

# THE WATERLINE

IT COULD BE HEAVEN, IT COULD BE HELL.



*A journey beneath the shiny surface of the cruising world with a handful of human beings. From the most dangerous jobs and remote locations to the luxury decks of gigantic ships, we discover the human effort needed to craft the entertainment of the few and challenge the real meaning of happiness.*

Documentary | Social Impact Strategy  
State of Development: Research & Development

PRIMI PIANI © THE WATERLINE 2022

## DOCUMENTARY

### Synopsis and Characters

The characters narrated below are based on people we encountered in these years of research. Although none of them has been chosen yet, the situations described are inspired by actual events.

*The show on deck number 5 is about to begin. Antonio, Clara and the children are in their cabin. Clara is nervous and tries to dress well the children, "elegant" is the dress code for the evening on board. Samantha starts crying. Antonio tries to console her, while Andrea throws a tantrum and creates chaos with clothes placed on the double bed.*

*Sidi is sitting on the iron ore powder within the open-sky wagon of the 2 kilometres long train. Behind him, in the next wagon, a handful of goats squeeze each other in the attempt to gain warmth in the cold Sahara night. Sidi's going back home after two weeks at the illegal excavation site where he's been looking for gold.*

*Dalma looks at the dark snowy road with one eye; with the other, she sets the coffee pot on the mini-stove placed on the truck dashboard. She is due to stop in half an hour, but there is no time: she has to deliver the iron bars to the ship factory.*

*Masum walks towards his second-hand bike out of the Italian ship factory gates. He rushes in the quiet cold winter day direction home. He is about to marry Aashi, a young woman in Bangladesh, over the phone. The Bengalese community Imam sits on his couch, searching for a phone signal.*

*A giant cruise ship is approaching the shore at full speed. Abid takes his blowtorch and backs away, waiting for impact. His peers look at the ship from behind the fence just before going to the local primary school. Today Bilal celebrates one year at the ship-breaking factory.*

*The arena of the ship is packed. Antonio and Clara's family rush through the lines in search of their seat. The kids don't seem to care and the parents have a hard time trying to keep an appearance of decency. The lights fade out and a loud fanfare fills the arena. Acrobats throw themselves in a sky imbued by a psychedelic laser show, while hanging on ropes and flying trapezes. The family is astonished. The cruising show goes on and on...*

Regardless of the living conditions of the characters - is it the search for relief or the pursuit of happiness disguised as entertainment - a silent question emerges along the way:

*- While looking for personal happiness, what is the human price paid to craft this massive entertainment?*



## Subject

A gigantic floating holiday village, a cruise ship, is being built and will soon be ready to sail the international waters. From the extraction of the materials to the dismantling process of the old ships, the human beings involved, whether through their workforce or as final users, find a space to confess their hopes for a better future and the pursuit of happiness, walking on the line between escape for survival and escapism from everyday life.

## Author's Note

The metaphor of a giant floating mirror of our society encloses everything that pushes us, over time, to find new answers to fundamental questions of the times we live in. It is where we can take a deep look at ourselves and perceive our power and responsibilities within the privileged part of the globalized society. The course is designed, and the ship is sailing the seas, but are we, both as single human beings and society, looking for happiness in the right direction?

## Cinematic Approach

The documentary alternates moments of observation with more intimate ones, where the characters explore the limits of their dreams.

The dramatic beauty of the locations, the hard-working conditions, the long journeys, and the gigantic vessels are talking for themselves, so when the word of the characters is finally heard, its specific weight is utterly heavy.

The characters' dreams and the observation of their hard/luxurious life create a tableaux-like juxtaposition of frames, a natural contrast between worlds, suggesting invisible landscapes of irony while giving the audience a chance to look at themselves in the mirror while tasting a bitter-sweet candy.

## SOCIAL IMPACT STRATEGY

Following the partnership with [NGO Shipbreaking Platform](#) at the [Ship Recycling Lab](#) event, and the interest of [The Ocean Opportunity Lab](#) and [IndustriALL Global Union](#), we aim to foster new partnerships with Organisations and Stakeholders active both in the cruise ship production chain and in the protection of labour and environmental conditions.

The project supports five of the 2030 United Nation's [SDGs](#).



## COME ABOARD!

- **Production Companies**  
Especially if active in the 5 locations of interest.
- **Academicians and Experts**  
Individuals with knowledge and experience in the production chain, law, labor rights, and environmental care.
- **NGOs and Foundations**  
Public and private entities, NGOs, associations, and national and international foundations involved with the project's main issues.
- **Stakeholders**  
Companies, investors, and activists involved, at various levels, in the civil society and the Green Energy transition to promote the project and its Social Impact Strategy goals.

## ABOUT US

We have documented the lives of humans from war zones to slums, from remote villages to megacities across Europe, Asia, Southern America, and the Middle East. Our experience in video-making, photography, communication, and project management ranges from the profit sector to NGOs, allowing us to carry out tailored impact strategies that work synergistically with films, causes, and audiences.

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