



# QUESTIONS OF IDENTITY

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## Acknowledgments

I'm very grateful to Professor Gianfranco Neri and Professor Marina Tornatora for collaborating on this interdisciplinary Diversity Course exchange between California College of the Arts (CCA) and Mediterranea University of Reggio Calabria (UniRC), Architecture Department and sustaining this opportunity for students interested in a fertile international dialog. I would also like to thank all the students from CCA and UniRC who were willing to work on this project and make an effort to participate in a cross-cultural conversation. A special thanks goes out to Alice, Yufan Niu and Nicole, Jiadai Liu, for collaborating in designing this class catalog. This class would not have been possible without the support from the California College of the Arts, Diversity Studies, Department Humanity and Science and our Provost, Tammy Rae Carland. I'm sincerely grateful.

Mariella Poli  
Senior Adjunct Professor  
CCA Diversity Studies, Humanity & Science Department

# SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES

California College of the Arts (CCA)

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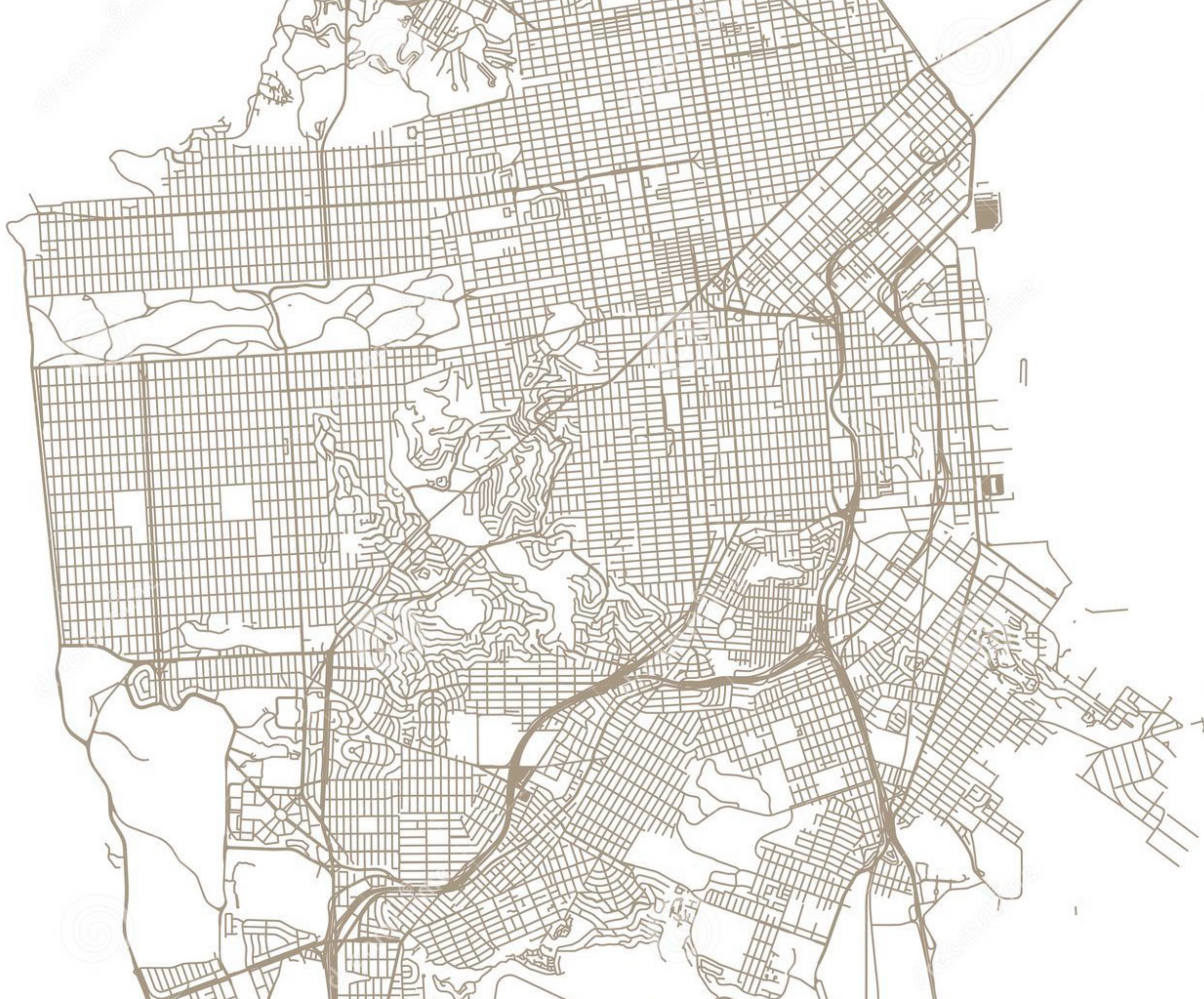
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# SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES

California College of  
the Arts (CCA)



# MULTICULTURALISM & IDENTITY

From a small village built in 1776 called Yerba Buena grew the city of San Francisco with its population from diverse cultures and religious backgrounds. The platform for the artworks on view in this catalog are a result of an Interdisciplinary and International Exchange Course of Design and Art, "Multiculturalism and Identity" from the Diversity Program, Department Humanity & Science at the California College of the Arts, San Francisco.

Diversity Studies Studios introduce students to the interrelations between race/ethnicity, art making and design practices. These courses complement the Diversity Studies Seminars with their hands-on approach in which themes of ethnic identity are incorporated into studio and community practices.

There is an on-line international discourse between the students from California College of the Arts and the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria, Architecture Department, Italy throughout the term. This conversation was based on an exchange of ideas emanating from student artwork in progress, based on a similar topic. This catalog and exhibition features the artworks from an interdisciplinary, international and culturally diverse group of artists/designers investigating current and historical perceptions concerning culture and identity in everyday life in San Francisco's diverse neighborhoods and in small villages called Bova with ancient Greek roots in the Calabria region of Southern Italy.

The individual views presented are focused on underrepresented communities and their complex relationship with regard to artistic and cultural production. Each body of work represents a unique perception according to each individual's experience, vision and culture identity. Areas and issues under examination

include the representation of space both physical and psychological in every conceivable site within our personal and physical boundaries, race, history, memory, tradition, religion, gender, age, identity, are also recurrent concerns that permeate our daily lives and contribute to our understanding of who we are as a culture.

This catalogue contains the manifestations of each participant's complete commitment and experiences from engaging with community organizations, neighborhood inhabitants in combination with personal perception, vision, interest and esthetics.

S.A. Prof. Mariella Poli

Diversity Program, Department of Humanity & Science  
California College of the Arts

Neighborhood:

**FILLMORE**



**Aron Au**  
Illustration, Senior

Aaron Au is a fourth year illustration student studying towards a Bachelor of Fine Arts. As a first generation Chinese-American, a lot of his work is influenced by Western and Eastern culture. He pulls ideas from his childhood and incorporates themes of nostalgia, play, and humor into his pieces. Growing up, he was inspired by how visual novels and comic books told stories through pictures. As an illustrator, he hopes to illuminate multicultural narratives in order to inspire others. When Au is not creating artwork, he plays the saxophone which often influences his work as well.



# FILLMORE SPICES

Jazz is the beautiful culture that blossomed from the cruel act of slavery. Through jazz, African Americans endured many injustices throughout history. During WWII President Roosevelt put executive order 9066 into effect, sending millions of Japanese Americans to internment camps. In San Francisco, African Americans took advantage of the vacant land and created a community amongst themselves. The Fillmore district became a big jazz cultural center and even earned the nickname “Harlem of the West”. However, efforts to gentrify the area continue to operate since post-WWII. Now, what once was a great jazz empire has now been reduced to empty condominiums. Although many of the original buildings and businesses are gone, the presence of jazz still resonates and is a big part of the Fillmore neighborhood identity.

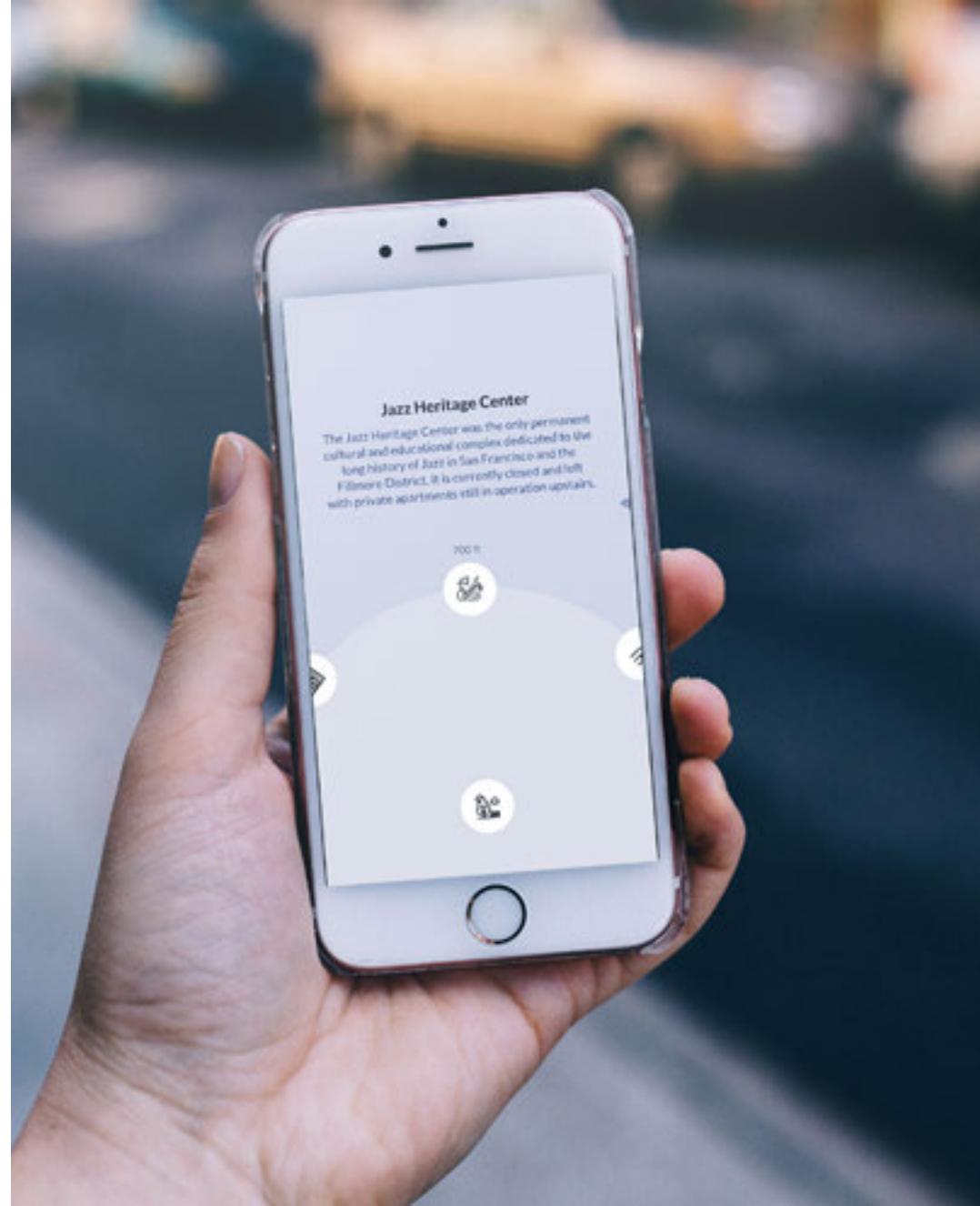
This project intends to commemorate what was lost in the Fillmore district and celebrate what is still present. Inspired by the local business Sheba Jazz Lounge, this composition is a response to the rich culture and sensations that Ethiopian cuisine brings to the table. The format of the jazz tune was developed from my interpretation of the cyclical history of Ethiopian spices and African people in America. By using both the senses of smell and hearing, I hope to replicate a small snippet of the Fillmore experience.





