“Everything that makes the possible out of the impossible depends on how much stubborn you are, how much strength you have and how many people you can convince to believe in your ideas”. J. M
“Freedom is like music:
you can play what you want...

...and everybody must play what Freedom wants” – Giorgio Gaber
"La Libertà è alla portata di tutti, come la chitarra: ognuno suona quello che vuole e tutti suonano quello che vuole la Libertà". Giorgio Gaber
American Rouge is the story of an epileptic writer (Dejan Jelaca), recently moved to New York in search of success. However, the so called “Kingdom of Freedom and Opportunities”, New York, is more epileptic than him and drags him down to his demise. Because of the side effects of Phenobarbital - the prescription to prevent seizures - the writer has hallucinations of the Statue of Liberty, personification of New York that looks like one of the lustful Tango dancer of Moulin Rouge (Katie Ostrowski), who sensually seduces him like the fake Big Dream.
AMERICAN ROUGE

CAST
DEJAN JELACA: THE EPILEPTIC WRITER

Dejan Jelaca is a Serbian actor. After graduating at the Academy of Art of Belgrad and at UCLA, Dejan has moved to New York where he consistently works at NBC. While travelling between Europe and the U.S, Dejan has had the opportunity to work in several film productions, TV series, and, above all, theatre productions. Some of his recent acting experiences in film have been: “Blossoms of Faith” with TX Productions (United States), “The 22 Jump Street with Sony Production (United States) and the Italian-Serbian coproductions for: “The Forgotten”, “The Hungarian Servant”, “The Robbery of the Vault and “The Play of Dolls”.

AMERICAN ROUGE

CAST BIOS
KATIE OSTROWSKI: THE DANCING FREEDOM

Katie Ostrowski is a Florida native and current grad student at NYU. Thanks to her versatility, she worked in many productions in New York, among which: Guys and Dolls (choreographer, dancer); The Three Penny Opera (choreographer); Blood Wedding (choreographer); The Adventures of Seucy and Boto (dancer, singer, puppeteer); the Gallatin Arts Festival (Dancer). Katie has also worked marketing campaigns for the August Strindberg Theatre Rep, the Kathryn Posin Dance Company, and the New York International Theatre Festival.
THE SINGER

Annachiara Campo is a 21 years old Italian university student and singer. She has been taking complementary piano and opera singing lessons since she was 14. Nowadays, she keeps studying and foregrounding her musical career in order to enter the Luisa d’Annunzio Conservatory in her hometown, Pescara. As a soprano voice range, her past performances include arias by W.A. Mozart, E. Satie, G.F. Händel, F.P. Tosti and G.B. Pergolesi. As far as pop music is concerned, she occasionally collaborates with local artists both in studio recordings and live performances and owns a Youtube channel for her covers and renditions.
AMERICAN ROUGE

CREW
Jasmine Manari was born in Ortona on the 24th July 1993. In June 2012, Jasmine got the diploma for Classical Studies at Gabriele d'Annunzio High School of Pescara; since January 2013, she has been studying Film and Electronic Arts on her own while following theoretical film classes at John Cabot University of Rome.

As far as Arts are concerned, Jasmine followed two years course of Theatre Acting in Pescara from 2010 till 2012 and, in the meanwhile, in July 2011, she published her first collection of poems called ‘Rose in Winter’ with BookSprint Editor. After that, in March 2012, Jasmine won the provincial selection of Philosophy Olympiads on ‘The bounds of Freedom’ and, in June 2012, right after
her graduation from High School, she ended up writing her first feature film called ‘The Lines of Love’.

In 2013, from February till May, Jasmine wrote and directed her very first short-film, ‘The Urchin’, thanks to the collaborative role of the founder of ‘INFANTAFILMARTS’, the Anglo-Italian filmmaker Stefano Ferrara. From August till October 2013, Jasmine produced and directed her second Short-film, ‘My Big Mouth Vagina’, freely inspired by Eve Ensler’s play ‘The Vagina Monologues’ considered a worldwide symbol of Feminism and fight against sexual abuse on women. In March 2014, ‘My Big Mouth Vagina’ was selected by the London Lesbian Film Festival and screened in London-Ontario (Canada) on the 26th April 2014. Finally, in September 2014, the same short-film was selected by Twelfth and the Last Experimental International Film Festival and screened in Sydney (Australia).

