

'This is Not Cricket,' the Possibility of a Tolerant Future for Italy

Monica Straniero (October 24, 2019)



Shot almost entirely in Piazza Vittorio, Rome's most culturally diverse neighborhood, the new documentary by Jacopo de Bertoldi presented at 'Alice Nella Città,' a section of Rome's Festa del Cinema tells of the friendship between two young men united by their passion for a game that in some parts of the world is almost a religion.

"'This is not cricket' was the first sentence uttered by Shince when he joined the team." Comments Jacopo de Bertoldi, the director of the documentary 'This is not cricket' presented at Alice Nella Città, a section of Rome's Festa del Cinema, as a special event by [Panorama Italia](#) [2].

"He immediately noticed how the boys played according to strange, almost made-up rules. The funny thing is that in the UK the title is an expression used to designate unethical behavior, poor sportsmanship."

The documentary, filmed almost entirely in Piazza Vittorio, Rome's most culturally diverse



neighborhood, tells of the friendship between two young men united by their passion for a game that in some parts of the world is almost a religion. Born in South-East England around 1300, it remains one of the most tangible traces of British colonialism today and boasts 3 billion players world-wide.

"Shince, born in Italy of Indian parents, and Fernando, raised by his aunt, a maid nostalgic of Almirante's MSI (ed. a neo-fascist party), met on the field and both play for the Piazza Vittorio Cricket Club." Narrated by Fernando, the documentary follows them from their childhood up until the team's break-up and their journey to rebuild it. Each day bares new objectives, metaphors for the obstacles that the two protagonists and their companions face everyday to overcome society's mistrust and rejection.

"Shince e Fernando sono cresciuti in un periodo in cui la questione migratoria è entrata di prepotenza nel dibattito politico e si cominciava ad avvertire la propaganda xenofoba delle destre. Raccontare la loro amicizia mi è sembrato quindi il modo mi

"Shince and Fernando grew up in a time when the issue of immigration aggressively made its way into political discourse and xenophobic right-wing propaganda was spreading. Recounting their friendship felt like the best way to unravel the prejudice that is spreading across Italy."

'This is not cricket' is not just a film about friendship, it's also about the value of sport as a personal challenge, as an instrument to overcome physical, social and cultural limitations, and as an instrument for integration. "Particularly in cricket, players have to learn to accept their adversaries," the director explains. The team members are Bengalese, Pakistani, Indian, each of them come to our country with the dream of redemption, they try to reshape their identity through the sport."

Bertoldi's documentary becomes a journey through the Italy of immigrants who resist, new Italians who wear their jerseys to foster social change, against one of Europe's most restrictive laws, which prevents those born in Italy from obtaining citizenship before turning 18.

See the official trailer [here](#). [3]

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[2] <https://www.panorama.it/>

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