

FILMS / REVIEWS Switzerland / Italy  
**Review: *Radical Landscapes***

by **GIORGIA DEL DON**

14/11/2022 - Elettra Fiumi's debut feature film whisks us away to a fantasy world of utopias and radical reflections which sought to fundamentally remould society



It took almost nine years for **Elettra Fiumi** - an Italian-American director based in Switzerland - to finish this film which is both highly personal and intimately linked to the historic period that was the Sixties. *Radical Landscapes* [+], presented in a world premiere at DOC NYC, first started to germinate in the director's mind in 2014 when her father - the revolutionary Florentine architect **Fabrizio Fiumi** - passed away, leaving behind an impressive archive in need of (re)organisation. Using documents, proofs and reflections produced by Gruppo 9999, the group her father belonged to, Elettra Fiumi tries to bring back to life the visionary spirit which inhabited these artists, their courage and their determination to destroy the false certainties which society at the time wanted to instil in them, in order to create new ones.

Whilst many automatically associate the revolutionary spirit of '68 and its artistic avant-garde with the USA, few are aware of what was going on in Florence at that time. It's precisely this gap in knowledge which *Radical Landscapes* seeks to fill, offering up a fascinating and meticulously documented immersion in a world which no longer exists, a world where the concept of architecture was widening far beyond the mere construction of buildings, encouraging reflection on how we live together and our relationship with nature.

Inspired by works by Gruppo 9999 and their extraordinary collages, the film opts for a hybrid form blending archive material, current footage also featuring the director herself, and Dadaistic-flavoured animated images.

It's an interesting fusion which helps the documentary avoid sliding into the trap of academicism, endowing it with a lightness and humour typical of the time. The avant-garde Sixties and Seventies music which accompanies the images, and the marriage between strident, industrial cacophonies and reassuring sounds of the nature surrounding Florence, allow us to immerse ourselves in a high-on synesthetic fashion in a version of Italy which is radically different to the present-day country.

*Radical Landscapes* operates on two distinct levels: the personal (the relationship between the father and daughter) and the historic (research into visionary architectonic and artistic trends), trying to maintain an, at times, challenging balance between the two. The figure of the director's father, Fabrizio Fiumi, acts, in some sense, as an access key to an underground world which is bubbling away under the historical foundations of the city of Florence. By way of discoveries made thanks to the archive her father left behind, and interviews with people who knew and collaborated with him, Elettra Fiumi tries to reconstruct the personality of this man who had never been anything other than a father for her. It's an intimate investigation which soon makes way for more universal reflections relating to an entire community of thought, almost as if the figure of Fiumi the architect were impossible to disassociate from it. At which point, in some sort of Warholian happening, the city of Florence is unexpectedly invaded by psychedelic and distorted sounds, flashy colours and visionary performances, all enclosed within the walls of the imposing Space Electronic where so many experimental concerts, exhibitions and artistic performances were held, attracting crowds of artists and protesters of all kinds.

Despite leaving a few questions about Fabrizio Fiumi's personality open, perhaps out of modesty, and increasingly focusing on the figure of the architect, the end result of the film is anything but sterile. And Fiumi the father does subtly manage to shine through, the effect of which is genuinely touching.

*Radical Landscapes* is produced by Lugano's Central Productions and Fiumi Studios, who are also managing international sales, alongside Rome's FilmAffair and RSI Radiotelevisione svizzera.

(Translated from Italian)

## more about: Radical Landscapes



### Interview: Elettra Fiumi • Director of *Radical Landscapes*

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15/11/2022



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**international title:** Radical Landscapes

**original title:** Radical Landscapes

**country:** Switzerland, Italy

**year:** 2022

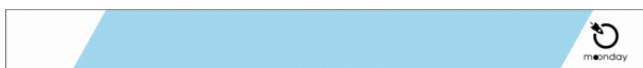
**directed by:** Elettra Fiumi

**screenplay:** Elettra Fiumi

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