Furthermore, from October 2013 till February 2014, Jasmine wrote, directed, produced, and edited her last short-film, ‘Espiazioni’ (Atonement), in which she worked with Paila Pavese, well-known Italian voice talent that gave her voice to Jessica Rabbit in the Italian version of ‘Who Framed Roger Rabbit’ by Robert Zemeckis. Also, in ‘Espiazioni’, Jasmine had the chance to work with Varo Venturi, an Italian musician, actor, and director. Interestingly, ‘Espiazioni’ (Atonement) has been selected by: the Sydney Transgender Film Festival and screened as an International premiere on the 10th December 2014; the Los Angeles CineFest where it won also thanks to the online audience’s vote on the 1st April 2015; the Three Cities Online Film/ TV Festival & Conference on the 12th April 2015 in Santo Domingo.
From January till May 2014, Jasmine enrolled for a direct exchange program with California State University of Long Beach (CSULB) where she followed courses of Directing, Production Management, Advanced Editing, Video Acting, Piano, and Latin-American Dancing. Besides, from February till May 2014, Jasmine worked as an Intern at the Los Angeles Film School for Simone Bartesaghi, Italian Professor and Director who won several International festivals, among which the 2004 Edition of Milan International Film Festival (MIFF).

In March 2014, she worked as production assistant within Cineaste Films Production for the music video ‘Bakermat-Vandaag’, filmed in LA. Later, in April 2014, she worked as PA in the movie ‘Shaker Pointe’ directed by the writer and director Darin Scott. After that, on the 5th May 2014, she worked as Production Assistant at the 8th Annual Film Electronic Department Career Day of CSULB, supervised by Stephen Hubbert, coordinator of CSULB film Department. Currently, she has been following six courses at the New School of New York (NYC) and working on her first production abroad for her dark experimental music video called ‘American Rouge’.

Last but not least, Jasmine worked as director of photography and camera operator for the project R.O.S.A. (Remove Obstacles to Social Awareness), founded and sponsored by Marden Entertainment.
AMERICAN ROUGE
CREW BIOS

CHOREOGRAPHER

Ramiro Batista is an Argentinian actor, dancer and choreographer.

Since the earliest age, Ramiro followed artistic gymnastics courses at GEBA (Gimnasia y Esgrima de Bueno Saires) and took Ballet for four years and Theatre acting for one year at Lee Strasberg Institute.

Ramiro is currently studying at the Broadway Dance Center of New York where he is foregrounding different stiles, among which Tango, “the dance of his origins”.
Angelo Marrone, eclectic musician and resourceful composer, was born on the 8th April 1988 in Guardiagrele.
Since he can remember, Angelo has always loved music as he has never stopped to explore its fascinating world thanks to which he has dug deep within himself.

Angelo made his first step of his musical adventure in the local area, especially in the Music School of Guardiagrele where he found his pianist’s soul and his passion for writing and arranging music. Consequently, he decides to dedicate himself to
Jazz piano for five years under teacher Marco Di Battista’s supervision. In 2007, Angelo enrolled in “Contemporary Writing and Arranging” for Pop Music at Conservatorio Luisa D’Annunzio di Pescara where he graduated with excellence marks. At the same time, Angelo followed several Masterclasses with some of the most important contemporary artists, such as: Jerry Gates, Nicola Pisani, Marco Frisina, Antonio Genovino, Dan Moretti, Gianluca Podio, Gil Godstein, Francesco Tarantelli, Andrea Pejrolo.

Because of his thirst for discovering and experiencing different cultures and musical traditions, Angelo traveled a lot both in Italy and abroad in cities like Colonia (2005), Sydney (2008), and Madrid (2011), where he usually coordinates the music department during the World Youth Day (WYD).

In January 2014, Angelo joins the “Roots and Ways of Cultural Diversity in Music” at the Parliament of Berlin, in which he, along with several musicians from all over Europe, played an original score created for the Remembrance Day. Also, still in Berlin, during the same year, Angelo played at multiple festivals and concerts with his band led by the singer-songwriter Miriam Ricordi.

