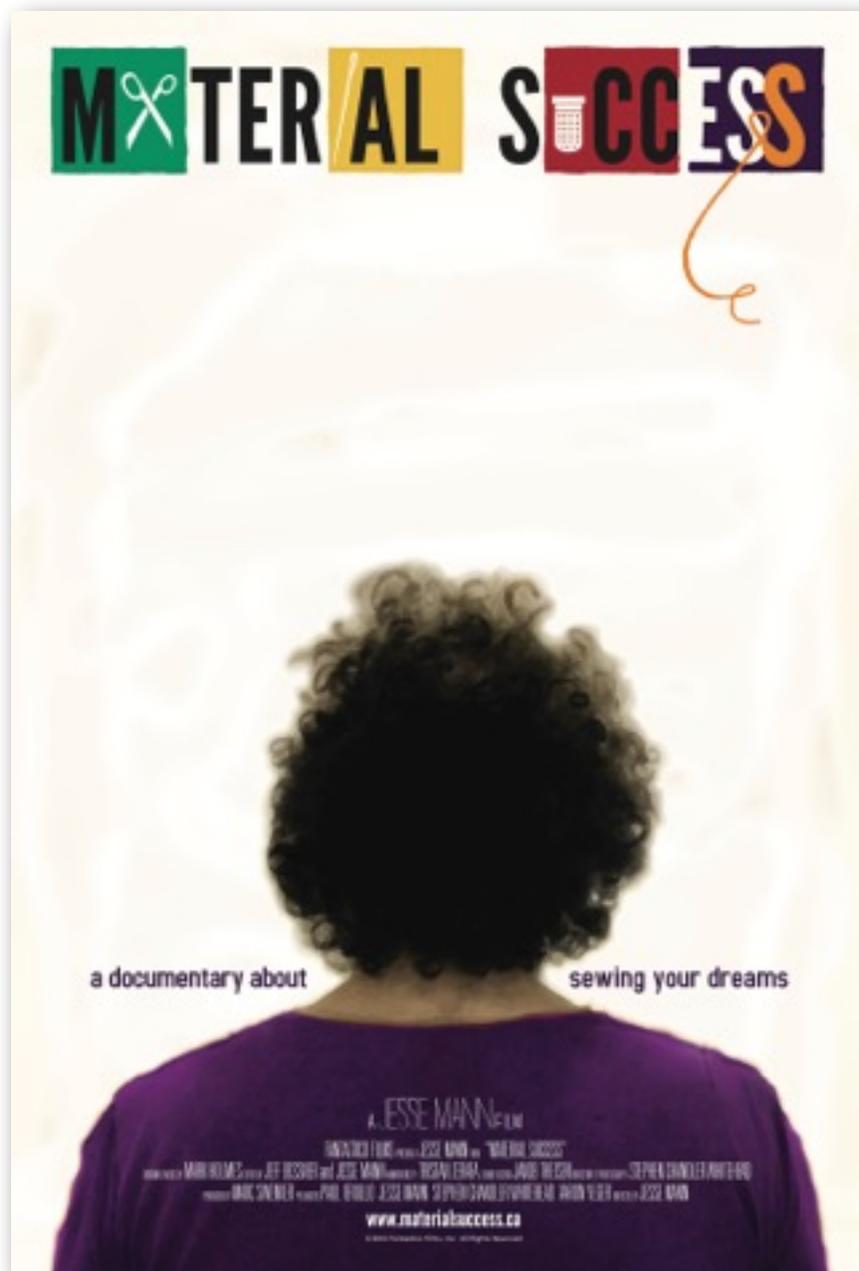


A FANTASTICO FILMS PRODUCTION



MATERIAL SUCCESS
Documentary Feature, Canada
83 minutes, HD, 16:9, Dolby Digital 5.1

Rating: Unrated

Director: Jesse Mann
Produced by: Marc Swenker
Fantastico Films, Inc.

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MATERIAL SUCCESS

LOGLINE/SYNOPSIS

Material Success chronicles the misadventures of the eccentric designer Bruno Ierullo preparing for his first fashion show after tragedy inspires him to put his life savings on the line to make a career change into the world of fashion. Featuring over 300 hand-made garments of kaleidoscopic colour and the unbridled ideologies of Bruno's new life and artistry."

Short Synopsis:

MATERIAL SUCCESS follows the misadventures of the eccentric designer Bruno Ierullo as he readies for his first fashion show after a personal tragedy inspires him to risk his life savings on a mid-life career change into the art. Documenting the events one month leading up to the designers first runway show, Bruno is bursting at the seams with ideologies inspiring both his designs and his new life. Hilarity ensues as the show day approaches, ego's clash and the devote friendship between Susana Benavides, the collections production manager, and the designer is revealed. **MATERIAL SUCCESS** explores a jocular world, filled with colour, where friendship and courage can inspire change at any moment in your life.

Long Synopsis:

MATERIAL SUCCESS follows the misadventures of the eccentric designer Bruno Ierullo as he readies for his first fashion after a personal tragedy inspires him to risk his life savings on a career change into the art. Documenting the events one month leading up to the designers first fashion show, the film is not representative of the glam and fame of the fashion industry but it is both a behind the scenes of clothing creation from sketch to runway and the study of an explosion of colour and ambition emerging from a man in a moment of great life transition.

