



OFFICIAL SELECTION
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

ON THE ROAD



INTERNATIONAL SALES

MK2
55 rue Traversière - 75012 Paris France
intlsales@mk2.com
Ph: +33 (0)1 44 67 30 30
www.mk2pro.com

Juliette SCHRAMECK *Head of International Sales & Acquisitions*
juliette.schrameck@mk2.com • +33 (0)6 86 43 07 52

Dorothee PFISTNER *Senior Sales & Acquisitions Executive*
dorothee.pfistner@mk2.com • +33 (0)7 60 83 98 65

Victoire THEVENIN *International Sales Executive*
victoire.thevenin@mk2.com • +33 (0)6 69 55 57 05

Clémence PERRIER-LATOURET *Marketing & Festival Manager*
clemence.perrier-latour@mk2.com • +33 (0)1 44 67 30 11

PRESS

Charles MCDONALD
Email: charles@charlesmcdonald.co.uk
Cell: + 33 (0)7 86 72 44 87

Matthew SANDERS
Email: matthew@magiclanternart.org.uk
Cell: +44 7815 130 390

NATHANAËL KARMITZ CHARLES GILLIBERT AND AMERICAN ZOETROPE PRESENT



ON THE ROAD

A FILM DIRECTED BY WALTER SALLES

BASED ON JACK KEROUAC'S NOVEL

WITH

GARRETT HEDLUND SAM RILEY KRISTEN STEWART
AMY ADAMS TOM STURRIDGE DANNY MORGAN ALICE BRAGA
ELISABETH MOSS KIRSTEN DUNST VIGGO MORTENSEN

DCP and 35 mm - image 2.35 - sound : 5.1 / Dolby SRD / SR / DTS - color - France, Brazil - 137 min.

Pictures and press kit downloadable on www.mk2pro.com



SYNOPSIS

Just after his father's death, Sal Paradise, an aspiring New York writer, meets Dean Moriarty, a devastatingly charming ex-con, married to the very liberated and seductive Marylou.

Sal and Dean bond instantly. Determined not to get locked in to a constricted life, the two friends cut their ties and take to the road with Marylou. Thirsting for freedom, the three young people head off in search of the world, of other encounters, and of themselves.

“

The only people for me are the mad ones, the ones mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing but burn, burn, burn like fabulous roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars... - Jack Kerouac -

”

A TRAVELER'S GUIDE

The protagonists of the Beat Generation each had their alter egos in Kerouac's book *On the Road*. These characters are not portrayed by actors in the adaptation of the book for the big screen. A look at the impressive cast.

The whole text can be found in Trois Couleurs Special Issue #8

NEAL CASSADY

REALITY



© Carolyn Cassady

REALITY / BOOK / MOVIE

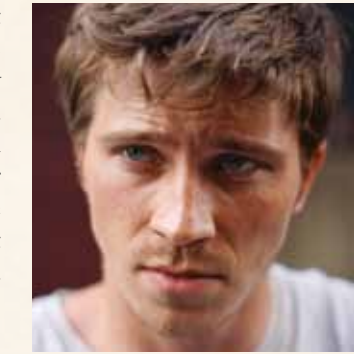
DEAN MORIARTY

BOOK

Iconic Beat poet, Neal Cassady was charming but burned out, avidly chasing after freedom, road miles and women. Kerouac travelled with him to some very out-of-the-way spots in the United States; these wild adventures are narrated in *On the Road*, where Neal becomes Dean Moriarty, the charismatic adventurer who intimidates Sal Paradise. The role could have been given to Marlon Brando or Brad Pitt, but is finally played by the cheeky Garrett Hedlund (TROY, TRON: LEGACY). **Q. G.**

GARRETT HEDLUND

MOVIE



JACK KEROUAC

REALITY



© Hal Hinkle

SAL PARADISE

BOOK

"*King of the Beats*", Jack Kerouac was a vagabond angel whose spontaneous prose placed him among some of the most important literary giants of the 20th century. In his masterpiece work, *On the Road*, he puts himself into the character of Sal Paradise, a slightly withdrawn young man fascinated by Dean Moriarty, who took him under wing as they took off across country. Following his role as Ian Curtis in CONTROL, Sam Riley incarnates Paradise, another counterculture icon. **Q. G.**

SAM RILEY

MOVIE



“
Dean
is the perfect
guy
for the road
”

“
I was only myself,
Sal Paradise,
sad,
strolling in this violet dark
”

Photo courtesy of Anne Marie Santos and Gerald Nicosia

LUANNE HENDERSON

REALITY



MARYLOU

BOOK

LuAnne married Neal Cassady at the age of 15 and divorced him soon after but remained his mistress for many years. She was with Dean and Sal as they travelled across the USA, experimenting with drugs, alcohol and other antics, often crude in nature. LuAnne is Marylou in *On the Road*. “I don’t resemble her at all,” proclaimed the actress Kristen Stewart who, before TWILIGHT, lent her acting talents to the role of a pouting and sensual muse on the road and in the wild in INTO THE WILD by Sean Penn. **J.R.**

KRISTEN STEWART

MOVIE



CAROLYN CASSADY

REALITY



CAMILLE

BOOK

Played by the evanescent Kirsten Dunst (THE VIRGIN SUICIDES, MARIE ANTOINETTE, MELANCHOLIA), Carolyn Cassady, Camille in *On the Road*, is today eighty-eight years old. She was a courageous mother who raised her children fathered by Neal Cassady, while he would often hit the road on escapades with other young women. **J.R.**

KIRSTEN DUNST

MOVIE



© Carolyn Cassady

WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS

REALITY



OLD BULL LEE

BOOK

Junkie guru, Williams S. Burroughs was the oldest and gloomiest of the original Beat clan. Considered his most symbolic work, *Naked Lunch* suggests a metaphor of the human condition enhanced by drug addiction. Old Bull Lee, his avatar in *On the Road*, is totally irresponsible and keeps trying to enlighten Sal and Dean in their carefree lives. A paradoxical role for Viggo Mortensen (LORD OF THE RINGS, THE ROAD), who was reportedly surprised at the lack of mystical spirit in the writings of his character. “To me, his work feels much more cold-blooded, surgical, clean than the ones of Kerouac and Ginsberg.” **Q.G.**

