



**SUCCESS IS A WORD OF  
A THOUSAND SHADES**



**KANTFISH PRODUCTION**

# THE SWEET TASTE OF SUCCESS

with **MARÍA TERESA PANIAGUA**

Directed by **EMANUELE GIUSTO** and **CARLOS TEJEDA**

Original Music by **ANTONIO LO RISO**

with

<b>PLÁCIDO DOMINGO</b>	<b>ROSSY DE PALMA</b>	<b>FERNANDO SAVATER</b>
<b>ALBERTO GARCÍA-ALIX</b>	<b>PILAR ALBARRACÍN</b>	<b>LEO BASSI</b>
<b>DANIEL BIANCO</b>	<b>ENRIQUE R. DEL PORTAL</b>	<b>TANIA EVANS</b>
<b>JPELIRROJO</b>	<b>JAVIER SÁDABA</b>	<b>MIGUEL ÁNGEL VELAZQUEZ</b>
<b>VICTOR KÜPPERS</b>	<b>MARTIN SELIGMAN</b>	<b>NANCY ETCOFF</b>
		<b>MATTHIEU RICARD</b>

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# WHY THIS DOCUMENTARY?

Success is a concept that reveals itself as an expression of the thinking of each era. Between a projected reality and a more genuine one, each person grapples, often unconsciously, with this idea that sometimes becomes monolithic and dogmatic. The idea of "success" permeates and conditions both our private and collective lives.

With this documentary, we aim to capture the moment, through a specific story and various outstanding testimonies, revealing more intimate, more genuine aspects of this concept. The film provides a fascinating snapshot of the perception of success and its interpretation. Following an engaging story, we have the opportunity to reflect on the most current, significant, and critical topics that characterize our century: sociality, solitude, time, the relationship with old age, happiness, a positive attitude, everyday life, death, and even fame, a central component of the concept of success.

All of these are essential topics for a deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of success in the 21st century.

Often what is believed to be very clear is not, and what becomes an indisputable totem sometimes proves to be diametrically opposed to our original belief. That's why art, culture, theaters, artists, philosophers, scientific figures, as well as the wisdom of everyday life, all become potent tools for immersing ourselves in this sea and gaining a fair perspective on a concept that accompanies our lives like success.

EMANUELE GIUSTO KANTFISH



## AN EMOTIONAL AND ASTONISHING STORY

AN INTIMATE EXPLORATION OF THE CONCEPT OF SUCCESS, FEATURING MARÍA TERESA PANIAGUA, A VIBRANT OCTOGENARIAN ZARZUELA SINGER, AND INTERVIEWS WITH ROSSY DE PALMA, PLÁCIDO DOMINGO, FERNANDO SAVATER, ALBERTO GARCÍA-ALIX, MATTHIEU RICARD, NANCY ETCOFF, MARTIN SELIGMAN, AMONG OTHERS

The documentary addresses the most relevant topics of the 21st century, contemplating happiness, daily life, death, old age, and revealing its doubts about this "word of a thousand shades and somewhat perverse" known as success. This documentary has the potential to catalyze a change in your life and your perspective on the meaning of success.

Getting to know Maria Teresa Paniagua was enlightening. She's a unique character, brimming with joy. She was a Zarzuela singer who was incredibly famous in her time. So famous that people would await her with flowers at airports and train stations, even in countries on the other side of the world. Now, at nearly 90 years old, living alone in Lavapiés, in the heart of Madrid, takes her to another dimension that demonstrates the strength of a woman full of energy and introduces us to an intimate reflection on the concept of success.

We ask ourselves: What is success?

It seemed only natural to pose this question to distinguished, famous individuals with significant success: artists, philosophers, influencers, or scientists specializing in positive psychology. We delved into the intimacy of these people with the aim of understanding their thoughts on this complex and multifaceted concept.

The interviews reveal entirely new and original facets, previously unseen, of these personalities. Through this documentary, we learned a great deal during the journey, not only at a theoretical level but also at a practical one. What we experienced and shared can also change your life and perspective.

To create this documentary, we pursued a style that follows the spirit of the "enfants terribles" of the Nouvelle Vague, but with a Madrid twist, allowing room for spontaneity, real-life details, and essential truths. The film was shot on the streets, handheld, to capture all those everyday aspects where life simmers.

The interviews present surprising reflections and facets of representatives from the artistic, scientific, and intellectual world. These individuals include actress Rosy de Palma, philosophers Fernando Savater and Javier Sádaba, tenor Plácido Domingo, photographer Alberto García-Alix, monk Matthieu Ricard, psychiatrist Martin Seligman, Harvard professor Nancy Etcoff, TED Talks speaker and writer Victor Küppers, international artist Pilar Albarracín, actor Leo Bassi, Teatro de la Zarzuela director Daniel Bianco, singer and actor Enrique R. Del Portal, psychologist Tania Evans, CIVSEM director Miguel Ángel Velázquez, and YouTuber JPelirrojo.

This documentary is a soothing balm for the spirit.

## THE INTERVIEWEES



### MARÍA TERESA PANIAGUA

María Teresa is a renowned theater personality who, in her prime, sang as the lead in all the zarzuelas she worked on, gracing the stages across Spain and other continents.



## FERNANDO SAVATER

One of Spain's most well-known philosophers and intellectuals. Author of over fifty works of philosophical, political, and literary essays, along with numerous journalistic articles. He has sold more than ten million books and has received numerous awards for his works and his role in popularizing philosophy. Fernando Savater's unique approach to bringing philosophy closer to society, characterized by his distinct cultural critique, offers invaluable insights on happiness, success, and longevity in this interview that have left a lasting impact on us.



