58. festival internazionale del film Locarno.
3–13 agosto 2005.

OFFICIAL SELECTION, OUT OF COMPETITION

Press screening: Thursday, 4 August, 2:p.m., Teatro Kursaal
Official screening: Friday, 5 August 4:15 p.m., Sala Fevi
2nd screening : Saturday, 6 August, 9:a.m. l'Altra Sala
3rd screening: Sunday 7 August, 6:30 p.m., Otello Ascona

Downtown Pictures
Amka Films Productions
in association with
SSR/RTSI – Swiss Television
Mako Productions

present

FACE ADDICT

by **Edo Bertoglio**

an Italian and Swiss production

With the support of:
Italian Ministry of Culture
Federal Office of Culture, Switzerland
Republic and Canton of Ticino, Switzerland

Public Relations in Italy
Studio PUNTOeVIRGOLA

Public Relations in Switzerland
Tina Boillat Communications

www.downtownpictures.it / www.amka.ch

Credits

Director	EDO BERTOGLIO
Screenplay	EDO BERTOGLIO, GAIA GUASTI
Screenplay consultants	LORENZO BUCCELLA, LINDA YABLONSKY
Photography	EDO BERTOGLIO
Set design	ANDREA CRISANTI
General organization Italy	ALFONSO CUCCI
Cameramen	GIANFRANCO ROSI, VITO ROBBIANI
Sound	ADRIANO SCHRADE
Editing	GILLES DINNEMATIN, JACOPO QUADRI
Music	JOHN LURIE, FRANCO PIERSANTI
Production secretary, Italy	ELENA VAI, FRANCESCA ZERBETTO
Production coordination, Switzerland	TINA BOILLAT
Produced by	DOWNTOWN PICTURES (Italy)
	AMKA FILMS (Switzerland)
in association with	SSR/RTSI Swiss Television
	Mako Productions, USA
with the support of	Italian Ministry of Culture
	Federal Office of Culture, Switzerland
	Repubblica e Cantone Ticino, Switzerland
Executive producers	Marco Müller - Downtown Pictures (Italy)
	Tiziana Soudani - Amka Films (Switzerland)
Countries	Italy and Switzerland
Length and technical information	102 min, color + b/w, 35mm, 1:85, 2976 m
PR in Italy	Studio PUNTOeVIRGOLA tel. +39.06.39388909 - info@studiopuntoevirgola.com Olivia Alighiero e Flavia Schiavi Cell +39.335.6303795 e +39.335.6793144
PR in Switzerland	Tina Boillat Communications tel. +4191 950 01 08/cell. +4179 423 78 44 – tina@videonet.ch

Leading characters

Walter Steding
Glenn O'Brien
John Lurie
Maripol
Deborah Harry
Wendy Whitelaw
James Nares
Victor Bockris

Minor characters

Stewart Meyers
George Steding
Gloria Steding

Face Addict

the title

Face Addict, in other words, obsessed by faces. And how could someone whose tool of knowledge is photography, who freezes forever on faces the most intense expressions, and who took portraits of the protagonists of New York's so-called "downtown scene" not be obsessed by faces?

the movie

Face Addict tells the story of a unique and unrepeatable experience, that of the artistic community in New York between the late '70s and early '80s known as the downtown scene. From this scene emerged artists such as Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring, Jim Jarmusch, Deborah Harry, John Lurie and many others. With them Edo Bertoglio shared many experiences and passions.

Bertoglio lived in New York for 14 years. There he worked as a photographer for many magazines, among them Andy Warhol's *Interview*, *Vogue* and *Rolling Stone*, and made music videos and record covers for various emerging bands.

Face Addict, a walk-movie following the thread of memory, tells about the past and present lives of Bertoglio and other protagonists of the downtown scene, through personal reminiscences and original footage and photographs.
In this journey toward the rediscovery of New York 20 years later, on the traces of a time long gone and a scattered community, Bertoglio is accompanied by his friend Walter Steding, Andy Warhol's ex-assistant, avant-garde painter and musician.
The soundtrack of the film is by John Lurie and Franco Piersanti.

the photo exhibition

An **exhibition of Edo Bertoglio's photographs and of a selection of paintings by Walter Steding** will be inaugurated after the film's screening at the Casorella (in

the Castello Visconteo), Friday August 5th at 7 p.m., in presence of both Bertoglio and Steding, the latter Andy Warhol's ex-assistant and one of the protagonists of *Face Addict*.

