





A production LES FILMS DU TAMBOUR DE SOIE

# NO DOGS OR ITALIANS ALLOWED

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a film by **Alain Ughetto**

with the voices of **Ariane Ascaride & Alain Ughetto**

Original Soundtrack by **Nicola Piovani**

Production Les Films du Tambour de Soie - Vivement Lundi ! - Foliascope  
Graffiti Film - Lux Fugit Film et Umedia - Nadasdy Film - Ocidental Filmes - Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Cinéma

France, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland, Portugal / Length 1h10 / Visa n° 147 375

Release date **january 2023**



## Synopsis

In the Beginning of the 20th century - Ughettera, Northern Italy, The Ughetto family's village. Living in the region had become very difficult and the Ughettos dream of a better life abroad. Legend has it that Luigi Ughetto crossed the Alps starting a new life in France, thus changing the destiny of his beloved family forever. His grandson travels back in time revisiting their history.

The film is conceived as a fictional dialogue with Cesira, the director's grandmother, to whom he asks everything he would have liked to know. A testimony to the experiences of these generations of Italian migrants and a tribute to their courage. With poetry, the film gives to this personal story a universal dimension. It is the "nostalgic memory" which connects the elements that emerge in this work, from the original home, a small farm in the shadow of Mount Viso, to the multiple family anchors scattered in Ubaye, Valais, the Rhone Valley, Ariège and Drôme. The story is fed by the memories of the grandfather and traces from the past, photographs or correspondence. During this migratory experience, the Ughetto family improvised a new home, in which memory is the cement.



## Behind my name...

### Director's note by Alain Ughetto

At family dinners, my father used to tell us that there was a village in the Piedmont region of Italy called UGHETTERA where all the inhabitants had the same name as us. When he died, I went to see if this village existed. It did exist: UGHETTERA, the land of the Ughetto!

My investigation began there, nine years ago, as did the film. In the cemetery, I found neither the grave of my grandfather Luigi, nor the one my grandmother Cesira... What happened? The witnesses of that Italian period (the 1870s) have disappeared, the roofs of the houses have collapsed on their past as farmers; the trees have grown over their life as coalminers; nothing remains. The gift of this film was the discovery of Nuto Revelli's book, "*The World of the Vanquished*". This Italian sociologist recorded the testimonies of peasants of the same age as my grandparents who lived in the same area of Piedmont. Poignant testimonies about hunger, misery, wars...

In Ughettera, I collected all the objects which were parts of their daily life, charcoal, broccoli, chestnuts...

Back in my studio, with everything I gleaned there, I composed

a set. Broccolis become trees, charcoal becomes a mountain, sugar becomes a brick... In the heart of my workshop, with Jean-Marc Ogier and his team, we have reconstructed this vanished world.

We remember our father, our mother, a little of our grandparents, but beyond that not much: it's darkness, it's the big history. What interested me was to go back in time to connect intimate memories with the wider historical context. Today, behind my name, I have found a story, the chronicle of a family among hundreds of others. To write this story, I was inspired by reality. The reality of the life of some of my family from the Italian Piedmont. I delved into my own memory, then into those of my cousins, my brothers and sisters. Between war and migration, between birth and death, a story has emerged. Beyond the sorrow of a personal story, I discovered an astonishing journey, told in the film.

I would have liked to know Luigi, my grandfather, but I did not. But my grandmother Cesira, I knew her... I was twelve years old when she died, I called her "Granny". For me, Granny was born like that, next to the gas stove, dressed in black, with her hands in the polenta. She wanted to be more French than the French, so I never heard her speaking Italian. From the morning she made the kitchen sing, with polenta and milk, polenta and rabbit stew at noon and polenta in the oven in the evening.

...with everything  
I gleaned there, I  
composed a set.  
Broccolis become trees,  
charcoal becomes  
a mountain, sugar  
becomes a brick...



And then I realized that before being called Granny, my grandmother was Cesira, that she had been young and beautiful, that she had worn colors, that she had been desired and loved. In the VIVEMENT LUNDI! workshops in Rennes, we built the characters: Luigi, Cesira, Vincent my father and the many dolls that will accompany them.