VIGGO MORTENSEN

MOVIE



© Loomis Dean / Time & Life Pictures

ALLEN GINSBERG

REALITY



CARLO MARX

BOOK

Tom Sturridge, a 26 year old Brit, could have played the vampire in the film series TWILIGHT. Seen in THE BOAT THAT ROCKED, he takes on the aura of the luminary poet Allen Ginsberg, one of the pillars of the Beat Generation. The fervent author of *Howl*, baptized Carlo Marx in the book, was to become a collateral victim of the tormented love affairs of Sal and Dean. A coveted role, recently portrayed by James Franco in a film entitled HOWL and soon to be played by Daniel “Harry Potter” Radcliffe. **C.G.**

TOM STURRIDGE

MOVIE



© John Cohen / Hulton Archive

“
We’d all
learned from
HIM
”

JOAN VOLLMER

REALITY



© Allen Ginsberg / Corbis

JANE

BOOK

Before becoming William Burroughs' girlfriend, Joan Vollmer was already one of the founding members of the Beat circle in New York. During her studies she shared an apartment with the intellectual Edie Parker, Jack Kerouac's first wife. Joan Vollmer died a tragic death in Mexico when Burroughs accidentally killed her while playing William Tell. The red-headed Amy Adams (JULIE & JULIA, THE FIGHTER) becomes Jane, notably in a couple of very intoxicated scenes in New Orleans as the battered hostess. **C. G.**

AMY ADAMS

MOVIE



HELEN HINKLE

REALITY



© Al Hinkle

GALATEA DUNKEL

BOOK

Al Hinkle's wife, who died in 1994, provided for her husband while he completed his studies. At the time they were living in San Jose, California, not far from the home of their longtime friends, the Cassadys. Renamed Galatea in the book, this stubborn young bride is left along the way by her husband and Dean. After a forced stay at Old Bull Lee's in Louisiana, the gang is reunited and the occasion calls for a stretch of lively fun. Elisabeth Moss, the ingenious Peggy from the MAD MEN series, livens up this comedy scene with the right touch. **C. G.**

ELISABETH MOSS

MOVIE



AL HINKLE

REALITY



© Al Hinkle

ED DUNKEL

BOOK

Born in 1926, Al Hinkle is one of the rare male survivors of the Beat Generation. He first met Cassady then Kerouac, who instilled in him a determination and thirst for learning. "To my friends, freedom was worth all they went through to celebrate it," he said. His biggest regret was to not have been able to predict the premature death of Cassady in 1968. Danny Morgan, 29, new to the world of films after several appearances on television in the UK, takes on the role of Ed Dunkel, the chubby road chum. **C. G.**

DANNY MORGAN

MOVIE



“
Ed Dunkel was a tall, calm, unthinking fellow who was completely **READY** to do anything Dean asked him
”

BEA FRANCO

REALITY



© John Sampsas

TERRY

BOOK

Kerouac scrawled "Terry, the Mexican girl in Road" on several letters he received from Bea in 1947, following a short love affair in the cotton fields of California. She was a young and single mother and hoped to join him in New York. In one letter she poignantly said "if only I had been born a man", and slipped this photo of herself in the envelope. Brazilian actress Alice Braga, seen in CITY OF GOD and PREDATORS, brings to the screen her serious and protecting soft touch. **J. R.**

ALICE BRAGA

MOVIE





WALTER SALLES' INTERVIEW

By Auréliano Tonet

(The whole interview can be found in Trois Couleurs Special Issue #8)

Do you remember how you felt the first time you read *On the Road*?

I read the book at a difficult time in Brazil, the years of the military regime. Censorship affected the press, the publishing houses, music and cinema. *On the Road* wasn't published in Brazil at the time, and I had to read it in English. I was immediately taken by the freedom of the characters, by the Jazz-infused narrative, by the way sex and drugs could be seen as instruments to expand our understanding of the world. It was the exact reverse angle of what we were living. So Kerouac's vision caused a profound impression on me, and on many other people of my generation as well. Symptomatically, *On the Road* was published in Brazil in 1984, when the country was moving back towards democracy. The book was so emblematic for me that the idea of adapting it for the screen didn't initially occur to me.

More largely, what are your affinities with the Beat Generation?

I was a teenager in the late 1960s and early 1970s. For people of my generation, it wasn't difficult to understand that most of the liberation movements we were witnessing or taking part of when we were 20 had their roots in the generation of Ginsberg, Kerouac, Snyder, di Prima, or Baraka. They had quite simply redefined the culture from within. Michael McClure, who was part of the movement, expresses it more clearly than I: *"The other day, a young guy about 21 asked me what happened to the Beat Generation. He dressed the way he wanted, wore his hair the way he wanted, was against the war in Iraq,*

and interested in ecology and Buddhism. I asked him the same question: “Yeah, where’s the Beat Generation?”

In your work-in-progress documentary SEARCHING FOR ON THE ROAD, you talk about all the research you did before starting the shoot. Why was this such an important step for you?

When the initial conversations with American Zoetrope took place in 2004, I didn’t feel ready. The possibility of the adaptation was so complex that I proposed to shoot a documentary first, following the steps that Kerouac and the rest of the group took, trying to better understand the odyssey described in the book. I was also aiming to gain a more in-depth perspective of the issues facing that generation, the social political context of the late 40s, early 50s. Last, I shot the documentary because I wished I’d filmed what we’d experienced when we were scouting locations in Latin America for THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES. These are unique moments that will never be reproduced, it’s as simple as that.

Which version of *On the Road* did you and your co-writer Jose Rivera use for the screenplay?

In Lowell, Massachusetts, a town where Kerouac spent much of his childhood and adolescence, we met John Sampas, Jack’s brother-in-law. He was very generous and showed me a copy of the original scroll.

I was immediately struck by the urgency and immediacy of



this version. The first sentence already heralded a different type of narrative. The version published in 1957 began: “I met Dean not long after my wife and I split up.” The scroll begins differently, “I first met Neal not long after my father died.”

The hero of the scroll has just suffered a loss that compels him to go forward. The search for a father is a vital theme in the scroll, even more so than in the version published in 1957. This is a theme that has always interested me, and it became one of the motors driving the adaptation. For five years, Jose and I worked with and talked about many different versions. We tried to respect the book as much as possible. Sometimes we deviated from it – betraying it to be more faithful to it. An adaptation should incite the audience to return to the book, the original version. And to construct their own versions of *On the Road*.