The show includes many photographs published on the magazine *Interview* from 1978 to 1982 and several portraits of Basquiat, Warhol, John Lurie and many other protagonists of the New York's downtown scene, images that traveled around the world and well represented this extraordinary artistic period.

Credited journalists are invited to a tour of the exhibition guided by Bertoglio on Thursday, August 4th at 4 p.m., right after the film screening reserved for the press.

The exhibition will be open to the public every day between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. from August 5th to August 14th (entrance from the Castello Visconteo, via al Castello)

Director's notes

Why *Face Addict*?

FACE ADDICT originates from a sense of urgency that I feel with respect to my past: the need to close an intense, and at times also difficult, chapter of my life. It is precisely this need that drove me to make a film about the collective experiences of some of the protagonists of New York's "downtown scene". I was there and I also was one of them.
In the late 1970s New York was characterized by the birth of a true community of artists; the years that followed were intensely passionate and experimental. World-renowned artists like **Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring, Jim Jarmusch** and phenomena like New Wave music emerged from that community.

In October 1990, when I left New York, the period that had left such a deep mark on me was definitely over. New York was no longer as it was a decade earlier. The Downtown community that I had seen take shape and in which I had grown didn't exist anymore. It had disintegrated.
I escaped. I had a one-way ticket to Europe, and my only luggage was a trunk filled with photographs: my archive, my images, my rejects, the emulsions and emotions testifying the years that changed me forever.

In 1994, when I felt the need to think back on my experience of the downtown scene, I began precisely from my archive. The photographic material that came out of the old trunk later became a photo exhibition and a book.
It was only in 2000, however, that the idea of this film project got stronger, becoming increasingly necessary for me. My first film ***Downtown 81*** was finally released. I had shot it in 1981, and finished it after many pus and downs only in 1999. It was selected by the Cannes Festival in the section "La Quinzaine des réalisateurs". The screening of the film and the positive reactions to it were sources of surprise and curiosity. After 20 years I felt I could revisit my past and put it into a

different, sharper focus. *Downtown 81* portrayed the artistic vitality of the downtown scene, the exuberance of a tight community at the height of its creativity. What is left today of our experience of that period? Only after two decades did I feel I had achieved enough serenity and detachment to relive the past without regrets and without anxiety. And so the idea of ***FACE ADDICT*** took shape: I wanted to return to those places, meet again the people who experienced those years and survived them like me, who lived through them to become something or someone, or to forget them and be forgotten.

FACE ADDICT wants to be all this: personal memories, significant interviews, original footage, photos and music to offer a choral portrayal of that period.

As I was preparing the film, I selected a list of names among the protagonists of the downtown scene; I chose them because of the artistic connections we had, and because we had kept in touch though we had lived far apart for many years. During the shooting, seven of them stood out for the generosity of their participation and the power of their screen presence, and literally imposed themselves as leading characters of ***FACE ADDICT***, as friends, actors and the plot of my film. My own story is constantly reflected in their stories, because we share a common life experience.

In *Downtown 81*, **Walter Steding** played the second-most important role after **Jean-Michel Basquiat**, as the wiry blond kid who ironically flaunted his bizarre electronic glasses. Today Basquiat, the successful painter, is no longer with us. But Walter is. And it is he that accompanied me in my rediscovery of New York, 20 years later, on the traces of a scattered community and of a period passed into history, on a long walk guided by our common thread of reminiscence. ***FACE ADDICT*** is a walk-movie just like *Downtown 81*, but in a different city: New York is so changed that I almost can't recognize it, yet every street corner still brings back many memories.

Notes on the protagonists

Glenn O'Brien: poet and entertainer, today kissed by luck and fame. Glenn has turned his disenchantment into commodity: Madonna's book, Calvin Klein's advertising campaign, but also the magazines and the poetry evenings. Glenn incarnates literature as industry, sign as success, and writing as the manufacturing of consensus and wealth. But down deep there is also bitterness and disappointment.