Cesira became the 23 cm high figurine that we see in the film. As I asked her questions, she told me her story, her life in Italy, her meeting with Luigi, the aborted trip to America, why France?...

The project was proposed, developed and supported by Alexandre Cornu, producer of the Films du Tambour de Soie, in Marseille, with whom I had already directed my previous film *Jasmine*.

With the scriptwriter Alexis Galmot, who took over from Anne Paschetta, with whom I had developed the most documented part, we adapted the story, found a plot, adjusted the scenes and cut them into sequences.

Luigi, Cesira, my father, all were in place, I now had to integrate myself into this story...

The theme that interested me was the transmission from hand to hand.

My grandfather's hands passed on their knowledge to my father's hands, my father's hands in turn passed on their knowledge to me, and today I remember it, so I had to bear witness.

The hand, my hand, had to become a character, a character that acts on this world and in the workshop, the hand works, questions and intervenes.

Between Covid confinement and snowstorm, the film was largely shot in Beaumont-les-Valence in the studios of Foliascope, it began in January 2020 and was completed on July 31st, 2021.

What interested me in this film was to show people at work, people who have built our infrastructure in France: tunnels, roads, bridges, dams, people who without hiding remained totally invisible.

I have illuminated this story that begins with "I" and very quickly slips into "we". Whether we are Polish, Spanish, Portuguese, Indian, Vietnamese or North African, the past is in our DNA.

Echoing today, I wanted to bear witness to "how, at that time, we welcomed all foreigners".

I have been working on this film for nine years now and I love all the images.

It's a unique film where everyone brought their knowledge, their skills, their memory.

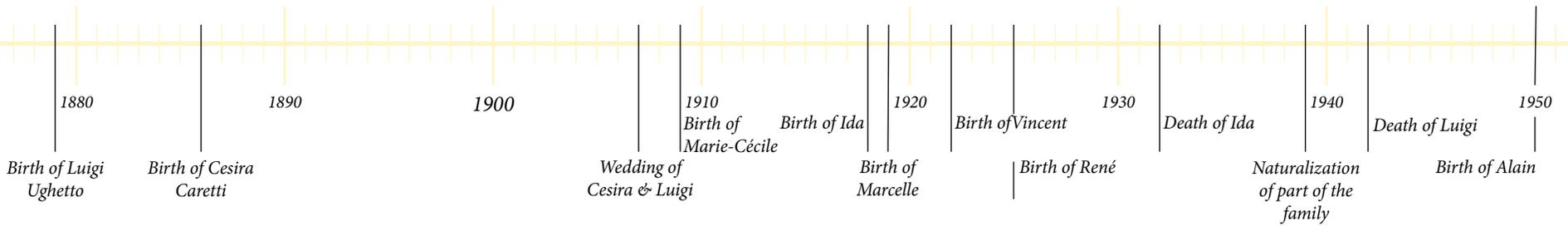
A team work, a long and beautiful common adventure where we all got together, producers, animators, technicians coming from all over Europe to present you this beautiful, this magnificent gift.

A film of testimony, but above all, a film of love.

It's a unique film where everyone brought their knowledge, their skills, their memory.







## Elements of chronology and geography of the Ughetto family

My grandfather Luigi died in 1942, eight years before I was born. My father didn't talk much about him and all I know today, I learn it by asking cousins and aunts.

Luigi Ughetto was born in 1879 in Pinasca, in the mountains, the poorest part of Piedmont.

Cesira Caretti was born in 1886 in Premeno, also in Piedmont, but in a wealthier area and family, near Lake Maggiore. When they were born, the Italian nation was very young (1871, end of the unification).

In 1905, Luigi was 26 years old and participated in the construction of the Simplon railway tunnel that connected the town of Brig in Valais (Switzerland) to the village of Iselle in the Italian Piedmont. It was probably there that Luigi, a worker, met Cesira, a contractor's daughter. They got married on August 6th, 1907 in the village of Cesira, in Premeno, as is the tradition.