Kerouac writes in a lush, lyrical, and opulent style. How far did you stray from Kerouackian language?

On the Road is sometimes seen as a narrative circumscribed to what has been lived. But, like many, I believe that the book’s originality lies in the coexistence of what has been experienced, and what has been imagined. Here’s an example: Kerouac describes William Burroughs’ house in New Orleans as an old, decaying, Southern colonial mansion. In reality, the house where Burroughs hosted Kerouac and Cassady in Algiers is quite different: a small wooden structure, nested on a calm street. It didn’t have an orgone accumulator as described in *On the Road*. But it doesn’t matter, because the old mansion and the orgone accumulator were part of other tales about Burroughs that Kerouac had heard from Ginsberg, when Allen and Neal went to his farm in Texas, and he integrated them into *On the Road*. The book transcends the factual report. It is the product of a unique ability to link what has been experienced with elements created by an endlessly

creative imagination. This is the spirit we tried to be faithful to.

***On the Road* is full of contradictions. Radical freedom is touted on one page, whereas the next may be far more conservative. In particular, the book has been criticized for misogyny. How did you overcome this dichotomy?**

Like all great books, *On the Road* elicits different reactions, depending on the reader’s point of view. If you read Barry Gifford’s wonderful oral biography of Kerouac, “Jack’s Book”, you’ll see how the same scene allows for different interpretations, like Kurosawa’s “Rashomon”. Some believe that the book can be seen as misogynistic. But I also spoke to young women who see the Marylou character as a woman who’s way ahead of her time, a teenager who implodes the sexual taboos of the 50s, and acts in manners that were forbidden in puritanical post-war America. Others see Camille/Carolyn as a silent heroine, a woman who supports a whole family while Neal/Dean is exploring the world with Jack/Sal. If the female characters are more present in the film than in the book, it is precisely because of this controversy.

Your films, like many other road movies, often involve two people travelling together. How did you set up the Sal-and-Dean duo?

Kerouac gives you a clear understanding of their relationship. Dean is the instigator, the incendiary, the “*Western wind*” who upsets all the convictions held by the group of New York intellectuals that Kerouac and Allen were part of before Dean landed in New York. Neal/Dean is so intriguing that he is the central character not only of several books by Kerouac, but also of *Go* by John Clellon Holmes, and of several of Ginsberg’s poems. Sal is a sensitive observer, one who expresses in words the breath of freedom that Dean brings, enabling us to share it. When I was making the documentary, I sometimes heard people

criticize Neal for selfishly taking advantage of his friends. But one might wonder who took advantage of whom, ultimately. In fact, this fascinating question is in the film.

The wide open spaces are a prominent part of ON THE ROAD. How did you and Éric Gautier plan the cinematography?

Physical geography is at the heart of the book, but less than what might be called the characters' internal geography. In one of her essays on *On the Road*, Ann Charters says that the book can also be understood as a story about the end of the road. The United States were defined on the basis of this westward journey. It's no accident if the Western is the quintessential North American film genre. The end of the conquest of the West signaled the beginning of the end of the American dream, and the characters in *On the Road* carry this dichotomy within themselves. We were especially interested in filming this desire to reveal what was unknown to them, alongside their inner conflicts. From the beginning, Éric Gautier, with his brilliantly sharp eye, understood the paradox. He is on the lookout, camera in hand, for the characters and their oscillations. As Éric pointed out, shooting ON THE ROAD in black and white would have been mere fulfilment of expectation, a citation of Robert Frank's *The Americans*. I'd rather keep black and white for a contemporary film – something I did in FOREIGNLAND, a film about the 1990s in Brazil.

Your adaptation of *On the Road* follows a rhythm similar to the one in the book, alternating moments of introspection and acceleration. Could your film be regarded as a “making-of” about itself?

The book contains the same duality. On the one hand, you have the urgency of a generation exploring all the senses, living to Be-bop and Benzadrine

tempos. The improvisational quality of Jazz resounds throughout the book. On the other hand, you have the contemplation and introspection that are unique to Kerouac. We've tried to express this to-and-fro motion in the film. But a film is also impregnated by what we experience during the shoot as a family: moments of happiness, doubt, joy, despair. Shooting THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES was not easy, but ON THE ROAD was ten times harder. For one thing, South America is still a last frontier, whereas the North American frontier has been polluted with Wal-Marts and suburban sprawl. We had to go a long way, sometimes a very long way, to achieve the sensation of finding new territory.

Although jazz is the lifeblood of *On the Road*, it has influenced generations of rockers. Do the characters in your film do the jitterbug, or pop their fingers to be-bop?

For THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES, composer Gustavo Santaolalla had worked upstream, composing themes that inspired us throughout the shoot. ON THE ROAD got off to a sudden start thanks to MK2's young producers Nathanaël Karmitz and Charles Gillibert, so quickly that we didn't have time to prepare the soundtrack beforehand, except for a Slim Gaillard song. So Gustavo worked as we were shooting and editing, before seeing the images. This process creates a gap between the image and the music which I find more interesting. Music ceases to underline the image. When you have someone as talented as Gustavo collaborating with you, you'd better take advantage of it! For the music, Gustavo worked with brilliant musicians like Charlie Haden and Brian Blade, and the recording sessions in Los Angeles were truly blissful. I'm very fond of the Liberation Music Orchestra that Haden leads, and Charlie is a pretty incredible storyteller...



***On the Road* tells the story of youth burning like candles in the night – but it also encompasses moments of joy, reflected in the exuberant dance sequences. How did you make sure the actors' playing brought out these waves of energy?**

Yes, the characters in the book burn, burn, burn like Roman candles... How can this energy be represented onscreen? In the characters' body language and gestures, in the constant motion that defines the film, in moments of ecstasy like the dancing scenes. But we also had to find interludes of silence and contemplation, to contrast with the sequences that were defined by a fast tempo.

How did you approach casting the film?