**Aosheng Ran**  
Interaction Design, Senior

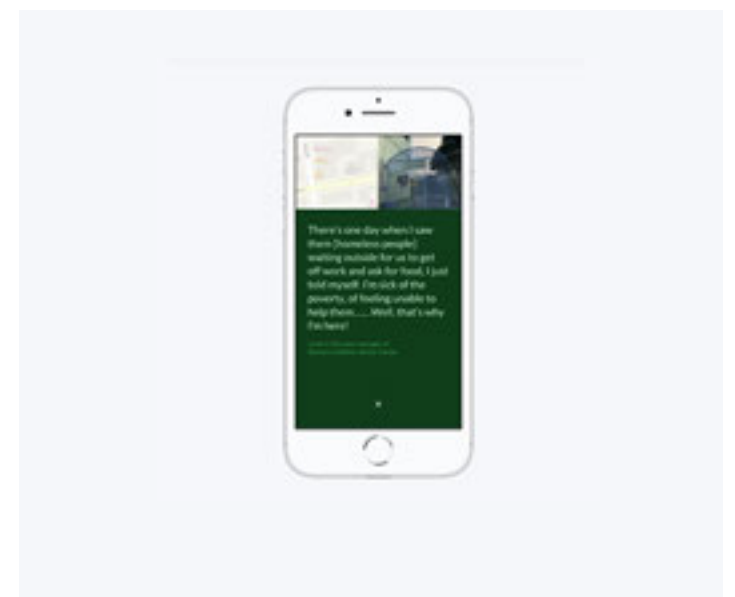
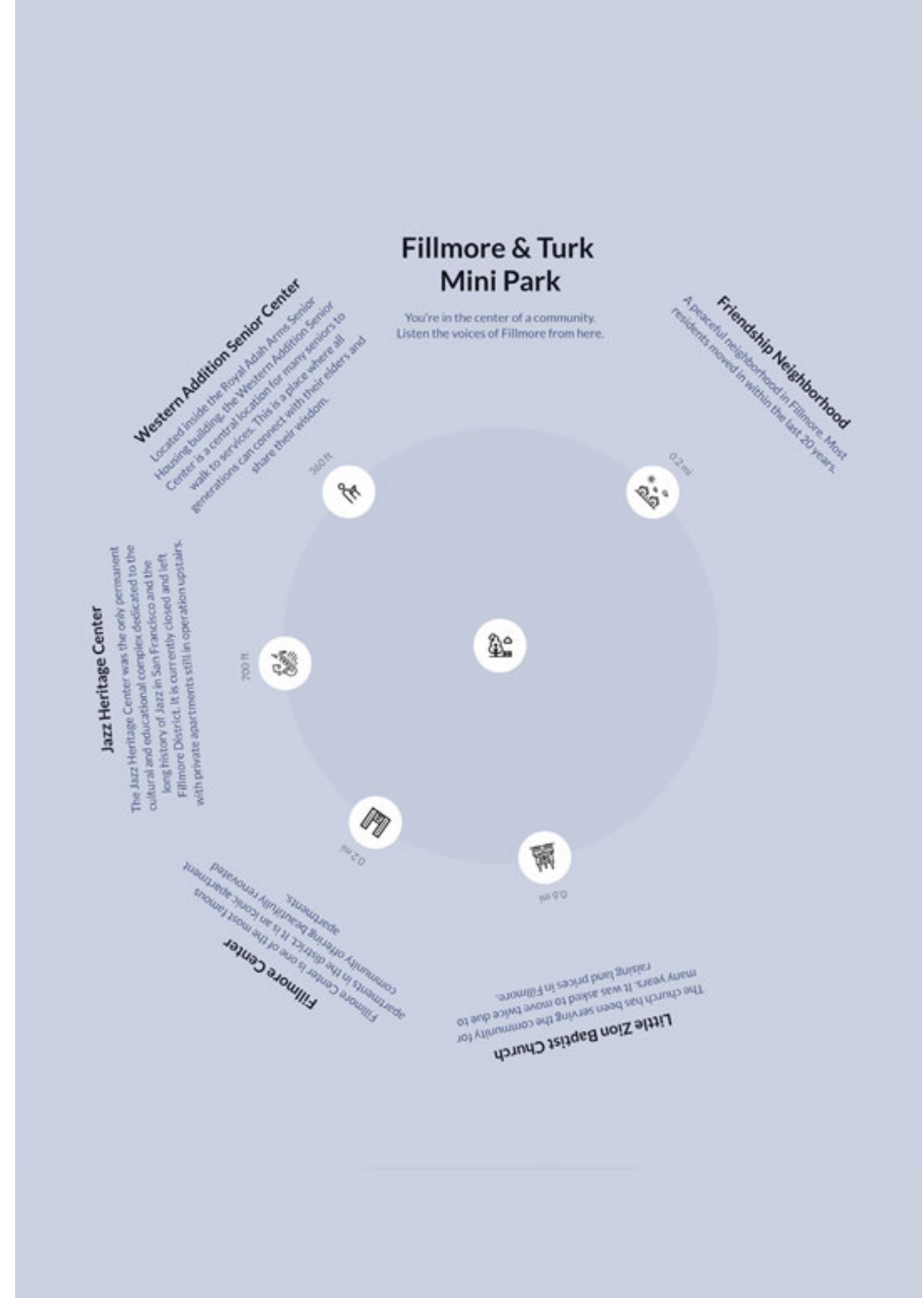
Aosheng Ran is a San Francisco-based interaction designer who uses systems thinking and storytelling to empower individuals and communities. Originally from China, he has worked in multiple non-profit organizations where he used design to encourage public conversations and civic engagement. As an interaction designer, he is committed to large-scale challenges in the present world. He specializes in creating conceptual frameworks to locate opportunities in people's experience and to facilitate behavior change. With strategic thinking, information visualization, and human-centered design, he is passionate about solving the world's most persistent problems and creating long-term social and cultural impact.



# COMMUNITY COMPASS

In the 20th century, many Fillmore residents moved out as a result of gentrification. The displacement of families and businesses has a profound impact on the culture in the district. However, the influence remains invisible in today's renovated Fillmore neighborhood consisted of shiny buildings and dirt-free streets. The attempts to reflect the history, such as the community statue in the public space, fell short when they failed to confront the past and represent the community.

The proposed park design includes interactive experiences that reflect the stories of the lost history and culture in today's Fillmore. Through scanning the QR code on the floor, the park visitors would be guided to access the excerpts from the interviews with Fillmore residents around the park. Each excerpt features a highlight quote from an interviewee and the associated location. The visitors would be able to move around to see all the quotations from different directions and connect themselves from the park to the collective memories in the rest of the neighborhood.





**Valeriya Velyka**  
B'Arch, 4th year

At the age of nine, she moved from Ukraine to Los Angeles with her mother. Outside of school, Valeriya took dance classes in various genres. In high school, Valeriya found her passion for Architecture after taking a drafting class. Ever since, she's been determined to combine her passion for music, performance, and design. After receiving her B'Arch Valeriya plans to design performance spaces. She believes that people spend most of their time indoors surrounded by architecture, unaware of the impact it has on their daily lives. Valeriya's goal in this field is to create something that will change the view of architecture as more than a series of buildings but as the emotions people feel in the spaces they occupy.



# TURK MINI PARK

My project is geared toward revealing missing or underrepresented stories about the African American Community. My proposal is to redesign the Mini Turk Park in Fillmore, in order to raise more awareness on important social issues. During the day the park will serve the community as a place of comfort while acknowledging the vibrant jazz culture in the 1940-60s. In the evenings, the park will act as a meeting place to share "missing" or obscured stories in the African American Community. Based on my research some important topics include: incarceration of American Americans, gentrification, business ownership, LGBTQ views and gender roles. Physically the park contains programs such as: intimate gathering space, seating, small stage, resting hut for homeless at night, greenery, and an expressive atmosphere.



## Interview at Turk Park

"Like much of San Francisco, it could be cleaner. I'm not a fan of the graffiti on the back wall"-Amber

"This park would make a good market, there are plenty of stores on this street." - Nicole

"I would love to see space transformed into a more active park. Not sure what would work best but it needs to be more welcoming." - Reinaldo

"This is already a gathering space, I've seen some small events being held for community groups." - Cinthia

"Usually an older crowd hang around here, or I see some homeless setting up for the night." - George

"This seems well thought out. I like the idea for adding the stage as well as seating, since the benches are gone"-Cinthia



Neighborhood:

**SOUTH OF MARKET**



**Maro Han**  
Architecture, 4th year

He was born and raised in South Korea. Before attending CCA, he served in both Korean and U.S. Army. However, Maro wished to connect with his creative childhood memories. He decided to study architecture while pursuing a concentration in digital craft. Maro is concerned with the housing crisis and architecture's role in the future. He's interested in how people can interact with architecture, and how it influences their daily lives. After graduation, he wishes to work for an architecture firm in Korea.



**Joanne Huang**  
Architecture, 4th year

Joanne Huang is an architecture designer who is currently attending California College of the Arts as a senior student. Originally from Taoyuan, Taiwan, Joanne started her interest in spatial design with Landscape Architecture where she focused on human behavior and activity within the environment of sustainable living. Her work involved cultural concern and social engagement, encouraging people to experience and interact with space.



11TH & HOWARD ST.

Flea Market  
+  
Public Kitchen



5TH & HOWARD ST.

Playground  
+  
Book Trading



4TH & BRANNAN ST.