Debbie Harry: singer, actress, Blondie, Cronenberg, the many lives she lived in her rise and fall. Years charged and weighed down by emotions, by sensorial and artistic outbursts, by drugs. Addicted by the thirst for experience, by the exaltation of experience.

John Lurie: the Lounge Lizards, his long and articulated artistic, musical and cinematographic career. He is a true photogenic pop-version of a dandy, but today suffers from a rare disease that attacks the nervous system. The camera captures his new vulnerability.

Maripol: stylist, for six years my muse and collaborator. The artistic tie with Madonna, her crosses and rubber objects. Maripol and our common memory: the different point of view of the person with whom I discovered New York.

James Nares: artist, to tell about the art world in the United States as a great entertainment machine. James Nares making films in the '80s and painting enormous canvases; his success story, the market, the art openings.

Wendy Whitelaw, make-up artist, fascinating "diva" of striking beauty. Her phenomenal success in the world of the jet-set was sudden and short-lived because of her unmanageable drug addiction. She escaped from New York and built a new life from scratch; a strong personality lost in the dullness of provincial America.

Victor Bockris: writer and biographer of Andy Warhol, Lou Reed, The Ramones and many other leading New York artists of the '70s and '80s, tied to a deep friendship with William Burroughs.

And, especially, **Walter Steding:** ex assistant of Andy Warhol, painter and musician of the avant-garde scene, still making music that is non-commercial, not governed by the market, and did not and will not cater to success.
Walter impressed me more than all the others from the very first day of shooting, for the emotions that pour out of his every gesture, for his extreme frailty mixed with an almost childish mischief and a touching determination to continue his artistic course without compromises. An old friend, a tenacious artist, an extraordinary character.

The historical period: the Downtown Scene

In 1976, during an energy crisis that kept the lights in America turned low and its cars off the road, New York City officially went bankrupt. In the city's cultural underground, however, life could not have been richer.

Young artists, composers, filmmakers, photographers and writers began moving into abandoned industrial buildings in the lower Manhattan neighborhood called SoHo and into run-down tenements in the bohemian East Village. Isolated from the establishment by the economic slump of the moment – in those days, no one came to town with money in their pockets – members of this creative community drew only on their imaginations and their wits. Ideas and style were paramount and experimentation in all things, from art to sex, drugs and rock, was the order of the day.

Since money was not an issue and no one had anything to lose, artists opened their own not-for-profit galleries as well as their own nightclubs and restaurants, which quickly became the social centers of the scene, and put out their own magazines to document it. The art galleries combined the exhibition of generally Conceptual or Minimalist art objects with live performances by such artists as Joan Jonas and Laurie Anderson, videos by Vito Acconci and Bruce Naumann and concerts by new composers like Philip Glass. On the Bowery – once only a boulevard of flophouses and homeless shelters – a bar called CBGB's presented young, white bands like The Ramones, Blondie, Television, Patti Smith, and The Talking Heads. These bands reinvented rock music as New Wave, which also brought about a revolution in fashion and gave a recognizable look and attitude to what was simply known as "downtown."

While Studio 54 – the world's glittering king of discos – began winding down uptown, this new downtown community began to make a serious impact on the world around it. A few established art dealers opened galleries in the large loft spaces of SoHo, which would become the vibrant center of the contemporary art world. Clubs like Tier 3 in TriBeCa and Club 57 on St. Marks Place featured a new wave of bands like

the Contortions, the Lounge Lizards, the Bush Tetras, and Teenage Jesus and the Jerks, and performers like Klaus Nomi and Ann Magnuson.