They had a first daughter Marie-Cécile, born in 1909 in Sierre (Switzerland).

In the 1910s, Italy got involved in a series of colonial expansion wars: Somalia in 1908 and Libya in 1911/1912. Luigi probably participated in the latter.

From 1900 to 1915, more than 8 million Italians left the kingdom. On May 23rd, 1915, after the declaration of war, the Italian armies

set up along the border, in the Julian Veneto and in the Alps. Luigi was 36 years old and was called up to fight in Italy. He was the father of three small children.

Luigi escaped and after the war he went back to work in France where he was lost until the birth of three new children in Corrèze: Marcelle in 1919, my father Vincent in 1921 and René in 1925.

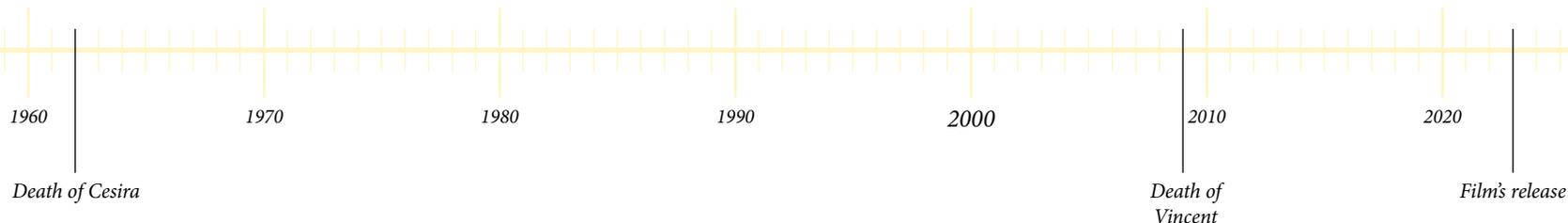
Luigi and Cesira were in France when Mussolini, taking advantage of the discontent of the "mutilated victory", created the National Fascist Party in 1921.

Those who remained in Italy remember a bloody time which profoundly divided the Piedmont region.

In 1932, in Ariege, Ida, Luigi and Cesira's second daughter, died at the age of 18. In 1939, Luigi, Cesira, my father, one of his brothers and one of his sisters were naturalized.

My father took part to the Second World War as a Frenchman and fought against the country of birth of his own parents.

Luigi died in 1942, Cesira twenty years later. My father died in 2009. His ashes were added, at his request, to those of my French mother.



# Emigrating

Given the harshness of the living conditions in the Piedmontese mountains, people have always crossed the Alps to improve their daily lives. Men and women tell us that they used to “rent themselves out” as seasonal workers. Children too, as soon as the snow melted and made it possible to cross the mountains on foot.

They all remember Barcelonnette, a town known for its children’s market where about 400 little girls and boys offered their services as servants, shepherds, “vacherots” (farm boys).

An army of illiterate, docile and hungry children of which Alain Ughetto’s grandfather must have been a part. This is where his life as a nomadic worker began, as it did for many other Piedmontese.

The emigration was first regular and seasonal, then very quickly definitive when thousands of farmers left Piedmont for France, Switzerland or America.

The history of Piedmont is therefore the history of a land that was emptied of its inhabitants. This phenomenon became massive

from the middle of the 19th century. Between 1876 and 1985, more than 27.5 million Italians left their country, that is to say, a village of 650 inhabitants emptied every day. In this massive emigration, Piedmont provides the largest number of migrants. It is this emigrants journey that the film will try to evoke, by following the paths of Luigi, Cesira and their companions, peasants in Piedmont, then workers in France.

Through their destiny, we cross the history of migrant and nomadic workforce who, yesterday for the Italians, today for the Africans, sell their labor skills and contribute to the agricultural and industrial development of many French regions, working in conditions hardly more enviable than those they left at home.





# An embodied reading of Italian immigration

## Point of view of anthropologist Philippe Hanus\*

*No Dogs or Italians Allowed* is a work of memory, imbued with fiction, which recounts, over nearly a century, the peregrinations of the Piedmontese family of director Alain Ughetto across the Alps, as a part of the history of human mobility.

