



ER FORCHETTA

THE FLIGHT OF A LIFE IN БЕЛЕБЭ

DIRECTED BY ZHANNA STANKOVYCH

PRODUCED BY LASTARIA · GRUPPO ALBATROS

LOGLINE

In a story suspended between reality and vision, former inmate Piero Patriarca, known as Er Forchetta, transforms his downfall into an act of collective care. Between house clearances, used books, and nights spent reading and writing in his van, he creates a world built on solidarity for those, like him, left on the margins.



SHORT SYNOPSIS

Piero Patriarca, known as Er Forchetta, lives in a van crammed with salvaged items and used books, which he sells to passersby during the day in Garbatella, in the heart of Rome. For years, he broke into people's homes using burglary tools, landing in prison on multiple occasions. Today, he continues to open doors—but for a living, handling the clearance of apartments and basements.

When he tries to reintegrate into society, he discovers there is no place for him. To avoid disappearing, he reverses the course of his decline and reinvents a world tailored to himself: he founds the association “La Forchetta”, launches a small newspaper, establishes a strict rule—do not steal—and shares the proceeds with others who, like him, have remained on the margins.

At night, in the silence of his van parked under a streetlight on the streets of Rome, amid used books and utopian dreams, he travels between past and future and writes down ideas for a different world.



EXTENDED SYNOPSIS

Piero Patriarca's long white hair holds a story that few stop to listen to. Sitting next to a stall of used books in front of the Garbatella metro station in Rome, he lives in a van filled with items he has salvaged during his clearance jobs. Passersby rush by, oblivious to this unusual man.

For years, Piero broke into other people's homes with burglary tools, landing in prison several times. Today he continues to open doors, but for work, clearing out apartments and basements. His life is divided into two mirror-image chapters: the same action, first carried out illegally and later legally, attempting to stay within the law.

When he tries to reintegrate into society, he discovers that his return is not welcome. The label of "ex-convict" weighs more heavily than the sentence he served. To avoid disappearing, he decides to carve out his own space: he founds the association "La Forchetta", creates a small newspaper, and establishes one ironclad rule: do not steal. Around him, he builds a fragile community of people who, like him, struggle to reintegrate.

The film is structured as a dialogue on multiple levels. On the one hand, there is the direct observation of Piero Patriarca's life, which unfolds and reveals itself without mediation: the used-book stall, the act of clearing homes, the van that becomes his home at night. On the other, a more lyrical dimension constructed by the director through symbolic images, evoking a world where it is possible to connect Piero's life with that of a figure from Rome a century earlier.

A key element of the film is the encounter between the director and Piero, which allows the protagonist to recognize the value of his own life experience.

The original soundtrack, composed by the director herself, accompanies the narrative like a musical thread that runs through the film and amplifies its poetic dimension, opening new trajectories of flight even for those who stop to listen.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Not far from the spot in Ostia where Er Forchetta fell asleep for the last time in his van, I found a solitary wing half-buried in the sand. It was a fragment of wood shaped by the wind and the sea. In that image, I recognized the trajectory of Piero Patriarca: the flight of a life in reverse.

Our first meeting took place in front of the Garbatella metro station in Rome. He was sitting next to a used book stall, immersed in reading. I took a photograph from a distance, so as not to disturb that silent harmony. The next day I returned to meet him. I never imagined that encounter would change my path and give rise to this film.

Piero was a man outside the coordinates of ordinary social life. After prison, he had tried to reintegrate, without success. Instead of accepting that exclusion, he invented his own space: an association, a newspaper, a system of rules. He continued to open doors—the same gesture that had landed him in prison—but in a different way.

Perhaps it was a sort of symmetry between our lives that created an immediate connection. My own existence is also divided into two chapters: twenty-five years in Ukraine, twenty-five years in Rome. Reinventing oneself means crossing a divide and choosing not to remain trapped by it.

In that solitary figure, I glimpsed something profoundly Roman and, at the same time, universal—almost an echo of Pasolini: the last “Accattone” of a changing city.

