

A GRASSROT PRODUCTION BY ROSY BATTAGLIA AND CITTADINI REATTIVI ETS

 **cittadini reattivi**
terra, cielo, acqua puliti per tutti

In a city declared a sacrifice zone by the UN,
a community fights to transform contamination into courage,
and pain into power to change

TARANTO CALLING

An investigative documentary by Rosy Battaglia



A collective and investigative documentary filmed over nine years in Taranto, one of the most polluted cities in Europe. “Taranto Calling” interweaves raw and powerful testimonies with moments of resilience and dignity, following a community that refuses to give up. In a land scarred by industry, voices rise to reclaim environmental justice and the right to breathe.

“Taranto Calling” is an investigative documentary filmed between 2016 and 2025, revealing to the public what sustainability truly means for human life. A journey from Trieste to Taranto sheds light on what is happening in the “city of two seas,” declared a sacrifice zone by the UN due to pollution from ILVA, the largest steel plant in Europe.

While mainstream narratives focus on the tension between pollution and employment, in Taranto it is the children who pay the highest price for contamination.

In a unique natural and historical setting, mothers, doctors, artists, activists, entrepreneurs, and even friars mobilize to restore justice and beauty to their land, challenging the power of industry and the State in an unequal battle to (re)turn hell into paradise.

“Taranto Calling” is a collective story grounded in scientific data, revealing the courage of those who, from the grassroots, are building a new model of development that transforms pain into beauty.

Director's Notes

My approach is that of journalistic inquiry, with a narrative rhythm shaped by the lives and struggles of the protagonists. Visually and narratively, the film is built around their voices, striving to reveal the beauty of Taranto despite the dust that still envelops it.

The documentary unfolds in two main acts, reflecting the dual nature of the investigation. The first contrasts the situation in Trieste — a city that dismantled its most polluting industrial facility — with the critical environmental and human impact of ILVA in Taranto, where pollution continues to affect children, adults, and the environment. The second act focuses on civil resistance that arises precisely from the most contaminated places, such as the Tamburi district. Here, mothers, doctors, activists, artists, and entrepreneurs choose to stay and make a difference, challenging the State and industry in an uneven battle.

The images alternate between marine and historical landscapes, polluted zones, and new cultural and social spaces, narrating the duality between an industrial past and a possible future.

As in my previous investigative films, the film is written by reality and guided by ethical choices that extended the production timeline, but made it possible to authentically portray the complexity of Taranto — a city suspended between environmental injustice, the right to life, and the search for a possible future.

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Taranto Calling

An investigative documentary
by Rosy Battaglia

Year: 2025

Duration: 100'

Format: HD / 16:9 / 1.85

Original Language: Italian

Subtitles: Italian, English

Directed by: Rosy Battaglia

Filming by: Rosy Battaglia, Giovanni Maimone,
Giuseppe Melucci (drone footage)

Special thanks to Piero Mottotese, Sophia Grew, Vincenzo Senzatela, Comitato Cittadini e Lavoratori Liberi e Pensanti, Fridays for Future Taranto

Editing: Riccardo Calderini, Rosy Battaglia.
Thanks to Fabio Spalvieri

Music: “Metal” and “Lucha”, Mosfet Collective – thanks for granting permission to use the tracks “Tarantella del Gargano” from the album “Viaggi e paraggi”, Daniele Sepe – thanks for granting permission to use the track “Polvere”, Fido Guido – thanks for granting permission to use the track

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All updates on the investigation Taranto Calling at:

tarantochiama.cittadinireattivi.it
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The investigations, articles, and cited sources include:

ANSA; ARPA Puglia; ASL Taranto; Archivio Antonio Cederna; Comune di Taranto; Comitato Lavoratori e Cittadini Liberi e Pensanti; European Commission; European Court of Human Rights; Donna Moderna; Epidemiologia e Prevenzione; Gazzetta Ufficiale; Giustizia per Taranto; Il Sole 24 Ore; Istituto Superiore di Sanità; ISPRA; Maremosso – Fondazione Giangiacomo Feltrinelli; Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security; Ministry of Health; United Nations; Oikos Mediterraneo; World Health Organization; Regione Puglia; Save the Children; Taranto Court; valori.it; cittadinireattivi.it