## JAVIER SÁDABA

A Spanish philosopher and intellectual, one of the most prominent figures of his generation in the media. Author of more than thirty books and hundreds of journalistic articles. His studies and intellectual focus primarily revolve around everyday life and happiness. In the documentary, his contribution highlights the importance of daily life, everyday attitudes, and aging.



## NANCY ETCOFF

American psychologist, researcher, and professor at Harvard University, specializing in the study and dissemination of well-being and happiness. She is the author of several books, and her TED Talks lecture reflects on modern society and its relationship with happiness. The clips we include in the documentary are revealing in understanding the current situation. Nancy Etcoff, highly enthusiastic after watching *The Sweet Taste of Success* has invited us to Harvard to showcase our work to her students and fellow researchers.



## MARTIN SELIGMAN

American psychologist and writer, a pioneer in the field of Positive Psychology focusing on well-being and happiness. Author of several bestsellers on positive psychology, he gave the first TED Talk seen by millions of people. The documentary includes the key to his studies in this TED Talk, where he reveals the "ingredient" common to all the happiest people



## ROSSY DE PALMA

An internationally renowned Spanish artist, a charismatic actress and singer, always present in Pedro Almodóvar's films, earning her the nickname "Almodóvar's girl." She describes herself as a humanist, and in her interview from the dressing rooms of the Teatro de la Zarzuela, she reveals her doubts about the light and shadow of success, with details from her own experiences in both success and failure. An intimate and revealing interview.



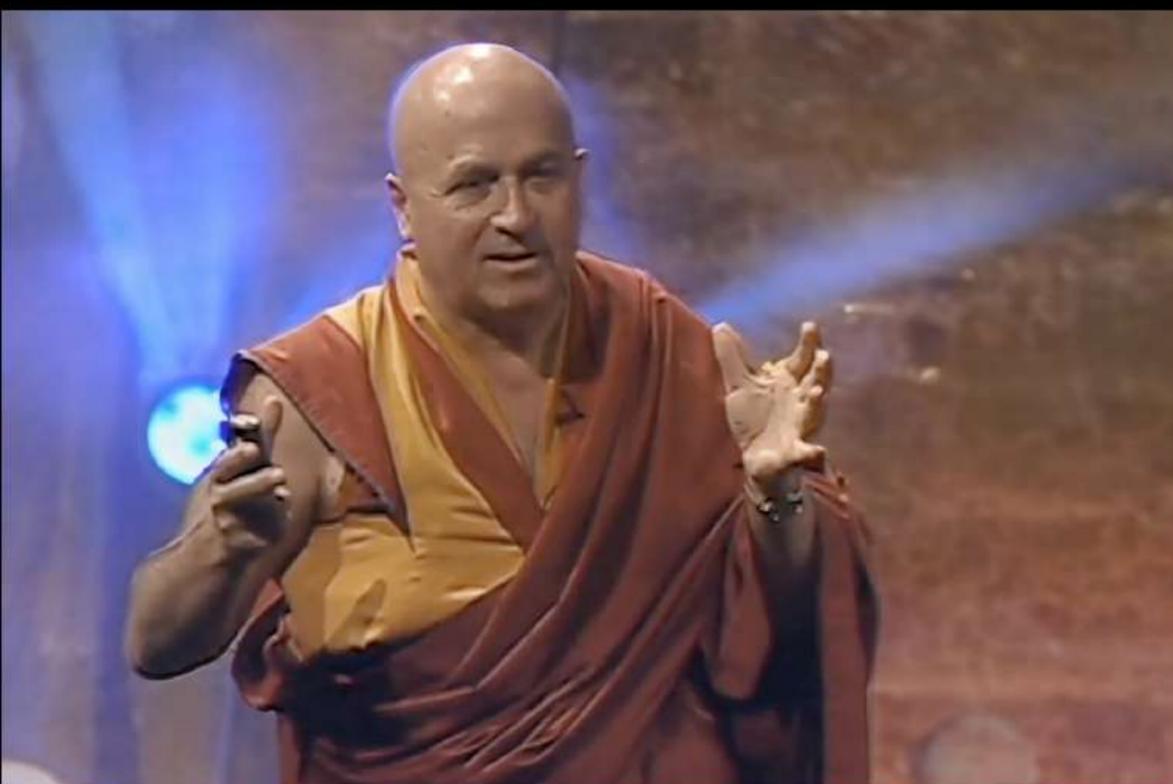
## ALBERTO GARCÍA-ALIX

An internationally acclaimed Spanish photographer, well-known for perfectly capturing the Movida Madrileña of the 1980s with his images, thus immortalizing one of the most iconic recent cultural movements. A lover of portraits and motorcycles, he discusses pain, death, what success means to him, and happiness in an intimate setting. His perspective, as an artist who has lived through so much, is truly enlightening.



## PLÁCIDO DOMINGO

A Spanish tenor considered one of the greatest in the history of lyrical music, a composer, and a director. In an exclusive interview from the Teatro Real in Madrid, he provides us with an intimate and unprecedented conversation. For the first time, he sets aside his role as a tenor to share his most personal thoughts on success and death. His words are deeply emotional.



