

Istituto Luce - Cinecittà  
with  
Rai Cinema  
and with  
Rai Trade  
in collaboration with  
Cubovision of Telecom Italia  
presents

# happy to be different

a film documentary by  
**GIANNI AMELIO**

distributed by



release: March 2014



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cinematography	<b>LUAN AMELIO</b>
editor	<b>CECILIA PAGLIARANI</b>
research and documentation	<b>FRANCESCO COSTABILE</b>
executive producer Istituto Luce Cinecittà	<b>MAURA COSENZA</b>
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produced by	<b>ISTITUTO LUCE - CINECITTÀ</b>
with	<b>RAI CINEMA</b>
and with	<b>RAI TRADE</b>
with the contribution of	<b>MIBACT - DIREZIONE GENERALE per il CINEMA</b>
in collaboration with	<b>CUBOVISION of TELECOM ITALIA</b>
produced with the support of the	<b>REGIONE LAZIO</b> Regional Fund for cinema and audiovisual
Italian distribution	<b>ISTITUTO LUCE - CINECITTÀ</b>
international distribution	<b>RAI TRADE</b>
nationality	<b>ITALIAN</b>
year of production	<b>2014</b>
film duration	<b>93'   color and b/w</b> (archive)

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**with stories by**

*(in order of appearance)*

**GIORGIO BONGIOVANNI**  
**NICOLA CALÌ**  
**FRANCESCO COCOLA**  
**PIERALBERTO MARCHESINI**  
**ROBERTO PAGLIERO**  
**CLAUDIO MORI with ALBA MONTORI**  
**ALDO SEBASTIANI**  
**CORRADO LEVI**  
**CIRO CASCINA**  
**AGOSTINO RAFF**  
**NINETTO DAVOLI**  
**JOHN FRANCIS LANE**  
**FERNANDO NIGIRO**  
**MOSÈ BOTTAZZI**  
**PAOLO POLI**  
**LUCY SALANI**  
**ROBERTO DAVID**  
**GLAUCO BETTERA**  
**ARON SANSEVERINO**

*"Happy being different if one is different. But woe betide being different if one is ordinary!"*  
This poem by Sandro Penna guides us in a secret Italy that has never before been unveiled by a film camera that wants to investigate reality and not fiction.

It's Italy's homosexual world as lived in the 20th century, from the start to the 1980s, when, following certain American movements, the first attempts of "liberation" started spreading.

In the documentary we hear the stories of those who directly experienced the burden of being different, almost invariably obstructed by their own family, mocked at school, excluded by "normal" society.

These people, who are now getting on in years, remember how they lived this situation under Fascism and then in the Second World War, when a veil of silence was drawn over the topic, and people lived in fear and repression.

Stories gathered in various parts of Italy, from north to south, to give the most representative idea of the feelings and habits of a nation that is anthropologically and culturally very varied. Dramatic stories but also comforting ones of people who were able to strike a private and social balance, despite the many challenges.

There's an artist who turned his "diversity" into a winning weapon, and his loneliness into a strongpoint. There's the man-in-the-street who was defeated by the often cruel incomprehension of parents and relatives. And there are those who found an emotional stability with other human beings, forming couples that lasted in time and shared joys and storms no more no less than heterosexual couples. The picture which emerges can be multifaceted and surprising: what is undoubtedly striking is the dignity and the courage with which each one managed to assert himself, battling against those who consider homosexuality a disease and a danger.

The original stories often violently clash with the stereotype image of homosexuals as portrayed by the means of communication: newspapers, newsreels, TV and films.

They transpire an aggressiveness and often a violence that even today make us reflect on how homophobic our society was (and still is). The archive materials, edited with the stories of these people, give an unsettling picture of how things were distorted and manipulated to reduce them all into a condemnable "phenomenon".

The final picture is of a world - ours - that needs to take steps towards respecting the rights and liberty of each of us.

*Gianni Amelio was born in Calabria. Having studied philosophy, he moved to Rome, where he started working as assistant director. He made his debut as cinema director in 1982, after working at length in television. He has won numerous international awards, including three EFA awards for best European film.*

**Essential filmography****CINEMA**

- 2013 L'INTREPIDO (*A Lonely Hero*)
- 2011 IL PRIMO UOMO (*Le premier homme*)
- 2006 LA STELLA CHE NON C'È (*The missing star*)
- 2004 LE CHIAVI DI CASA (*The Keys to the House*)
- 1998 COSÌ RIDEVANO (*The Way We Laughed*)
- 1994 L'AMERICA (*L'america*)
- 1992 IL LADRO DI BAMBINI (*Stolen Children*)
- 1990 PORTE APERTE (*Open Doors*)
- 1988 I RAGAZZI DI VIA PANISPERNA (*The Boys on Panisperna Street*)
- 1982 COLPIRE AL CUORE (*Blow to the Heart*)

**TELEVISION**

- 2000 LA TERRA È FATTA COSÌ (*So is Our Earth*)  
L'ONORE DELLE ARMI (*The Honour of the Arms*)
- 1999 POVERI NOI (*When we were Poor*)
- 1996 NON È FINITA LA PACE, CIOÈ LA GUERRA (*Peace, meaning War, isn't over*)
- 1983 I VELIERI (*The Sailing-Ships*)
- 1979 IL PICCOLO ARCHIMEDE (*Young Archimedes*)  
EFFETTI SPECIALI (*Special Effects*)
- 1978 LA MORTE AL LAVORO (*Death at Work*)
- 1976 BERTOLUCCI SECONDO IL CINEMA (*Bertolucci According to the Cinema*)
- 1973 LA CITTÀ DEL SOLE (*City of the Sun*)
- 1970 LA FINE DEL GIOCO (*The End of the Game*)