Bruno Ierullo is bursting at the seams with ideologies inspiring both his designs and his life, roaring that "Everywhere you go it's black, gray, and white. Nobody knows any different and we're scared." The film follows day by day the complexities of Bruno's ambitious endeavor—such as adding over 300 designs to a one hour show and insisting a first-time model open on his runway—and features fly-on-the-wall observations and confessionals from Bruno and his tireless band of colleagues which reveal his kaleidoscopic art to be a reflection of his iconoclasm.

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Peering into the world of fashion production and the different processes and people involved—from textile shops, to local leathersmiths and a button factory—hilarity ensues as the show

day approaches, ego's clash and the devote friendship between Susana Benavides, the collections production manager, and the designer is revealed.

The feature film debut of director Jesse Mann, **MATERIAL SUCCESS** paints a quirky world literally filled to the rafters with colour, where friendship and courage can inspire change at any moment in your life.



Layers of chiffon silk laid out in preparation for sewing

MATERIAL SUCCESS

“I was fed up. My emotions and these clothes—they’re so bright, so explosive with colour—I thought it was time to get excited, wear colours and start breathing and living for once.””

-Bruno Ierullo”



At his Toronto studio, Bruno describes his vision for a dress

DIRECTORS STATEMENT:

I met Bruno Ierullo through his nephew, my friend and producer Paul Ierullo, at his fashion production studio in Toronto. I walked into a neon green painted room filled to the rafters with a palette of colourful clothing I had never seen before—there was no black anywhere. I guess I was expecting to see only a few samples of a first time designer—there were hundreds of garments. Bruno was wearing his own vibrant clothing from head to toe, with a large expanse of curly hair and a child-like smile. He told me no one outside of these walls had seen any of his designs and he had created them all in little over a year. This man could not stop talking about his new idea’s for more garments. It was hard to get him to talk about anything else. He was clearly in his mid 50’s and yet he seemed so infused with child-like excitement, like he was seeing the world for the first time.

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I think Bruno is similar to many from his generation—completely dissatisfied with a chosen career path, feeling stuck in the middle of life, regretful and ready for a vital change. I wanted the audience to feel immersed in the world this man had ambitiously created for himself--though his routine, ideologies and art--a reality spun from years of repressed creativity and an unfettered passion for design.

The musical style of the film was influenced by both composer Mark Holmes and my love of the soundtracks of sitcoms and films from the 1960's. Also, the Italian influence in the songs seemed perfect because it was the language that connected Susana and Bruno and I also felt the music encapsulated their lively energy. Their antics together often seemed to me like a scene out of a sitcom, it was difficult not to provide the laugh track while filming. It was a magical moment for me when I saw that it was their friendship that had become the marrow of the transition in Bruno's life.

Material Success is my attempt to capture this movement towards change: a portrait of a man struggling to define himself in terms of his art, and a celebration of the guiding influences in his life.

~ Jesse Mann



Leathersmith Michael DiPilla sewing one of Bruno's designs

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SELECTED CAST BIO's:

“This is life; this is where it changes. You make the changes ”
or sometimes life makes the changes for you.”

-Bruno Ierullo”

BRUNO IERULLO

Bruno Ierullo was born in Toronto to Italian parents who had emigrated to Canada. He spent over 30 years working at a family business, with his two older brothers, in a job outside of the arts. At 53, Bruno decided to risk his life savings on a complete career change and enter the world of fashion as a designer.



SUSANA BENAVIDES

Born in Argentina, Susana Benavides came from a family working in fashion, growing up with parents who were both tailors. She moved to Canada in 1972 and has since been working for over 30 years in Toronto as both a contracted designer and production manager—Susana has made her living in fashion.

“Some people work because they have to work, they have no choice. They don't love work, they'd love to do something else.”

-Susana Benavides

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Susana and Bruno working at the studio

CREW BIO's:

JESSE MANN (Director/Editor)

attended the School of Image Arts at Ryerson University in Toronto, where she focused on directing and writing. She has worked as a producer, writer, director and editor of award winning commercials, short films, music videos and documentaries. She is currently writing her first narrative feature and in development on her second feature documentary. *Material Success* is Mann's first feature length film, which won Best Film at The Canadian Film Fest and Best Documentary at The Toronto Independent Film Festival in 2012.

MARC SWENKER (Producer)

is an international award winning film producer based out of Toronto, Canada. He is a graduate of the Image Arts program at Ryerson University. In 2013, he was nominated by the Producers Guild of America for outstanding documentary producer of the year. Swenker continues to develop and produce feature content and was most recently a producer on *Sleeping Giant*, which was an Official Selection of Cannes Film Festival 2015.

AARON YEGER (Producer)

attended the School of Image Arts at Ryerson University, where he garnered several awards, including the Norman Jewison Filmmaker award, the Harvey Hart Directing Award and two Universal Studios scholarships. He has worked as a story producer for television and as a writer and director of films, including his feature directorial debut with *A People Uncounted*, for which in 2013 he was nominated by The Producers Guild of America for outstanding documentary producer of the year. Most recently he was a producer on *Sleeping Giant*, which was an Official Selection of Cannes Film Festival 2015.