Being the music training opportunities a momentous stage for his professional growth, in 2011, Angelo enrolled in a course of Instrumental recording & Contemporary Music Production, thanks to which he foregrounded theories and practices of sound recording, mix e post-production at the Association “Radici Musicali”. Then, in 2013, Angelo registered for the Music Composition Course at Music Conservatory “Licinio Refice” of Frosinone and was taught by the teachers Stefano Cucci, Enrico Marocchini e Fabio Agostini. After this rewarding experience, Angelo decides to deepen his music studies with Stefano Cucci, well-
known coworker of Ennio Morricone.

During this period, Angelo finally began his first fieldworks: for instance, in 2012, he created the music scores for interviews and TV commercials dedicated to Airport of Rome, Ciampino, Fiumicino. Moreover, in 2013, thanks to the collaboration with the “Associazione Musicale” and “Corla BN” with the teacher Gianni Golini, Angelo added two outstanding achievements to his ever developing musical and human growth: the teaching experience and the choral singing one. Indeed, both of these stages deeply contributed to enhance Angelo’s thirst for music.

Angelo is currently the pianist of the extravagant musician and singer Miriam Ricordi, with whom Angelo launched the hit single “Stratega” on the 22nd November 2013 at the Auditorium Petruazzi in Pescara. Also, on the 30th April 2014, Angelo followed his band at the “Aspettando il Primo Maggio 2014” event in Teramo and, on the 25th May of the same year, he joined the event “Premio Pigro” dedicated to Ivan Graziano.

Among the most recent outstanding working experiences, Angelo created the music score for “American Rouge” shortfilm, which has been written, directed, and entirely produced by Jasmine Manari and already endorsed by international festivals, such as RuidalSud which takes place in Bari, Lecce and San Juan (Argentina).
THE MOULIN ROUGE

A lot of details of American Rouge’s cinematography, costumes, make-up and hair - and even the title itself - have been inspired by the fancy look of the most well-known cabaret in Paris: the Moulin Rouge.

By the end of the XIX century, the famous French cabaret, already considered as “the deconsacrated pantheon” of sex and perdition, symbolizes the end and the beginning of an era which have caused every kind of degeneration and, at the same time, instilled hope and expectations from the next century. Starting from this assumption, “American Rouge” offers as a parallel between the ancient cabaret of the collective consciousness and the modern Moulin Rouge of American society, especially New Yorkers’ one. That is why, Freedom and Opportunity shown off by the “Big Dream” are like many lustful tango dancers in American Rouge. Indeed, they stand for fascinating weapons that seduce millions of visitors, especially immigrants, many of whom have sacrificed everything to access a world that, in the end, will make them as much well-off as humanly poor. Hence,
because of the flattening, alienating yoke of this grinding chain machine, the most receptive people - the artists - suffer from a conscious and painful transformation of humans into machines. Indeed, they are the ones that deeply perceive how much dramatically human nature have been contaminated by the overwhelming iber-semplification and immediacy that exchanged the human soul of Art soul with money.

**“LE CHAT NOIR”**

Another reference to the ancient French cabaret in American Rouge is represented by “le Chat Noir” (Black Cat), one of the most animated night clubs inaugurated in 1881 in the famous Bohemian district of Montmatre, Paris, advertised by the worldwide known poster created by Théophile Alexandre in 1896. Interestingly, in American Rouge, the “Dancing Freedom” (Katie Ostrowski) has the same black face and the same disturbing yellow eyes of “Le Chat Noir” in one of her transformations. Again, the reason behind this charming, surreal look is related to the captivating and deceptive nature of New York, personified by the Statue of Liberty who hypnotizes the “Epileptic Writer” (Dejan Jelaca) with languid glance.
“LE MOUSTACHE DE DUCHAMP” (1919)