Gallery  
+  
Workshop

# POP-UP SPACES

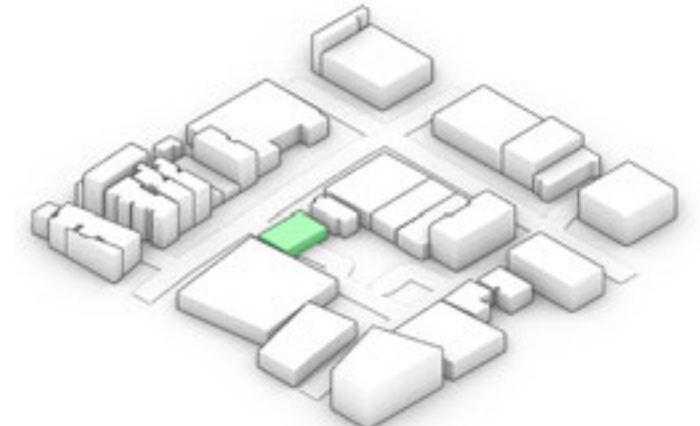
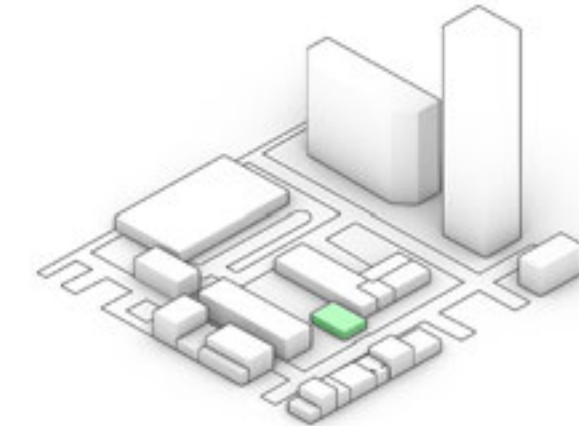
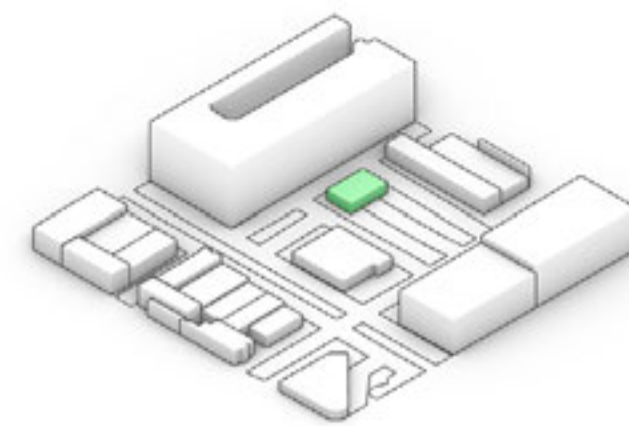
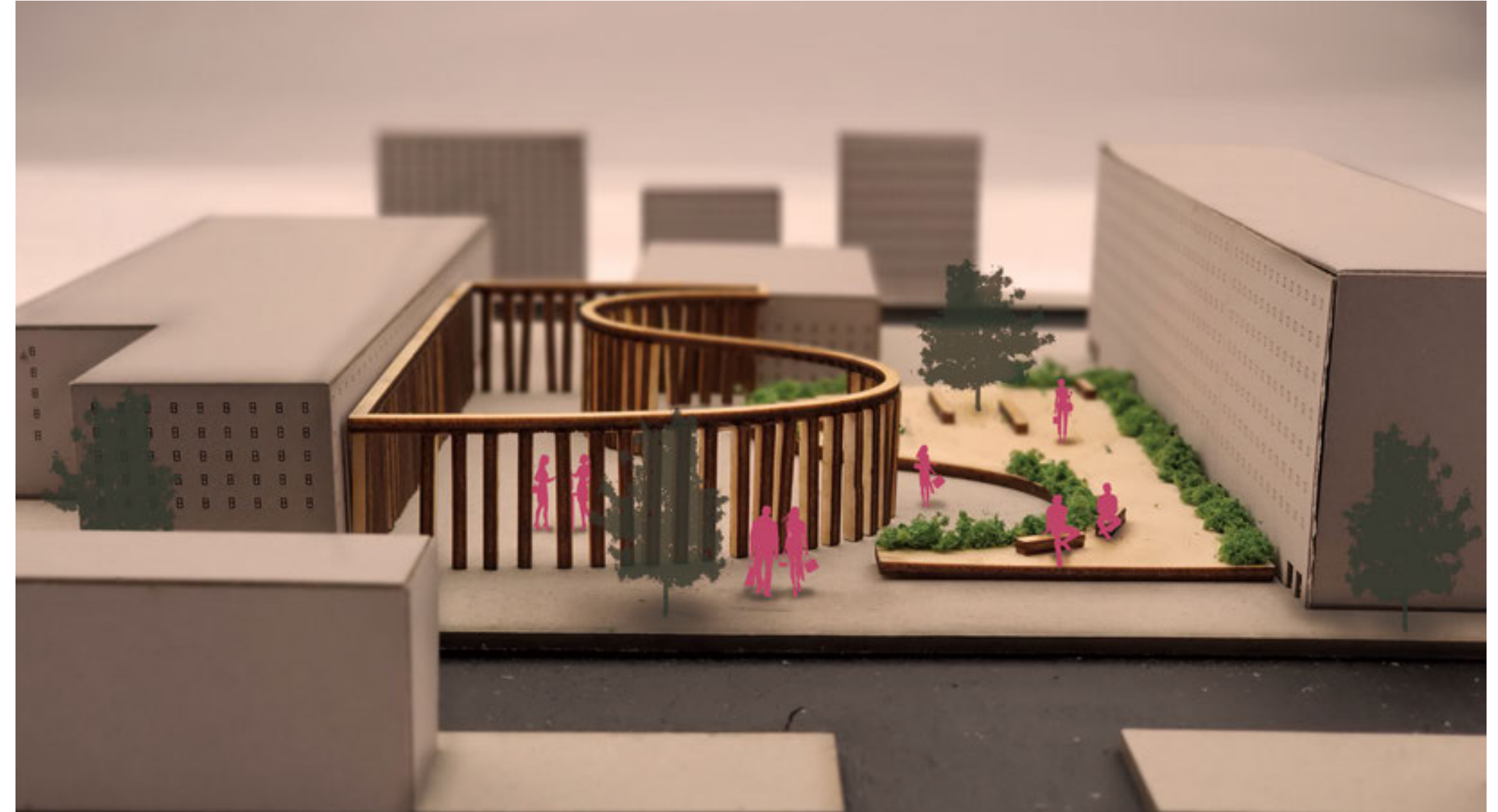
Soma has become a fast-changing neighborhood in recent years. People with different races, classes, gender, and generations are living under the housing crisis and gentrification. The building environment and living conditions are gradually going the opposite direction as the economic growth in the area which has been shown as high-end apartments, vacant parking lot, homeless population.

Through our research, we found that the public space such as parks or playgrounds indeed play an important role for community engagement. However, those existing public spaces were not well functioning as they were set in the first place. Thus, our project intention is focusing on how people can use some vacant space in the city more efficiently and encouraging engagement between neighborhoods.

First, use the parking lots as the space to open up events by renting them for a certain amount of time to provide pop-up space for the neighborhood to gather and share their foods, goods, and knowledge. Secondly, incorporating several programs; for example, flea market and public kitchen, booking trading and playground, gallery and workshop with our design which is the Yin and Yang concept.

Yin and Yang is a light-weight wooden structure within negative and positive space, shaped by the division of S curve in the center axis. The focus of the concept is imagining human activity with different types of programs in the public space under outdoor and (semi-)indoor conditions. Also, it is available for assembling in terms of materiality and its spatial layout.

By increasing the interaction from people to people and different neighborhoods, it will bring up people's awareness of the surroundings and their communities.





Neighborhood:

**MISSION**



**Paloma Diaz**  
Illustration, Senior

Paloma Diaz is an illustrator from Dallas, Texas currently pursuing her BFA in illustration as well as a minor in Visual Studies at California College of the Arts in San Francisco, California.

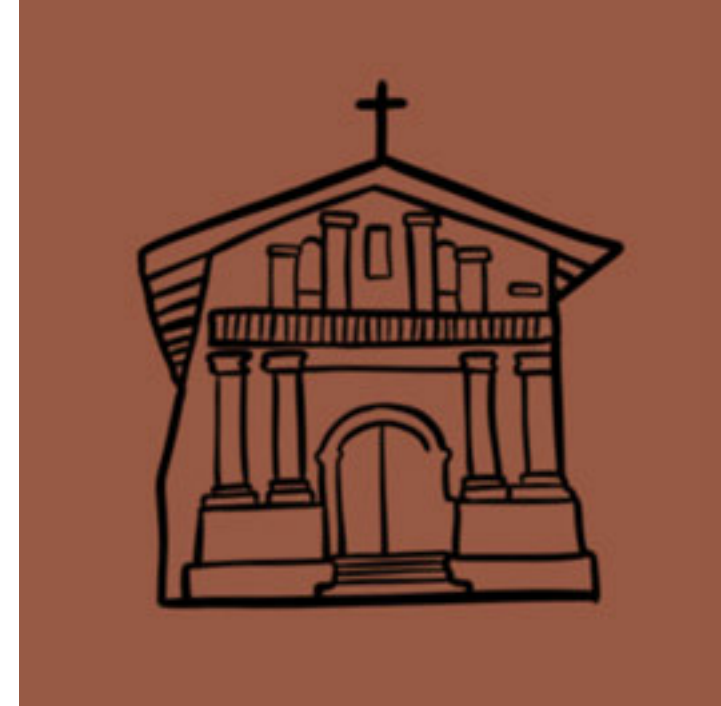
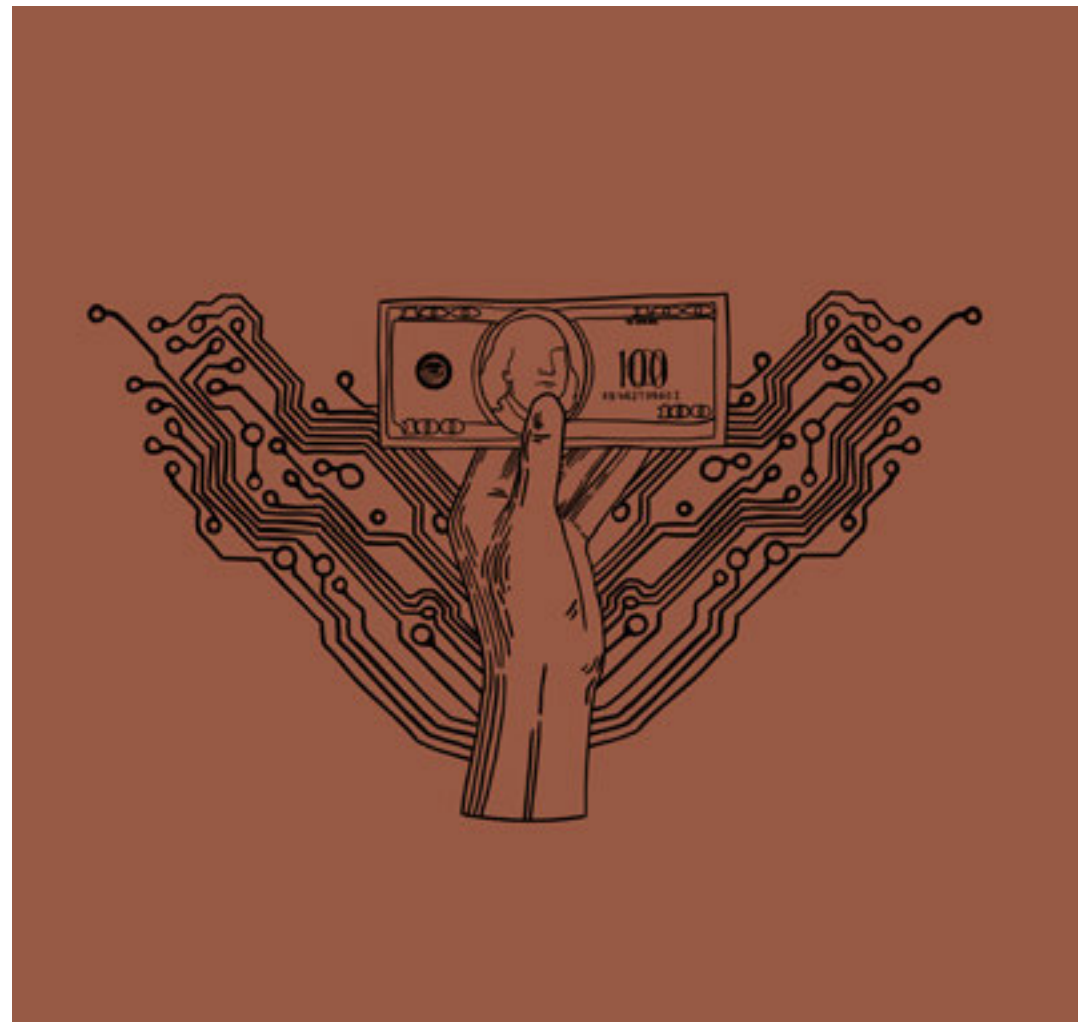
As a first generation student, Diaz strives to represent her heritage in the best way possible through her art making practices. Growing up surrounded by negative stereotypical assumptions about the LatinX community in Texas, she was forced to assimilate with American culture. It has become imperative for her to represent what it means to be a bisexual Latina in order to reclaim her identity. Diaz's work is concerned with authentically incorporating diversity and intersectional feminism. She creates purposeful and aesthetically pleasing visuals in hopes of embracing the rich identity of marginalized groups.



