1. Short Bio
An architect and engineer by training, Carlo Ratti practices in Italy and teaches at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he directs the Senseable City Lab. He graduated from the Politecnico di Torino and the École Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées in Paris, and later earned his MPhil and PhD at the University of Cambridge, UK.

2. What made you decide to leave Italy and why did you decide to stay in North America?
I had already been abroad for a few years before coming to Boston. I had studied engineering in France, at the École Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées, and then architecture and programming in the UK, at the University of Cambridge. It was then that I won a Fulbright Scholarship for a post-doc at MIT...

3. How would you define the interaction with the Italian professional community in North America? And with your colleagues in Italy?
All my academic interaction is origin-blind! I do not have many contacts with Italians in America... but I have many projects in Italy, and hence relationships with Italian colleagues...

4. How does one find a balance between working abroad and contributing to your homecountry?
Today, thanks to telecommunication technologies such as skype and the ease of travel it is very easy to keep working with Italy, from the USA or elsewhere. But you need to be willing to wake up at 5 am to start your day in Italy before you switch to your office at MIT...

5. What advise would you give to a young investigator making his/her first steps here?
To join a top US university as a visitor-visiting phd, visiting scholar, etc. It is the best vantage point to understand American academia and to then jump in the right direction...

6. Current research and achievements
see http://senseable.mit.edu