

TORINO FILM FESTIVAL 2023

Ugo Nespolo signs the image of the 41st Torino Film Festival between John Wayne and Jean-Luc Godard

Torino, November 24th – December 2nd 2023

On the occasion of the 41st edition of the Torino Film Festival, directed by Steve Della Casa for the second year in a row, the **Museo Nazionale del Cinema** decided to assign once again the creation of the coordinated image of the festival to **Ugo Nespolo**.

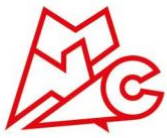
Internationally praised for his art between painting, cinema and sculpting, Ugo Nespolo is one of the most important artists in the contemporary Italian scene and he was president of the Museo Nazionale del Cinema from 2011 to 2014.

Ugo Nespolo states about the picture concept: *"How could we – paraphrasing Jean-Luc Godard – not truly love The Searchers even (but not only) from a visual point of view, absolute masterpiece of the American Western cinema, considered by The American Film Institute as twelfth best American movie of all times. The invitation of Steve Della Casa to work on the iconic image of John Wayne saving young Debbie – Natalie Wood, was accepted by me with enthusiasm to revisit a decisive scene that tops a densely psychologically-characterized plot, beginning with the initial critical incomprehension. It is precisely the vocation of the Torino Film Festival not to offer comfortable and well-known projects but to be able to bring to life research and questions, points of view that are always critical and therefore truly innovative."*

In the picture created for the 2023 edition, Ugo Nespolo depicts one of the most famous frames from John Ford's *The Searchers* in which John Wayne holds Natalie Wood in his arms, while celebrating this year's TFF tribute to the popular actor, a true icon of classic American cinema, on the 60th anniversary of the release of *Donovan's Reef*.

In the festival's pursuit of promoting popular cinema as much as arthouse cinema, the image of the 41st TFF is also accompanied by a quote from Jean-Luc Godard: *"How can I hate John Wayne and love him tenderly when abruptly he takes Natalie Wood into his arms in the next-to-the-last reel of The Searchers?"*

The Torino Film Festival is powered by the National Museum of Cinema



Ugo Nespolo Biography

Ugo Nespolo was born in Mosso (BI), graduated from the Albertina Academy of Fine Arts in Turin, and graduated in Modern Literature.

In the late 1960s he was part of the Schwarz Gallery in Milan, which counted Duchamp, Picabia, Schwitters, and Arman among its artists. His first Milan exhibition, presented by Pierre Restany and entitled "Conditional Machine Objects" somehow represents the climate and innovations of the group that Germano Celant would call "Arte Povera".

In the 1960s he moved to New York City where he was swept up in the cosmopolitan life of the metropolis and was fascinated by the emerging Pop Art, while in the 1970s he militated in conceptual and poverist circles.

In 1967 he pioneered the Italian Experimental Cinema following an encounter with Jonas Mekas, P. Adams Sitney, Andy Warhol, Yōko Ono, in the wake of New American Cinema. Together with Mario Schifano Nespolo devoted himself to Avant-Garde Cinema and between 1967 and 1968 made several films starring his friends and colleagues Enrico Baj, Michelangelo Pistoletto and Lucio Fontana. In Paris Man Ray gave him a script for a film that Nespolo would make under the title "*Revolving Doors*". His films have been shown and discussed in major museums, including the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Tate Modern in London, and the Venice Biennale.

Together with Enrico Baj Nespolo founded the Istituto Patafisico Ticinese and is, to this day, recognized as one of the highest authorities in this field.

In the late 1960s with Ben Vautier he initiated a series of Fluxus Concerts, among them the first Italian concert entitled "*Les Mots et les Choses*".

Despite the American contaminations, he did not forget the teachings of the European Avant-gardes; in fact, the influence of Fortunato Depero is very marked, from whom Nespolo draws the concept of a playful art that pervades every aspect of daily life. The concept of art and life (which is also the title of a book published by the artist in 1998) underlies Nespolo's expressiveness and is a legacy of the Futurist Movement: "*Manifesto for the Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe*" (1915).

From here also his interest in design, applied art and creative experimentation in various fields such as graphic design, illustration, clothing, scenography and lyrical opera costumes. His research varies also in the materials. He works on multiple supports and using different techniques: wood, metal, glass, ceramic, fabric, alabaster.

He is sure the role of the artist cannot be but an intellectual too, he studies and writes assiduously about facts and disciplines that have to do with aesthetic and the system of art.

In January 2019 the University of Turin confers him an honorary degree in Philosophy.

His art is then strictly linked to daily living and full of conceptual contributions: "you can't do art without reflecting on art". The object of his research is expressive mean and creative language; it is extracted from its common use and it gains status of artwork.

At the same time it doesn't forget the past, it rearranges it, it makes it contemporary through citation and revocation, giving it new life and making it matter of reflection.

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