# EL ROBO DE LA MISSION

The Mission District has a cyclical history of being built on colonization. What was originally home to the Ohlone tribe became property of the Spanish, undertaken by Manifest Destiny, an attraction during the Gold Rush, and now thanks to the internet it is being infiltrated by techies. Homes and businesses owned by working class latino communities are being pushed out due to competitive housing prices as affluent, white individuals move in. As a result, there is a change in culture and a spike in homeless rates.

In order to raise awareness of this situation, I created this tapestry; a tactile object that functions as a flag signaling the distress of the Mission. It reminds us of the loss of culture and urgent need for its preservation by illustrating the narrative of gentrification happening in the Mission district of San Francisco. Bringing this issue to light will hopefully inform and inspire affirmative action.





**Madison Collins**  
Illustration, Senior

Madison Collins is an Illustration student from Sacramento, California. Primarily working in gouache and watercolor she creates detailed paintings that aim to present a story or convey a moment in history. Some of her previous works include an illustrated book on outrageous medical treatments throughout history and illustrating a collection of antiques passed down from her grandfather. In the future she hopes to become a full time freelance Illustrator continuing to work with themes from history.



1990's



# A COGNITIVE GENTRIFICATION'S MAP

The Mission District has historically been home to the Latino community in SF. In recent years the tech boom in Silicon Valley has drawn in many young white tech workers driving up the cost of living in the area. This increase in living costs has displaced many local people and is threatening the survival of small businesses.

For my project I created three maps of the Mission District. One that highlights small businesses and depicts the current state of gentrification in the area. It charts which areas are most gentrified, most at risk for exclusion, and where displacement is currently ongoing. The map also highlights local organizations working to combat the negative effects of gentrification. The second map presents the level of gentrification that existed during the 1990s when the tech boom was just getting started. Finally, the third presents a look at new businesses in the Mission District. I hope the contrast that exists between these maps allows people to see the change that has occurred and brings awareness to the issue of gentrification.

2019







**Shanti Moreano Freire**  
Textiles, Senior

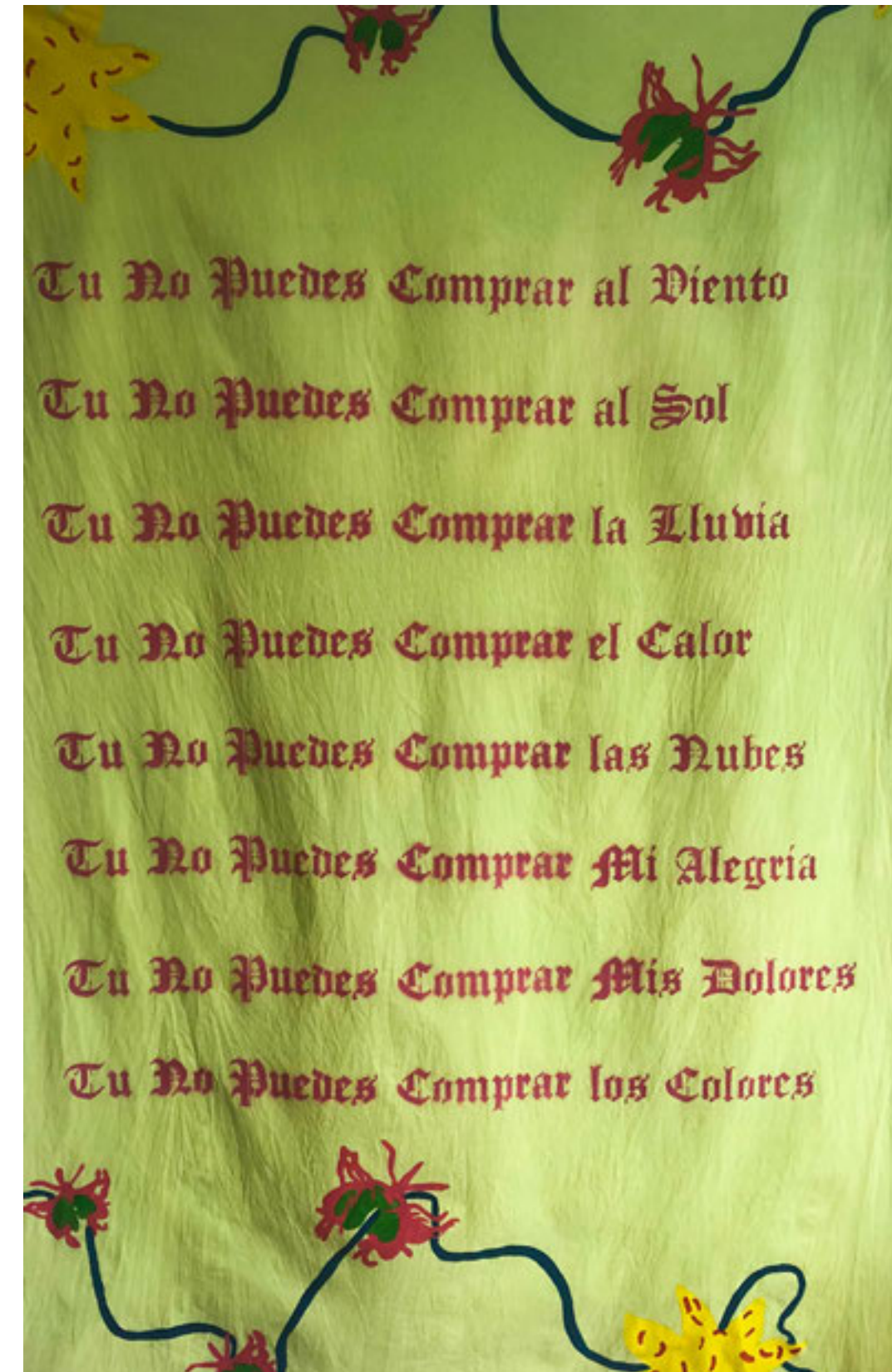
She is a Junior Textiles major at California College of the Arts. Born in Ecuador but growing up in Minnesota was challenging as her surroundings often seemed to oppose each other and the need to assimilate to Western culture became crucial to fitting in. Her practice revolves around the tensions and experiences that she went through as a kid. She explores the hybrid identity that comes from being from neither here nor there as well as uses color to create her own definition of Latinx identity utilizing mediums such as embroidery, weaving, and dyeing.

# AQUÍ SE COMPARTE, LO MÍO ES TUYO

The Mission has been a cultural hub for Central and South American immigrants as they have formed a community embracing their culture. With the rise in gentrification and Silicon Valley moving into San Francisco, the Mission neighborhood is rapidly changing, and some of these changes involve displacing the people who helped build it and who keep it alive. The beautiful browns, pinks, and oranges are being overtaken by white spaces. For this project, I would like to bring the colorful of Latinx culture back into the neighborhood through music.

Music and dance are part of Latinx and Hispanic culture and can be used as a creative medium to speak out for their rights and tell their stories. Calle 13, a Puerto Rican band, has a song called Latinoamerica, that personifies the continent, embracing the culture while simultaneously describing the hardships of Latinx struggles. For the project, I want to create three panels that have figures drawn on them that express the lyrics of Latinoamerica.

My goal for the panels drawn images is to provide the Mission community with a visual sense of support. When walking through the Mission, murals are abundant and give a clear narrative of the things happening. However, often times, a sense of accomplishment and pride can be difficult to acknowledge because of the constant, day to day, fighting of immigrants becoming normalized. Much like a mural, I want these visual panels to be for the Latinx/Chincax community as a reminder of their strength and hardwork.



Aquí Se Comparte  
Lo Mío Es  
Tuyo



El Jugo  
De Mi Lucha  
No Es  
Artificial



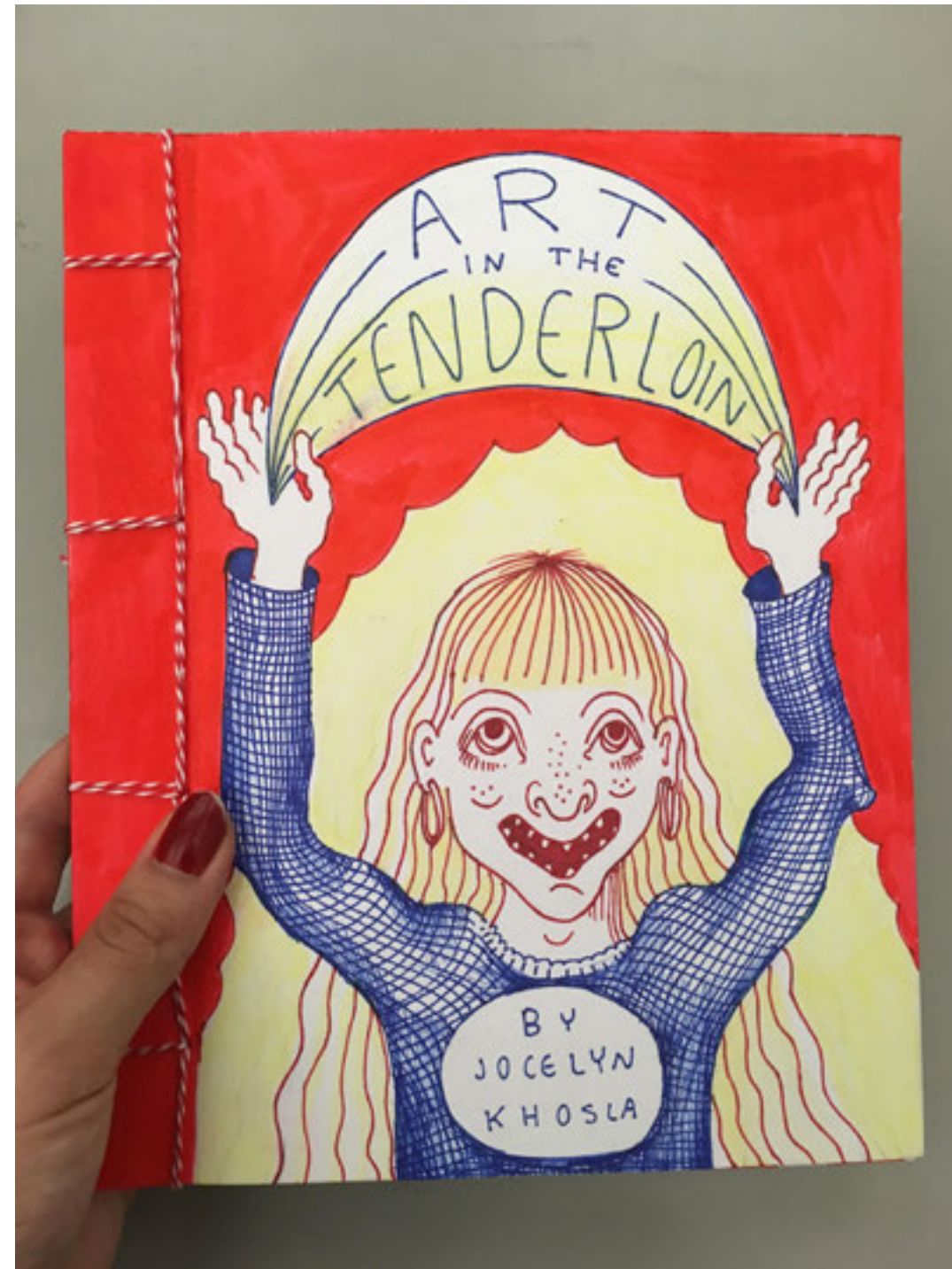
Neighborhood:

**TENDERLOIN**



**Jocelyn Khosla**  
Painting, Senior

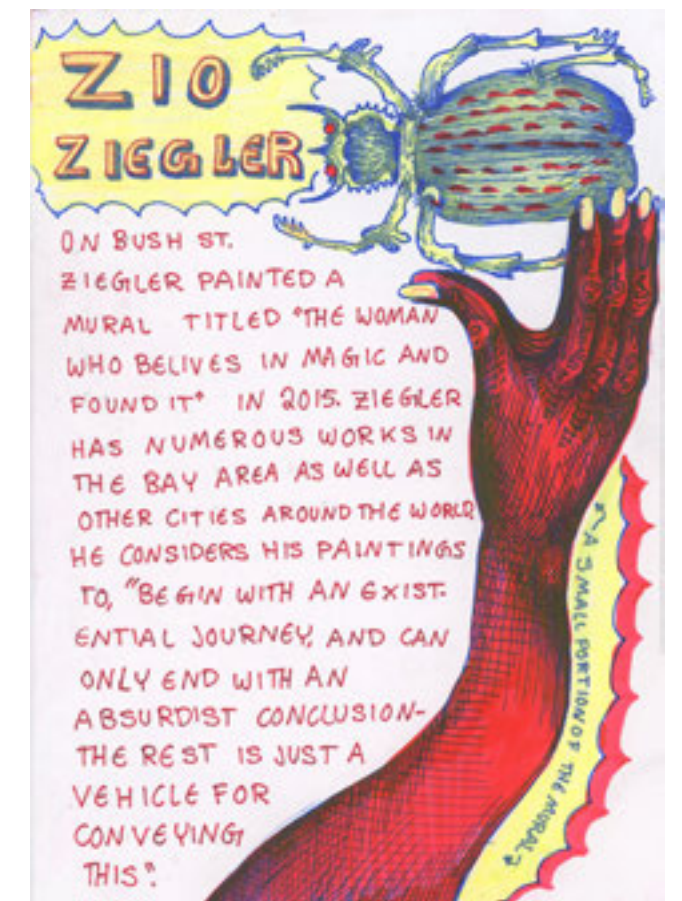
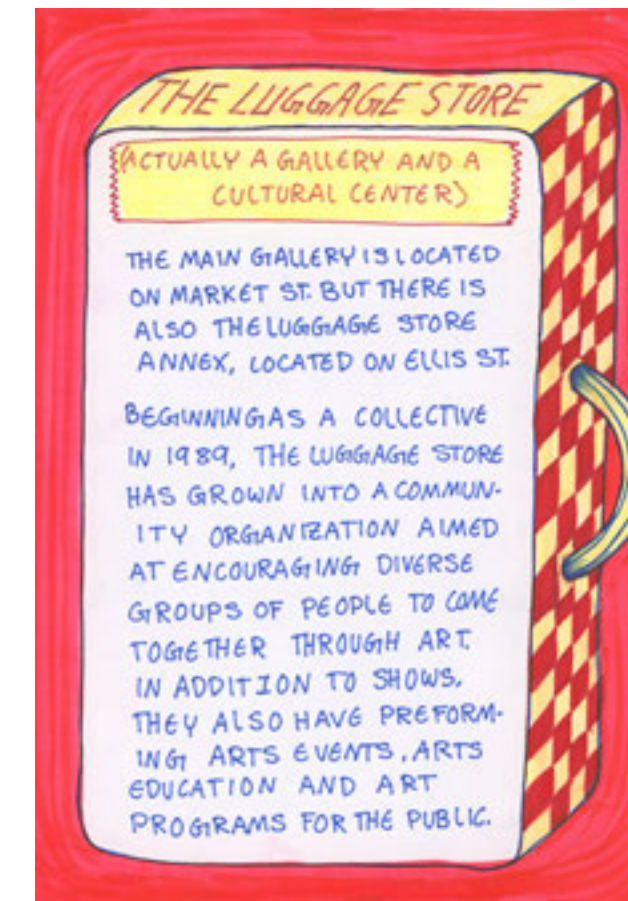
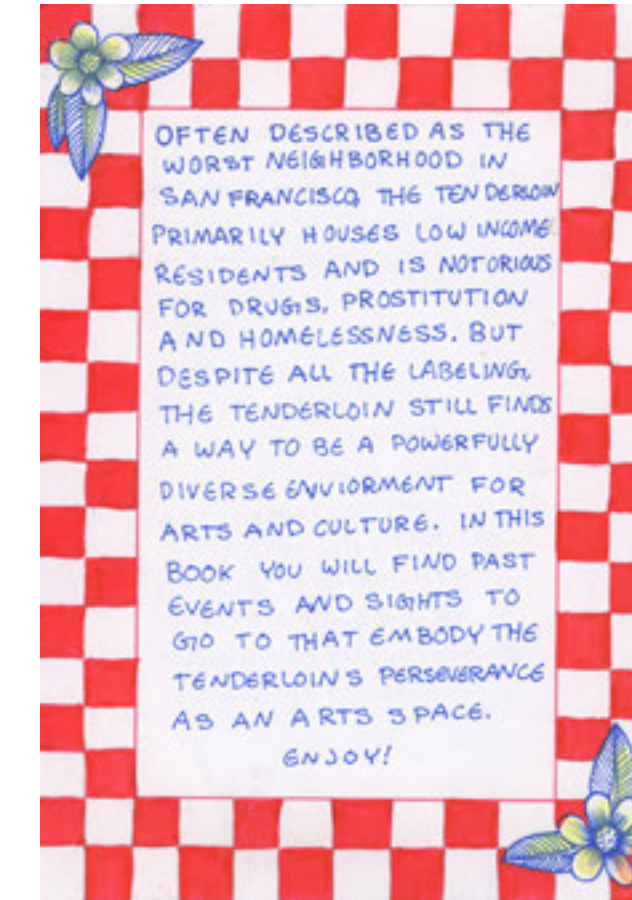
Jocelyn is a 22 year old Painting and Drawing major. Despite being in this major, she also enjoys sculpting in clay, cardboard and junk. Throughout her life, Jocelyn has found pleasure in making her own objects. Currently she makes her own sketchbooks based on medieval ones, clothes inspired by performance art and she is in the midst of making a series of demon masks out of throw away items. All of these projects are aimed at finding connections betweenness of the natural world and creating narrative structures within her artwork.



# ART IN THE TENDERLOIN

The Tenderloin is known for being the “bad part of town”. The people who live and work there are often those who have no other place to go. Primarily it houses low income residents and is notorious for drug use, prostitution and homelessness. Due to the rising tech industry in San Francisco, the Tenderloin has become even more isolated and forgotten by tourists and even people who have lived in San Francisco for many years.

Despite being so overlooked, the Tenderloin is one of the most diverse environments for arts and culture in the Bay Area. For my project, I wanted to examine and bring to light this exciting art scene of the Tenderloin. Aimed as being a guide for tourists to find new places, the book, Art in the Tenderloin, includes seven central sights including the The Luggage Store, The Tenderloin National Forest, Swim Gallery, a mural by Zio Zigler, Modernism Inc., Jessica Silverman Gallery, Tenderloin Museum and a map in the back to help travelers navigate their way. Amidst the colorful illustrations and descriptions of events and cultural icons of the neighborhood, Art in the Tenderloin guides newcomers to engage with the powerful spirit of the Tenderloin art scene while bringing the Tenderloin the attention it deserves.



## MODERNISM GALLERY

FOUNDED IN 1979, MODERNISM FOCUSES PRIMARILY ON THE RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE, BUT ALSO INCLUDES DADA, CUBIST, SURRELIST, VORTICIST AND GERMAN EXPRESSIONIST ART. MODERNISM WAS THE FIRST GALLERY IN THE BAY AREA TO SHOW ANDY WARHOL AND THE FIRST IN THE BAY AREA TO SHOWCASE ART OF THE RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE MOVEMENT. ALL TOGETHER, THEY HAVE HAD MORE THAN 450 EXHIBITIONS SHOWING BOTH HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY ART.

## JESSICA SILVERMAN GALLERY

JESSICA SILVERMAN FOUNDED THE GALLERY AFTER HER MA. IN CURATORIAL PRACTICE AT CALIFORNIA COLLEGE OF THE ARTS IN 2008. THE GALLERY FOCUSES ON SUPPORTING ARTISTS WHOSE WORK WOULD APPEAL TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS. SO FAR, THEIR ARTISTS HAVE BEEN ACQUIRED BY TATE, SF MOMA, NEW YORK MOMA, THE DE YOUNG, AND THE BERKELEY ART MUSEUM (TO NAME A FEW).

## TENDERLOIN MUSEUM

ORIGINALLY IT WAS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION BUT IT CHANGED INTO THE TENDERLOIN MUSEUM IN 2015, WITH THEIR CENTRAL MISSION BEING TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC OF THE TENDERLOIN'S HISTORY. THE ARTISTS AND ARTWORKS THEY CHOOSE TO SHOWCASE ARE OFTEN REFLECTIVE OF THE MELTING POT THAT THE TENDERLOIN WAS, AND IS.

## THE TENDERLOIN MUSEUMS WALKING TOURS

DAY: VISIT WHERE MUHAMAD ALI BOXED AND SEE WHERE THE GAY AND LESBIAN CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT GREW ITS ROOTS IN SAN FRANCISCO.

NIGHT: SEE WHAT WAS ONCE LGBTQ+ CLUBS, GAMBLING JOINTS, AND BROTHELS TO GET A FEELING OF WHAT MADE THE TENDERLOIN. (ADULTS ONLY)

## MAP OF THE TENDERLOIN

HAVE FUN!

THANK YOU!



**Xuezhi Wu**  
Industrial Design, Senior

He is from Shanghai, China. Started to do Chinese calligraphy since he was only four, like the color of black and white. Play lots of tennis in his spare time, found it to be fun and challenging. Have that idea to create, make his own toys and tools since he was little, finally able to choose to California College of the art to Pursue his Industrial design dream.



# TENDERLOIN WHEEL

Tenderloin district is a very complicated area in San Francisco. It is the place and neighborhood for the local residents, many are poor or low income families. It is also the place where you have a lot of homeless population, crimes happening. There are roughly over 3,500 kids lived in the tenderloin district, most are asian and pacific islanders. Parents worried, concerned about the safety and future of their children, tried to create a safer and more inspirational environment for their children's growth and lives within the neighborhood. I want to learn more about the parents and the youth in the neighborhood, try to see what I can do to help the kids. Enrich their after school activities, letting them have a better after school life. Although the space and resources are limited to the children in the tenderloin, I think letting them have fun, and just being kids is absolutely possible and worth doing.

The object I am target and want to improve on are the current bag shelves of the after school program in tenderloin. I believe by creating, using space more efficiently, changing and making the environment of the after school program better, The kids will then have a better place to study, play and learn. The changing and updating of the surrounding objects can be super beneficial to not only all the classrooms and programs but also to the kids. Helping them to form their good habits while having their fun.



*Tenderloin wheel*  
the fun and efficient bags storage for children

Neighborhood:

**CHINATOWN**



**Alice Niu**  
Graphic Design, Senior

Alice Niu is a graphic designer and visual artist who is currently a senior design student at California College of the Arts. Her work prioritizes visual communication design and sustainability, as well as the interaction between human and design. Because of her experience of growing up in several different cities, she gets interested in the impact of environment on individuals from family to culture, and curious about what constitutes a unique person. Besides design, she is a huge fan of fashion and intrigued by its culturally and politically component that drives diverse fashion trends.