## MATTHIEU RICARD

A Buddhist monk, often described as "the happiest man on the planet" in a 2004 study by the University of Wisconsin. Originally a molecular biologist, he abandoned his scientific career and lifestyle to embrace Buddhism. He is also a writer, philosopher, and photographer. In his TED talk, he reveals some insights into why he earned the title of "the happiest man."



## DANIEL BIANCO

Scenographer and director of the Teatro de la Zarzuela (2015-2023). A significant ambassador for Spanish lyrical heritage, particularly Zarzuela, to which he has dedicated his efforts and commitment in recent years. Knowledgeable about stages and successes, in his interview from the Teatro de la Zarzuela, he discusses the cultural path to understanding. Profoundly inspiring words.



## PILAR ALBARRACÍN

Internationally renowned Spanish artist known for her performances, videos, drawings, photographs, embroideries, collages, and installations. In her interview from Madrid, this provocative artist reveals her most intimate side with highly personal reflections on the individual and collective nature of this society.



## LEO BASSI

A famous satirical artist in televisions and theaters worldwide. From his Patónica Church in Madrid, Leo Bassi shares with us his perspective on the cultural evolution of this society, on old age, and his most unsettling discoveries in recent years.



## VICTOR KÜPPERS

Passionate motivational speaker, a disseminator of ideas and concepts from Positive Psychology to help individuals and businesses. His words in the TED talk we share in the documentary are an inspiration for a positive attitude and a good reflection of our protagonist.



## JPELIRROJO

Youtuber and influencer with over a million followers. A representative of the younger generations, he reveals very intimate details of his emotional journey through success and failure.



## MIGUEL ÁNGEL VELÁZQUEZ

Director of CIVSEM, the Center for Research on Human Values. He is dedicated to research, dissemination, and education on Human Values, as key factors for the integration, coexistence, self-improvement, and sense of transcendence of individuals.



## TANIA EVANS

Psychologist specializing in trauma relief, grief, and so-called chronic illnesses.



*The Sweet Taste of Success* has received support and a valuable collaboration from TED World.

TED is one of the most prominent online platforms for spreading ideas worth sharing. It is a cultural reference point that features talks by recognizable figures on relevant issues of our time.



Madrid a 22 de junio de 2018

Desde el Teatro de la Zarzuela hemos decidido apoyar institucionalmente la película documental *El dulce sabor del éxito* (Kantfish Productions), dirigida por Emanuele Giusto y Carlos Tejeda, por su envergadura cultural, sus valores humanos y su mensaje social, muy necesarios en la España de hoy.

La protagonista del film, María Teresa Paniagua, que fue una estrella artística y social indiscutible en sus días de cantante lírica (todo un ídolo de este Teatro), representa un ejemplo optimista y de éxito tanto por su larga historia como intérprete, como por la energía que demostró en su vida cotidiana, que durante casi noventa años transcurrió en el madrileño barrio de Lavapiés.

Esta película es, pues, un documento significativo para la memoria colectiva de la ciudad de Madrid, de España y de nuestra cultura. Por todo ello se hace muy conveniente favorecer causas de esta naturaleza, ya que, en definitiva, es en beneficio de todos. Nuestra más sincera enhorabuena por el trabajo y su excelente resultado.

Atentamente.

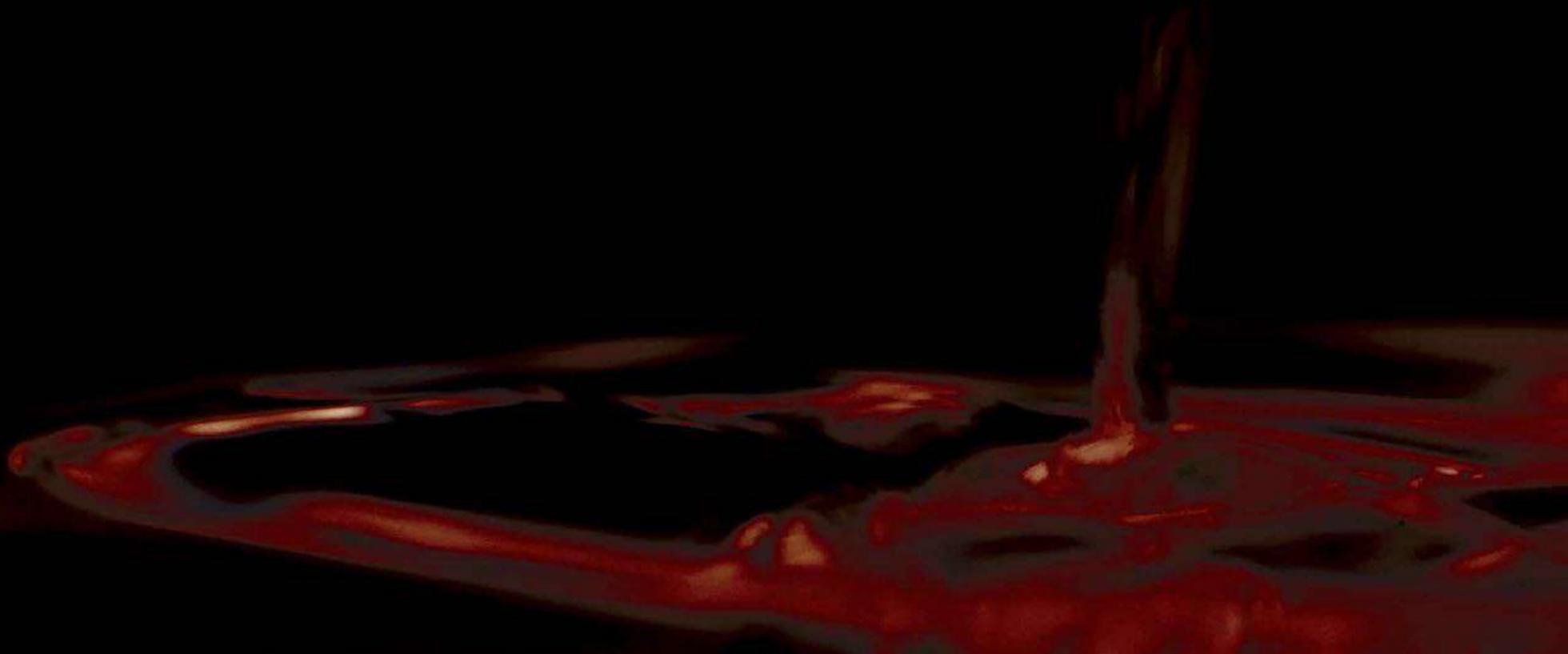
Daniel Bianco  
Director del Teatro de la Zarzuela