Luigi, the filmmaker's grandfather, is a man with a romantic destiny who crossed the Alpine barrier many times (sometimes at high altitude, thus running into a thousand dangers!), crossed several borders, faced two wars, misery and fascism. Along the way, he fell in love with Cesira, with whom he founded a family in-between Italy and France. The descendants of this nomadic worker settled on the banks of the Rhone and, like many other French children, were fascinated by the Tour de France, vibrating to the sound of the accordion of Yvette Horner. Luigi's adventure, though singular, is no less representative of the migratory experience of some 25 million Italians who left the peninsula to settle in Europe (and in particular in France), America or Australia. Trying to reach the four corners of the world, they took with them the culture of their country, their dreams and hopes, their desire to succeed in a new land.

By retracing the major stages of the journey of Luigi, Cesira and their descendants, the film offers an embodied reading of Italian immigration. It questions the articulation between territorial and national logics.

The title of the film, "NO DOGS OR ITALIANS ALLOWED", challenges the viewer. It refers metaphorically to the italophobia - literally "fear of the Italian" - present in French society during the years 1875-1914, in a context of rising European nationalism, recurrent diplomatic tensions between France and Italy and a crisis in the French labor market. The Italian immigrant was then considered a scapegoat. Italophobia also manifested itself during the Fascist period and then during the Second World War. From 1945 onwards, the perception of Transalpine people gradually improved in French society, but remained negative in Belgium, Germany and Switzerland until the early 1970s...

Nowadays, Italianness is fashionable in the cities of the South-East, from Chambéry to Nice via Grenoble, which claim "an Italian air"!

By articulating intimate memory and collective memory of immigration, the film transforms the stories of exile to allow them to make sense beyond the only circles of Italian immigrants and their descendants.

This emancipating work, with a universal scope, expresses the idea that people in migratory situations, yesterday and today, participate in an inexhaustible movement through space, consubstantial with a humanity on the move to live better, or simply to live.

\*Philippe Hanus is the coordinator of the Ethnopôle «Migrations, Frontières, Mémoires» at the Cpa-Valence Romans Agglo



## Why stopping there? ...

### Production note

I have just lived an incredible adventure with Alain Ughetto over the past few years. *Jasmine*, Alain's 1st feature film, was released in theaters in 2013. It had a great career in festivals and a certain critical success.

We have built a solid relationship with Alain Ughetto, based first of all on trust, then on friendship, and we now know how to work well together.

While we were accompanying *Jasmine* to festivals, Alain started to slip me a few words... He was working on a new project. And then a text arrived on my mailbox. A first draft, but already a clear ambition. To imagine a narrative that goes from the singular (the personal and family history of the director) to the universal (Italian immigration to France in the 20th century). And to continue with animation. Animation is Alain's primary means of expression. You have to know that he started with it, that he made his first films at the very beginning of the 80's and that in 1985, his third short film, *La Boule*, won the César for the best animated short film.