# MEMORY OF FESTIVITY

Chinatown of San Francisco was rebuilt as a commercial and tourist center after the 1906 earthquake and its resulting fires. Even though these western-friendly remakes helped shift the public image of Chinese immigrants, it also perpetuated stereotypes about Chinese culture. Ultimately, these places are neither Chinese nor American, historically authentic or fully imaginative, but something in between, unique cultural and architectural mixtures of both Chinese and American history. The majority of Chinese immigrants, however, have been maintaining their culture by celebrating traditional Chinese festivals. A substantial part of Chinese festivity is using the unique calendar system which is officially known as the Rural Calendar (農曆; 农历; 'farming calendar'), or Lunar Calendar (陰曆; 阴历; 'yin calendar').

As a Chinese who was born and raised in Mainland China, I determine my identity based on the traditional culture by which I have been implicitly influenced. Through my research on the Chinatown community, I find out that traditional festivals are pretty significant in terms of the family reunion. Festivity is not only a part of Chinatown culture but also a memory of family and friends in the Chinatown community. Even though the younger generation of Chinese immigrants is raised within western society and may be less connected to the culture of traditional festivals, they are still more or less acknowledged Chinese traditional festivals by their parents or grandparents. Therefore, this project is to illustrate Chinese festivals and Chinatown culture and to recall memories. The greeting is a vital custom of practicing Chinese festivals so that this project uses the form of the greeting cards. This series consisting of 5 substantial Chinese festivals: Spring Festival, Lantern Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival, and Dongzhi Festival. The folk paper-cut style of the cards symbolizes Chinese culture and festivity. There is one greeting sentence inside each card in English and Chinese with Cantonese pronunciation.





**Nicole Lyu**  
Illustration, Senior

Nicole Lyu is a fourth year illustration major student in California College of Arts. Her work is based on her interest in literature and music, she wants to express her feelings and the image in her head when she was moved by a nice book, a poem or a song. She wants to capture and keep that magical moment. She was born and raised in China, which have a great influence on her style of drawing. But she don't want to be stereotyped by that, there are so many beautiful art out there that she don't want to miss.



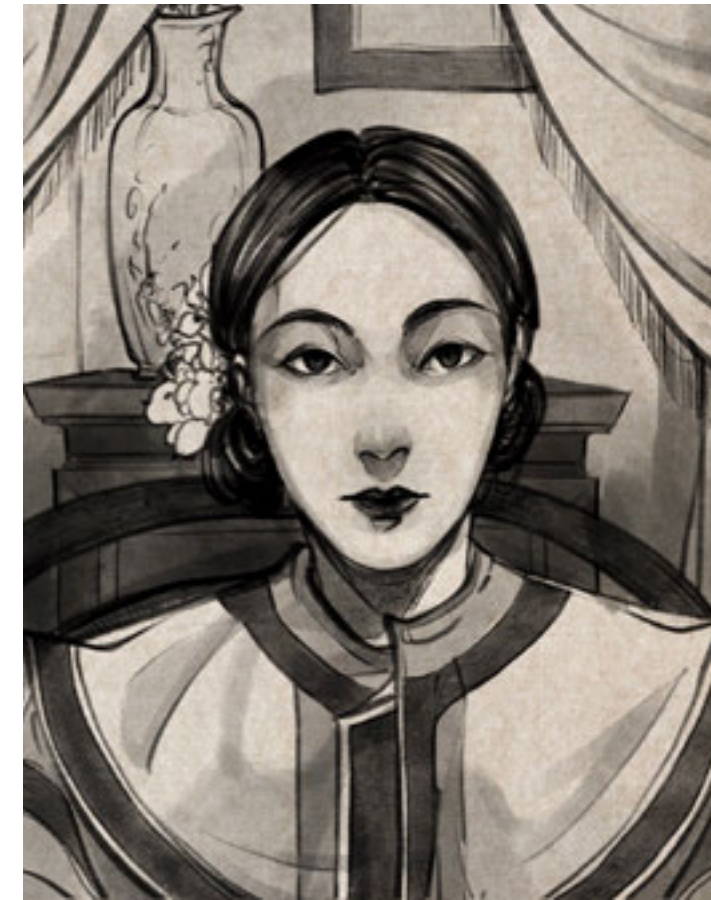
# CHINATOWN'S TIMELINE ILLUSTRATION

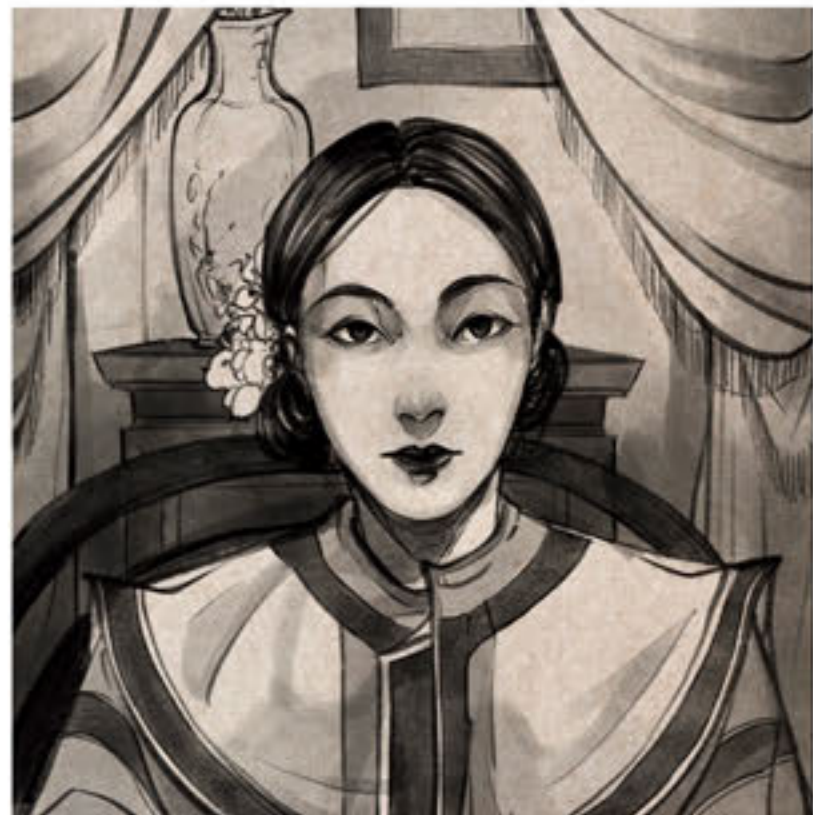
Many children in Chinatown were raised by their grandparents in China before the age of 5. Their parents were poor when their kids were born and they didn't have the ability to raise them in America, only choice they had was to work harder and earn enough money to bring back their child. These kids were called "Satellite Children", like a satellite in space, these children leave and return to the starting point.

Although a short separation between children and their parents do not always cause damage to their relationship, but these children sometimes show several signs of trauma. I believe one solution to that is to engage children in conversations about their own experiences.

"They're always looking for someone who share the same experience with them, a sense of where they are and who's there to protect them."—Elizabeth Culkin, principal of 176 elementary school

So for my project, I want to do a series of illustrations about the history of Chinatown, to show the children how their elder generation fought their way out to build their own home in a whole new country.







**Tiffany Kim**  
Illustration, Senior

Tiffany Kim is an illustrator who is a junior student at California College of the Arts. Her work is about transforming the complex world into a simple one. Tiffany, who has lived in major cities all her life, wants to express herself through simple images and drawings. Although she is very used to living in a complex society, she finds it easy to create something simple yet has quality and meanings.

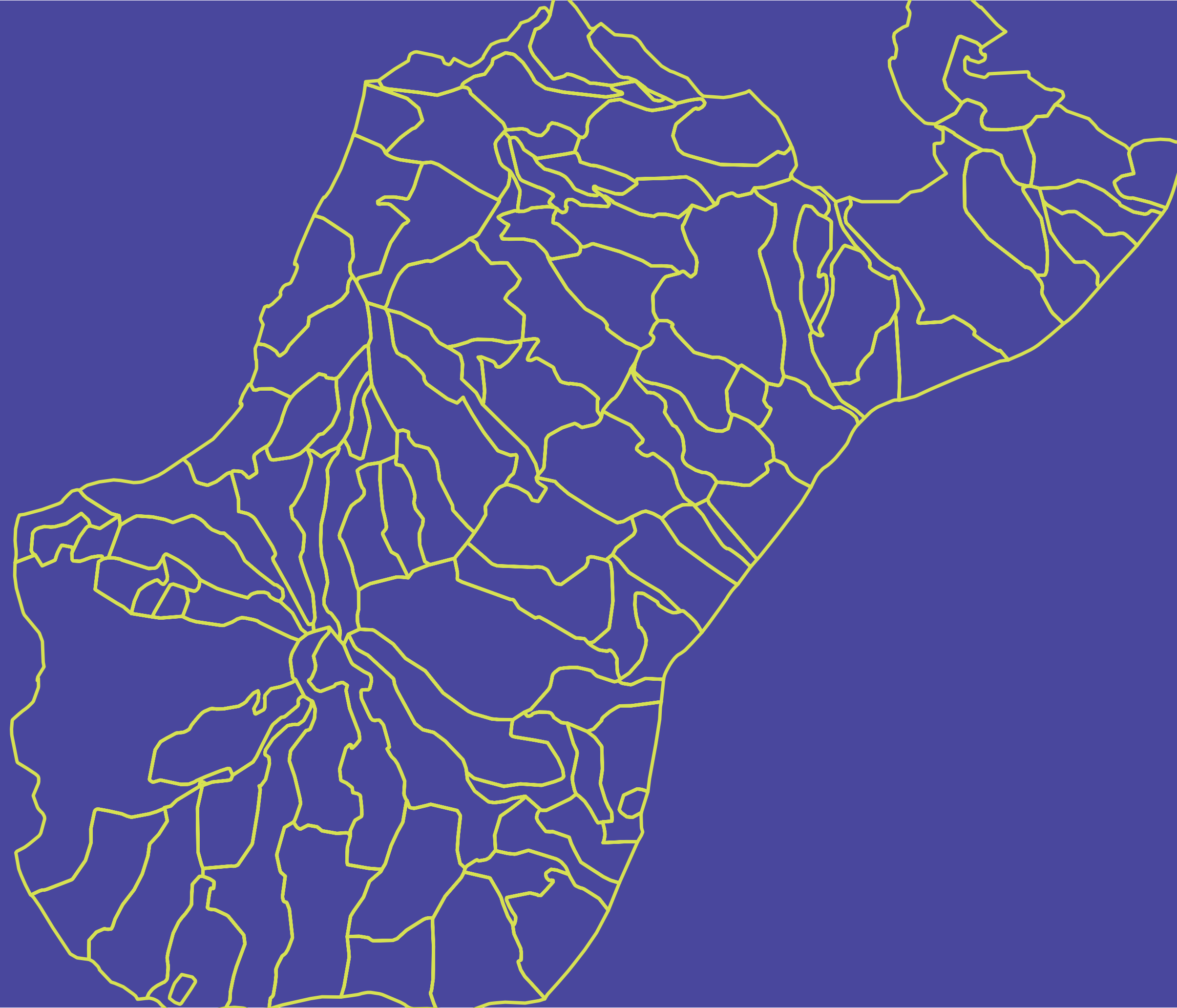


# UNTITLED

Tenderloin district is a very complicated area in San Francisco. It is the place and neighborhood for the local residents, many are poor or low income families. It is also the place where you have a lot of homeless population, crimes happening. There are roughly over 3,500 kids lived in the tenderloin district, most are Asian and Pacific Islanders. Parents worried, concerned about the safety and future of their children, tried to create a safer and more inspirational environment for their children's growth and lives within the neighborhood. I want to learn more about the parents and the youth in the neighborhood, try to see what I can do to help the kids. Enrich their after school activities, letting them have a better after school life. Although the space and resources are limited to the children in the tenderloin, I think letting them have fun, and just being kids is absolutely possible and worth doing.

