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Chiara Clemente's 'Beginnings' Returns to Sundance Channel

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Chiara Clemente's curiosity about the early lives of creative talents began in her own youth as she tiptoed around the paintings in the studio of her father, the artist Francesco Clemente. But instead of paints and canvas, the director and New York social fixture decided that she is "a storyteller whose medium is film. I do documentaries, but I say I do portraits."

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Clemente's latest series of short documentaries airs today on the Sundance Channel, and focuses on the beginning of a creative career when everything seems hopeful and possible. The aptly named "Beginnings: Paris," delves into the creative process and inspirations of five Parisians, including actress-musician Charlotte Gainsbourg, shoe designer Christian Louboutin, perfumer Frédéric Malle, film director and cartoonist Marjane Satrapi, and bookseller of Shakespeare & Co., Sylvia Whitman.

Clemente, 34, had her own creative beginnings when she was 12 and decided she wanted to make movies. She attended film school and focused her attention on artists.

"My parents were very encouraging," she says. "Growing up in such a visual atmosphere helped. This piece is so personal. I started with a wish list. I set a date and shot five people in five days."

This is the second season for "Beginnings," the first of which in 2010 focused on New York and featured Carolina Herrera, Yoko Ono, Mario Sorrenti and Massimo Vignelli, among others.

One common sentiment among the disparate cast of "Beginnings: Paris," was people expressing the need to create. Satrapi was "the most explosive character," Clemente says. "I heard Gainsbourg was shy, but she was great. Louboutin was very open. I got to see his whole creative process."

Clemente wants to continue working on the series. "I want to inspire people and motivate and inspire myself," she says. "I'm working on a narrative feature. It's mostly original, but based on a true story."



Chiara Clemente
Photo By George Chinsee

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