

## MY BEAUTIFUL DACIA

*a documentary by  
Julio Soto and Stefan Constantinescu*

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*produced by Julio Soto  
and Alexandru Solomon*

*At some point I got involved in the game of love, I, the hole in the curtain, who told you this story.  
I loved a beautiful, cream colored Dacia, which I only saw once... but, what can I say, I now have kids  
in pre-school and everything that was, seems like a dream.*

*From The Sink Poem - Mircea Cartarescu*



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# **MY BEAUTIFUL DACIA**

Directors: **Julio Soto & Stefan Constantinescu**

Producción: **The ThinkLab (Spain), Hi Film Productions (Romania)**

Country: **Spain, Romania 2008/9**

Format: **Color, HD, 1x52 (TV) / 1X90 (Cinema)**

Original Language(s): **Romanian.**

## **1. SYNOPSIS**

**My Beautiful Dacia** is a light hearted and humoristic portrayal of the evolution of Romania from **Communism to Capitalism**, seen through the eyes of its most emblematic symbol, the **Dacia** automobile. In our film, we will follow **different generations of Romanians** - from the old nostalgic to the young entrepreneurs - showing the present transformation of Romanian society. The connecting point between the different stories is always the Dacia **car**: first, a symbol of the ambitions of Communist technology and now a reflection of the new global economy. In 1999, Dacia was bought by Renault and nowadays it's **a best-selling car** in developing markets.

The first Dacia car came out the Romanian factories of Pitesti in 1968, during the **Ceausescu** era. In essence, Dacia was the realization of a dream: modernize Romania and make it totally self-sufficient and independent from foreign hands. In reality, Dacia's dream was never fulfilled and Romania in the meantime was becoming one of Europe's poorest countries. With the collapse of the Ceausescu regime, the dreams that fed many generations of Romanians quickly dissipated. By the end of the 90's, Dacia was dying, as an old & obsolete relic, spiraling down along with the rest of Romanian industry and mortally wounded by the imports of Western cars. But she **survived**.

Already in the XXI century and with a foot inside the EU, Dacia's grandson makes its entrance into a market addicted to petrol and a consumer obsessed with flashy cars: the Dacia **Logan** (the first model designed under Renault's umbrella) is born. Will this new model survive into this Darwinian global market, where Italian, Chinese and Indian manufacturers are threatening to manufacture cheaper cars than the Romanian?

## **2. TREATMENT**

For Romanians, Dacia represents more than a means of transportation: it represents an entire lifestyle. Take **MRS. DOBRIN**. She has been preserving her Dacia with loving care since her husband's death. Her husband is now

embodied by the car she still keeps. **DUMITRU BURLAN, Ceaucescu's Double**, impersonated Ceaucescu in a few occasions. During the 1989 Revolution, he accompanied the Ceaucescu's in their escape on a green Dacia that -ironically- brought them to their deaths. He will take us to the spots where everything happened.

Others give up their past and drive their old Dacia-s to the massive **graveyards** where thousands of cars lie rusty and forgotten. Next to the yard groups of people take parts from the cars for recycling or selling. Some of those will buy a new Dacia Logan.

The end of Communism was not the end of Dacia. Other perils endanger it now. **Constantin STROE**, General Manager at Dacia, is concerned: TATA India has just released a new economy model that will compete against the Logan. India, China and Iran are just a few samples of massive markets where Dacia is finding unusual success, becoming a truly global car. Meanwhile, **CS MIOVENI**, a 3d class football team sponsored by Dacia, struggles to jump into the upper league, as its players dream to emigrate. The gaps left in the industry by the Romanians migrating to the EU are filled by **hundreds of Chinese workers**. Outside Romania, there are more than 3 million Romanians living in EU countries. There are signs that this migration might be reversed: some Romanian engineers have started to repatriate, attracted by the new opportunities, including the new Dacia-Renault Research Centre.

### **3. DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

2009 will mark the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall and the anniversary of the Romanian Revolution that toppled Ceaucescu's regime.

In Romania, the cities are segregated between old, poor neighbourhoods and the newly modern villas. Romania's growing consuming class, once denied capitalism's choices, is now flooded with them. Debt, once anathema for the middle class, is now an acceptable means to an end. America went through a similar evolution, but Romania today offers a UNIQUE chance to watch it in real time.

We'll take you on a trip from communism to capitalism, on four wheels. Outside the landscape changes, inside the passengers' mentalities change too, while the vehicle that drives us there adapts rapidly to the new roads.

Fasten your seat belts!

**Project intended to be completed:** Autumn 2009

**Julio Soto / Director & Producer**

Julio Soto is a film producer & director who has been living and working in between Spain, Scandinavia and New York. His most recent documentary film, **Radiophobia**, received many international awards such as the Best Documentary / Diane Seligman Award at the 9<sup>TH</sup> Brooklyn International Film Festival; Best Documentary / XXIII Bogotá IFF; Best Film, Best Documentary and Best Cinematography / 2006 ECU European Independent FF in Paris; Audience Award at Documenta Madrid 2006 and Punto de Vista FF Pamplona; Film Excellency Award / GFFS IFF in Seoul. Radiophobia has also been licensed to channels such as: National Geographic Channel, History Channel, TVE, Aljazeera Intl., DR2, MTV3, Planete, PTS Taiwan, TVR and DocuTV. He has also shown his work at festivals such as: Oberhausen, Clermont-Ferrand, New York Underground Film Festival, Viper Basel, Impakt, Hamburg...

