

PRIX 
EUROPA

Nilaya Productions and Zenit Arti Audiovisive
present

FALLING IN LOVE AT WARTIME

written and directed by **Audrey GORDON**
edited by **Marco DURETTI**
original music composed by **Eric SLABIAK**
Produced by **Patricia Boutinard Rouelle and Massimo Arvat**



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FALLING IN LOVE AT WARTIME

A film by **Audrey Gordon**

Produced by **Nilaya Productions** (France) and **Zenit Arti Audiovisive** (Italy)

With the participation of France Télévisions and **Rai Documentari**

With the support of **MIC-Ministero della Cultura**, **Piemonte Doc Film Fund - Fondo regionale per il documentario**,
Fondation pour la mémoire de la Shoah, **Fondation Rothschild**, **Procirep – Société des producteurs** and **Angoa**,
Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée

Worldsales: **ZED** – www.zed.fr

Production year: **2021**

Length: **52 minutes**

Genre: **Documentary**

Written and directed by

Audrey Gordon

Produced by

Massimo Arvat

Patricia Boutinard Rouelle

Editor

Marco Duretti

Original Music

Eric Slabiak

Photography

Fanny Mazoyer

Sound

Fabrice Fuzillier

Benjamin Silvestre

Historical consultants

Alberto Cavaglion

Jean-Louis Panicacci

Paolo Veneziano

Animation

Linda Kelvink

Archive researcher

Ilaria Sbarigia

Artistic Producer

Marianne Jestaz

Production manager

Mathieu Cabanes

Assistant director

Hugo Grillo



LOGLINE

This film tells the historic period of Italian occupation of France (40-43) through the story of a love affair between Rima, a young Jewish girl, and Federico, an Italian officer. Photo albums and letters found allow us to embody a little-known side of the history of the Second World War.



SYNOPSIS

From June 1940 to September 1943, the Italian army occupied several departments in the South of France. Thousands of Jews take refuge there. But in September 1943, the armistice between Italy and the Allies signaled the arrival of the Germans and the flight of Italian soldiers and Jews across the mountain. We tell this historic period through the story of a love affair between Rima, a young Jewish girl of Russian origin and Federico, an attractive Italian officer. Photo albums and letters found allow us to embody a little-known side of the history of the Second World War.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

« La mia bisnonna è di Lombardia » (“My great grand-mother comes from Lombardy”). That’s the first phrase in Italian I learnt as a child. But it’s completely false, family lore. During the war, my grand-parents were refugees in a little village in the Alps in Italian territory. A Jew and resistant fighter sought by the Germans, my grandfather Simon Gordon had got down from a train at Aix-les-Bains to find German soldiers waiting on the platform. My grandfather’s eyes met those of an Italian officer, and without saying a word, as if he were a prisoner, the officer had two Italian soldiers grab Simon and escort him out of the station, right under the Germans’ noses. Once outside, the officer who had just saved my grandfather’s life, freed him and whispered, “Now run!” He took just enough time to share his name: Mario Rubbini. After the war, Simon found Mario and they became close friends and did business together between France and Italy their entire lives. So, there’s something visceral to my family’s bond with Italy. The legend of family roots imposed itself to pay homage to this bond. Since then, I’ve learnt to speak Italian and studied the history, especially from that period, and I often walk in the mountains, in the exact area where my grandparents spent part of the war. Appearing nowhere, this “Italian territory” of my identity is a sort of missing or invisible part of my identity... It’s this void, this missing part of my identity that I’d like to go and explore in this film.

BIOGRAPHY

Audrey GORDON - Author/Director

Audrey Gordon began her career as a journalist in the international service of LIBERATION. She notably directed “Kinderlekh” for France 3, “90 secondes” for France Ô.

Her film “Siblings”, produced by Charles Gillibert - CG CINEMA, has been selected at the HOT DOCS festival in Toronto in 2018.

In 2017, she directed the feature film “First campaign” (Great Prize of the International Political Film Festival - Politikos in 2018).

FILMOGRAPHY

A historian with a degree from The Paris Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po), Audrey Gordon started on LIBERATION’s foreign desk as New York correspondent for the 2008 presidential elections, before moving to FRANCE 3 Régions as a reporter.

In 2012, she wrote and produced her first film, “Kinderlekh,” a 52-minute documentary film first broadcast on FRANCE 3 in 2013. It follows an elementary school class as it performs on stage the story of the children of Izieu, who had been deported in 1944 – and exploring how history can be imparted through theatre.

In 2014, Audrey’s encounter with Edith, who had been a young resistance member during World War II, led her to write and direct her first short fiction film, “Edith & Lucile”.

In 2015, she directed short documentary films, including “A Two-Way Street,” broadcast on AL-JAZEERA, which explores the unique relationship between Jews and Muslim’s in India’s Calcutta.

In 2016, she directed “90 Seconds” for FRANCE Ô, a 52-minute documentary co-written with Daniel Picouly and produced by CINETEVE, an account of the eruption of Martinique’s Mount Pelée in 1902, blending archival footage and animation.

From 2016 to 2018, she directed the feature-length documentary film, “Siblings,” produced by Charles Gillibert - CG CINEMA, an account of brothers and sisters in America who live with separate foster families and are reunited once a year at summer camp.

The film was in competition at Hot Docs in Toronto in 2018, and in the Champs Elysées Film Festival in 2019. In 2019, it was broadcast as part of France 2’s “25 nuances de docs”.

In 2017, she directed the feature-length documentary film, "Première campagne" ("First Campaign") following a young France 2 journalist as she covers her first presidential election with Macron's campaign. Produced by LES ECURIES PRODUCTION and KUIV, distributed by JOUR2FÊTE, the film had a theatrical release in April 2019.

In 2018, it was awarded the Grand Prix at Politikos – the first film festival devoted to political films.

In 2019, Audrey directed the documentary "Journal de Maires" for France 3, about mayors in France's Grand Est region.

In 2020-2021, for France Télévisions and Italy's RAI, she directed "Falling in love at wartime", a 52-minute film produced by Nilaya Productions and Zenit Arti Audiovisive.

In 2021, she directed the documentary film "Le procès d'Emma Bovary" as part of "Les grands romans du scandale" series for ARTE.



CV ZENIT

Independent production company established in 1992 in Turin, Italy. It produces documentaries, factual and cross-media programs for the international and Italian market. The films produced by Zenit have been broadcast by the main international networks and platforms (including Rai, Sky, Fox, Arte, France TV, ZDF, Ur, Yle, Dr, Canal Plus, History Channel, Discovery Channel, SBS, RSI, VPRO, CBC, Netflix ...) and have participated in over 150 international festivals and awards (Cannes, Venice, Idfa, Hot Docs, Cinema du reel, CPH: DOX, DokLeipzig, One World, Sheffield DocFest, Prix Europa, Fipa, Banff, Japan Prize, Input ...). More info at www.zenit.to.it