



presents

THE LAST IMPRESARIO



A Film by Gracie Otto
85' | Australia | 2013 | HD

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

A portrait of Michael White, the enfant terrible of London's theatre-land in the 70's, the man responsible for introducing Yoko Ono, Merce Cunningham and Pina Bausch to the international audiences. He challenged censorship with his hit erotic revue *Oh! Calcutta!*, struck gold with *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* and *A Corus Line* and produced *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, *My Dinner with Andre*, and John Waters' *Polyester*. Fifty of his closest friends (including Yoko Ono, Kate Moss, Anna Wintour, John Waters and John Cleese) introduce us to one of life's true originals.

MEDIUM SYNOPSIS

Michael White might just be the most famous person you've never heard of. The London theatre and film impresario produced over 300 shows and movies over the last 50 years. Bringing to the stage the risqué productions of *Oh! Calcutta!*, *The Rocky Horror Show* and to the screen *Monty Python's The Holy Grail*, as well as introducing **Merce Cunningham**, **Pina Bausch** and **Yoko Ono** to London audiences, he irrevocably shaped the cultural scene of 1970s London. Fondly known as 'Chalky' by his friends, he is now in his late seventies and still enjoys partying like there's no tomorrow. In this intimate documentary, filmmaker **Gracie Otto** introduces us to this larger-than-life phenomenon.

Following a chance encounter with **White** in Cannes 2010, **Gracie Otto** has created an intriguing tribute to a truly fascinating truly fascinating entertainment figure with a remarkable cultural legacy. ***The Last Impresario*** offers a trip down memory lane and a historical snapshot of an era that has significantly shaped film, theatre, dance and art.

PRESS

“Michael White is the star at the center of this gloriously English answer to The Kid Stays In The Picture.”
Variety

“The kind of glitzy, gossipy, celebrity-jammed story that grabs you from the first frame.” Hollywood Reporter

“A poignant portrait” AAP Local Today

“Who wants to see a documentary about a theatre producer. Most of us . . . if not the world at large.”
Michael Coveney, Whats On Stage

“Every now and again somebody really special comes into the world to shake things up a bit – in 1936 Michael White was born. The most famous person you’ve never heard of.” Wizard Radio

“Interesting portrayal about a man who essentially made his fortune by refusing to grow up” Film Ireland

“Otto’s affectionate film spends time with the man and ably delivers his life. It’s fascinating stuff.” Last Word On Earth

HIGHLIGHTED QUOTES FROM THE FILM

'There are films & theatre that tell an audience what to think & there are other film & theatre pieces that say WAKE UP!' **Andre Gregory**

"A person like Michael is absolutely essential to a cultural revolution" artist **Jean Jacques Lebel**

"Failure on Broadway is like leprosy ... People don't want to catch it!" **Barry Humphries**

"Sex, drugs and rock n roll were things that he openly spoke about" **Wallace Shawn**

"It's easy to underestimate just how radical and risky what he did was" **Jim Sharman**

"The party after the show was of equal importance" **Lorne Michaels**

"He was technicolor in a black and white world" **Barnaby Thompson**

"He really was the impresario of the day" **Lyndall Hobbs**

"I don't find young people boring. I actually think they are a lot more interesting than some of my contemporaries" **Michael White**

FILMMAKERS' STATEMENT

Gracie Otto, Director says: *"Meeting Michael was such a life changing moment. I've come to discover just how big a part he played in film and theatre history yet remained so enigmatic. He moved within an incredible circle of cultural icons, he was the life of the party and still lives in the moment, always looking forward. I'm thrilled we can share his story and it's an honour to premiere at the BFI London Film Festival'.*

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Nicole O'Donohue, Producer says *'Whether it be by his theatre productions, films or parties, Michael was a man of his time who pulled the rest of society with him. It has been a long journey to bring this story to the screen, many people contributed their time as a labour of love and for that we are truly grateful, we were so pleased we could launch the film in Michael's home town of London'*

ABOUT THE FILM-MAKER:

Gracie Otto's biography:

Gracie is an accomplished Australian filmmaker with substantial credits as a director, writer, editor and actress. Her debut directing feature *The Last Impresario* premiered at the London Film Festival. Gracie comes from an acting family (father Barry, sister Miranda) and graduated from Sydney Film School in 2006. Her five short films – *Seamstress*, *La Meme Nuit*, *Tango Trois*, *Broken Beat*, *Kill Blondes* – have won awards and screened internationally. She starred in and edited *Three Blind Mice* which won the Fipresci Prize at the 2008 London Film Festival. Gracie has two feature dramas in development – *Rue de Tournon* and *Girls In Hotels* currently being shot in chapters around the world.

Filmography:

THE LAST IMPRESARIO, 2013, Feature Documentary

PARFUM DE REGRETS, 2011, Short Film

YEARLING, 2011, Short Film

LA CABANE A MARSEILLE, 2011, Short Film

SEAMSTRESS, 2011, Short Film

LA MEME , 2007, Short Film

TANGO TROIS, 2005, Short Film

BROKEN BEAT, 2005, Short Film

CREDITS

Writer, Director, Co-Producer GRACIE OTTO

Producer NICOLE O'DONOHUE

Shooting Format : Digital Canon 5D

Shooting Locations : Australia/USA/UK/France

Editor : Karen Johnson

Composer : Michael Yezerski

Cinematographer : Gracie Otto

Sound Designer : Lawrence Horne

Music Supervisor : Andrew Kotatko

Archive Producer/Rights & Clearances : Lisa Savage

Graphics & Online Post : Craig Deeker and The Gingerbread Man

ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS

Naomi Watts, Jessica Carrera, Miriam Haleyi, Richard Coram

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

Thomas Mai, Julia Overton, Mel Flanagan

Interviewees include:

Yoko Ono, Anna Wintour, Kate Moss, Naomi Watts, Barry Humphries, John Cleese, Bill Oddie, Greta Scacchi, Nigel Planer, Robert Fox, Alan Yentob, Rachel Ward, Jim Sharman, Brian Thomson, Richard O'Brien, Nell Campbell, Patricia Quinn, Lyndall Hobbs, Sarah Hillsdon, Joshua White, Peter Richardson, John Waters, Alan Finkelstein, Lorne Michaels, Lou Adler, Sabrina Guinness, Wallace Shawn, Tracey Tynan, Andre Gregory, Jean Pigozzi and of course the man himself **Michael White**.

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