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PAUL IERULLO (Producer)

is currently completing *Chasing the King*, a documentary exploring Chuck Berry's influence in early rock and roll.

STEPHEN C. WHITEHEAD (Director of Photography)

is an award winning cinematographer who began his studies in film production at Ryerson University, where he won the Technicolor award for cinematography in both 2006 and 2007. He began his professional career as a camera assistant and has worked on everything from Hollywood blockbusters and nationally aired commercials to independent films and music videos. His work has been shown at the prestigious Manaki Brothers and Camerimage cinematography festivals, and his most recent film, *A People Uncounted*, won best documentary at Foyle International Film Festival 2011. In 2012, he won the CSC award for best cinematography in a documentary.

JEFF BESSNER (Supervising Editor)

is an award winning editor, receiving four Gemini nominations in the past 5 years and winning one. In the field of long form editing, he has edited, *The Final*, winner of the Grand Jury Gold Medal of the Houston Atlanta and Sonoma Film Festival, the feature documentary on the Bernie Madoff whistle-blower entitled *Chasing Madoff* as well as Moze Mossanan's *Year of the Lion* for which he received the Gemini Award for Best Editing. In the field of short form editing, Jeff has been responsible for editing literally hundreds of television commercials and music videos, many of which have won national and international awards.

MARK HOLMES (Composer)

was inducted into the Canadian Music and Broadcast Industry Hall of Fame in 2010, after over 30 years of working as a producer, singer-songwriter and composer of music Internationally. Born in Mansfield, England, he emigrated to Canada in the early 80's and he has since produced over 4 albums, where his talents garnered quintuple platinum success and a Juno nomination for album of the year in '86. His song *Not in Love* recently climbed the charts after the Toronto band Crystal Castles covered the song and Robert Smith of The Cure laid down the vocals. He continues to tour as part of Platinum Blonde and is currently in studio finishing the follow up to the 2012 album *Now & Never*.



First-time model Robert Denburg auditions for the show

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FILM CREDITS:

Running Time: 83 min.

Rating: Unrated

Shooting Format: HD

Exhibition Format: 1080p HDCam SR, HD Cam, Blu-ray, DVD

Audio Format: Dolby Digital 5.1

PRINCIPLE CAST (in order of appearance)

Bruno Ierullo
Susana Benavides
Shawn Cuffie
Rene Holder
Jeff Woodrow
Dominic Di-Pilla
Michael Di-Pilla
Robert Denburg
Jerry Ramnaresh
Barry Jones
"Nana" Ierullo
Paul Langill
Don Ierullo

FILMMAKERS & CREW

Directed/Written by

Jesse Mann

Produced by

Marc Swenker

Producers

Paul Ierullo, Jesse Mann, Stephen Chandler Whitehead,
Aaron Yeger

Supervising Editor

Jeff Bessner

Editor

Jesse Mann

Director of Photography

Stephen Chandler Whitehead

Original Music

Mark Holmes

Sound Design

Jakob Theisen

Sound Mixer

Adam Parsons

Animations/Graphics

Tristan Zerafa

Colour

Kyle Kurbegovich

Accounting

Barry Jones

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Show co-ordinator Shawn Cuffie training the male models



Changing careers might not be as seamless as Bruno originally thought ...

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AWARDS:



PRESS CLIPPINGS:

MEMORABLE QUOTES ABOUT THIS INSPIRATIONAL FILM:



“will keep audiences in suspense”

-Regan Reid, *Metro*

“*Material Success* sells **an experience that’s pure catharsis**” “an endlessly engrossing character study” “Jesse Mann’s surprisingly **vogue documentary**... revealing Ierullo a truly sympathetic character; one who is vulnerable yet determined, staunchly authentic yet perpetually acquiescent, emotionally fragile yet psychologically rigid...Mann, in Ierullo, paints a portrait of a **universally identifiable man.**”

—Justin Li, *Sound on Sight*

“You don’t have to be a fan of the fashion world to enjoy this film. You only have to be a person full of **passion.**”

-William Brownridge, *Toronto Film Scene*

“It’s a heartwarming story of **perseverance, confidence**, and above all, **passion**...Ierullo’s story represents a much greater message: that sometimes throwing caution and regularity to the wind are the most stable decisions you can make for yourself; that ultimately, **doing what you love to do is more important than any measure of normalcy.**”

—Sara Harowitz, *SheDoesTheCity*

MATERIAL SUCCESS

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FESTIVALS:

Toronto Independent Film Festival (CANADA) (2012)

Canadian Film Festival (CANADA) (2012)

Art & Fashion Festival (POLAND) (2012)

Black Nights Film Festival (ESTONIA) (2012)

Lewiston Auburn Film Festival (USA) (2013)

Victoria International Film Festival (CANADA) (2013)

46th Parallel Film Festival (CANADA) (2013)

Miami Fashion Film Festival (USA) (2013)

St Louis International Film Festival (USA) (2013)

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