**"THE SUBJECT IS VERY POWERFUL".**

M.P., PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION

**"I WAS VERY IMPRESSED. IT IS A SMALL MASTERPIECE".**

A.T., TV BUYER



'IT'S A VERY INTERESTING FILM. I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT CINEMA STILL HAS THE POWER TO CHANGE THINGS FOR THE BETTER AND SURPRISE THE AUDIENCE. IT HAS BEEN QUITE A SURPRISE'.

'THE SOUNDTRACK STANDS OUT'.

JLP\_NO SOLO CINE, FILM CRITIC



'AFTER WATCHING IT, I FOUND IT  
DIFFICULT TO RECOVER FROM THE  
OVERWHELMING HUMANITY IT EXUDES.  
THE QUESTIONS AND REFLECTIONS IT  
EVOKES GENERATE EMPATHY. I WAS  
SURPRISED AND ENJOYED ITS APPROACH  
TO LIFE'.

H. U. SALES AGENT AND DISTRIBUTOR



## TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

Kantfish production / 74 min / TV 55 min / 2021 /  
Color / Documentary / Language: Spanish / 1.77:1 HD / Stereo / 5.1

Developed with the institutional support of Zarzuela Theater  
in Madrid, Ted Talks and Madrid Community



TEATRO DE  
LA ZARZUELA



Comunidad  
de Madrid



Direction	Emanuele Giusto / Carlos Tejeda
Screenplay	Emanuele Giusto
Original music	Antonio Lo Riso
Production	Kantfish Production
Music production	Bunkermusik
Collaboration	Arantzazu Plazaola
Audio delivery	Ramón Rico
Drawings	Carlos Tejeda
Color	Color en Movimiento
Graphic design	ECK
Photography artworks	Emanuele Giusto

Subtitling advisors Spanish / English / Italian / French  
Delphine De Ponteves / Judie Willer / Delphine Valadié

'I THINK IT'S ONE OF THOSE WORKS THAT SHOULD BE SHOWN IN SCHOOLS, A MASTERCLASS ON WHAT HAPPINESS, DEATH, TIME UTILIZATION, AND EXISTENCE MEAN. AND ALL OF THIS WITHOUT POMPOSITY, WITHOUT PRETENSIONS, WITH CLEAR AND PRECISE DISCOURSE. IT'S ALWAYS A PLEASURE TO LISTEN TO SAVATER, BUT TO SEE PLÁCIDO DOMINGO EXPLAINING THE INSIGNIFICANCE OF BEING IN THE LAST SECOND IS PRICELESS'.