One of Leonardo Da Vinci’s masterpieces dissacrated by Marcel Duchamp, who added the whiskers to it with a extremely vulgar alternative title (L. H. O. O. Q., “Elle a chaud au cul ”). Thereby, the French artist satyrically transformed the enigmatic woman of Leonardo both in a man and in a prostitute in order to criticize Art with purely contemplative aims. Indeed, as he clarified in his essay “The Creative Act”, the aesthetic value of an artwork does not exist in the subject’s beauty or in artists’ technical skills but in the creative act itself. That is why, he believed the ready-made to be the artwork par excellence. On the contrary, American Rouge refers to Duchamp only to reverse his critique. In fact, the director wants to highlight that, in city like New York, everything flows at such a supernatural speed that, Art itself, as a “human, too human” product, ends up losing its greatness and, consequently, its uniqueness, originality, and above all that sense of “labor” (fatigue) which can transform the creative effort into a true artwork. In the end, what ultimately may affect the Art concept is that dangerous semplification that makes oscillate the dividing line between democratization of Art and pure mediocrity.
"THE DUCHAMP’S WHEEL"

The Duchamp’s wheel is another key-symbol in American Rouge: it whirls round and round back and forth, at the beginning of the movie, without a clearly defined direction.

Needless to say, the director wants to strongly criticize New Yorkers’ extreme enthusiasm for ready-mades, left at the mercy of the chaos that limps and is easily pleased of having any shape without hesitating on first drafts and other annoying frills. Consequently, in this context, Art is merely the result of a hurried immediacy that refuses to think in deep about the expressive power of the creative act in itself. To make things worst, contemplation and meditation seem to be provocatively censured in this kind of Art: indeed, according to Duchamp, Art is in the creation, in the act itself, and it does not really matter whether it may be bad, good or indifferent. However, what the director Jasmine Manari wants to say with American Rouge is that Duchamp’s vision of Art is nowadays rather an overabused, more convenient concept that tends to praise oversimplification and speed rather than a more “difficult” kind of Art, which is made of sacrifice, effort, and above all hard work.
That is why, not surprisingly, the wheel spins fastly while a small spinning top - whose blue and red colours metaphorically refer to the pattern of the Dancing Freedom’s clothes - comes from one of the Freedom’s eyes and gets stuck in the same wheel that will finally spin on the head of “Queen” of New York, the Statue of Liberty, as if it were the only plausible crown in the “Kingdom of Speed”.

**THE “SPECULUM ORIS”**

“The speculum oris” (“mouth opener”) is definitely one of the details that make American Rouge a dark narrative music video.

Created by Ambroise Parè in the XVI century, the mouth opener, made of two steel valves, was a scissor shaped instrument used to keep the which tend to arrogantly replace Classic Art with a less “heavy” contemplative one. Hence, the wheel represents an Art jaws open during epileptic attacks in order to prevent the epileptic people to cut off their own tongue during the seizure attack. In the specific case of the Epileptic writer (Dejan Jelaca) of American Rouge, the mouth opener appears only at the end of the seizure attack in order to highlight the unbearable intrusion of such an epileptic city like New York, which violently penetrates in the writer’s mind and daze him till he is finally deprived of his divine mania or artistic concentration that used to make him fully inspired to write.
The Jellfish

One of the most dark hypertextual references in American Rouge is certainly represented by one of the three Gorgons or monstrous marine creatures in Greek mythologies: the Jellfish. Sensual, fascinating creature with snakes instead of hair, the Jellfish is one of the marine monsters that shares humans’ mortal status but keeps the unsettling power of pitilessly turning to stone whoever dares to look at her in the eyes. Accordingly, the Dancing Freedom (Katie Ostrowski) of American Rouge, with her hypnotic cat’s eyes and her charming, mermaid-like, transfigured squamous face strikes the writer (Dejan Jelaca) and paralizes him with her epileptic shock. In fact, the Mermaid/Jellfish/Dancing Freedom (Katie Ostrowski) as the “Guardian” of the city – not by chance the Greek word “medusa” means “protector” and, therefore, “guardian” – and the sum of all the wishes of the ambitious immigrants that come to her kingdom, finally appears in all her monstruosity in front of the writer, to whom she is going to provoke the so called “grand mal” (tonic clonic seizure): the last, unbearable seizure attack.
Among the several subliminal references in such a psychedelic and surrealistic context as American Rouge’s one, there could not be missing the Surrealistic artwork of “Les Amants” by Magritte (1928).

This is certainly the last hypertextual reference with which the director Jasmine Manari changes the original meaning of Magritte’s veiled faces – symbol of a blind, unconditioned Love that has no need to see in order to Love and be Loved –, into a “Maya’s veil”, which is the symbol of the cosmic Schopenhauerian illusion. Accordingly, not by chance, the sanskrit word māyā means not only “production”, “Art”, but also, as in this case, “illusion”.