The cast was constituted over the years, starting in 2004 and 2005. Kirsten Dunst was the first actress I spoke to, with Camille in mind. I always find her acting incredibly precise, nothing is unnecessarily underlined... For Kristen Stewart, things happened in an unforeseen way. Gustavo Santaolalla and Alejandro Inárritu had just seen a first cut of INTO THE WILD, and they told me, “Don't look any further for Marylou. The girl is in the new Sean Penn film, and she is fantastic.” I saw Penn's film, which I truly loved, and met Kristen just before the TWILIGHT madness started. She knew the book extremely well, and she understood Marylou. Kristen stayed committed to the film during all the years of uncertainty. As for Garrett, he came in for a test. He asked to read a text he'd written while riding a bus from Minnesota to Los Angeles, stopping in nude-bars and so forth. By the



time he'd gotten half-way through, I knew he would be Dean. Garrett also waited for years. Whenever he got an offer for another film, he would call first. A friendship emerged from the trust we had in each other, as it did with Gael García Bernal. Tom Sturridge also did a great test for us, reading for Carlo. I remember everyone in the room being so taken by it. When I saw CONTROL, I was very impressed by Sam Riley's performance as Ian Curtis. It was simply brilliant. He came to read with Garrett in New York, and I was profoundly moved by his humanity and intelligence, as well as his precision as an actor. These were the qualities necessary to play a writer. Closer to the shoot, Viggo joined us to play Bull Lee, as well as Amy Adams. They are both genius actors, who can morph into any character seamlessly, and grant them an incredible inner life. When Viggo came to New Orleans, he brought the typing machine Burroughs was using at the time, the same guns, and he had done extensive research on what Burroughs was reading in 1949. It happened to be the Mayan Codes and the works of Celine. The improvisation on Celine in the film is a suggestion brought by Viggo. He's one of the co-authors of the film.

You decided to have the actors playing the leading roles gather in a "beatnik camp" prior to the shoot. Why?

It's an experiment we've been carrying out since FOREIGNLAND. The idea is to create a community before we begin creating the film. Barry Gifford, who wrote the great "Jack's book" and had researched *On the Road* and Kerouac's work thoroughly, came to the camp to talk to us about the book and its characters. He was extremely generous with us. Barry had interviewed LuAnne Henderson, and listening to the recordings he made with her was a big help to Kristen. LuAnne's daughter, Anne Marie Santos, also visited and brought a weath of photos and information about her mother. It was very moving to see her with Kristen. Just as when Neal Cassady's son John

came to see us. He was incredibly generous with Garrett, and communicated something fundamental to us: *On the Road* is not a story about the Beat Generation. It's a story about young men, 18, 20 years old, mostly sons of immigrants who don't find their place in the conservative America of the late 40s and 50s and collide against it, ultimately changing the culture from within. *On the Road* is the moment before the eruption, the lava forming and boiling under the surface, about to emerge... it's about the formative years of a brilliant generation. There you go, here's another parallel with THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES.

In your opinion, where does Kerouac's modernity lie?

In the desire to explore everything in the flesh. To feel, smell, taste, live every moment to the fullest- and not vicariously, on a screen. When I was shooting the documentary, we were driving with Lawrence Ferlinghetti around San Francisco. He looked at the jammed up Bay Bridge to Berkeley and uttered a sentence I will never forget: "You see, there's no more away." When *On the Road* was written, the world had yet to be mapped completely. Borges used to say that his greatest pleasure in literature was to name what had yet to be named. Today, we get the impression everything has already been done or explored. Chinese director Jia Zhang-Ke beautifully expresses this implosion of space and time in his film THE WORLD. It ends, symptomatically, with the suicide of the young hero and heroine. *On the Road* is like an antidote to this immobility. That's what fascinates me the most about the book.

The Hudson is one of the key characters in *On the Road*. It is the setting for arguments, desires, encounters, etc.

Ah, the Hudson... It really is a fullfledged character, like "La Poderosa" in THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES. So many key moments in the film happen in the car, which can also be seen as what a "huis-clos". We covered

thousand of miles with it, nonstop, shooting first unit scenes or driving around the United States for the second unit. People recognized the car, and came up to us to talk about it. This is when we realized that the Hudson has a cult following, and that enabled us to meet some unique individuals. Many of them were colorful mechanics, let's admit it... I've always loved Steve McQueen's films, partly because of his highly intelligent restraint as an actor, but also for his awesome skill as a driver. Garrett has some of his qualities. He is one with the car, so we were able to shoot scenes with the actors moving at speeds that were... how can I say it... not exactly legal, but so much in the spirit of Neal Cassady and Dean Moriarty.





FROM BOOK TO FILM, THE TALE OF A TORTUOUS ADAPTATION

ADAPTATION TIME

By Étienne Rouillon
(*The whole interview can be found in Trois Couleurs Special Issue #8*)

Jack Kerouac wrote to Neal Cassady, “*I’ll revolutionize American letters and drink champagne with Hollywood starlets.*” He delivered on the first part but was stuck with plain water for the second. Yet, it wasn’t for lack of trying from the outset. With copies of *On the Road* hot off the press in 1957, Kerouac confidently put pen to paper in a letter (found in 2005) addressed to Marlon Brando. He has a great idea for him: Brando buys the rights to *On the Road* to make a film. Marlon plays Dean and Jack plays Sal.

“

I’ll revolutionize American letters and drink champagne with Hollywood starlets.

- Jack Kerouac -

”

URBAN LEGENDS

Roman Coppola, head of the American Zoetrope production company with his sister Sofia, has seen a lot of people struggle with it: *“Ah yes, the famous letter to Brando! But isn’t that a myth? You managed to get hold of it? It’s just that there are so many myths about On the Road and Beat culture. For instance, I heard about a project with Montgomery Clift. In my opinion, Hollywood was fascinated by the idea of making a movie from the start. The book was very popular there. But there was a catch. Movies are usually built around the classic ‘beginning-middle-end’ plot structure. On the Road is famously absolutely unconventional in this respect. Most of the adaptation projects contemporaneous with Kerouac focussed on that and the results have never been satisfying.”*

