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## **“OVERBOOKED” TAKES US INTO THE CHAOS OF A SMALL ITALIAN TRAVEL AGENCY SERVING MOROCCAN IMMIGRANTS**

*Film to Premiere on Global Voices Series on PBS WORLD Channel  
Sunday, August 24, at 10 PM*

(San Francisco, CA)—Sergio Botto is a polite and professional Italian travel agent; his colleague, Youssef El Idris, is a rough, authoritarian Moroccan immigrant. Together they manage a diverse group of people traveling from Torino, Italy, to Morocco. In telling their stories, Sergio and Youssef provide a glimpse into their strange and respectful relationship: a prime example of cultural integration. **OVERBOOKED** will have its U.S. premiere on Sunday, August 24, 2008, at 10 PM on *Global Voices*, a new series produced by ITVS International airing on the PBS WORLD digital channel (check local listings).

Every morning in their tiny travel agency, Sergio and Youssef face the usual crowd of eager immigrants. The “ethnic agency,” as Sergio calls it, offers all sorts of services; but to many, they are known for one reason only: They organize the Sun Coach, the official bus connecting Torino and Morocco. For those who make the trip, it’s not just a vacation, but also a tangible symbol of success after years abroad and a way to maintain a connection with their culture and pass it on to their children growing up in Italy.

**OVERBOOKED** lets us see the chaotic, funny and sometimes tragic moments of the agency. Originally just a smart business idea, the agency is now much more than that. Over the years Sergio and Youssef have gained the respect and trust of the immigrant community and have become an early example of improvised and necessary integration between cultures. Youssef, who arrived in Italy 15 years ago, controls the bus trips from bookings to departure and is a respected point of reference for all Arab customers living in the region. Sergio generally stays in the background and observes the crowd from behind his eyeglasses, but steps in to counsel the customers on an array of subjects, from filling out a job application to buying an apartment.

“The film was born from my desire to explore the slow, silent changes happening in the city I live in,” said director Stefano Strocchi. “Twelve years ago nobody would have imagined that the city would have changed so much, welcoming thousands of immigrants and reshaping itself with the new communities. Through Sergio and Youssef and their relationship with their clients, the small seed of a new world and how we are adapting to a radical transformation of our social life is born.”

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## **Filmmaker Background**

### **Stefano Strocchi, Director**

Stefano Strocchi was born in Torino, Italy, in 1975. He worked in the auto industry and studied cinema and art history at Torino University. In 1997, he moved to Montreal, Canada, where he developed his interest in cinema and contemporary art, graduating from Concordia University with a degree in fine arts and film studies. In 2001, he moved back to Italy, where he collaborated with Stefilm as producer, production manager and assistant director, working on international co-productions. It was during this time that he developed his passion for storytelling through documentaries. **OVERBOOKED** is his directorial debut.

### **About *Global Voices***

*Global Voices* is a new series produced by ITVS International to air on the PBS WORLD digital channel March –September, on Sundays at 10 PM (check local listings). The first original series to launch on PBS WORLD, *Global Voices* will bring to a national audience internationally themed documentaries made by U.S.-based and international filmmakers. The 26-week-long series will feature the U.S. premieres of five documentaries funded by ITVS International as well as encore broadcasts of other acclaimed ITVS programs. Encore presentations include the Academy Award nominee **DAUGHTER FROM DANANG**, the Emmy Award winner **A LION'S TRAIL**, and the Independent Spirit Award winner and Emmy nominee **LOST BOYS OF SUDAN**. For more information about *Global Voices*, visit [www.pbs.org/globalvoices](http://www.pbs.org/globalvoices).

### **About PBS WORLD**

PBS WORLD is a new digital channel featuring documentary and public affairs programming from public television's award-winning signature series and acclaimed independent filmmakers. Produced and distributed by PBS, WGBH Boston and Thirteen/WNET New York, in association with American Public Television and the National Educational Telecommunications Association, PBS WORLD launched on 55 stations across the country, representing 24 licensees and reaching more than 27 percent of U.S. households. In most markets, PBS WORLD programming will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. More information about PBS WORLD is available at [pbs.org](http://pbs.org).

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