

Armand Assante to Narrate Paul Borghese's Documentary The Streets of Little Italy: 100 Years of San Gennaro

NEW YORK , NY, UNITED STATES, August 6, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Four Time Golden Globe Nominee and Emmy Award-winning actor Armand Assante (Gotti, The Mambo Kings, American Gangster, The Odyssey) has joined the feature documentary The Streets of Little Italy: 100 Years of San Gennaro, reuniting with director Paul Borghese (Once Upon a Time in Brooklyn, Back in the Day) for the first time since their 2013 crime drama.

Currently in production, the feature-length documentary chronicles the remarkable story of how a small immigrant religious procession on Manhattan's Mulberry Street evolved into the world's most famous and most attended Italian feast.

Produced by CIAO USA in collaboration with Figli di San Gennaro, Inc., the historic organization behind the Feast, the film marks the centennial of one of New York City's most enduring cultural traditions while preserving the history, faith, and legacy of the Italian-American community that built it.



Production has already filmed in Italy's city of Naples, the city of Benevento (birthplace of San Gennaro), and the city of Pozzuoli (where San Gennaro was martyred), exploring the Saint's origins and the spiritual roots that inspired generations of Italian immigrants. Filming is currently underway in New York's Little Italy and will continue throughout this year's historic 100th anniversary Feast of San Gennaro, taking place on Mulberry Street from September 17-27, 2026.

Blending rare archival materials, historical photography, intimate interviews with lifelong Little Italy residents, prominent Italian-American actors and public figures, and immersive vérité coverage of this year's centennial celebration, the documentary follows the evolution of the Feast over the past century. The film also traces the immigrant journey through archival material

from Ellis Island, connecting the story of San Gennaro to the millions of Italians who first arrived in America seeking a new life.

"The Feast of San Gennaro is so much more than a festival, it's the heartbeat of Little Italy and a living testament to the resilience, faith, and pride of generations of Italian-Americans," said Borghese. "As a proud Italian American whose work has always been deeply connected to New York and its people, it's an incredible privilege to help preserve this story for future generations while celebrating one hundred years of a tradition that continues to unite families from around the world."

Assante, whose career spans more than 200 film and television credits, will narrate the documentary and also appear on camera, lending his voice to the century-long story of immigration, identity, and community that transformed a neighborhood celebration into an internationally recognized cultural institution.

Director Paul Borghese also hopes to include up close and personal interviews with notable Italian-American figures, including Academy Award-winning filmmaker Martin Scorsese, with whom he worked closely on *The Irishman*. "He has roots in this neighborhood, having grown up here in the 1950s," said Borghese. Scorsese previously appeared in Borghese's documentary *BEYOND WISEGUYS: Italian Americans and the Movies*, which Borghese produced alongside John Turturro.

The producers are also seeking to feature other prominent Italian-American actors and entertainers, including Marisa Tomei, Stanley Tucci, Ralph Macchio, Chazz Palminteri, and Tony Danza, among others, many of whom have appeared in Borghese's previous documentary projects.

Actor, singer, and musician Dominic Chianese (*The Sopranos*, *The Godfather*) will perform popular Neapolitan Italian songs from the Italian immigration era as part of the film's soundtrack and original score.

The documentary is written by Fred Gardaphé, one of the founders of Italian-American Studies and Distinguished Professor of English and Italian-American Studies at Queens College, CUNY, with cinematography by longtime Borghese collaborator George Mitas.

The executive producers said they sought out Borghese to direct the film not only because of his accomplishments as an award-winning filmmaker, but also because of his longstanding involvement in the Italian-American community. Borghese is a longtime member of the Order Sons of Italy in America and President Emeritus of GIAA (the Guild of Italian American Actors).

At the heart of *The Streets of Little Italy: 100 Years of San Gennaro* is a story of heritage, faith, food, family, and the enduring power of community. With unprecedented access to festival organizers, community leaders, archival collections, and the 2026 centennial celebration itself,

the filmmakers aim to create a definitive cinematic portrait of Little Italy and one of America's most beloved immigrant traditions, with plans for an international film festival run followed by commercial distribution.

"We couldn't be more pleased with how filming has progressed so far and with the early interest the project has already generated among distributors and networks," said Executive Producer Giuseppe Barone of CIAO USA. "Our hope is that this documentary will ultimately expand beyond the original feature-length format into a premium three-part documentary series for a major streaming platform or network."

About CIAO USA

CIAO USA is a media production and entertainment company dedicated to creating compelling content that celebrates Italian culture, heritage, history, and the Italian-American experience. Through original films, documentaries, television programming, live events, and digital media, the company develops authentic stories that preserve traditions while inspiring future generations and connecting audiences with the people, places, and history that have shaped Italy and Italian-American communities around the world.

From feature documentaries and cultural programming to concerts, festivals, and special event productions, CIAO USA brings stories to life with creativity, passion, and authenticity. Through strategic partnerships with filmmakers, artists, cultural organizations, businesses, and institutions in both Italy and the United States, the company creates original productions that educate, entertain, and foster meaningful cultural connections while preserving the enduring legacy of Italian immigrants and their contributions to society.

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