Indeed, Roman admits that he too tried to develop a screenplay of the book with himself slated to direct. In fact, the book and its adaptation to the big screen haunted the Coppola family for decades. *“We set to work in 1979,”* resumes Roman Coppola. *“My father, Francis Ford Coppola, was very interested in the story and bought the movie rights to the book. In most cases, when it comes to rights in Hollywood, in actual fact, you’re really buying an option. Meaning that you buy exclusive adaptation rights on the project for two or three years. So the longer a project drags on the more you have to pay. I don’t exactly know how it happened, but my father was actually able to buy the book. No business about options. It was his. Otherwise, he would eventually have dropped the project. He always believed that it would make a wonderful film. Everything was just a matter of timing and meetings. And then Walter Salles came along eight years ago.”*



BEAT IT

“Profoundly harmonious”, recalls Rebecca Yeldham, in every possible way – rapturous, amazing, nostalgic, and poetic – when asked to tell us about this summit meeting after five decades of thwarted adaptations. *“I knew of MK2 as I am very involved in the promotion of foreign films in the United States. When we met them, we’d already been working on the project for 6 years. We’d already struggled with the notion of adapting the quintessential American novel as a foreign crew – Walter is Brazilian, I’m Australian, Jose Rivera is Puerto Rican, Éric Gautier is French and Carlos Conti is Argentine. This led us to seek increased legitimacy on the project, which is why we did all this research, the interviews and the trips. “I don’t think Walter ever wondered: ‘How would Kerouac have shot it?’ On the other hand, I do think he was conscious of another question: ‘Would Kerouac approve of what I’m doing?’ He also knew that it had to be his adaptation, faithful yet creative too. Throughout this eight-year adventure, Walter worked hard to learn all about everyone and everything associated with On the Road and the culture surrounding it. I think the film is the fruit of these efforts and our shared dedication to honor this beloved text. And with respect to Kerouac, I think that we can be confident about how he would have received our movie, given what he wrote in the letter to Marlon Brando, ‘... it’s going to be the beginning of something real great.’”*



FRENCH TOUCH

Walter Salles recalls, “An adaptation of *On the Road*? I had never thought about it before the end of *THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES*. The book had such an iconic quality to me that the idea of adapting it never even crossed my mind. It was only after *THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES* was presented at Sundance in 2004 that the idea started to take shape.” Francis Ford Coppola was so impressed with the film, he zeroed in on Salles as the missing link in his plans. *ON THE ROAD* has passed through many illustrious hands over the years. In the late 1970s, Francis Ford Coppola suggested to Jean-Luc Godard that he direct it, with no follow through. Later, Gus Van Sant was in the running, as the writer and screenwriter Barry Gifford (*WILD AT HEART*) tells us: “Francis hired me to write the screenplay for the movie in 1995. The director was Gus Van Sant. For a variety of reasons we were in the dark, we weren’t able to finalize the project. I’m delighted that Walter Salles has been able to pull it off. We’ve become friends as we have a lot in common. He called and invited me to be a consultant on his movie, which I accepted with pleasure. Walter used my book *Jack’s Book* like a bible. It was the first object of its kind, a written chronological documentary, constructed like a video, a ‘bookmovie’ as Kerouac said. There are obviously many ways to adapt a novel to the screen. What I know for sure is that Walter’s version is true to himself.” Salles’ profound personal commitment is key to understanding why this project at last came to fruition. It had yet to sign a company able to engage wholeheartedly in what for any executive producer constitutes a nightmare project: the period road movie. The MK2 producer Charles Gillibert, who is credited with accelerating the main production process, describes how he was taken over by Walter Salles’ contagious enthusiasm. “In early January 2010, Marin Karmitz, Nathanaël Karmitz and I had a meeting with Walter Salles at MK2 headquarters in Paris to discuss another project he was working on. After a

good hour of discussions on the screenplay, directing, cinema... we were just about to leave. Walter pulled out a manila envelope with the title hand-written in pen: ‘ON THE ROAD.’ He handed it to us, saying:

“- And there’s that too.

- ON THE ROAD, like the book?

- Yes!”

*The tone of his voice betrayed the fact: as we parted we were broaching a subject of much greater magnitude. Walter shot over to the airport to fly back to Brazil. We called him back the next day. He returned to Paris two weeks later with all sorts of documents accompanied by Carlos Conti, the production designer. We began by viewing screen tests of Garrett Hedlund, who’d refused all the roles he was offered for two years for fear of missing out on *ON THE ROAD*, as well as tests with Sam Riley. We also talked to Kristen Stewart, whom we’d met before the release of the first *TWILIGHT* film. Miles and miles of location scouting, photos, videos, script meetings, gathering the technical crews and so on. Walter had already traveled the route taken by Kerouac and met all the figures involved in the Beat adventure and the book. He was completely possessed by *On the Road*. The film already existed, we just had to find it.” They did find it in California. “Ten days later, Nathanaël and I arrived in Los Angeles to discuss the film rights with Roman Coppola and Rebecca Yeldham, Walter’s producer (who worked with him on *THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES* and *LINHA DE PASSE*.) We gave ourselves one week to reach an agreement as shooting was due to start in the summer.”*





IN SEARCH OF PAST HIGHWAYS

By Isaure Pisani-Ferry

(The whole interview can be found in Trois Couleurs Special Issue #8)

*”How long did it take you to write On the Road?” TV talk-show host Steve Allen asks Jack Kerouac in 1959. “Three weeks,” Kerouac replies. “That’s amazing,” Allen marvels. “How long were you on the road itself?” Kerouac thinks. “Seven years.” The studio audience murmurs in admiration. But the truth is that Kerouac started *On the Road* in the summer of 1948, not in 1951, as he later claimed, and did not finish it until 1957. Returning from his first transcontinental road trip in August 1948, he wrote in his diary, on the 23rd: “I have another novel in mind, *On the Road*, which I keep thinking about, about two guys hitch-hiking to California in search of something they don’t really find, and losing themselves on the road, and coming all the way back hopeful of something else.”*

“

– How long did it take you to write On the Road? – Three weeks – That’s amazing – Allen marvels.