**Stefan Constantinescu / Co-Director**

Stefan Constantinescu is a Romanian filmmaker and artist that lives in Sweden. His films **My Generation**, **The Passage** or **The Baron** have been shown at film festivals such as TIFF in Cluj, Thessaloniki Intl. FF, the Göteborg IFF and the 8th Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin. As an artist, he has exhibited in international galleries and museums such as the Malmö Konstmuseum in Sweden, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Bucharest or the Contemporary Art Center in Vilnius.

**Alexandru Solomon / Co-producer**

Alexandru has been making documentaries since 1993, while pursuing his career as director of photography for fiction films. His films are mixing genres, using his visual and experimental skills and have been screened in tv stations and awarded in festivals around the world. In the last years, Alexandru has entered the arena of international coproduction with the **Great Communist Bank Robbery** (BBC, ZDF/Arte, France 2, premiered at IDFA 2004). **Cold Waves**, his latest feature doc, premiered in DOK Leipzig and was released in theatres throughout Romania. He is currently coproducing several films with international partners.



**JULIO SOTO**

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**BIOS**

Julio Soto is a film producer and director who works and lives in between Madrid and New York. In 2004, he co-founded **The Thinklab**, an independent production company based in New York and Madrid.

His most recent documentary film, **Radiophobia**, was presented at the 2007 Full Frame Film Festival and the 2006 Hollywood Awards. It has received many international awards such as the Best Documentary / Diane Seligman Award at the 2006 Brooklyn International Film Festival in New York; Audience Award at the 2007 Punto de Vista Documentary FF in Pamplona, Spain, Best Documentary at the XXIII Bogotá IFF; Best Film, Best Documentary and Best Cinematography at the 2006 ECU European Independent FF in Paris; Audience Award at Documenta Madrid 2006; Film Excellency Award at the GFFS IFF in Seoul, Korea, besides being selected for many festivals around the world.

Julio Soto was recently awarded a **fellowship** from the prestigious **New York Foundation for the Arts** to continue his artistic dedication to film. His films have also received international **awards** at the 2005 Toronto Latin FF, the 2005 Rio de Janeiro VideoArt Festival, the 2002 Brooklyn IFF, the NAP Video Biennial in Pasadena and the 2003 Media Arts Festival Japan. His work has been shown extensively at film festivals such as IDFA, Clermont-Ferrand, New York Underground FF, Viper Basel, Impakt, Oberhausen, Hamburg, Nemo and Kasseler to name a few.

He has also exhibited at the **Cervantes Institute** in NY, the **Queens Museum of Art** in NY, the **Brooklyn Museum of Art** in NY, the **Museum of Contemporary Art in Bucharest, Chicago, Río de Janeiro, and the Institute for Contemporary Art in London.**



His talent and vision also plays a key role in advertising and music video projects for agencies like McCann Erikson, Propaganda Films, Ogilvy, Bates USA, Grey Advertising and FCB.