Starting from this assumption, American Rouge focuses on the charming illusion of the Dancing Freedom and on the terrible consequences on its deceit: the seduced and abandoned protagonist’s irreversible fall into the void.
CRUDELIA DEVIL (1996)

 Crudelia Devil (1996), Ursula (1989), and Maleficent (2014) are undoubtedly three of the most sadic characters that inspired the director and scriptwriter Jasmine Manari during the making of Dancing Freedom’s (*Katie Ostrowski*) look.

To begin with, Crudelia Devil has been a fundamental model for the vintage look of the movie, as it is evident from her black embroidered gloves and her cigarette holder, symbol of elegant fashion of the early twenties and thirties of the XX century.
MALEFICENT

Secondly, Maleficent has been another greatly inspiring character.

Indeed, her sensual moves, her sadic irony, and the way she makes out her malefic plans have been main inspirations for both the co-protagonist Katie Ostrowski and the singer Annachiara Campo, whose voice had to be contemporarily pitiless, malefic, stinging, sadic, and sensual in each line of the song.

URSULA

Thirdly, Ursula, the witch of the seas in “The Little Mermaid” (1989), has been the main model for the “Dancing Freedom”, especially when she turns back to her original Statue of Liberty’s shape. In detail, the director and screenwriter Jasmine Manari aims to distort the sense of monumentality and power of the Statue of Liberty by filtering it through the distorted lens of a “monstrum” that changes from being a Jellfish/Charming Mermaid (Katie Ostrowski) to be a statuesque - apparently - protective figure, who rises up from the sea foam exactly
where the epileptic writer (Dejan Jelaca) fell with all his deep and misunderstood sense of Art. Indeed, the Art in which he believes disregards the pure chaos and the frustrating immediacy and asks for all the time, fatigue, patience, and constant hard work in order to create a true artwork.
**American Rouge**  
**The Origins of the Soundtrack**

From “New York New York” to “American Rouge”: this has been the musical challenge brilliantly overcome by the composer Angelo Marrone.

Indeed, American Rouge music soundtrack is the result of an articulated snap-fit technique developed through a wire fence of music genre, among which Jazz and Tango, gradually elaborate within three main levels (the video, the music, and the song).

Among the innumerable layers of composer Angelo Marrone’s soundtrack, it is important to mention the originality of the sensentional mass of intentional dissonances, purposely “annoying” to the audience’s listening. Indeed, from the beginning till the end of the film, the audience must feel devoured by the same anxiety that grips the epileptic writer (Dejan Jelaca). Accordingly, director Jasmine Manari’s request to work on three
layers for the soundtrack-making process perfectly matched the peculiarity of the music score: indeed, differently from how music videos are traditionally done, American Rouge’s music score and melody have been created in reason of the film images and not the other way round. In other words, the song has been stitched on the already delicate audio-visual combination in previously fixed moments of the film. In addition to that, as far as the melodic structure of American Rouge is concerned, two songs has been specifically inspiring: Liza Minnelli’s version of “New York New York” Minnelli and “El Tango De Roxanne” of “Moulin Rouge!” (2001). The former has been a point of reference for the music instruments played in the soundtrack; the latter has represented a passional and sensual music example for tango, the most lascivious dance of the Dancing Freedom (Katie Ostrowski), who, like a contemporary Satine/Sparkling Diamond of the American Moulin Rouge, invites immigrants to join her. Last but not least, it is relevant to underline the origins of the satyrical song: indeed, the author Jasmine Manari, undertook a refined, implied process of demithologization of the American Dream that can be perceived only comparing the two following lyrics: New York New York and American Rouge. Indeed, by considering the articulation of every single line, it is possible to highlight how the writer deconstructed, word by word, the well-known American lyrics that praises the will-o-the wisps of a fake Freedom and created an anti-American satyr of New York instead.
The last huge, momentous stage of American Rouge – post production has been the “American Rouge” live orchestra: the true, beating heart of the music recorded in the Auditorium of Conservatorio Luisa D’Annunzio in Pescara.