”



BYWAYS AND DETOURS

On the Road was Kerouac's second novel. The first, *The Town and the City*, was strongly influenced by his heroes, Mark Twain, Thomas Wolfe, and Walt Whitman, authors who celebrate America's vastness and splendor. Kerouac began the new novel hoping to find a revolutionary way of writing. But his notebooks still strove to attain the lyricism of his elders. He rummaged about restlessly for a narrative structure. For months on end, he accumulated protoversions of *On the Road*, some of them one page long, others hundreds. He wrote sometimes in the first person, sometimes the third. He hesitated between travel companions: Warren Beauchamps (Lucien Carr), Dean Pomeray (Neal Cassady); solo. In other words, he rode off in all directions, and after several months of torment, ran dry. So when Neal Cassady, LuAnne, and Al Hinkle offered to take him on the road again, he immediately accepted. In February 1949, he was back on the East Coast, writing *On the Road*. He figured he'd have it finished in a matter of months. His trip had convinced him that what he wanted to say about America, the reality, the friendships, the serendipity, required the present immediate tense. He wanted to write a novel about his generation, "a study of the young people of this age who 'refuse to work,' as it were, and who roam the country half on the verge of crime, half on the verge of hoboism" (November 1949 entry in his notebook *Night Notes and Diagrams for On the Road*). He had succeeded in defining the Beat Generation as his subject, but he was still casting around for the right way to tell the story.



BURNING OIL

From 1949 to 1950, Kerouac swung between intensive writing and wandering. He moved to Denver alone, hoping to finish his book there; went to live with Neal Cassady in San Francisco; fought with him, returned to New York, left for Denver again, made up with Neal, and spent two months in Mexico City with Burroughs, high as a kite 24 hours a day, returned definitively to New York in late 1950, married a young woman he'd just met, moved into her place, and got a job as a scribbler at 20th Century Fox. The whole time, he progressed with the novel as if in a labyrinth – getting lost. In spring 1951, he was hospitalized for weeks with phlebitis. The day he was discharged, he told Holmes: “*You know what I’m going to do? I’m going to get me a roll of shelf-paper, feed it into the typewriter, and just write it down as fast as I can, exactly like it happened, all in a rush, the hell with these phony architectures – and worry about it later*” (cited by Ann Charters). Three weeks later, the novel that was an eternal recommencement was finished. Thoughts of Neal Cassady were what got Kerouac out of his funk and rolling with *On the Road*. Hanging out with Neal, he saw the Roman candle, blazing through life with freedom and fury, and the sight helped him focus. He realized his best model was not Thomas Wolfe, but the extraordinary unknown Neal, and the story of *On the Road* is the story of their friendship. According to Allen Ginsberg, “*Jack finally discovered the kind of things he and Neal were talking about were the subject matter for what he wanted to write down*” (quoted by Ann Charters). Kerouac was dazzled by Neal’s letter-writing style: powerful geysers, directly erupting experience, oblivious to literary

effects. Their immediacy was what Kerouac had spent years searching for. Finally, the long rest imposed by the hospital stay enabled all the novelistic sediment he had accumulated to settle.

When Jack got out in early April, he had a clear plan. One morning, Kerouac took the huge roll of paper to Robert Giroux at Harcourt Brace. The scroll was a single paragraph, 120 feet long. “*Here’s your novel!*” he cried. Giroux was taken aback: “*But Jack, how can you make corrections on a manuscript like that?*” In a rage, Kerouac refused to change a single comma, took his scroll, and vanished (quoted by Ann Charters).





FINDING A PLACE TO PARK

Months and years went by. A new search had begun: now that Kerouac had found his identity as a writer, he needed a publisher. He submitted the typescript of *On the Road* 6 times, and got 6 rejection slips. He threw himself into writing other novels, but feelings of bitterness at being misunderstood were overwhelming him. Finally, in 1955, he met Malcolm Cowley, an editorial consultant at Viking Press. Cowley was enthusiastic about *On the Road*, but asked Kerouac to make some changes. Otherwise, the book was not publishable. It had to be shortened, cleaned up so that the vocabulary conformed to decency laws, and the characters' identities had to be disguised, to avoid libel charges. A battle-weary Kerouac accepted. In fact, he attacked the book with a chain saw. Fortunately, he realized that he was killing his work and at the last minute, he returned to a more faithful version.

THE ROAD TO ACCEPTANCE

On the Road was published on September 5, 1957, after a nine-year journey into the abyss. Recognition had come too late. That's what Kerouac was hinting at, when he glossed over the book's painful birth. As if to say: "*Where were you squares on that April day when I finished the book? That's when we should have met.*"



CREW & CAST

WALTER SALLES (Director)

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2012 *ON THE ROAD*
2008 *LINHA DE PASSE* (co-director)
In Competition, Cannes Film Festival 2008
2006 *PARIS, JE T'AIME* (segment - 16^{ème} arrondissement)
2005 *DARK WATER*
2004 *THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES*
In Competition, Cannes Film Festival 2004
2001 *BEHIND THE SUN*
1998 *CENTRAL STATION*
Golden Bear, Berlinale 1998
1996 *FOREIGN LAND*



DANNY GLICKER

(Costume design)

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2012** *ON THE ROAD* by Walter Salles
2011 *RESTLESS* by Gus Van Sant
2009 *UP IN THE AIR* by Jason Reitman
2008 *MILK* by Gus Van Sant
TRUE BLOOD (TV)
2006 *THE HILLS HAVE EYES* by Alexandre Aja
2005 *THANK YOU FOR SMOKING* by Jason Reitman

CARLOS CONTI

(Production design)

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2012** *ON THE ROAD* by Walter Salles
2009 *ULTIMATE HEIST* by Laurent Tuel
2007 *THE KITE RUNNER* by Marc Foster
2004 *THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES* by Walter Salles
2000 *THE MAN WHO CRIED* by Sally Potter
1995 *NELLY AND MONSIEUR ARNAUD* by Claude Sautet
1986 *BETTY BLUE* by Jean-Jacques Beineix

GUSTAVO SANTAOLALLA

(Music)

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2012** *ON THE ROAD* by Walter Salles
2007 *INTO THE WILD* by Sean Penn
ENTOURAGE (TV)
2006 *BABEL* by Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu
2005 *LORD OF WAR* by Andrew Niccol
BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN de Ang Lee
2004 *SHREK 2* by Andrew Adamson, Kelly Asbury & Conrad Vernon
THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES by Walter Salles
2001 *24* (TV)
2000 *AMORES PERROS* by Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu
1999 *THE SOPRANOS* (TV)

ÉRIC GAUTIER

(Director of photography)

