

'Sono Cosa Nostra', a Documentary on Libera

Natasha Lardera (December 11, 2015)



Directed by Simone Aleandri and Produced by Clipper Media with Rai Cinema, the documentary Sono Cosa Nostra celebrates the 20 years of Libera, a network of over 1600 associations fighting against all types of Mafias. Libera was founded by Don Ciotti, a priest from Turin, in 1995 and it uses land and assets seized from the Mafia to set up local food cooperatives, antidrug projects, and community centers. Libera was also fundamental in the passing of law 109 which allows the seizure of assets belonging to the Mafia.

"We will show it in movie theaters, we will air it on TV, it will be everywhere. This film is a tool of public service, it's about our commitment to legality and the daily battle of who fights it step by step." [Paolo del Brocco](#) [2], CEO of [Rai Cinema](#) [2] told this to the audience of Nitehawk Cinema at the special screening, and world wide premiere, of Sono Cosa Nostra.

Directed by [Simone Aleandri](#) [3] and Produced by [Clipper Media](#) [4] with Rai Cinema, the documentary that celebrates 20 years of Libera, a network of over 1600 associations fighting against



the Mafia and organized crime. Libera was founded by [Don Ciotti](#) [5], a priest from Turin, in 1995 and it uses land and assets seized from the Mafia to set up local food cooperatives, anti-drug projects, and community centers. Libera was also fundamental in the passing of law 109 which allows the seizure of assets belonging to the Mafia.

Don Ciotti himself attended the screening where he humbly and emotionally stated how he is not the hero here but he “represents a group, a community of 1600 associations who do no tire to fight.” “This documentary brings you some small examples,” Don Ciotti continued to explain, “What has been done is still too little, we have confiscated only 17.000 assets.

If we all join forces – the magistrates along with ordinary people – we can look at the future in a different way. The fight against the Mafia requires a lot of work, starting with education, in schools. Education awakes the conscience, knowledge is power. March 2016 marks the 20th year anniversary of Law 109. The current legislature is inadequate, we could do more. This government and the one before it have created a Commission in charge of improving the law of confiscation of property. Two proposals have been presented at the Senate. The first important element is that not only assets of the Mafia should be seized but also assets of any criminal association.”

Don Ciotti started his fight against the Mafia in the early 1990s in a period when the Mafia was responsible for several massacres and bombings. But mostly it was responsible for the killings of two key anti-Mafia campaigners, judges [Giovanni Falcone](#) [6] and Paolo Borsellino. “The Mafia is a social and cultural evil that causes injustice, abuse of power, and corruption. It is a mentality, it isn't just a criminal organization,” he has said.

The film captures how hundreds of cooperatives can blossom from what comes from corrupted realities. It captures the hope and the strength of those in Calabria, Sicily, Campania, as southern Italy is generally known to be most afflicted by the Mafia, but also in Lombardy, Piedmont and other Northern Italian cities where organized crime is spreading quietly. The North is particularly appetizing because it does better economically. Even there farmhouses and fields have been confiscated and work has been given to many, especially immigrants and people who haven't been so lucky in life and need to start over. “If there's something that really bothers these criminals is the sharing of private goods,” Don Ciotti explained.

In Castel Volturno, in the province of Caserta, Massimo Rocco has founded “Le terre di Don Peppe Diana” a dairy farm that produces amazing mozzarella di bufala. The farm stands on the land confiscated from a member of the Camorra, Michele Zaza. The vineyards of the Sicilian cooperative helmed by Valentina Fiore, who attended the screening, were erected in honor of [Placido Rizzotto](#) [7], an Italian socialist peasant and trade union leader who was kidnapped and killed by Cosa Nostra in 1948. Others produce honey or olive oil, pasta or any sorts of vegetables.

But aren't people afraid to work this land? “The fight against the Mafia, is done with work first, as work gives humans their dignity back, and then with laws. Through the years there have been several incidents of vandalism, arson, or damage but assaults directed at people are rare,” Don Ciotti has said, “What's important is not to leave anybody alone and work together at this common goal.” Meanwhile the Mafia does not stand aside and watch, there's still a serious corruption problem.

“Looking back at these twenty years it just seems impossible,” Don Ciotti concluded “and even if it is a little we have done a lot. What we need are responsible citizens and in order to have them, we need to work on education. Educating them to be responsible.” Sono Cosa Nostra, this powerful film, is part of this education strategy. Indeed at the screening, in a conversation with writer and professor [Antonio Monda](#) [8], Don Ciotti admitted how this film sends out a positive message and is in contradiction with many other films and TV shows that glorify the Mafia and criminality. It's good to have positive cinema that tells true stories, mostly stories of success towards the fight against organized crime.



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Links

- [1] <http://108.61.128.93/files/liberasopra1449909121jpg>
- [2] https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rai_Cinema
- [3] <http://www.rai.tv/dl/RaiTV/programmi/media/ContentItem-9ac41577-114e-4530-ab82-049144d59e8a.html>
- [4] <http://clippermedia.it>
- [5] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luigi_Ciotti
- [6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giovanni_Falcone
- [7] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Placido_Rizzotto
- [8] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonio_Monda