



ZALAB FILM
presents

MY PLACE IS HERE

(Io resto)

a film by
Michele Aiello

directed by MICHELE AIELLO story MICHELE AIELLO LUCA GENNARI cinematographer LUCA GENNARI editor CORRADO IUVARA original music FRANCESCO AMBROSINI colorist CORRADO IUVARA
sound designer e mix MASSIMO MARIANI communication CHIARA TRINGALI distribution MAUD CORINO a ZALAB FILM SRL production in collaboration with RCE FOTO VERONA and COMUNE DI BRESCIA-FILM COMMISSION
produced by MICHELE AIELLO



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MY PLACE IS HERE

(lo resto)

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MICHELE AIELLO

The only feature documentary film set entirely inside an Italian hospital
during the first pandemic wave of COVID-19

Produced by
MICHELE AIELLO
ZALAB FILM

Distribution
ZALAB FILM

FILM CREW

Director & Producer	Michele Aiello
Story	Michele Aiello, Luca Gennari
Cinematographer	Luca Gennari
Editor	Corrado Iuvara
Music	Francesco Ambrosini
Sound design e Mix	Massimo Mariani Fullcode SAS
Color	Corrado Iuvara
Production	ZALAB FILM SRL
In collaboration with	RCE Foto Verona and Comune di Brescia-Film Commission
Distribution	Maud Corino, ZALAB FILM distribution@zalabfilm.eu +39 333 6127483 www.zalab.org
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Original title: Io resto
Italy
2021
81'

Language: Italian
Subtitles: English
DCP, Colors



LOGLINE

A 30-days journey inside a hospital. A unique document on the Western World facing the unknown. A crew observes and shows, for the first time, the emotional burden and the luminous gestures that connect the medical staff and the COVID-19 patients during the outbreak of the pandemic.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Lombardy, Italy – March 2020.

A small camera team enters the wards of the hospital of Brescia, that is dramatically facing the first pandemic peak of COVID-19. It respectfully observes moments of what is the new and partly unknown daily activity in it. But most of all, they show the intimacy that is created between patients and medical staff, beyond the inevitable isolation barriers. Moments of uncertainty, pain, fragility and humility intertwine and are especially expressed through the unspoken details that hold us somewhere between symphony and tragedy.

SYNOPSIS

Italy is in the midst of a strict lockdown due to the first pandemic peak of covid-19. Lombardy especially is the region most affected. The cases of virus infection increase dramatically and the hospitals are not properly equipped to deal with it. Doctors, nurses and drivers for the transport of patients are making enormous efforts to address and contain it. The media call them heroes and angels, but their daily struggles together with covid-19 patients mostly remain invisible, except inside the hospital wards.

The camera enters and stays inside the Spedali Civili of Brescia – one of the largest hospitals of Europe – with permission to accompany and record what is happening. The hospital itself becomes the set of individual battles and collective dramatic story, in which emotions run high and intense. Putting together glimpses and fragments we get to know the people involved, we see their faces, we touch the intimate, delicate and strong relationships they build. So that every captured detail conveys its weight and importance in the entirety of these dramatic and uncertain moments.

From all over the world the essential personal protective equipments (PPEs) arrive to the basement storage area of the hospital. The head nurse Roberto does check them, pack by pack.

“We trust the labels, but we really shouldn’t trust them”, Roberto tells his colleagues. It is necessary to verify if the biological labels correspond to the needs for adequate protection against such an invasive virus.

The nurses in the meantime swab patients hospitalized before the outbreak of the pandemic and other inhabitants of Brescia. Many people have not seen the loved ones for weeks due to the lockdown, others have recently lost them. The situation is very fragile. The encounter between patient and the nurse often opens to a flow of emotions and stories, as happens with Monica. Like a river out of its banks, she tells the nurse Itala her concerns for her elderly father who is seriously ill and hospitalized.

In the Covid-19 wards there is no relief from the intense pace. The doors that open and close are a recurring theme, like in a prison from which the criminal virus must not get out. Along the white corridors doctors and nurses run to intervene and try to stabilize the violent and sudden respiratory crises. While patients pant, oxygen masks are not always available and have to wait for them to arrive from another side of the hospital. The doctor Lina who strongly empathizes with patients, is faced with the inevitability of not being able to save the all patients. Her intense gaze seems to wonder how far her responsibility goes, in such critical moments. In some cases, Lina must face the grim reality that she cannot save all of her patients. Tania seems to abandon this life, while Franco seems to resist the hardest blows of the disease.

