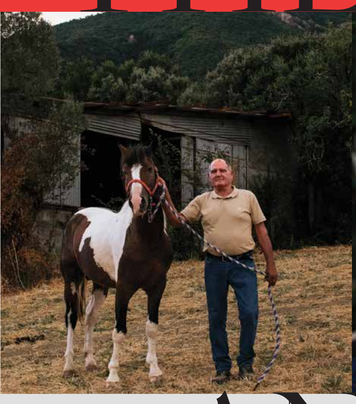
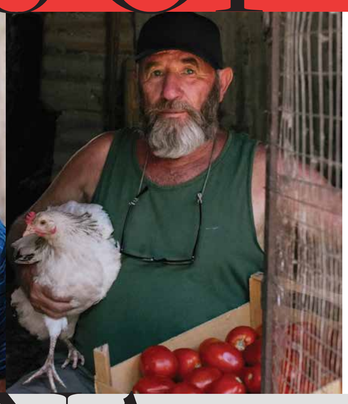
THE VOICES OF



ANTONIMINA

This project was born from an invisible thread.

It is the thread that brought me back here, across the ocean, to retrace the footsteps of my great-grandmother, Teresa Elisabetta Garreffa, whom her father took away from Antonimina in 1912, the year after she was born.

Returning here, I felt that I was re-rooting my ancestors in the land they had once been forced to leave out of necessity, eventually losing contact with the family who remained here.

As a documentary filmmaker, I came to Italy in 2024 with a deep desire in my heart: to discover who I truly was as an artist. I wanted to expand the way I create, to feel more connected to what I wanted to say, and to speak more directly with my soul.

What I did not expect was that, almost immediately after my arrival, I would find the inspiration to write my first fiction feature, based on the true story of my great-grandmother.

As a third-generation Italian born abroad, I have always lived with the feeling of existing between two worlds. I imagine that my great-grandmother must have felt that way too, as an immigrant in California, facing her own personal challenges.

But she never lost her roots.

She always called herself a *calabrisella*. For her ninetieth birthday, she wore a flower crown and danced the tarantella. She taught me how to embroider and how to make gnocchi by hand.

As Mimmo Pelle shares so beautifully in his interview:

"You never forget the place where you were born, of course you don't."

Moving to Italy, to be honest, was not as easy as I had imagined. I came with the dream of applying for Italian citizenship: my way of re-rooting my ancestors in their homeland and finally feeling rooted here myself.

But six months after my arrival, the government suddenly changed the law, making it impossible for me to move forward. I felt rejected, frightened by the possibility that I might not be able to stay, and severed from my origins.

It was only after meeting my cousins that I finally felt a true sense of belonging here in Italy.

When I visited Antonimina last summer, almost exactly one year ago, I immediately felt the quiet and profound magic of these streets.

At first, I had come simply out of curiosity, just to see where my great-grandmother had been born. But thanks to the magic of this town, I discovered that I still had family living here.

We were reunited after a century of separation.

That moment remains one of the most beautiful memories of my entire life.

During that same visit, I interviewed Luvarà Concetta to better understand the culture and traditions of the time when my great-grandmother left. It was through her beautiful stories that the idea for the multimedia project you will experience tonight was born.

Every voice collected along this journey is a thread of memory that connects the past to the present.

In a town shaped by tradition and emigration, the elders remain the true custodians of the soul of Antonimina.

In his interview, Bruno Pelle remembers his youth:

"In the evenings, we didn't have what we have today... When we were a family, we would go to one another's homes and spend time together; there were the elders who would tell us stories, incredible stories."

At its heart, this project speaks of the invisible threads that connect us across time, distance, and generations.

The slow-moving portraits projected onto these historic walls reflect the feeling of time slowing down. They invite you to pause, to be present with the person in front of you, and to listen to their stories with all your heart.

Many of the homes in Antonimina have been abandoned over the years, and their walls are slowly giving way to time.

I created this project not only to honor my great-grandmother and my roots, but to transform these ancient stone walls into an open-air gallery, bringing the streets back to life through the faces and voices of the people who have preserved and carried forward the memory of Antonimina.

My hope is that these stories can help reignite a sense of pride, connection, and belonging within the community, while also allowing these voices to travel beyond Antonimina.

We hope to continue this project, collecting more stories and, one day, sharing them with communities around the world where Calabrians have emigrated and built new lives.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who shared their stories with me and entrusted me with their memories.

As you walk these streets, you will hear the voices of Adelina Monteleone, Francesco Pelle, and Teresa Monteleone. Further down, along Via Consalvo, you will hear Bruno Pelle, Marisa Pelle, Clelia Fazzari, Mimmo Pelle, and his father Antonio Pelle.

A special thank you to the women of ***Enosis***, especially Maria Fazzari, who guided and supported me throughout this entire project, helping me bring it to life.

Thank you to the Comune and to the land of Antonimina.

Thank you to ***Legami degli Fimmini***, who financially supported this project and made it possible.

Thank you to S9 Films for their support and contribution throughout the filming process.

And above all, thank you to the people of Antonimina for welcoming me, for sharing your stories with me, and for allowing me to return to a place that, in so many ways, feels as though it has been waiting for me all this time.

- Jacqueline Romano, artista e regista

In Collaboration with Enosis APS e Comune di Antonimina.