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2012** *ON THE ROAD* by Walter Salles
SOMETHING IN THE AIR by Olivier Assayas
2009 *WILD GRASS* by Alain Resnais
2008 *A CHRISTMAS TALE* by Arnaud Desplechin
SUMMER HOURS by Olivier Assayas
2007 *INTO THE WILD* by Sean Penn
2005 *ONE STAYS, THE OTHER LEAVES* by Claude Berri
GABRIELLE by Patrice Chéreau
2004 *THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES* by Walter Salles
CLEAN by Olivier Assayas
KINGS AND QUEEN by Arnaud Desplechin
2001 *INTIMACY* by Patrice Chéreau
2000 *LES DESTINEES* by Olivier Assayas
ESTHER KAHN by Arnaud Desplechin
1999 *POLAX* by Léos Carax
1994 *LE FILS PREFERE* by Nicole Garcia



FRANÇOIS GEDIGIER (Editor)

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2012 *ON THE ROAD* by Walter Salles
2011 *THE TREE* by Julie Bertuccelli
2009 *PERSECUTION* by Patrice Chéreau
2008 *LET IT RAIN* by Agnès Jaoui
2007 *HUNTING AND GATHERING* by Claude Berri
2005 *GABRIELLE* by Patrice Chéreau
ONE STAYS, THE OTHER LEAVES by Claude Berri
2001 *INTIMACY* by Patrice Chéreau
2000 *DANCER IN THE DARK* by Lars Von Trier
1994 *QUEEN MARGOT* by Patrice Chéreau



GARRETT HEDLUND

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- | | |
|------|--|
| 2012 | <i>ON THE ROAD</i> by Walter Salles |
| 2010 | <i>TRON: LEGACY</i> by Joseph Kosinski
<i>COUNTRY SONG</i> by Shana Feste |
| 2007 | <i>DEATH SENTENCE</i> by James Wan
<i>GEORGIA RULE</i> by Garry Marshall |
| 2006 | <i>ERAGON</i> by Stefen Fangmeier |
| 2005 | <i>FOUR BROTHERS</i> by John Singleton |
| 2004 | <i>TROY</i> by Wolfgang Petersen |



SAM RILEY

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- | | |
|------|---|
| 2012 | <i>ON THE ROAD</i> by Walter Salles |
| 2010 | <i>BRIGHTON ROCK</i> by Rowan Joffe
<i>13</i> by Gela Babluani |
| 2008 | <i>FRANKLYN</i> by Gerald McMorrin |
| 2007 | <i>CONTROL</i> by Anton Corbijn |

KRISTEN STEWART

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2012 *ON THE ROAD* by Walter Salles
2011 *THE TWILIGHT SAGA: BREAKING DAWN – Part 1* by Bill Condon
2010 *THE TWILIGHT SAGA: ECLIPSE* by David Slade
THE RUNAWAYS by Floria Sigismondi
WELCOME TO THE RILEYS by Jake Scott
2009 *TWILIGHT NEW MOON* by Chris Weitz
2008 *TWILIGHT* by Catherine Hardwicke
WHAT JUST HAPPENED by Barry Levinson
2007 *INTO THE WILD* by Sean Penn





TOM STURRIDGE

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2012 *ON THE ROAD* by Walter Salles
WAITING FOR FOREVER by James Keach
- 2009 *THE BOAT THAT ROCKED* by Richard Curtis
- 2004 *BEING JULIA* by Istvan Szabo
VANITY FAIR by Mira Nair

AMY ADAMS

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2012 *ON THE ROAD* by Walter Salles
2010 *THE FIGHTER* by David O. Russell
2009 *JULIE & JULIA* by Nora Ephron
2008 *DOUBT* by John Patrick Shanley
SUNSHINE CLEANING by Christine Jeffs
2007 *CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR* by Mike Nichols
ENCHANTED by Kevin Lima
2002 *CATCH ME IF YOU CAN* by Steven Spielberg



DANNY MORGAN

FILMOGRAPHY

Feature Film Debut

- 2012 *ON THE ROAD* by Walter Salles



ALICE BRAGA

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2012 *ON THE ROAD* by Walter Salles
- 2009 *CROSSING OVER* by Wayne Kramer
- 2008 *BLINDNESS* by Fernando Meirelles
- 2007 *I AM LEGEND* by Francis Lawrence
- 2002 *CITY OF GOD* by Fernando Meirelles



ELISABETH MOSS

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2012 *ON THE ROAD* by Walter Salles
- 2010 *AMERICAN TRIP* by Nicholas Stoller
- 2007/2012 *MAD MEN* by Matthew Weiner (TV)
- 2003 *THE MISSING* by Ron Howard
- 1999 *GIRL, INTERRUPTED* by James Mangold



KIRSTEN DUNST

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2012 *ON THE ROAD* by Walter Salles
2011 *MELANCHOLIA* by Lars von Trier
2007 *SPIDER-MAN 3* by Sam Raimi
2006 *MARIE ANTOINETTE* by Sofia Coppola
2005 *ELIZABETHTOWN* by Cameron Crowe
2004 *SPIDER-MAN 2* by Sam Raimi
ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND by Michel Gondry
2003 *MONA LISA SMILE* by Mike Newell
2002 *SPIDER-MAN* by Sam Raimi
2000 *BRING IT ON* by Peyton Reed
1999 *THE VIRGIN SUICIDES* by Sofia Coppola
1997 *WAG THE DOG* by Barry Levinson
1994 *LITTLE WOMEN* by Gillian Armstrong
INTERVIEW WITH THE VAMPIRE: THE VAMPIRE CHRONICLES by Neil Jordan



VIGGO MORTENSEN

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

- 2012 *ON THE ROAD* by Walter Salles
2011 *A DANGEROUS METHOD* by David Cronenberg
2009 *THE ROAD* by John Hillcoat
2008 *APPALOOSA* by Ed Harris
2007 *EASTERN PROMISES* by David Cronenberg
2005 *A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE* by David Cronenberg
2003 *THE LORD OF THE RINGS : THE RETURN OF THE KING* by Peter Jackson
2002 *THE LORD OF THE RINGS : THE TWO TOWERS* by Peter Jackson
2001 *THE LORD OF THE RINGS : THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING* by Peter Jackson
1998 *PSYCHO* by Gus Van Sant
1996 *ALBINO ALLIGATOR* by Kevin Spacey
THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY by Jane Campion
1993 *CARLITO'S WAY* by Brian de Palma
1991 *THE INDIAN RUNNER* by Sean Penn