During calmer moments, doctors and nurses move from one room to another, like bees from cell to cell, trying to talk and to interact with the patients through the unavoidable barriers which serve to isolate the virus. Iconic is the sequence of the kiss between the nurse Noemi and the patient Giusy. Even wearing a FFP2 mask their lips press and encounter on the glass window. Giusy is one of the liveliest patients in the hospital, trying to cheer up the nurses. Together they summon up all the courage, love and even humor to face the frightening situations of their fragility.

The sisters Elena and Silvia have experienced it in what they say, finally looking into each other’s eyes, was "a travel there and back." Elena only 39 was hospitalized in intensive care and her sister Silvia, an infectious disease specialist, tried her best to get her out of that nightmare. Elena remembers that she could not sleep and was constantly hallucinating and now is terrified by the feeling of suffocation.

Faced with uncertainty, Covid-19 patients like Tania, Franco, Giusy and Elena fight for life. Their struggles are deeply supported by Lina, Silvia, Noemi and all the medical staff, who among other things facilitate and maintain contact with patients’ families.

They're not just patient-doctor relationships. It’s something of an intimate, strong and delicate depth, being everything the people involved in this collective tragedy can cling to.



DIRECTOR'S VISION

Whenever I think of a doctor, I think of my mother Silvia, a tireless and generous pediatrician. Since childhood I've been fascinated by the way she works, completely dedicated to the care of children, whether they are her young patients or not, always available far beyond working hours.

When the pandemic hit Italy and the hospitals began to admit patients in massive waves, I thought of the many Silvias, hard and dedicated workers who make an essential contribution to their community. For this reason I did not want to portray the medical staff as impersonal heroes. Rather, I was interested in grasping the complexity and the essence of those moments.

The key feature of this complex situation was the isolation of patients, a condition equally painful for the patients as for the medical staff. The only people able to be with patients and to comfort them were doctors and nurses, but those only possible human contacts were through barriers, even in the critical moments on the point of death. This tragic loneliness comes out again and again in the documentary.

Since I had no time for location surveys, I had to write the story while filming it together with my mate and DoP Luca Gennari. From the first days of shooting I decided it was going to be a collective story. Hence, the leading role is played by the entire community of medical staff and their patients.

I chose to film from the point of view of an eyewitness, like if I were one of the protagonists. I prefer not to define or impose a rigid point of view in my films, because I'd like the audience to be the more free as possible to interpret what they are watching.



FILM CREW

DIRECTOR & PRODUCER – MICHELE AIELLO

Michele Aiello (1987) is a director of documentary films and Participatory Video expert. He has a degree in International Relations.

Michele Aiello filmography:

- *One Day the Night*, 2019 (documentary, 69'), director
- *Paese Nostro*, 2017 (documentary, 120'), co-writer
- *A School of Their Own*, 2016 (documentary, 74'), co-writer

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CINEMATOGRAPHER – LUCA GENNARI

Luca Gennari (1984) is a working cinematographer making narrative and commercial films. He trained with Giuseppe Rotunno (AIC, ASC) and Giovanni Fiore Coltellacci (AIC). He graduated in The National Film and Television School (CSC), in 2012.

Luca Gennari filmography:

- *Novorossiya*, 2020 (documentary, 64'), director and DoP
- *One Day the Night*, 2019 (documentary, 69'), DoP
- *Joseph's Journey*, 2019 (documentary), DoP

EDITOR – CORRADO IUVARA

Corrado Iuvara (1987) has edited many feature films, documentaries and short films, presented and winning awards at some of the major international film festivals.

Corrado Iuvara filmography:

- *One Day the Night*, 2019 (documentary, 69')
- *Gli Asteroidi*, 2017 (fiction, 91'), directed by Germano Maccioni, nomination for best film at Locarno International Festival 2017
- *La prima meta*, 2016 (documentary, 74'), directed by Enza Negroni, in competition at Festival dei Popoli and at Vision du Reel