

IOM ROMÌ

(A DAY IN ROME)

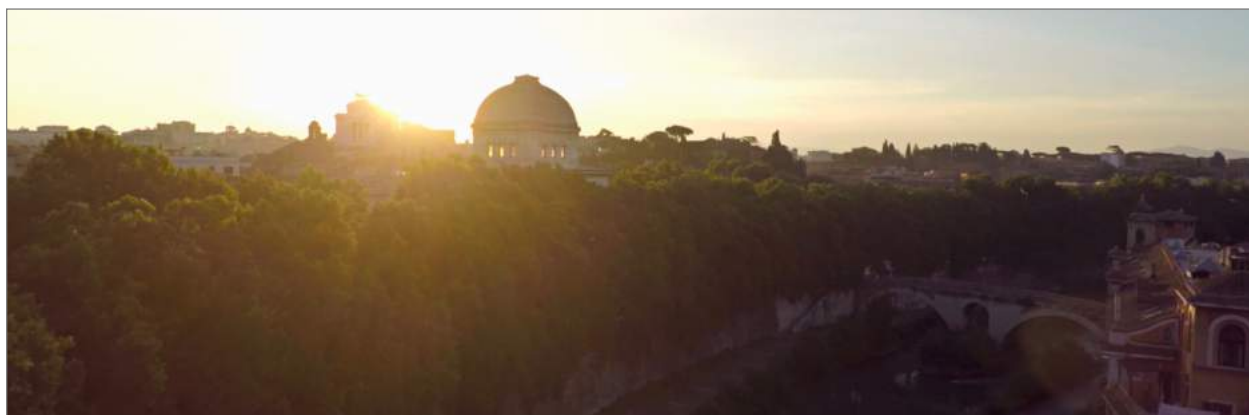
A short documentary by Valerio Ciriaci

30 mins / Italy / 2017



SYNOPSIS

“Iom Romì” chronicles a day in the life of the contemporary Jewish community of Rome, which for centuries has lived in limbo between persecution and integration. As the only cultural group in the city that can claim an uninterrupted line of descent from the times of the empire, Roman Jews have fostered rituals and traditions that are unique in the world. From dawn to dusk, through the voices of several characters living and working in the historic Ghetto quarter, “Iom Romì” tells the story of a community both fiercely independent and distinctly Roman.



Produced by **Awen Films**

in collaboration with **Centro Primo Levi**

Executive Producers **Natalia Indrimi**

Alessandro Cassin

Director **Valerio Ciriaci**

Cinematographer **Isaak Liptzin**

Editor **Giovanni Pompetti**

Original Score **Francesco Venturi**

Sound Design **Luigi Porto**



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

As a native citizen of Rome, born and raised only a few minutes from the old Ghetto district, it came as a surprise to discover last summer how little I know about the Jewish community that still lives there to this day. When I began working on this film with Centro Primo Levi and the Jewish Museum of Rome, I realized that an entire microcosm had been there, right under my nose, the whole time. “Iom Romì” is our attempt to paint a portrait of life within a community that has lived in the city for more than two thousand years. Roman Jews are the most ancient continuous inhabitants of Rome — while the earliest evidence of Jewish settlers in the city dates back as far as the 2nd century BC, the modern-day community identifies its birth in the first wave of Diaspora refugees that arrived after the sacking of Jerusalem by emperor Vespasian in 70 AD. Despite their roots in the capital running deeper than anyone else's, their relationship with the Christian majority and the political authorities has often been fraught, with religious persecutions culminating in the establishment by the Vatican of the Ghetto in 1555 and, more recently, in the Fascist racial laws and the deportations of 1943. But, as the city continuously changed around them, cultural and economic exchange between the broader population and the Jewish minority never ceased. Today, a visitor to the Ghetto quarter can still come into contact with rituals and traditions that are completely unique, and also deeply interwoven with the broader life of the city. Over the course of a week in early June, cinematographer Isaak Liptzin and I followed a series of characters as they went about their daily activities: the morning prayer, a trip to the bakery, a visit to the historical archives, a wedding in the Great Synagogue, a meal with friends at a traditional restaurant. As we returned to the Ghetto day after day, a tapestry began to emerge illuminating the distinctive character of this community and its rich history, dialect and popular culture.

— *Valerio Ciriaci, Director*

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Valerio Ciriaci was born in Rome and graduated with a major in Communication Sciences from La Sapienza University with a thesis on Jean Rouch and ethno-fiction. In 2011 he moved to New York City to attend documentary classes at New York Film Academy. In 2012 he developed and directed original content for i-Italy airing on NYC Life (WNYE-DT1). Under the umbrella of the production company Awen Films, he has directed award-winning documentary shorts and other non-fiction productions – and initiated a long-term collaboration with Centro Primo Levi, which gave rise to the web-doc series “CPL minidocs,” a video-installation for “Rome Lab” at the Center for Jewish History, and the 30-minute documentary “Iom Romì,” which premiered at the 2017 New York Jewish Film Festival at Lincoln Center. His first feature film, “If Only I Were That Warrior,” was awarded the 2016 Italian Golden Globe and aired on public television in Italy (Rai Storia) and Switzerland (RSI La2). His latest feature documentary, “Mister Wonderland,” is expected to be released in late 2018.