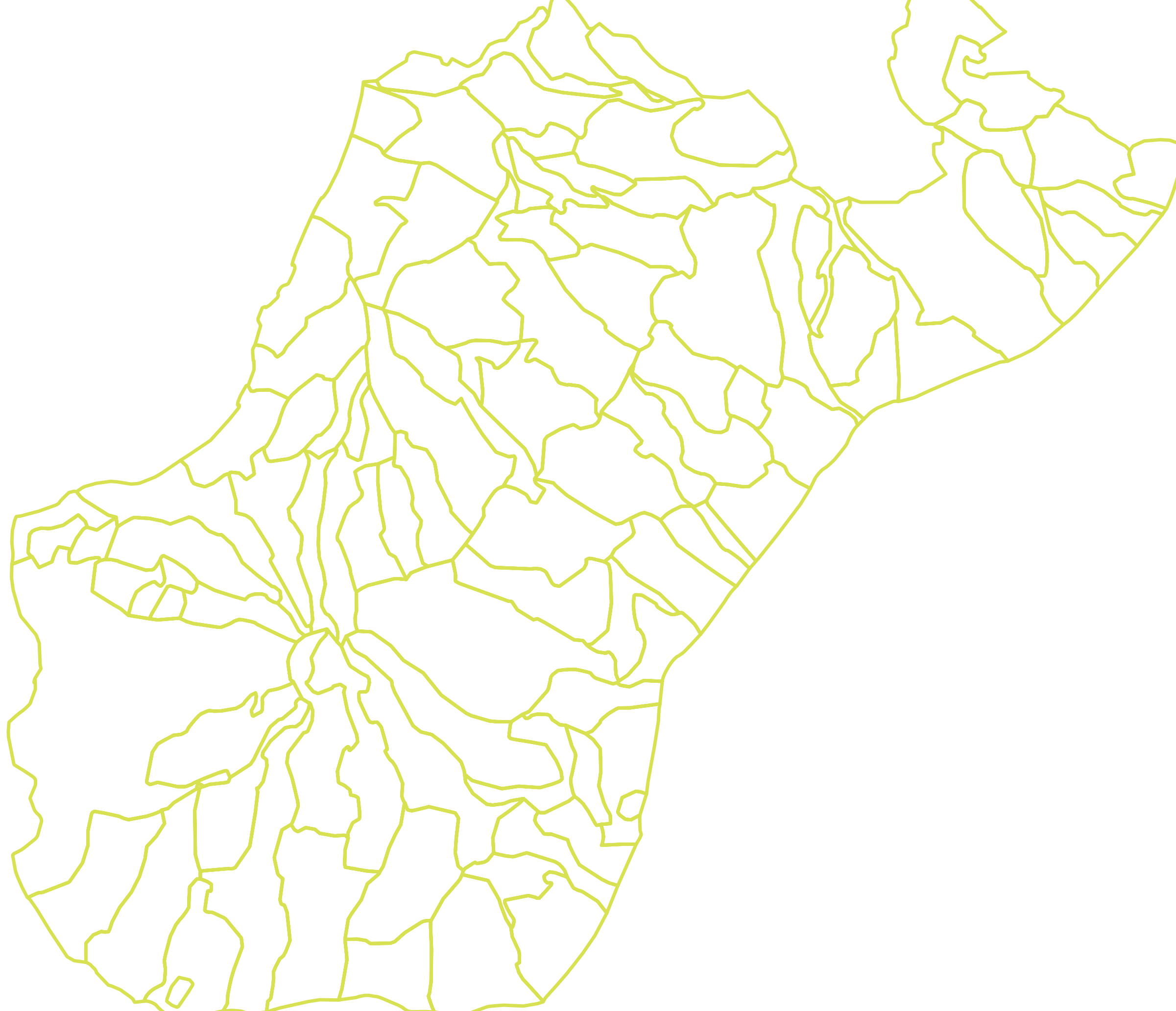
The object I am targeting and want to improve on are the current bag shelves of the after school program in Tenderloin. I believe by creating, using space more efficiently, changing and making the environment of the after school program better, the kids will then have a better place to study, play and learn. The changing and updating of the surrounding objects can be super beneficial to not only all the classrooms and programs but also to the kids. Helping them to form their good habits while having their fun.





**BOVA,  
REGGIO  
CALABRIA,  
ITALY**

Mediterranea University  
of Reggio Calabria (UniRC)



# STRATEGIES FOR VILLAGES REVERSE EXODUS

The students focus on the issue of the “inland areas” that represent a significant portion of Italy, comprising more than 60% of the national territory and affecting about a quarter of the total population with a dense and complex network of municipalities (53%). Today, the small inland realities acquire a new light expressing an idea of urban beauty that hardly can be find in the suburbs of our cities, such as the Greek area of the Ionian coast of Calabria, where are located the abandoned or semi-abandoned villages of Bova, Pentedattilo, Roghudi, Bagaladi and Palizzi.

These realities, characterized by a strong link between the landscape, geographical, and historical identities, are a linguistic minority of the Greek Calabrian language.

The origins and the peculiar position on the slopes of Aspromonte mountain, make them unique, fragile places yet, not just because of the potential consequences due to the phenomenon of abandonment, but also for the territorial risks regarding their geological and orographic history.

The LaboratorioCondiviso (Shared Laboratory) attempts to understand the current condition of the village of Bova and the Greek area.

The students carried out photographic campaigns of the inhabitants, the village and the landscape, enriched with dialogues done with the residents, guardians of the Greek-Calabrian language of Bovesia, who welcomed the young researchers with the same spirit of hospitality as explained in the texts of the German glottologist.

Aware of the material as well as the immaterial heritage of Bova, after the first visit and getting in touch with the atmosphere of the place, the students returned several times to the sound, the musicality, the rhythm of the language, that still can be find in the tradition and among the inhabitants.

The LaboratorioCondiviso (Shared Laboratory) is imagined as a

place for open discussion that offer opportunities of knowledge exchange using the digital platform with an active participation of all Italian students, together with their colleagues from the California College of Arts in San Francisco.

Students were asked to construct a project based on three phases: knowledge, storytelling, planning of spaces dedicated to the Greek Calabrian language and linked to the Gerhard Rohlfs Museum, among the first scholars of this language.

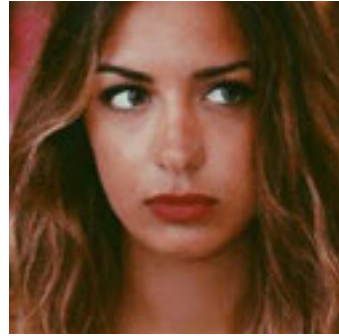
The students stimulated of this confrontation between the site visit and the sound of the words, are exploring the reasons that have allowed this continuity of history that still can be found in the texture of the materials of the houses, in the cultivated terraces with olive trees, in the wrinkles of the inhabitants' faces and in the gurgling of their arcane words up to the remains of the castle, the roads that goes around the Byzantine churches and the houses concentrated in the Giudecca district.

The project proposals outline new ways of linking small ruins re-functionalized in a diffused hotel and “chips” of an ideal virtual museum involving the entire village, giving identity to the community placed under the monumental mass of the Castle.

The stops of the route – accented by architectural devices that intercept panoramic views – are marked by hybrid architectures that host spaces for craft production, scientific research as well as residence for scholars that constantly are in bigger number because of the interest to learn a language that has been handed down since Homer time.

Prof. R. Marina Tornatora  
Mediterranea University of Reggio Calabria-UniRC,  
Architecture and Territory Department-dArTe

Arch. Alessandro De Luca, Arch. Francesco Leto,  
Arch. Cristiana Penna, Arch. Francesca Schepis



**Bisogni Greta**

She is 23 years old and she was born in Vibo Valentia. She is studying Architecture at the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria.

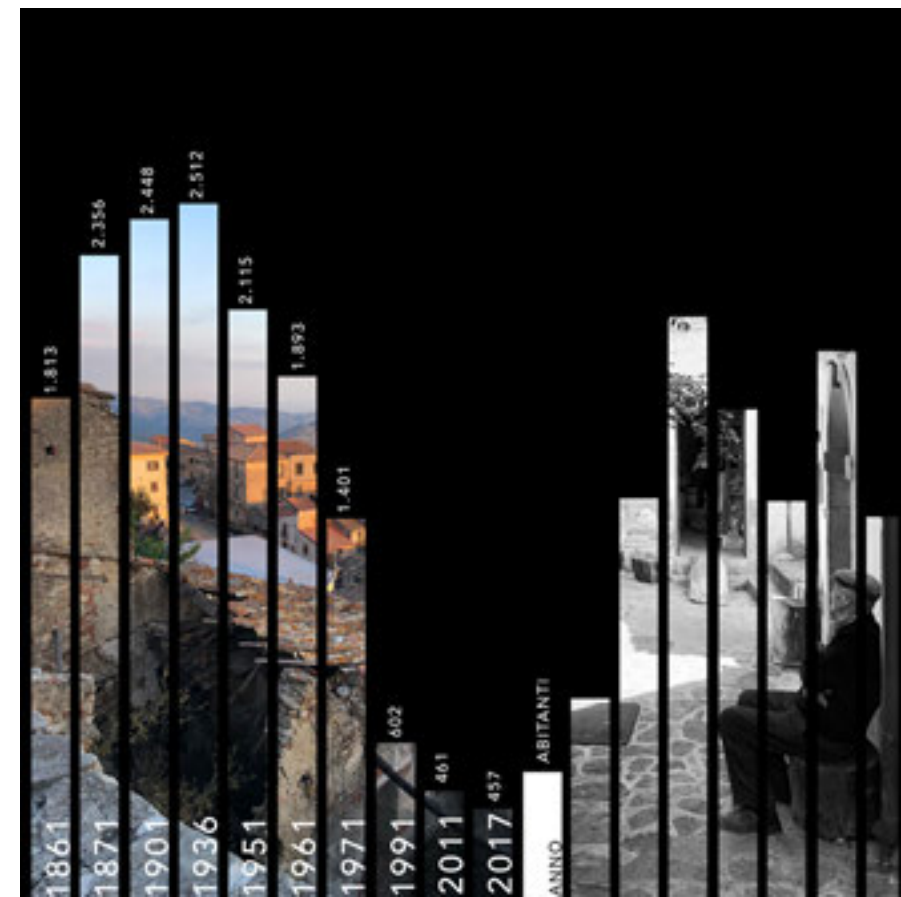
In the last years she had the opportunity to improve her skills participating to many projects, exhibitions and workshops such as:

the seminary "Un cantiere sullo stretto", Christian Marinotti's workshop

From Cezanne to Duchamp the invention of contemporary art,

some exhibitions organized with the university association of which she is a member (MUSA).

Her interests are architecture, art, photography, fashion, interior design,



# THE SOUND OF BOVA

Silence, absence, solitude. These are the first impressions arriving in the village of Bova. The attention thus focuses on the noises in the background: a mountain that flows, a bell that rings, the voices of the few inhabitants who gather in the square. But above all there is history and culture: from the Norman Castle to the Jewish Giudecca at the Gerhard Rohlfs Language Museum. In the latter photographs, texts, ancient tools and his dictionary kept in a display case that cannot be consulted.

