

The Empty Building Production Corp.

(917) 826- 0720

gogio2008@gmail.com

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY / BIOGRAPHY

The Empty Building is Giovanni Sanseviero's directorial debut. Prior to this three-year endeavor, he pursued acting: first in New York with the Gene Frankel Theatre, followed by private coaching with Mark Marno in Los Angeles. Also in LA, he became a member of Theatre West. Giovanni has participated in a few film and stage productions.



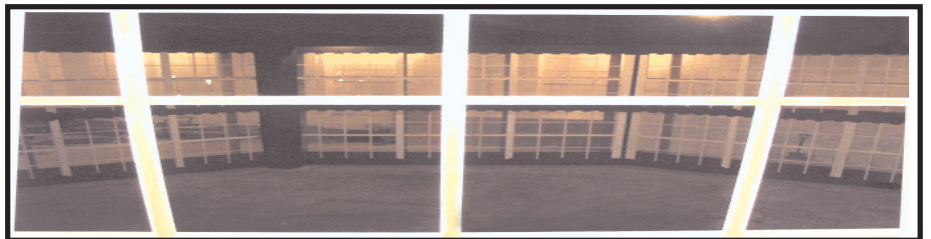
THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY

In January 2001, Giovanni was rambling around NYC exploring the auditioning circuit. Through a friend he met Steve Newman, the owner of a cab company located at West 60th Street, an area on the tail-tail end of Hell's Kitchen displaying the dwindling "old New York" ambiance. There, Giovanni noticed a deteriorating four-story building surrounded by cabs. Steve explained he was using only the ground floor and as for the rest, it was abandoned and inaccessible.

Well, Giovanni's curiosity led him to climb an elevator cable to investigate and immediately his ambitions to make film connected. Though as of yet there was no real story, he knew this broken-down palace was the ideal place where one would be born. Giovanni explained his idea, one that could not take more than a "couple of weeks to shoot." Steve thought it innocent enough and even offered to explain to the landlord's managing company (if they should ever catch wind) that the project would be brief, without complication, and should not warrant a fee. This would drastically change...



From the street, this unassuming building would provide a perfect cover from any of the imaginable encumbrances and because of this, the story began to grow ... and grow. Giovanni now desperately needed to apply for a home mortgage to fund his film, but he needed to rent out his house in order to cover the note. So, in a corner of the building's ground floor, he lived for the next year and a half it took to prepare the location. A sequestered pre-pre-production was underway: major clean up, make-shift plumbing and electric, a homemade elevator (if such a thing exists), production offices and the construction of virtually all the sets including the massive 50 foot diameter x 16 foot high octagon room. Here, in a sort of 360-degree theatrical stage, he envisioned the focal point of his story being told.



By now there was just too much going on to keep it under wraps... Enter the landlord. Through a face expanding with varying shades of purple the landlord made himself eminently clear: the production would be given a very fast-approaching date for its completion and only if every legality was in place including the payment of back and future rent plus insurance- effective immediately. Giovanni was amazed it ended there.

Shortly thereafter, while Giovanni was already scrambling to protect his worst kept secret from a host of NYC regulators, the NYC Fire Department started issuing summonses, the Con Edison Power Company...

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...found a myriad of “funny” wiring and hastily pulled the meter, and if a rejected mortgage during pre-production wasn’t enough, the NYC Buildings Department stepped in with evacuation in mind.

Two days before production was to begin, December 5, 2002, the mortgage finally went through but the good news was accompanied by a major cold snap and snowstorm, hampering the only two exterior days of the 12-day shoot. The following two weeks inside the building were raw, but everyone forged ahead with the same goal in mind...
(find a warmer production).

The rest of the story can be found within the film. The hard work and dedication of everyone does shine through and most of all, earmarking the film as a small miracle for even being pulled off.

The City of New York officially condemned the building a few weeks following wrap. Some months later, the building was demolished and reduced to a parking lot...



Except for the raw footage, everything else was lost.