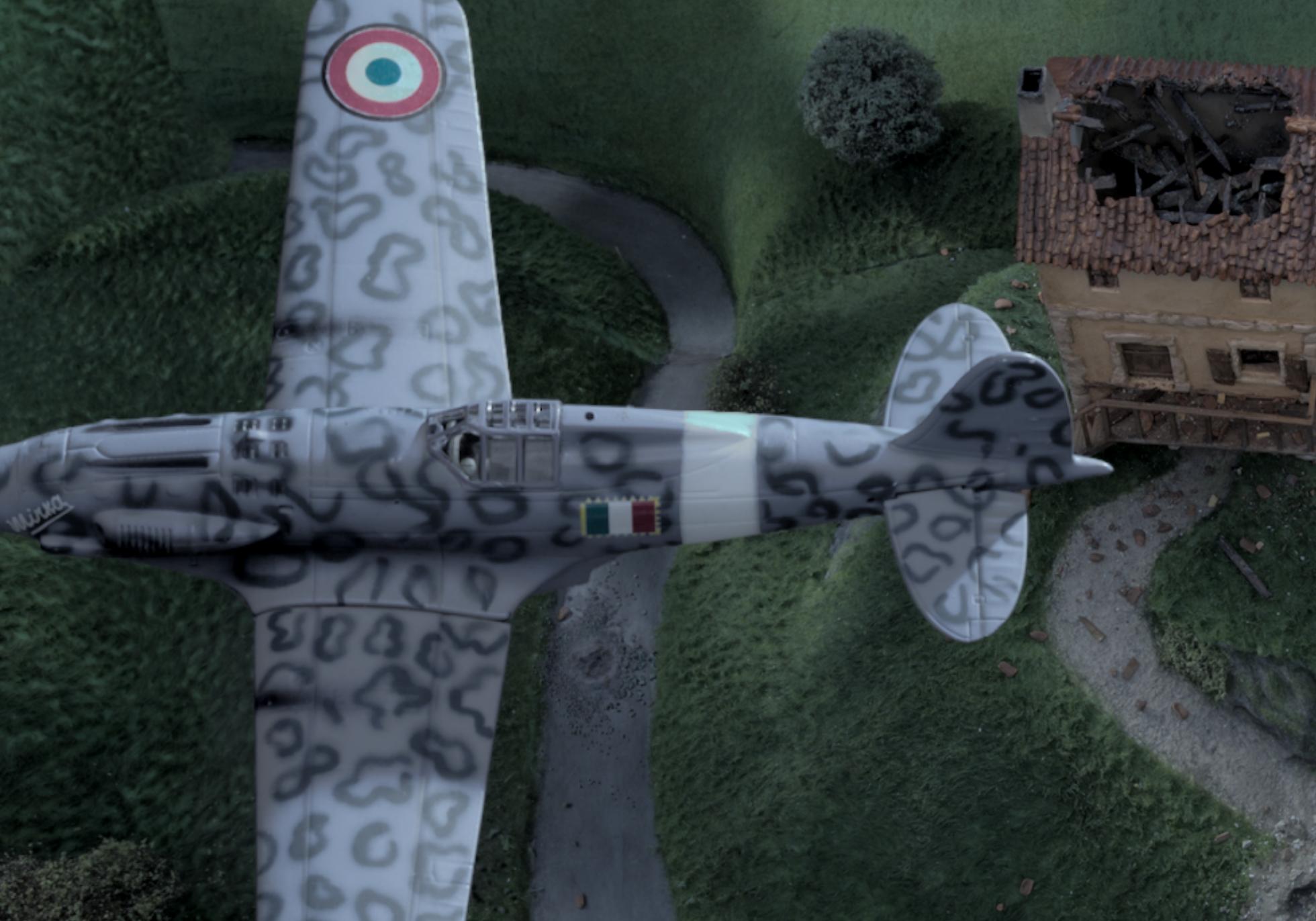
From then on, everyone was waiting for his first feature film... which never came! Black out, total silence, he worked as a documentary director at France 3 Marseille to keep the pot boiling as he says... Before finally returning to his first love with the release of *Jasmine*, mentioned above.

Animation is part of his life, but it also makes sense in the story of this new project. In this story of transmission between a grandfather, a father and a son, manual work is at the heart of

the narrative. In fact, the first title of "NO DOGS OR ITALIANS ALLOWED" was Mano d'opera («handiwork») in French: Luigi, the grandfather, built roads, bridges and dams. Vincent, the father, built his houses one after the other and magically made birds appear from the Babybel crust. As for Alain, he resisted the family pressure that saw him succeeding in a career as a civil servant in order to handle the modeling clay and animate his characters.

The technique we used had to keep a "handmade" aspect (there is always a question of hands in this film, especially Luigi's, which were so beautiful according to Cesira), an artisanal approach, because its raw material was what could be found in the Piedmont where the Ughetto family was born. Charcoal to represent the mountains, the pieces of sugar from the sugar box become the bricks of a wall, the chestnuts of the POLENTA are the stones that mark the paths and the broccoli become trees...