There are a thousand ways to tell the story of a marginalized person's struggle for survival. I decided to do so through poetry. Because poetry saved Piero, sustaining him through brutality and allowing him to glimpse light beyond hostility.

I chose black and white to best represent Piero's life, which unfolded amid opposites: legality and illegality, light and shadow, harsh reality and poetry. The use of evocative photography, alternating with observational footage, allowed me to linger in his silences and to draw near without intruding.

This film stems from a gaze that lingered a moment longer than the others. It is an attempt to hold onto a presence before time erases it.

THE FILM'S ORIGINS

The film originated from a photographic encounter. For about three years, Zhanna Stankovych followed Piero Patriarca, known as Er Forchetta, documenting his daily life in Garbatella, Rome. She accompanied him to the used book stall in front of the metro station, during clear-outs of apartments and basements, on his nighttime wanderings through the city, and during his moments of rest.

Over time, a relationship of trust and mutual understanding developed between them, allowing the director to accompany him even into the most intimate moments of his daily life, when at night the van became his **home, archive, and refuge**. Piero would lay out his mattress, read, write, and finally fall asleep.

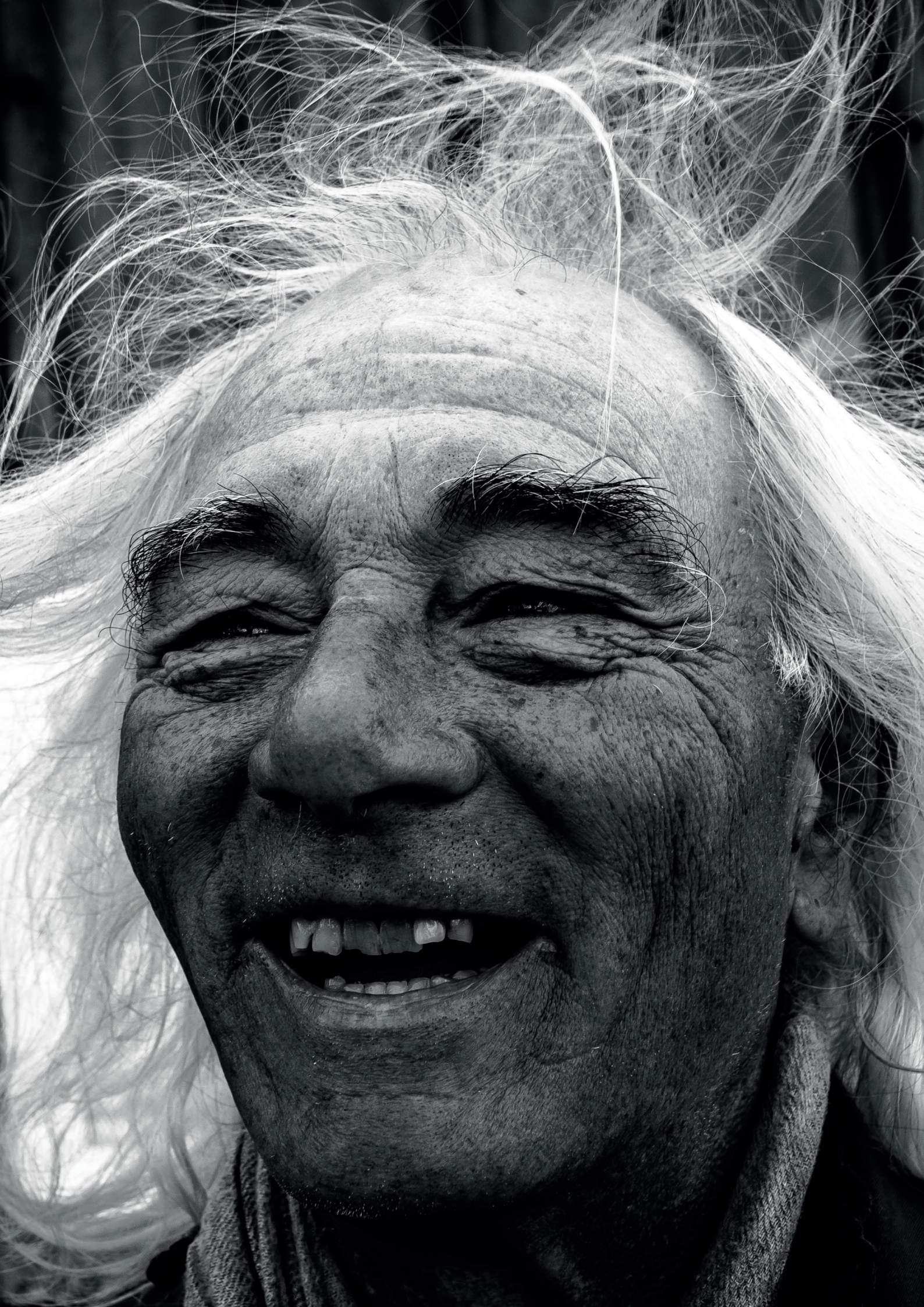
Over the years, the director photographed that reality, but she also began filming it, without the initial intention of making a documentary. The filming emerged as a natural extension of her photographic gaze, to capture gestures, words, and moments that photography alone could not convey.