Directed by conductor Stefano Bellante, the “American Rouge” live orchestra, composed of five wind instruments (clarinet, flute, piccolo, trumpet and trombone), seven stringed instruments (four violins, a viola, a cello e un and a bass) and a piano, added depth and importance to the composer Angelo Marrone’s excellent music sheet. Interestingly, although the musicians had very few time to learn the music and practice it altogether during the contrived rhythm of American Rouge post production, it outstands that they put all their skills, effort, pragmatism, and plasticità to play the two music scores – one of which also included two additional sassophonists that enriched the music of the American Rouge’s Special Contents - and adjust to the need of the Orchestra Sound Recordist, Dario Saracino.
CAST

Dejan Jelaca ................................................................. The Epileptic Writer
Katie Ostrowski .......................................................... The Dancing Freedom
Ramiro Batista .............................................................. First Dancer - Immigrant
Roberta Cifuentes ........................................................ Androgynous - Immigrant
Erika Martinez .............................................................. Dancer - Immigrant
Felipe Beltran Carrion .................................................. Second Dancer - Immigrant
Annachiara Campo .......................................................... The Singer
Mirko Manari ................................................................. The Voice Over
Jessica Bonanni .............................................................. The French Voice Over
CREW

PRODUCTION

Directed by .................................................................................. Jasmine Manari
Produced by .................................................................................. Jasmine Manari
Screenplay by ................................................................................ Jasmine Manari
Director of Photography ............................................................... Jasmine Manari
Art Director .................................................................................. Jasmine Manari
Costume Designer ........................................................................ Jasmine Manari
Editor ............................................................................................ Jasmine Manari
Casting ........................................................................................... Jasmine Manari
Associate Producer ....................................................................... Prachya Klong Amornratananond
First Camera Operator ................................................................. Jean Kim
Second Camera Operator ............................................................. Maneerat Joy Srinakarin
Third Camera Operator ............................................................... Juan Guix
Fourth Camera Operator .............................................................. Jasmine Manari
Make Up Artist & Hair .................................................................. Roberto Morelli
Production Manager ..................................................................... Jasmine Manari
Assistant Production Manager ...................................................... Nausheen Ishtiaq
Assistant Director ......................................................................... Lauren Orban
Script Supervisor .......................................................................... Danielle Bourne
Lighting Technician ...................................................................... Omar Greene
Key Grip ....................................................................................... Adrien Boyer
Choreographer ............................................................................. Ramiro Batista
Unit Publicist ................................................................................ Jasmine Manari
Production Assistant .................................................................... Harry Taylor
Production Assistant ..................................................................... Fabian Verajano
Production Assistant .................................................................... Jin Huang
Production Assistant .................................................................... Mattia Ciurlino
POST-PRODUCTION

Music.................................................................Angelo Marrone
Sound Engineer..................................................Dario Saracino
Orchestra Sound Recordist.................................Dario Saracino
Sound Mixer .......................................................Dario Saracino
Special Effects ..................................................Piero Perilli
Colorist ............................................................Serena Perla
Conductor ..........................................................Stefano Bellante
Clarinetist ..........................................................Mattia Aceto
Flautist .............................................................Matteo Esposito
Piccolinist .........................................................Lucrezia Di Leonardo
Oboist ..............................................................Marta Savini
Trumpetist .........................................................Gianluca Ranalli
Trombonist ........................................................Orsolya Taliga
First Violinist / Violinist Solo ..............................Alessio Di Nisio
Second Violinist ................................................Stefania Ranaldo
Third Violinist .....................................................Giulia Pieramico
Fourth Violinist ................................................Elena Travaglini
Violist ...............................................................Francesca Andrea Sbaraglia
Cellist ..............................................................Alessandro Lumachi
Bassist ..............................................................Gregory Coniglio
Pianist ..............................................................Matteo Piastrelloni

POST-PRODUCTION/SPECIAL CONTENTS

Music.................................................................Luigi Ferri
Saxophonist .......................................................Mattia Feliciani
Trumpetist .........................................................Gianluca Ranalli
First Violinist .....................................................Stefania Ranaldo
Cellist ..............................................................Alessandro Lumachi
Bassist ..............................................................Gregory Coniglio