Alexandre Cornu







## The shooting

The film was shot in the Drôme region of France, using the technique of “stop motion” animation. This process uses real objects, in volume, and gives the illusion that they have a natural movement. It requires large film sets and the creation of scaled sets for the puppets.

Alain Ughetto brought back natural elements and photographs from his visit to Piedmont to feed and inspire the artistic direction of his film. We find moss, chestnuts, coal, sugar... even a pumpkin.

These materials choices bring an organic dimension to the reconstruction of the village of his lost ancestors. The construction of the sets is also part of an approach that starts with rustic materials to evolve towards more detailed universes, all of which are closer to the daily life of the family. Thus, the first sets are very rough, echoing the social condition of Luigi and Cesira, and more realistic as it improves.

On the production side, we worked with Vivement Lundi ! in Rennes, with the help of Jean-François Le Corre, Mathieu Courtois and their teams, and Foliascope, a studio created by Pascal Le Nôtre in Beaumont-lès-Valence, now directed by Nicolas Flory and Ilan Urroz. Then, the stop motion was reinforced by the 2D images of landscapes and the real documentary images shot in Ughettera.

These two studios, co-producers of the film, know each other perfectly and were able to share the work to be done in a coherent way: the puppets, costumes and sets for Vivement Lundi!

And for Foliascope, the entire shooting part: 8 sets mobilized, and the reception of the complete team of French animators and technicians, reinforced by the arrival of Italian, Swiss, Belgian and Portuguese artistic supports.

The technical and financial arrangements were completed by the co-production in Switzerland with Nadasdy Film, which handled the compositing part. Nicolas Burlet, who manages this structure, is a faithful partner of the Rennes-based studio.

The post-production was done in Belgium thanks to Lux Fugit Film. The sound part was elaborated in Portugal, where Luis Correia and Paula Oliveira from Ocidental Filmes joined the adventure. The special effects, the sound effects, and above all the magnificent music of Maestro Nicola Piovani, were made possible thanks to the complicity of Enrica Capra, co-producer of Graffiti Film in Turin. Italy, of course, had to have an essential place in the genesis of this project.

Alexandre Cornu

# A film that bears witness

## Interview with Alain Ughetto March 2022

### How was this project born?

I had started an investigation on my Italian origins, where I found a large number of testimonies, and I learned that a village bore the name of Ughetto: Ughettera, the land of the Ughetto... But there is nothing left of my grandparents there. Then I traced the contours of the great wars my grandparents experienced, the routes they took. They were naturalized French two months before the war, then the territory where they lived was invaded by Mussolini. How did they live, how did they feel about all this? These are the questions that guided me.

### Stop motion animation: why this technique, especially for this film?

Stop motion animation begins with a kind of DIY approach of materials and equipment to create figures. My father used to tinker with everything, I do the same. By modeling, I could imagine, even fantasize my grandfather as a farmer, then as a worker, I could imagine him working, loving. The same with my grandmother. The hand, my hand, has become a character, a character that acts on this world. In the workshop, the hand works, tinkers, questions and intervenes.

### For this film, you went from documentary to fiction...

With the large teams needed to make "NO DOGS OR ITALIANS ALLOWED", you can't improvise like you can in a documentary. We had to prepare, draw, storyboarding, sound, narration. I

asked my grandmother Cesira, who became a 23cm high puppet for the occasion, to tell me about her childhood, her meeting with Luigi, the village of Ughettera... which would not have been possible in a documentary.

### How did you fill in the "holes" in this family memory?

I relied on my uncles and aunts. And I found information about my grandfather, from the inhabitants of his village, in a book by Nuto Revelli, *The World of the Vanquished*. And I imagined that my grandmother, this old woman in black that I called Granny, must have been young and beautiful...

What interested me was to bring my grandparents back to life. And in the film, it is my grandmother who tells her story, like a tale told to an adult. It is a personal story that is addressed to everyone: it starts with "I", before arriving at "We"... It talks about migrations, and migrations are inscribed in the DNA of peoples.