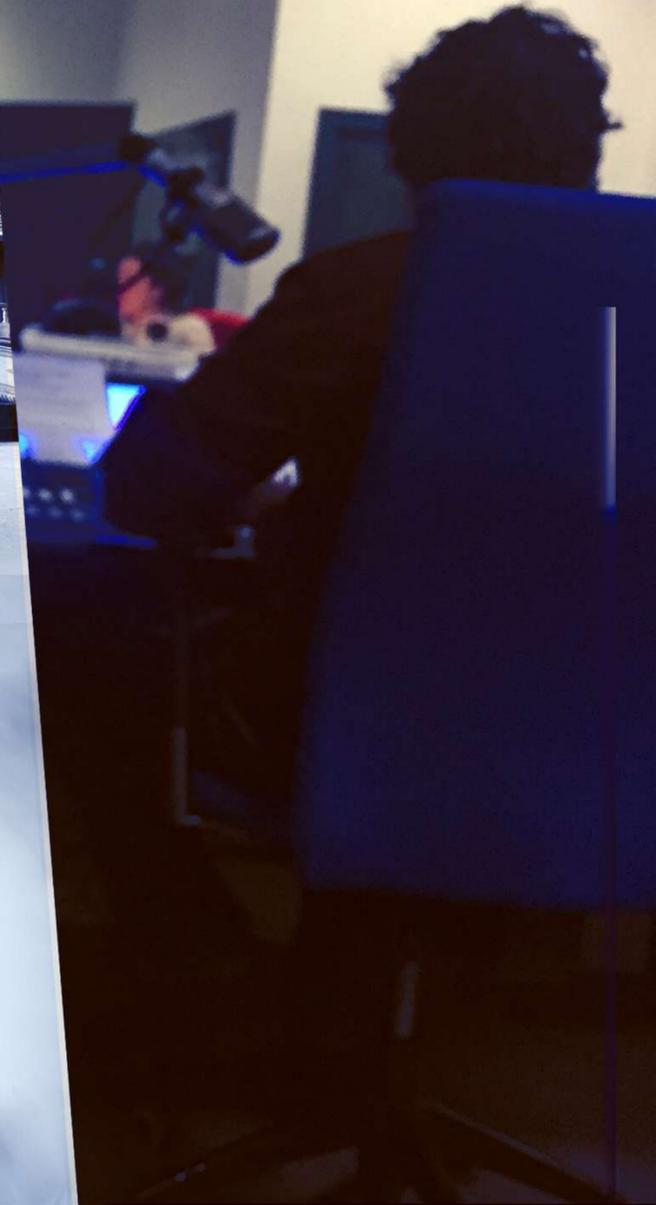
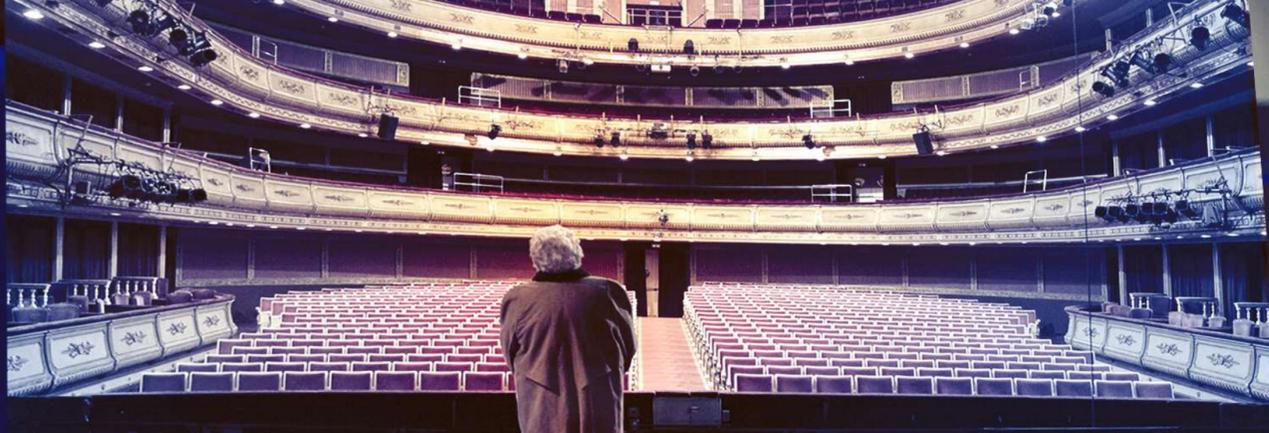
\_R.C., DISTRIBUTION



# The enfants terribles of the Nouvelle Vague, but with the Madrid feel.

The documentary leaves space for spontaneity. The shooting took place camera-at-hand out in the streets, in order to capture all those everyday expressions that bring life to its fullest. The main character and her surroundings, the neighborhood of Lavapiés in Madrid, serve to this reflection on success and all those ingredients that form our existence.





SUCCESS IS A WORD OF  
A THOUSAND NUANCES

WINNER  
AWARD OF MERIT  
IMPACT  
DOCS  
AWARDS

BEST FIRST  
FEATURE  
FESTIVAL DE  
CINE ESPAÑOL  
MÁLAGA  
2021

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
Cinque Ports  
International  
Documentary Film  
Festival  
2022

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
8th International  
Festival of Ierapetra  
and Awards  
2021

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
Something  
Wicked  
DocuFest  
2022

KANTFISH PRODUCTION

# THE SWEET TASTE OF SUCCESS

DIRECTED by EMANUELE GIUSTO and CARLOS TEJEDA  
Original Music by ANTONIO LO RISO

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
Peachtree Village  
International  
Film Festival  
ATLANTA  
2021

OFFICIAL SELECTION  
7th International  
Documentary  
Festival of Estimar  
2022

YOUNG  
FILM  
MARKET

with

PLÁCIDO DOMINGO	ROSSY DE PALMA	FERNANDO SAVATER
ALBERTO GARCÍA-ALIX	PILAR ALBARRACÍN	LEO BASSI
DANIEL BIANCO	ENRIQUE R. DEL PORTAL	TANIA EVANS
JPELIRROJO	JAVIER SÁDABA	MIGUEL ÁNGEL VELAZQUEZ
VICTOR KÜPPERS	MARTIN SELIGMAN	NANCY ETCOFF MATTHIEU RICARD

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TED IDEAS WORTH SPREADING

TEATRO DE LA ZARZUELA

Comunidad de Madrid

## Media

Success is one of the most intriguing topics of our time.

The film approaches this subject in a broad, universal, and timeless manner. The reflection presented in "The Sweet Taste of Success" is emotional, surprising, and innovative. A "fresh and original film", as described by Marcos H. from TVE Televisión Española, the national Spanish television.

The reflection also holds significant media interest due to the participation of renowned personalities such as actress Rossy De Palma, philosopher Fernando Savater, tenor Plácido Domingo, photographer Alberto García-Alix, and collaborations with distinguished TED Talks speakers like the famous Matthieu Ricard, psychiatrist Martin Seligman, and Nancy Etcoff. It also includes figures from contemporary culture such as the YouTuber Jpelirrojo.