ARTISTIC LIST

Garrett HEDLUND
Sam RILEY
Kristen STEWART
Amy ADAMS
Tom STURRIDGE
Danny MORGAN
Alice BRAGA
Marie-Ginette GUAY
Elisabeth MOSS
Kirsten DUNST
Viggo MORTENSEN

Dean Moriarty / Neal Cassady
Sal Paradise / Jack Kerouac
Marylou / LuAnne Henderson
Jane / Joan Vollmer
Carlo Marx / Allen Ginsberg
Ed Dunkle / Al Hinkle
Terry / Bea Franco
Ma Paradise
Galatea Dunkle / Helen Hinkle
Camille / Carolyn Cassady
Old Bull Lee / William S. Burroughs





TECHNICAL LIST

Directed by **Walter SALLES**
Screenplay **Jose RIVERA**
From the novel by **Jack KEROUAC**
Produced by **Nathanaël KARMITZ**, **Charles GILLIBERT**
Produced by **Rebecca YELDHAM**, **Roman COPPOLA**
Executive Producers **Francis Ford COPPOLA**, **John WILLIAMS**, **Jerry LEIDER**
and **Tessa ROSS**, **Arpad BUSSON**
Associate Producers **Peter CAVANEY**, **Marin KARMITZ**
Director of photography **Éric GAUTIER** - (AFC)
Production designer **Carlos CONTI**
Music by **Gustavo SANTAOLALLA** featuring **Charlie HADEN** and **Brian BLADE**
Costume designer by **Danny GLICKER**
Casting **David RUBIN**, **Richard HICKS**
Editor **François GEDIGIER**
Re-recording Mixers **Patrick ROUSSEAU**, **Jean-Paul HURIER**
Music Supervisor **Lynn FAINCHTEIN**
Co-executive Producer **Michael ZAKIN**
Line Producer **Benjamin HESS**
1st assistant director **Myron HOFFERT**
A **Jerry Leider Company** production - In association with **Vanguard Films**, **Film 4**
In co-production with **France 2 Cinéma** With the participation of **France Télévisions**, **Canal+** and **Ciné+**
A French-Brazilian co-production **MK2** in co-production with **Videofilmes**



EXHIBITION

***On the Road* by Jack Kerouac. The Epic, from Writing to Filming**
May 16th - August 19th, 2012

Paris Museum of Letters and Manuscripts presents an exhibition dedicated to one of the most cult novels of American literature. It is the very first time the 120-foot-long typescript on which Kerouac wrote the first version of *On the Road* - considered as the Beat Generation manifesto - is exhibited in France.

PRESS CONTACT : Gaëlle Cueff

3, rue des Lilas - 75019 Paris • Ph: + 33 (0)1 42 41 64 98 • gaelle.cueff@orange.fr

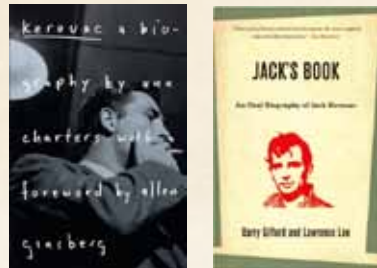


BOOKS

On the Road (original scroll), Jack Kerouac
Published by Penguin Classics (August 26, 2008)

Kerouac: a Biography (with a foreword by Allen Ginsberg), Ann Charters
Published by St. Martin's Griffin (October 15, 1994)

Jack's Book: an Oral Biography of Jack Kerouac, Barry Gifford and Lawrence Lee
Published by Da Capo Press (October 6, 2005)



TROIS COULEURS SPECIAL ISSUE

On the Road
Based on Jack Kerouac's novel
The Man • the Book • the Film
The Odyssey of a Myth

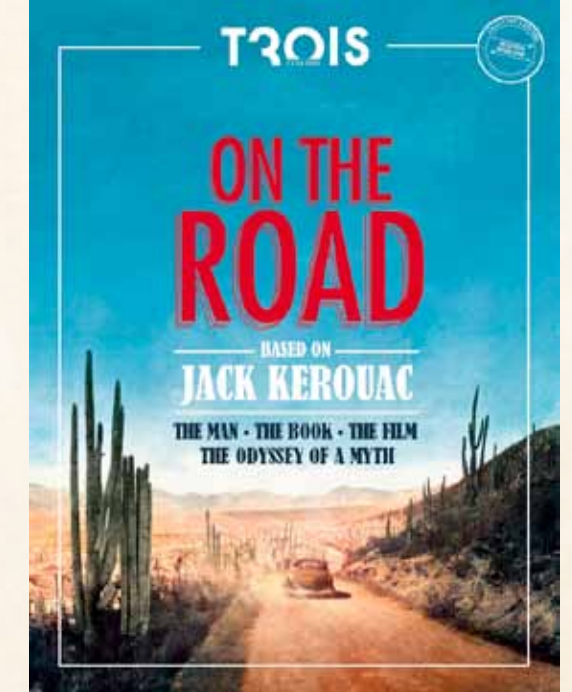
Stare deep into the chapters of an unparalleled story. The story of an iconic writer, a landmark novel, and one of the biggest cinematographic challenges of the decade. Exclusive archives, interviews all around the Beat galaxy, unpublished portfolios: you'll find all the keys to enter a peer-less cultural phenomenon, the Beat Generation.

Unique material, assembled for the first time in a book:

- Exclusive pictures from the set of ON THE ROAD.
- Screenplay excerpts with hand notes by the director, Walter Salles.
- Exclusive interviews with Kristen Stewart, Garrett Hedlund, Sam Riley...
- Concept art and sketches for the film.
- Unseen archives and exclusive manuscripts by Jack Kerouac.
- Interview with the last remaining Beats.
- Jack Kerouac's road, from Brittany to California.
- Maps, timelines, bibliography, among other reading tools.

SOUNDTRACK

ON THE ROAD soundtrack will contain jazz and blues emblematic tunes from the period (Charlie Parker, Billie Holiday, Quincy Jones...) as well as new compositions by Argentine composer Gustavo Santaolalla, who already won two Oscars for Best Film Music in 2006 (BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN) and 2007 (BABEL).



mk2