

# THE ILLUSIONISTS – Insecurity Sells

## Press Release

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**Paris, France – August 9th 2011.** Elena Rossini's latest film "The Illusionists" has just raised \$37,708 through the donations of 363 backers on Kickstarter, a crowdfunding website, reflecting the strong support of individuals for the project. The press and blogosphere are taking notice: on Tuesday, July 12th the independent filmmaking site indieWIRE.com selected "The Illusionists" as its "Project of the Day."

"The Illusionists" is a documentary about the body as the "finest consumer object," focusing on how mass media, advertising, and several industries manipulate and exploit people's insecurities about their bodies for profit. The documentary will trace the evolution of beauty ideals through the centuries and will examine the economic motives behind the marketing of unattainable beauty. The preoccupation over physical beauty is as old as time; what is different today is the central role that the pursuit of the perfect body has taken: it has become our new religion. The fast-paced culture brought on by globalization and the economy has created a new paradigm: individuals are increasingly pushed to re-invent themselves. Through advertising and mass media, multibillion-dollar industries (most notably cosmetics, fashion, dieting and cosmetic surgery) saturate our lives with images of idealized, unattainable beauty, of an "Official Body" that does not exist in nature and that can be obtained only through cosmetic surgery – or digital retouching. The beauty industry is constantly expanding and has now found two new targets: little girls and men. A revolution is under way in the perception that these two groups have of themselves.

"The Illusionists" will include information and testimonies from sociologists, historians, advertising executives, magazine editors, scientists and authors in North America, Europe and Asia. Many world renowned experts are already lined up for the interviews, including author & filmmaker Jean Kilbourne (best known for her iconic film series "Killing Us Softly"), psychotherapist Susie Orbach (best known for her books "Fat is a Feminist Issue" and "Bodies") and Jenn Pozner (author of "Reality Bites Back"), amongst others. The movie's style will be similar to recent documentaries like "Inside Job," "Food, Inc." and "The Corporation," with high production values and a mix of interviews, stock footage, and scenes shot on location. The ultimate goal is for the documentary to become an educational tool, making viewers empowered consumers of media.

Several non-profit organizations are rallying around the project, offering support. The Center for Eating Disorders at Sheppard Pratt, 85 Broads, 7Wonderlicious, and DIRE (Donne Italiane Rete Estera) are proud partners of the film.

Rossini is an Italian-born director, cinematographer and editor. Her first feature-length movie, "Dove Sei Tu," is a fictional narrative film shot in Italy, which Elena wrote, produced and directed when she was 25. Her other projects are just as notable; she worked for the Louvre museum and ARTE Web on a short documentary, "Ideal Women," which juxtaposed beauty ideals in the art world versus the mass media arena. In addition to her film work, Rossini created No Country for Young Women, an ongoing multimedia project striving to connect women across generations and nationalities on the topic of their careers.

## Links

"The Illusionists" Kickstarter.com page: <http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1085595579/the-illusionists-documentary-insecurity-sells>

"The Illusionists" official website: [www.theillusionists.org](http://www.theillusionists.org)

"The Illusionists" on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/illusionists](http://www.twitter.com/illusionists)

"The Illusionists" on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/theillusionists.org](http://www.facebook.com/theillusionists.org)

Press & blog mentions: [www.theillusionists.org/?page\\_id=1622](http://www.theillusionists.org/?page_id=1622)

Elena Rossini's website: [www.elenarossini.com](http://www.elenarossini.com)

No Country for Young Women: [www.nocountryforyoungwomen.com](http://www.nocountryforyoungwomen.com)

The Center for Eating Disorders at Sheppard Pratt: [www.eatingdisorder.org](http://www.eatingdisorder.org)

85 Broads: [www.85broads.com](http://www.85broads.com)

7Wonderlicious: [www.7wonderlicious.com](http://www.7wonderlicious.com)

DIRE – Donne Italiane Rete Estera: [www.di-re.org](http://www.di-re.org)

indieWIRE's "Project of the Day":

[http://www.indiewire.com/article/indiewires\\_project\\_of\\_the\\_day\\_consumerism\\_expose\\_doc\\_the\\_illusionists](http://www.indiewire.com/article/indiewires_project_of_the_day_consumerism_expose_doc_the_illusionists)