"I WAS RIVETED TO THE SCREEN. WHAT A BEAUTIFUL FILM! I FEEL HONORED TO HAVE PLAYED A SMALL PART IN IT."

"A WORK OF ART, PERFECT EVOCATION OF JOY, ELEVATION, AND OF BEING MOVED".

\_ N. E., PSYCHOLOGIST AND PROFESSOR AT HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL.



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

### EMANUELE GIUSTO KANTFISH

"Success is a word of a thousand nuances and somewhat perverse," said renowned artist Alberto García-Alix as he swung his leg, arms crossed and adorned with tattoos, surrounded by his motorcycles in the intimacy of his home.

Truth seems to be irrelevant in this society, compressed and confined within a few variables, with a tendency to reduce everything, including the concept of success, to a few uniform goals. In reality, we are complex beings who need to nourish ourselves with an infinity of different values. And the fundamental aspects to consider are significant. The documentary aims to present these aspects in an emotional, truthful, and vivid way, inspiring an essential reflection for those who wish to have awareness of their life and choices in society.

As a reporter, I have lived on different continents. Observing the dynamics that are shaping the world in this new globalized and hyper-technological reality, I have felt an increasing need to shift the perspective of reflection and analysis, seeking a new line of research that is inversely oriented. A Copernican shift to move from observations of global circumstances to focused attention on what is near, very near, or even within ourselves.

Particular and individual experiences, as well as sociality, our relationship with aging and death, hold notable importance beyond the dynamics of the productivity-driven world. That is why it is useful and necessary to take the time to observe them.

The impossibility of facing the long *Braudelian* wave that colonizes every corner of our existence. The lack of power theorized by Moisés Naím. The desertification and contraction of humanistic faculties, emphasized by the former director of The New York Times, Jill Abramson, during a meeting we had in Madrid a few years ago, for instance. Or the pandemic of depression, narrated by Harvard professor Nancy Etcoff. These are indications that our society is rapidly changing, and perhaps in an unpredictable direction. Therefore, it is crucial to reflect upon matters that shape our lives, such as the concept of "success."



# EMANUELE GIUSTO KANTFISH

## Biography

As a director, screenwriter, and producer, his audiovisual works, such as the fiction short film ALMAMATER (2014), the documentary short film Nadie Como Atenas (2013), the official video for World Water Day (2012 - FAO United Nations), and the video Far West Luanda Report (2010), have received dozens of awards at international festivals, including special Jury prizes and Audience Choice awards, among others. He also worked as a screenwriter on "Border Control Italia" (2022-23), a series entirely shot in Italy for Dmax.tv Discovery Inc Media, Warner Bros. Discovery, part of the 3 Sillas - Croptv team.

As a journalist, writer, and photojournalist for the past 22 years, his reports have been published in various forms, including text, photography, and video, in media outlets from Spain, Italy, the United States, the UK, among others, including L'Espresso and Corriere della Sera magazine (Italy), El País Semanal, XL Semanal, and Rolling Stone (Spain), The Guardian (UK), and Foreign Policy (USA). His work has been distributed by agencies like AP, Contacto, and Notimex and published by Lunweg Editores, part of the Grupo Planeta publishing group.

He is the author of the book "Il Giro d'Europa con 30€" on the changes in social systems due to the low-cost phenomenon, published by the prestigious Feltrinelli publishing house. He also authored "CryptoJungla: Low-Cost Reaches Finance" (More Than Real) and "Keys to Enter the Crypto Jungle" (Ra-Ma).

Conferences. He has given lectures, master classes, and participated as a speaker in conferences, round tables at institutions, universities, academies, and master's programs, such as the "Metaverse Summit Branding & Marketing Strategy" at IE Business School in Madrid, the Polytechnic University of Madrid, the Escuela Superior Esat in Valencia, Efti in Madrid, Coam Colegio de Arquitectos, the Círculo de Bellas Artes, El Matadero in Madrid, or the ParaisuStartup entrepreneurs' forum, among others.

He has participated in national TV and radio programs in Italy and Spain, including TVE 24 horas Economía, Rai Uno Unomattina, Rai Tre Cominciamo Bene, and La 7 Effettodominio. He has contributed to various radio programs including Radio 24 Il Sole24Ore, Salvadanaio, Cuore e Denari, RSI Radio Nacional de Suiza, RadioDueRai Fahrenheit, RNE5 Radiocinco Tdonoticias Radio Nacional de España, among others.

He holds a Law degree from the University of Perugia, Italy, and is a member of the Italian National Order of Journalists (Ordine Nazionale dei Giornalisti). He also holds a Master's degree in photography and image technique from EFTI in Madrid..

KANTFISH.COM

Emanuele Giusto Kantfish

Interviewed, quoted, invited by, published in, or collaborated with:



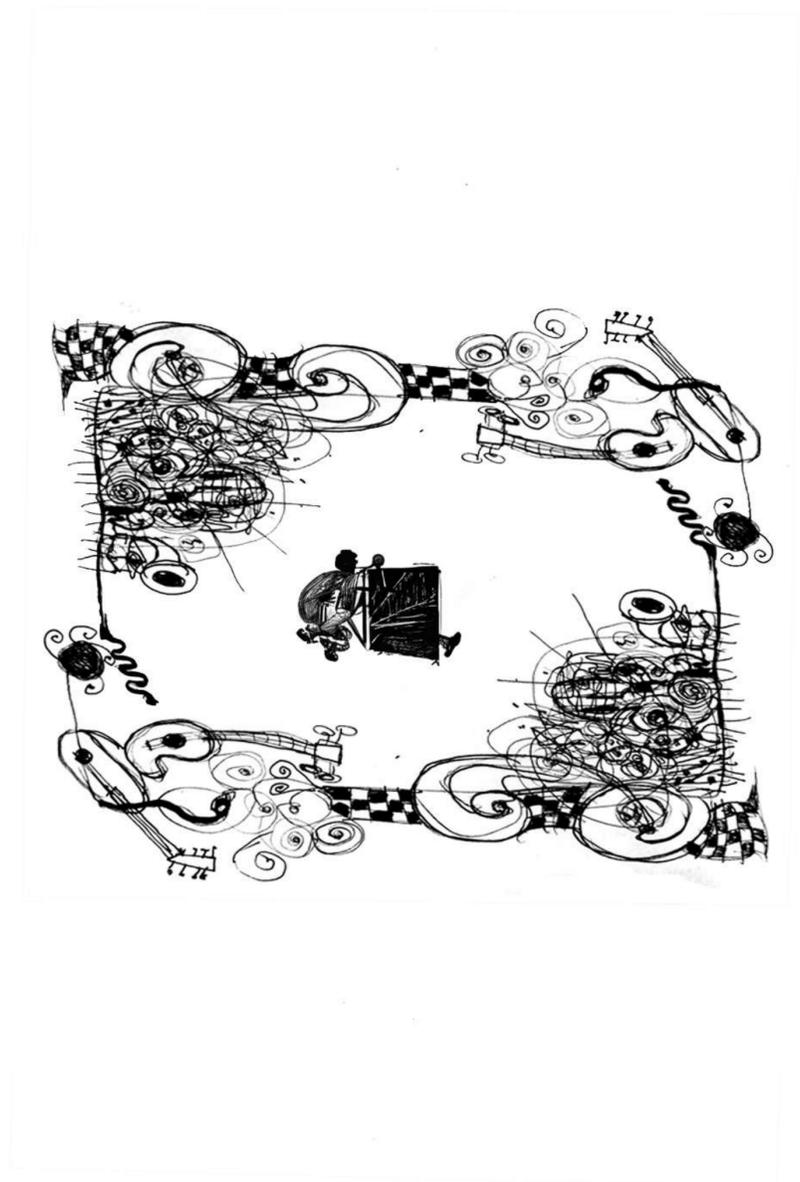
# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

## CARLOS TEJEDA

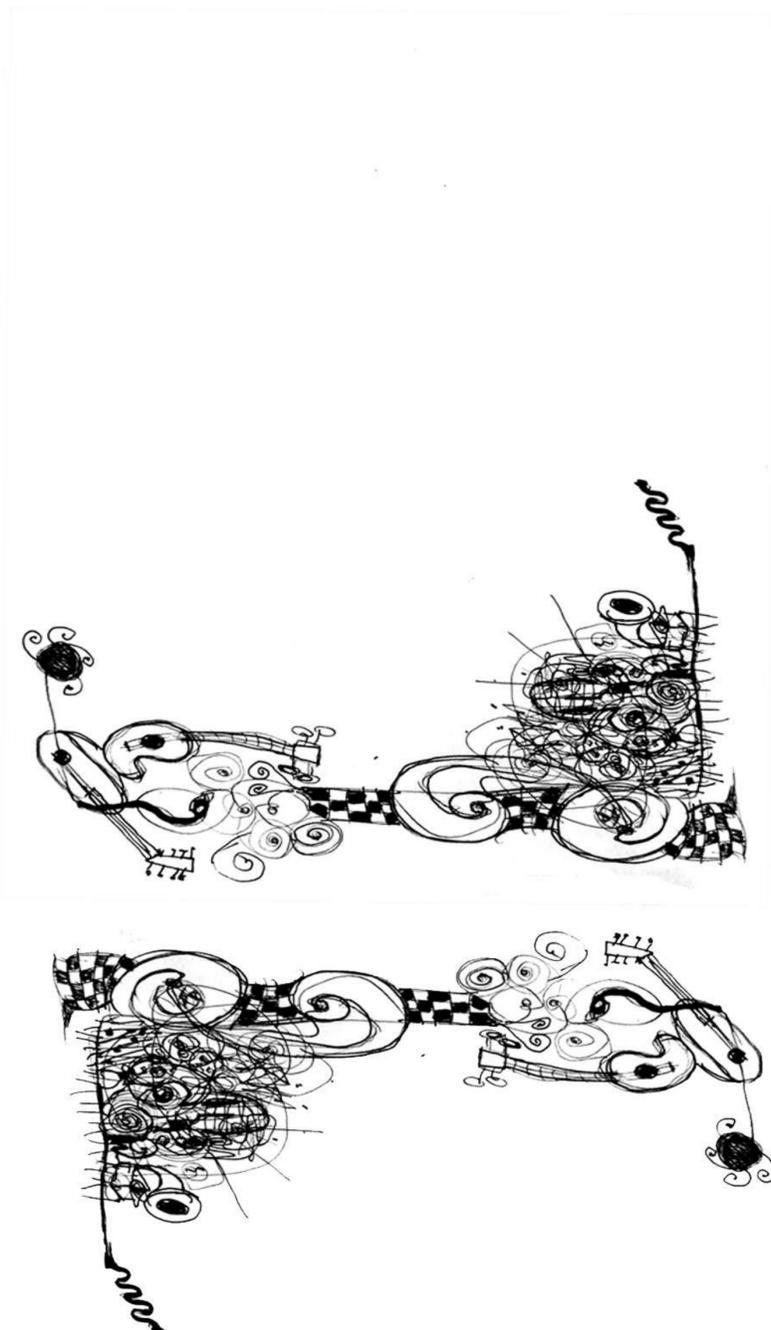
At a certain point in time the writer Robert Walser reveals to his friend Carl Seelig that "Everyday things are beautiful and rich enough to be able to get poetic sparks out of them." Statement that could well define the spirit that has driven the conception of the documentary feature *The Sweet Taste of Success*.