**Stefan Constantinescu**

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stefan@forma12.com

Lives and works in Stockholm

**Born**

**1968** Bucharest, Romania

**Studies**

**1997–98** Special student, The Royal Academy of Arts, Stockholm, Sweden

**1994–97** Master of Fine Arts, at The Royal Academy of Arts, Stockholm, Sweden

**1989–96** Bachelor of Art, at The Romanian Art Academy, Bucharest, Romania

**Filmography**

**2005** "Passagen", 62 min, DV Cam

**2003** "Dacia 1300, My Generation", 62 min, DV Cam

**2002** "The Baron, 22.02.2002", 45 min, mini DV

**Film Festivals**

**2006** "Passagen", Transylvania International Film Festival, Cluj, Romania

**2006** "Passagen", festivalul cARTfilm, Iasi, Romania

**2006** "Passagen", Thessaloniki International DocMarket

**2006** "Passagen", Göteborg Film Festival, Göteborg, Sweden

**2004** "Dacia 1300, My Generation", The 8th Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin, Paris, France

**Personal Exhibitions**

**2004** "Dacia 1300, My Generation", Muzeul Taranului Roman, Bucharest, Romania

**2004** "Dacia 1300, My Generation", Gallery Vector, Iasi, Romania

**2004** "Dacia 1300, My Generation", Gallery H-Arta, Timisoara, Romania

**2004** "Dacia 1300, My Generation", Malmö Konstmuseum, F-Rummet, Sweden

**2003** "Dacia 1300, My Generation", ID:I Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden

**2001** "Just What Is It...", Gallery Atelier 35, Bucharest, Romania

**2000** "Archive of Pain", Video Installation, Dalles Art Hall, Bucharest, Romania

**2000** "Archive of Pain", Video Installation, Contemporary Art Center, Vilnius, Lithuania

**1997** Gallery Mejan, Stockholm, Sweden

### **Group Exhibitions**

- 2006** "Dada East? The Romanians of Cabaret Voltaire", Zurich, Helvetia  
**2006** "INDIRECT SPEECH", Kunsthalle Fridericianum, Kassel, Germany  
**2006** "Chaos: The Age of Confusion", Bucharest Biennale, Bucharest, Romania  
**2006** "ON DIFFERENCE #2", Württembergischer Kunstvereins Stuttgart, Germany  
**2005** "Minnesbilder", Skulpturens Hus, Stockholm, Sweden  
**2005** "ON DIFFERENCE #1 – Local Contexts - Hybrid Spaces", Württembergischer Kunstvereins Stuttgart, Germany  
**2005** "TEXTground" – Display Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic  
**2004** "Blick 2004", Kunstverein Munich, Germany  
**2004** "Ideas in Motion" – video days 2, Associazione Culturale Promere and Cooperativa Atelier, Florens, Italy  
**2004** "The Way like the World is", Turkish Bath of Iasi, Romania  
**2004** "Blick 2004", Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden  
**2003** "Narration in Swedish Contemporary Art", Norrköpings Konstmuseum, Sweden  
**2002** "Focus on Romania", Museum Quartier, Wien, Austria  
**2002** "COOP 02", Museum of Contemporary Art/Kalinderu Media Lab, Bucharest, Romania  
**1999** "Real/Ireal", Gallery Atelier 35, Bucharest, Romania  
**1997** "Främlingen", Gallery Mejan, Stockholm, Sweden  
**1996** Konstnärshuset, Stockholm, Sweden  
**1996** Gallery Galleriet, Växjö, Sweden

### **Represented**

Malmö Museum of Contemporary Art, Sweden

### **List of publications**

#### *Books:*

- 2000** "Archive of pain the Romanian Experience - Arhiva Durerii, o experienta românească", Sweden  
**2003** "Dacia 1300, my generation", (Simetria – Bucharest), Romania

#### *Articles in magazines:*

- 2006** "Northern Lights", IDEA Magazine, nr: #23, Cluj, Romania



## Features

### *Print*

- 2005** Aftonbladet, "Så kort är ett liv – och så långt", Ulrika Stahre om "Minnesbilder"
- 2004** Springerin 3/04, "Dacia 1300, My Generation", Editor: Dr. Susanne Neuburger, Wien, Austria
- 2004** Helsingborgs Dagblad, "Med rumänsk folkbil till det förflutna", ("Martin Schibli went to a different type of art exhibit in Malmö"), Martin Schibli, Helsingborg, Sweden
- 2004** Sydsvenskan, "Jelena Zetterström sees Stefan Constantinescu", Jelena Zetterström, Malmö, Sweden
- 2003** Nutida Musik/Tritonus, "A conversation among artists from the former Eastern bloc", Stockholm, Sweden
- 2003** Dagens Nyheter - På stan, "The car of the future", Milou Allerholm, Stockholm, Sweden
- 2003** Dagens Nyheter, "Konsten att berätta", Milou Allerholm, Stockholm, Sweden
- 2003** Uppsala Nya Tidning, "Berättelser i ung svensk konst", Cristina Karlstam, Uppsala, Sweden
- 2003** Norrköpings Tidningar, "Konsten som berättar", Bo Borg, Norrköping, Sweden
- 2003** Aftonbladet, "Tomheten vinner – Ulrika Stahre ser – sanningar - i Norrköping", Ulrika Stahre, Stockholm, Sweden
- 2003** Norrköpings Tidningar, "Konsten har blivit mer tillgänglig", Pauli Olavi Kuivanen, Norrköping, Sweden

### *Radio/TV*

- 2003** Radio P1, Bildbyrån, "Global views" – Editors: Cecilia Blomberg and Måns Hirschfeldt, Stockholm, Sweden

## Scholarships

- 2006** Support for Swedish Artists Exhibiting Abroad, IASPIS, Sweden
- 2006** Support for Swedish Artists Exhibiting Abroad, IASPIS, Sweden
- 2004** The Arts Grants Committee, Sweden
- 2004** Arbetsstipendium, The Arts Grants Committee, Sweden
- 2004** Support for Swedish Artists Exhibiting Abroad, IASPIS, Sweden
- 2003** Support for Swedish Artists Exhibiting Abroad, IASPIS, Sweden
- 2002** The Arts Grants Committee, Sweden
- 2001** Support for Swedish Artists Exhibiting Abroad, IASPIS, Sweden
- 2000** Support for Swedish Artists Exhibiting Abroad, IASPIS, Sweden
- 1998** Arbetsstipendium, The Arts Grants Committee, Sweden



**1997** Helge Ax:son Jonsons Foundation, Sweden, Axel Hirschs stipendium, Sweden, Söderbergs stipendium, Sweden, Ak:s Särsk stipendium, Sweden  
Wilhelm Smiths stipendium, Sweden

**1996** Wilhelm Smiths stipendium, Sweden

**1995** Nordplus stipendium, Bergen, Norway

Wilhelm Smiths stipendium, Sweden