In 2021, Piero Patriarca passed away. After his death, the need to preserve his memory led Zhanna Stankovych to revisit the material she had gathered over the years and transform it into a film.

This project also gave rise to the **photography exhibition “Garbatella – Il cuore di un quartiere in 100 battiti di luce”**, on display at the Museo delle Mura in Rome. During the exhibition, the production company met with the director, and from that conversation the idea to develop the film was born.

Er Forchetta – Il volo di una vita al contrario thus emerged from fragments of life gathered over time, as an attempt to preserve the memory of a man who transformed his fall into an unexpected form of freedom.





THE CHARACTER

It's hard to sum up Er Forchetta in just a few words. Piero Patriarca is a man who has chosen to become one with his persona.

Sitting next to a stall of used books or behind the glass of a bus stop, with his long white hair and a bent fork pinned to his coat, he answers the phone with ease: «La Forchetta, good morning». They call him for a clearance job. He climbs into his van, lined with newspapers and magazines, and heads off to a new apartment to clear out.

For years, he opened the doors of other people's homes with burglar's tools. Today, he continues to open them for work. He doesn't attach sentimental value to objects: raised in a poor, large family, he learned early on that things are meant for survival. They move, they're sold, they constantly pass from hand to hand.

He resells the recovered items for very little money and splits the profit with his collaborators, keeping almost nothing for himself. In the world he has created, there is one ironclad rule: don't steal.

He loves theater, writes scripts, and moves in Rome's artistic circles. On the street, he acts and protects himself at the same time. Irony is his defense; dignity, his stance.

Piero is neither a symbol nor a social case. He is a free man who has lived two opposing lives and has chosen not to disappear.

SOUNDTRACK

The film's soundtrack was composed by director Zhanna Stankovych and was conceived as a musical tribute to that mysterious amber-hued season that precedes every winter: a suspended moment in time when light and shadow draw closer and contrasts become more subtle.

At the heart of this imagery lies the "disamara", the maple seed that begins as a pair of mirror-image spirals, each of which, after separating, takes its own flight. This image that evokes the dual trajectory of Piero Patriarca's life, suspended between two opposing existences.

Disamara – Un volo in otto scene (A flight in eight scenes), is the musical narrative of that brief and fragile time preceding "the last winter" of a man who has lived two lives. It is a journey through human autumn observed with a gaze that still retains something from childhood.

The album, released on January 17, 2026, consists of eight pieces for violin and piano: "Detachment" – "Mystery" – "Euphoria" – "Suspended" – "Incompetence" – "Abandonment" – "Day of Reckoning" – "Memory".

The piano is sometimes played directly on the instrument's internal strings. These sounds evoke the clanging of prison bars, in the first part of the protagonist's life, and the echo of thuds in the cellars he emptied, in the second.

The music does not simply accompany the images: it springs from the very gaze that gave birth to the film and extends its poetic breath.

