by Peter Marcias who was nominated at the Nastro d'Argento in 2016 and his success (fortunately) has not stopped. We met him at Villa Borghese on a beautiful sunny day, lit up by the light that only Rome can give and we had a chat.

Hello Roberto, tell us how did you approach the job of scenic designer?

"I saw my first film set in 1998. Franco Zeffirelli was filming "*Tea with Mussolini*" in Florence and while I was going to university, I came across this awesome "bandwagon". I was fascinated by this street of the old town which was completely transformed ... the signs of substituted shops, no lampposts, no parables on the rooftops, no pedestrian crossings. After graduating in architecture I won a European masters in scenography and costume design. I was one of the four Italian admitted for 10 places available throughout Europe. A small/great satisfaction! I moved to Rome to attend the IED master with teachers of the caliber of Alberto Verso and Andrea Crisanti who I will thank all my life!"

What are your sources of inspiration?

"I have a strong love for color and all it contains and represents. I use it and I mix it even to the limit of chance ... I love the contamination of styles and eras; many say that I have a "timeless no season" style, sometimes vintage and very little Italian ... maybe is this why I am often called in projects abroad!? If you ask me who my favorite directors are I can only be banal: Quentin Tarantino and David Fincher, while very Italian scenic designer Dante Ferretti and costume designer Milena Canonero"

How has the role of costume designer changed with new technologies?

"The work of a costume designer suffers the historical and social change a lot in every age because it touches the situation first-hand, and tries to reproduce and stimulate the imagination of each person. A movie character must be "recognized" by the public for his look and the details of his clothing. Fashion changes so sudden and everything gets old very quickly!! This is also how the presentation of a character, the sketch to understand, is no longer just a hand drawing equipped with fabric samples, but it becomes a collection of memories, of psychology imaging, sponsors! "

Plans for the future?

"I have been taught to be superstitious. I have just finished a horror film in which I dealt with both the scenography and costumes. The future seems to wink back to America. After the film I shot in Los Angeles in 2015 (*Calico Skies*) I received an offer from the director and if all goes well I should return to the US, but unfortunately I cannot anticipate anything about the script and the actors!"