



COCKNEY
an evolving
dialect

a documentary by Abi Weaver & Daniele Rugo

Running Time: **52 min.**

Language: **English**

Written/Directed: **Abi Weaver, Daniele Rugo**

Production Manager: **Simon Downie**

Cinematography: **Nicolas Sburlati**

Camera: **Pierre Dejon**

Soundtrack: **Alessandro Cerino**

Principal Photography: **June 2010**

Delivery: **September 2010**

Distribution: **TV, Theatre, Online, home video**

Abi Weaver

I am a director, actor and writer, recently graduated from BA Drama and Theatre Arts at Goldsmiths (University of London). My heritage is in East London and I have always been inspired by stories of relatives growing up in the East End. I believe that the East End is an important part of London's history and this history should be made accessible. In June i will be directing my own adaptation of Kafka's novel The Trial. In July i will be acting in my first feature film in Rome. I create photography projects and regularly collaborate with photographers.

Daniele Rugo

I am a filmmaker and writer. After studying film in Italy, I've moved to the UK and completed a PhD. I have been immersing myself into the history of East London - migration, hospitality, conflicts - since I've moved there 6 years ago. I've shot my last short film - As if Alive, screened in US, UK, Italy and India - between Hoxton and Wapping. I've cut my teeth professionally as a cameraman and technician in the media industry for more than seven years. Since 2003 my videos have been exhibited in London, Venice, New York, Melbourne, Istanbul, Valencia, Bologna, Tangier. At the moment I am writing two long features: Ducey - a noir story in black and white - and Milly's Wolftail, a bi-sexual love triangle.

Synopsis

The documentary will follow the historical development of the Cockney dialect, reflecting on the phonetic aspects evolving with the social changes taking place in East London starting with the beginning the 20th century. Key to the success of the project will be the ability to establish a 'free' interaction between the occasional storytellers and the camera.

The question the documentary will ask is: 'has cockney disappeared or is it instead always been in a process of evolution, given its oral and colloquial nature?'

Brief

'Cockney: Regeneration' is a documentary that explores the evolution of the Cockney dialect and the regenerations of the East End of London over the last century.

Through evocative images the documentary will seek to capture the processes of regeneration in view of the Olympic Games in 2012 and the recent improvements to environment and services. The film will also describe the social, demographic and architectural transformations that have shaped the East End.

The aim is not only to record an important part of British heritage, but to interrogate and project the contemporary perception of the East End of London, now the cultural hotspot of the Capital. Emphasis will be put on the development and regeneration of the East End as a cosmopolitan and inspirational area open to innovation, with a diverse community, a shared sense of citizenship, social responsibility and environmental consciousness.

The work will focus on sites such as Billingsgate Market, Columbia Road Flower Market, Spitalfields, Brick Lane, Leyton Orient F.C, pie and mash shops around Hackney, White Cube art gallery and other heritage sites in the East End of London.

The narrative will progress through a series of interviews with personalities such as Lord Alan Sugar and Steven Berkoff, and by way of a number of personal stories. The latter will aim at engaging the general public in the role of storyteller. The film will trigger a dialogue between the generations who have lived through the renovation of the East End and the evolution of the Cockney dialect with the aim to explore the relationship between heritage and renovation.

'Cockney: Regeneration' invites the audience to be taken on a journey through

Aims & Goals

The aim of the project is to inspire a reflection on the future. The film should vehicle the idea that the East End of London is a site in constant transformation and that this trait profoundly marks its personality.

The documentary will pay attention to this constant *production of the new* by examining the development of the Cockney dialect as a heritage to be both preserved and projected.

Emphasizing the dynamism of traditions as opposed to mere conservation, the film will deal with the imminent changes in view of the Olympics as yet another resource.

Furthermore, presenting the East End as a place where plural identities negotiate their positions day-by-day, the documentary will call attention to the sense of 'hospitality' that reflects the spirit of London at large.

Following the metamorphosis of the urban scenery in the last century (both architectonically and demographically) the project aims at promoting the new face of the East End, which will attract in the near future an ever-increasing number of visitors.

Audience

The documentary is intended for distribution on 4 platforms: television broadcast, cinemas and film festivals, home video (DVD), internet. This strategy allows us to reach a wide audience, matching the expectations both of the younger generations – more and more inclined towards online streaming and pay-per-view – and of traditional spectators.

The language adopted will be a mixture of the traditional (illustrative) documentary and more imaginative techniques that will make it appealing to the young population.

The audience should not remain detached from the story, at the opposite the attempt will be that of drawing spectators in a process of engagement with the city itself in the role of storyteller.

Because of its theme, the film should be able to attract the attention of a very diverse group of people: while on one side it triggers an investigation on the past, on the other it offers a reflection on the new.

We are currently looking for distribution opportunities abroad; in particular we have already developed partnerships in Australia, France and Italy.

Visual Approach

From a visual point of view the documentary will articulate an attention for the future encountered in traces of the past. The film will thus be structured around a series of ellipses, attempting to organize the parallelism between archive footage and shots of today's London.

The richness and diversity characteristic of the landscapes of the East End will be captured through the emergence of unexpected details rather than by way of a panoramic overview. This will allow us to assemble an imaginary geography rendered visually homogeneous by a recurring palette; cold/neutral tones balanced by bursts of pastel/bright colors.

The smooth stream of images will be punctuated by a series of 'interruptions' as if the film were to mimic the act of unpacking a suitcase.



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