The film main character, and in a way its spiritual guide, María Teresa Paniagua, a successful Zarzuela singer of her time, proposes spontaneously from her own daily experience, a series of reflections on various aspects of contemporary life.

Aspects that are also confirmed by renowned figures such as Plácido Domingo, Rossy de Palma, Fernando Savater, Javier Sádaba, Alberto García-Alix, Leo Bassi and other prominent names in psychology, arts and science. Because *The Sweet Taste of Success* is a suggestive poetic and aesthetic journey, as well as an invitation to inspire the viewer to ask new questions.



## CARLOS TEJEDA



Writer and film critic. He is the author of several books like Cinema made by artists (2008), Andrei Tarkovski (2010) or Jim Jarmusch (2014) and coordinator of Cine XXI. Directors and Directorates (2013), among others, published in the Chair.

Coordinator at the Documenta Madrid festival (2011-12 editions).

He has published articles in the cultural supplement of the ABC newspaper or the Directed For magazines, Jazz Notebook (film and music section), Lapiz international art magazine. Documentalist at the Spanish Film Library. Professor at the Rey Juan Carlos University of Madrid. Screenwriter and director of the short film ALMAMATER (2014). PhD in Fine Arts, by the Complutense University of Madrid.

[www.carlostejeda.com](http://www.carlostejeda.com)

# ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK

ANTONIO LO RISO

## BIOGRAPHY

Degree by the Real Conservatory of Music of Madrid. He's the author of the soundtracks for the documentary feature film *The Sweet Taste of Success* (2021), the short film *ALMAMATER* (2014) and producer of the album *Intemporanea* (Bunkermusik, 2015).

He is the founder of the project Bunkermusik.com, sponsored in 2018 and 2019 by the Ministry of Culture for the technological innovation of cultural industries, winning the First Prize "Music Startup 2015" in Matadero Madrid.

[antonioloriso.com](http://antonioloriso.com)

## Music

David García Mir  
Estefania Villaron Romero  
Angel Boti Lucas  
Cristina Jiménez Jiménez

Percussions  
Cello 1  
Violin 1  
Viola

Synthesizers, Production Mix  
Antonio Lo Riso

Other tracks:

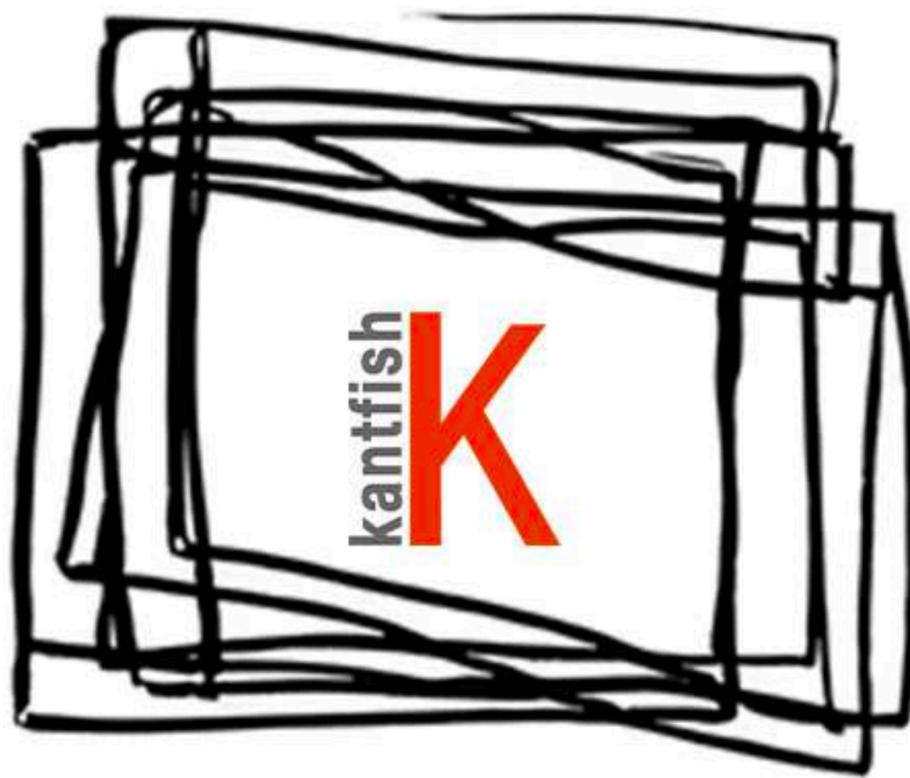
Víctor Esteban Iglesias  
Daniel Hernández Martín  
Elena Alonso Sánchez

Cello 2  
Violin 2  
Harp

Enrique Fuentes      Flute  
Estefanía Villarón      Cello  
Emilio Bayón      Piano  
Juan Mansilla      Piano

Recording Studio:  
Robin Groove Studio, Madrid





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