In the spring of 1979 Steve Maas opened a tiny club south of Canal Street called the Mudd Club. It was here where the next generation of artists, musicians, designers, filmmakers and writers came together, meeting at theme parties that gave rise to performances, fashion shows, and screenings of short, Super-8 films that created its own universe of stars. It was here that Marianne Faithful made a comeback and the B-52s their New York debut. Nan Goldin photographed most of the clubgoers and showed the results in slide shows with musical soundtracks. Photographers David Armstrong, William Coupon and Edo Bertoglio invited the Mudd Club's regulars to their studios. Poets and writers like Gary Indiana, Glenn O'Brien, Cookie Mueller and David Wojnarowicz held readings.
At the same time, a new music known as hip-hop began snaking its way out of housing projects in Harlem and the Bronx along with a new form of public art called graffiti. These artists too came downtown. In the East Village, the Pyramid Club opened on Avenue A and attracted new talents like Madonna. Artists like Keith Haring, Jean-Michel Basquiat, George Condo and Kenny Scharf emerged in a new East Village gallery called The Fun.
In 1980 Diego Cortez and Arto Lindsay organized the group exhibition "New York, New Wave" at P.S.1, gathering all the artists of that scene. The show was a great sensation, despite the scandalized reactions of some of the conformist art critics.

Some of the energy – and certainly some of the spirit of adventure – came from easy access to hard drugs, cocaine and heroin. These drugs became something of the social glue that cemented many relationships and destroyed many others. Beginning in 1982, as AIDS made its presence known, the Mudd Club closed and another, larger dance club called Area opened, as did new bars like the Odeon. By this time, the lights were on in New York again and the art market simply exploded, bringing money, mainstream media, uptown collectors, major galleries and internationally celebrated designers into an increasingly different downtown scene.

By the mid-1980s, the underground had lost its steam to AIDS and drugs but also to commercial success, and there really has been nothing like it since.

Most of those feverish years are but a memory, but the work created during that period certainly remains and continues to influence our culture worldwide. We see this in books, in museums, in films. We can't forget that it was the social fabric of the downtown scene that generated this culture and that gave it a face and a meaning. The relationships created then were what supported it and promoted it. Many of those who made significant contributions to its growth are unknown today, even though they continue to do great work. Their story remains to be written, and *FACE ADDICT* wants to contribute in writing a piece of it.

Edo Bertoglio

After graduating in film direction and editing in Paris in 1975, he moves first to London and then to New York, where he stays 14 years. There he works as photographer for various American, Japanese, French and Italian magazines, including *Rolling Stone, GQ*, *Vogue*, *Vanity*, *Spin*, *Paper Magazine*, *I.D.*, *Art Forum*.

From 1978 to 1982 he regularly collaborates with Andy Warhol's magazine *Interview*. During these years he also makes record covers for record companies such as Warner Brothers, Arista and Atlantic Records, and several music videos.

In 1981 he directs *Downtown 81.* The film portrays a day in the life of the young and at the time still unknown artist Jean-Michel Basquiat, offering a "cross-section" of New York's lively artistic community of the early '80s. Finally completed in 1999 after many ups and downs, the film is selected by the 2000 Cannes International Film Festival in the section "Quinzaine des Réalisateurs".

After leaving New York in 1990, he focuses on audiovisual production, making commissioned videos and documentaries for television.

SOLO PHOTO EXHIBITIONS
1983 Century Café, New York
1984 Gallery 303 PARK AVENUE, New York
1990 "DATED", Orti, Lugano
2003 "BASQUIAT", Galleria Barbara Mahler, Lugano
2005 "BASQUIAT BY EDO BERTOGLIO", Modern Art Museum, Lugano.

GROUP PHOTO EXHIBITIONS
1976 Galerie Media, Neuchatel
1979 Stefanotti Gallery, New York
1981 "NEW YORK NEW WAVE", P.S.1, New York
1986 "FORM & COLOR", Swiss Institute, New York
1988 "ARTISTI DEL TICINO A NEW YORK", Villa Malpensata, Lugano
1992 "ARTISTS IN THE CITY", Whitney Downtown, New York
2001 Galleria Pack, Milan

2003 Museo cantonale d'arte, Fondo Cotti, Lugano
2004 "PARIS-NEW YORK", Galerie Benedicte Siroux, Paris
2004 "THE ANDY WARHOL SHOW", Triennale, Milan

PRIZES

1981 Special prize of the jury, International Photography Triennial, Freiburg, Switzerland
1982 1st and 2nd prize for best music video of the year, Festival of Salsomaggiore, Italy
2000 Film "Downtown 81" selected for the "Directors' Fortnight", Cannes 2000