ZHANNA STANKOVYCH

DISAMARA

UN VOLO IN 8 SCENE



VIOLINO - OKSANA TIUTIUNYK
PIANOFORTE - ZHANNA STANKOVYCH

MUSICHE ORIGINALI PER IL FILM
"ER FORCHETTA - IL VOLO DI UNA VITA AL CONTRARIO"



ZHANNA
STANKOVYCH
DIRECTOR

BIOGRAPHY

BRIEF

Zhanna Stankovych is Ukrainian, a professional classical composer, pianist, photographer and writer by passion.

She was a finalist at the 2022 Sarajevo Photo Festival in the “Photojournalism” category, with her photo essay *Er Forchetta*. Zhanna Stankovych’s works have been exhibited at the “Rencontres de la Photographie” in Arles, France. She has held four solo exhibitions in Rome: *Dove sorge il sole* (Where the Sun Rises), dedicated to Japan; *Mondo ex* (Former World), on women from the former Yugoslavia living in Rome; and “Marte Nostrum”, at the Incinque OpenArt Monti Gallery. In collaboration with Roma Capitale, she organized the photography exhibition “Garbatella – Il cuore di un quartiere in 100 battiti di luce”, on view at the Museo delle Mura in Rome from December 16, 2023, to March 23, 2024, which won first place in the 18th Alberoandronico National Award, presented at the Campidoglio.

Author of the first book in the European Union on the history of Ukrainian music, “Rifiorire dalle radici” (Edizioni Momenti).

BIOGRAPHY

EXTENDED

Zhanna Stankovych, Ukrainian, is a professional classical composer and pianist, as well as a photographer and writer by passion.

She was a finalist at the 2022 Sarajevo Photo Festival in the “Photojournalism” category, with her photo essay *Er Forchetta*.

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Author of the first book in the European Union on the history of Ukrainian music, “*Rifiorire dalle radici*” (Blossoming from the roots), and of the teaching method on composition, *L’universo sul pentagramma* (Edizioni Momenti). Author of the suite *Gogol’ nella Città Eterna* (Gogol’ in the Eternal City), and the symphonic poem “*Fabula Pysanka*”. In collaboration with the Special Superintendence of Rome and the Ministry of Culture, her original compositions are performed at the Colosseum Archaeological Park – Curia Iulia, the Pyramid of Caius Cestius, and the Auditorium of the National Museum of Musical Instruments, as well as at the Austrian Cultural Forum and the Museum of Rome in Trastevere.

Winner of the literary prize at the National Mother Tongue Competition, honored at the Turin Book Fair in the presence of the Ukrainian Consul in Italy.



CREDITS

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

ORIGINAL TITLE	Er Forchetta – Il volo di una vita al contrario
INTERNATIONAL TITLE	Er Forchetta – The Flight of a Life in Reverse
DIRECTOR	Zhanna Stankovych
COUNTRY	Italy
YEAR	2026
RUNNING TIME	46'54"
ORIGINAL LANGUAGE	Italian
SUBTITLES	English
GENRE	documentary
IMAGE FORMAT	black and white
VIDEO FORMAT	digital / Full HD
RESOLUTION	1920×1080
ASPECT RATIO	16:9 / 1.78:1
SOUND	stereo
PRODUCTION	Lastaria / Gruppo editoriale Albatros
WEBSITE	www.erforchetta.com
COPYRIGHT	© 2026 Lastaria / Gruppo editoriale Albatros

ARTISTIC AND TECHNICAL CREDITS

WRITTEN, DIRECTED AND NARRATED BY	Zhanna Stankovych
CINEMATOGRAPHY	Zhanna Stankovych
EDITING AND POST-PRODUCTION	Bernhard Gemassmer
SPECIAL ADVISOR	Enrico Graziani
ORIGINAL MUSIC	Zhanna Stankovych
PIANO	Zhanna Stankovych
VIOLIN	Oksana Tiutiunyk
SOUND ENGINEER	Nick Valente
ENGLISH SUBTITLES	Iris Gemassmer
GRAPHIC AND WEB DESIGN	Simone Zanco