### Is this something you are proud of?

I worked on this film for more than nine years, and I love all the images. It's a unique film where everyone brought their knowledge, their skills, their memory. A team work, a long and beautiful common adventure where we all got together, producers, animators, technicians arriving from all over Europe to make this film which that bears witness, but above all a film of love of which I am very proud.



## Echoing the film...

### Exhibition

*Luigi, the first, left... May 6, 2022 - March 12, 2023 - Centre du Patrimoine Arménien Valence (Drôme)*

*This original exhibition, produced by the Cpa around the animated film «NO DOGS OR ITALIANS ALLOWED», traces the social history of Italians who left their country to settle in France over nearly a century. Based on a family story, it highlights the difficulties encountered in rebuilding a home in exile and questions the transmission of this memory.*

EXPO 6 MAI 2022 → 12 MARS 2023

« Luigi, Histoires et mémoires d'Italiens en migration le premier, est parti... »

En écho au film interdit aux chiens et aux italiens

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## Alain Ughetto

Alain Ughetto inherited from his father and grandfather a pronounced taste for DIY that he infuses into his cinema through animation, a way to explore the intimate. In 1985, Alain Resnais awarded him the César for best animated short film for *La Boule*. In 2013, he directed *Jasmine*, in which his love story is played out in the tumult of Tehran at the end of the 1970s. After a long maturation, he returns today to shape the story of his grandfather and, through it, of many Italian immigrants.



**NICOLA PIOVANI**

Oscar for Best Original Soundtrack in 1999  
for *Life is Beautiful* by Roberto Benigni

**ARIANE ASCARIDE**

César for best actress  
in *Marius and Jeannette*  
by Robert Guédiguian



**ALAIN UGHETTO**

César for Best Animated Short Film  
in 1985 for *La Boule*



## LES FILMS DU TAMBOUR DE SOIE

**Alexandre Cornu  
& Muriel Sorbo**

**tamtamsoie.com**

Author's views, producer's ambition (and vice versa...). Since 1987, this company has been making cultural objects that make you see and think. An «art craft» at the service of the senses and the intelligence. Documentaries, animation, digital fiction and interactive writing for all screens in Marseille, Paris, Vichy, from here and elsewhere, from local to international.

A group of five people are seated in a wooden cable car, suspended by two thick cables. They are dressed in winter attire, including hats and coats. The background is a vast, snow-covered mountain range under a clear sky. The text is overlaid in the bottom left corner.

**NO DOGS  
OR ITALIANS  
ALLOWED**

Director **Alain UGHETTO**

Executive producer **Alexandre CORNU**  
**LES FILMS DU TAMBOUR DE SOIE (France)**

Executive coproducers: **VIVEMENT LUNDI (France)**  
**Jean-François LE CORRE, Mathieu COURTOIS**

Coproduction **FOLIASCOPE (France) – Ilan URROZ, Nicolas FLORY**  
**LUX FUGIT FILM (Belgique) – Manuel POUTTE**  
**GRAFFITI FILM (Italie) – Enrica CAPRA**  
**OCIDENTAL FILMES (Portugal) – Luis CORREIA**  
**NADASDY FILM (Suisse) – Nicolas BURLET**

In coproduction with: **Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Cinéma**  
**la RTS Radio Télévision Suisse**  
**Umedia**

In association with **uFund**

Coproducers **Bastien SIRODOT, Cédric ILAND**

Screenwriters **Alain UGHETTO, Alexis GALMOT, Anne PASCHETTA**

Character design **Alain UGHETTO, David ROUSSEL**

Original Soundtrack  
**Nicola PIOVANI**

1<sup>st</sup> assistant director & storyboard **Camille ROSSI**

DOP **Fabien DROUET, Sara SPONGA**

Set design **Jean-Marc OGIER**

Animator **Marjolaine PAROT**

Manufacturing Director  
**Nicolas FLORY**

Editor **Denis LEBORGNE**

Voices **Ariane ASCARIDE: *Cesira***  
**Alain UGHETTO: *the narrator***

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