The project "The sound of Bova" then starts from the idea of telling the village through sounds, exploiting its silence and at the same time making accessible to everyone the texts of Rohlfs and the great cultural heritage that he left to the village.

This through three widespread pavilions, dedicated to the chosen sounds (gurgling, ringing, voices) and built using the abandoned ruins, selected from a concept that connects the key points: the two fountains and the Giudecca well, the four bell towers, the main meeting points for citizens. Their form arises from an attempt to schematize the waves of propagation of different sounds based on theories of Gestalt perception inspired by the Paris Sound Cylinder of Leitner and the concept of "acoustic shell", the pavilions will generate a sound that will not very intense on the outside, will attract passers-by and will only involve them directly inside. The walls will be a sort of "huge searchable dictionary" in which the words, stories and ancient Greek songs will be engraved.



**Maria Carmela De Angelis**

She is 24 years old and she lives in Reggio Calabria, south Italy.

She is a student in Architecture at the Mediterranean University in Reggio Calabria, attending the fifth year.

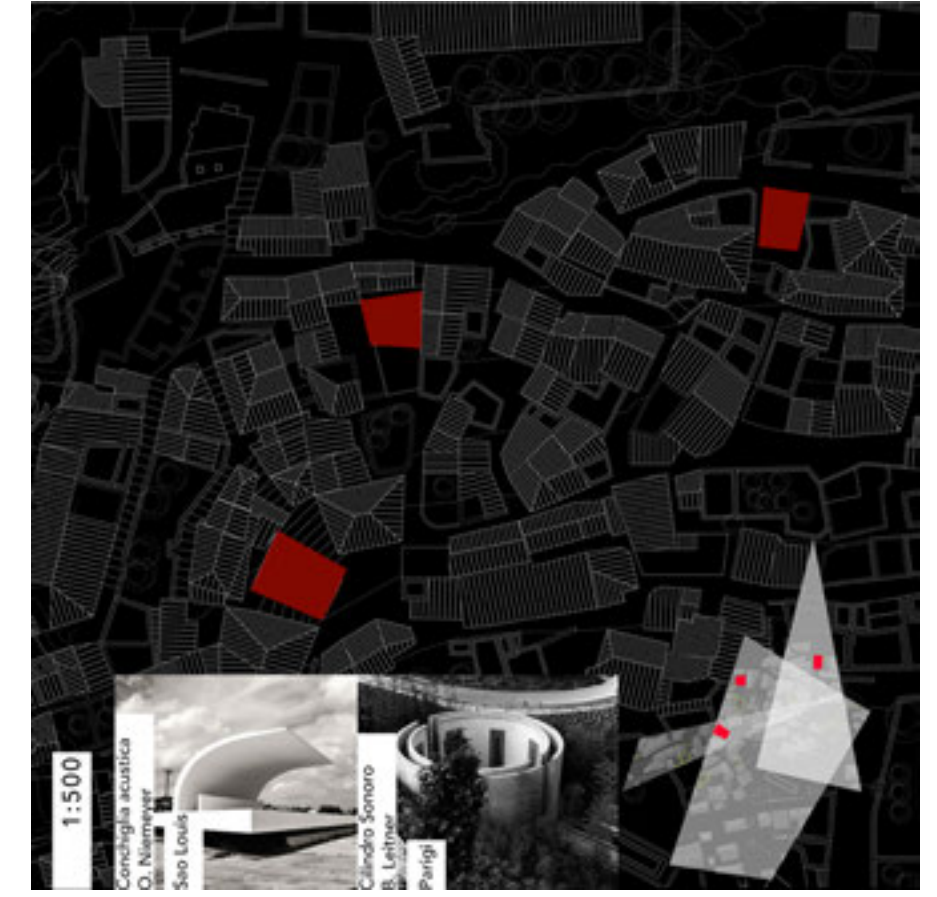
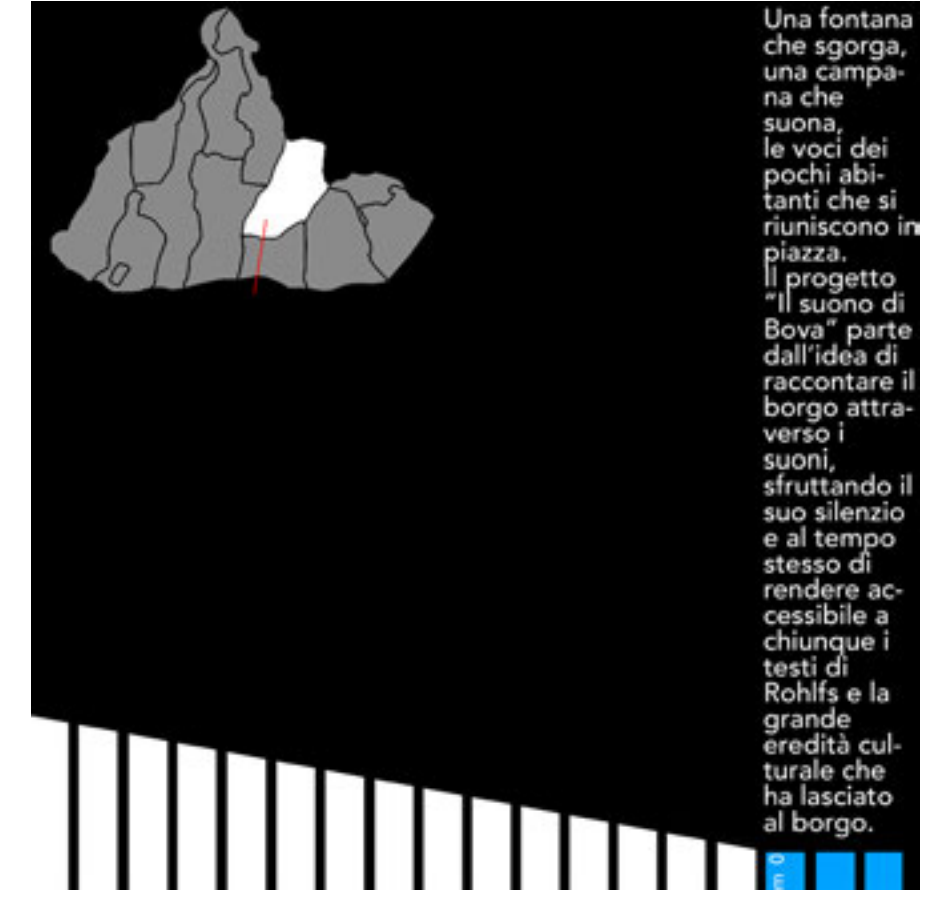
In the last years she had the opportunity to improve her skills participating to many projects, exhibitions, workshops, specialized courses such as:

The course of 3D studio max.

The seminary "Un cantiere sullo stretto".

The workshop of Christian Marinotti, "From Cézanne to Duchamp the invention of contemporary art".

Her interests are architecture, every kind of art and 3D virtual modeling.



Una fontana che sgorga, una campana che suona, le voci dei pochi abitanti che si riuniscono in piazza. Il progetto "Il suono di Bova" parte dall'idea di raccontare il borgo attraverso i suoni, sfruttando il suo silenzio e al tempo stesso di rendere accessibile a chiunque i testi di Rohlfs e la grande eredità culturale che ha lasciato al borgo.



**Valentina Cordi**

She is 26 years old and she was born in Melito di Porto Salvo (Reggio Calabria). She studying Architecture at the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria. In the last years she had the opportunity to improve her skills participating to many projects, exhibitions and workshops such as:

- “Un parco inclusivo nel quartiere Gebbione di Reggio Calabria”
- International Summer School #Joint-Landscape,
- Call for project BAMBOO#PAVILION.

Her interests are architecture, art, photography, 3d virtual modeling, reading, exploring, music, painting, graphic, design.



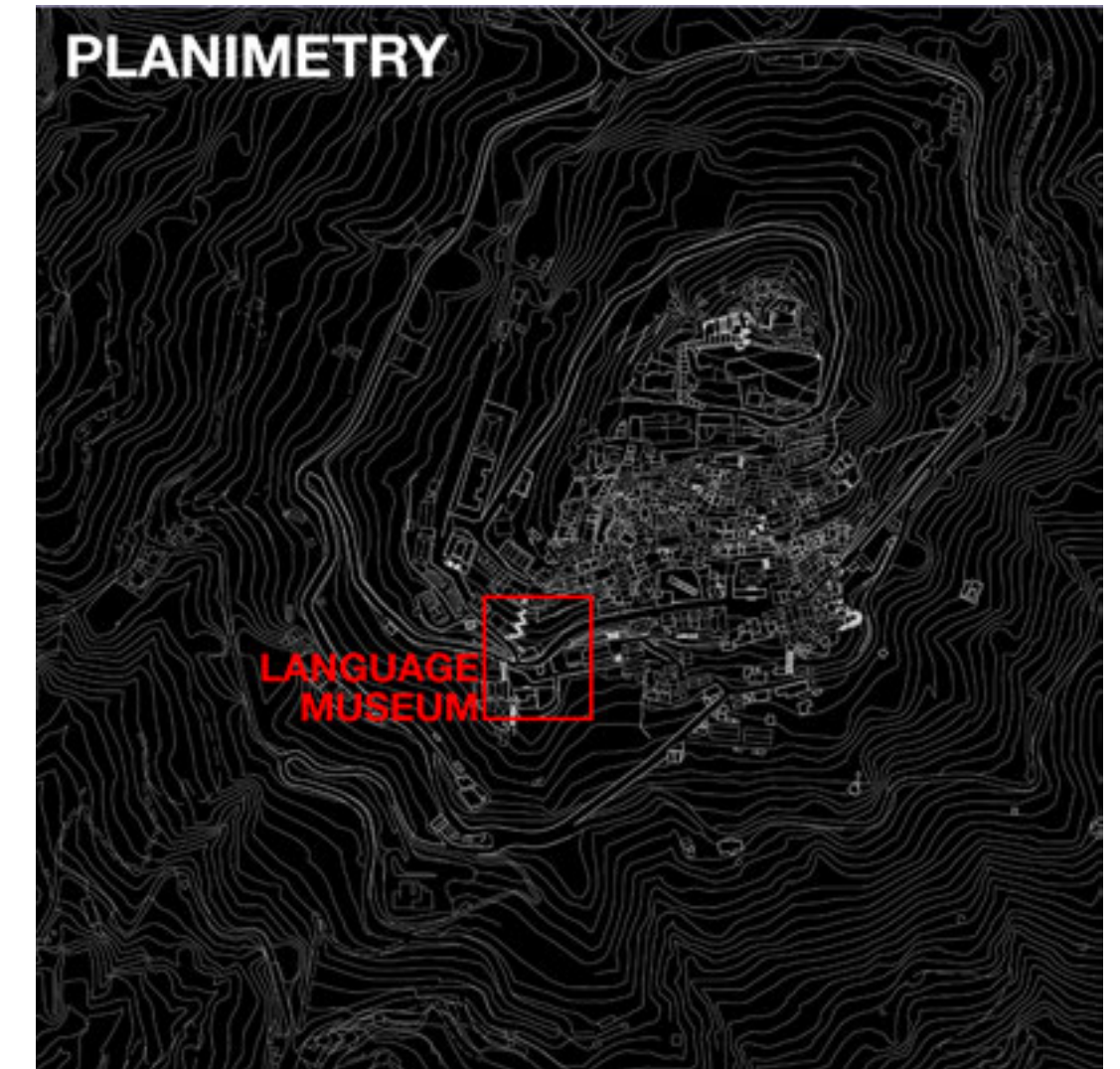
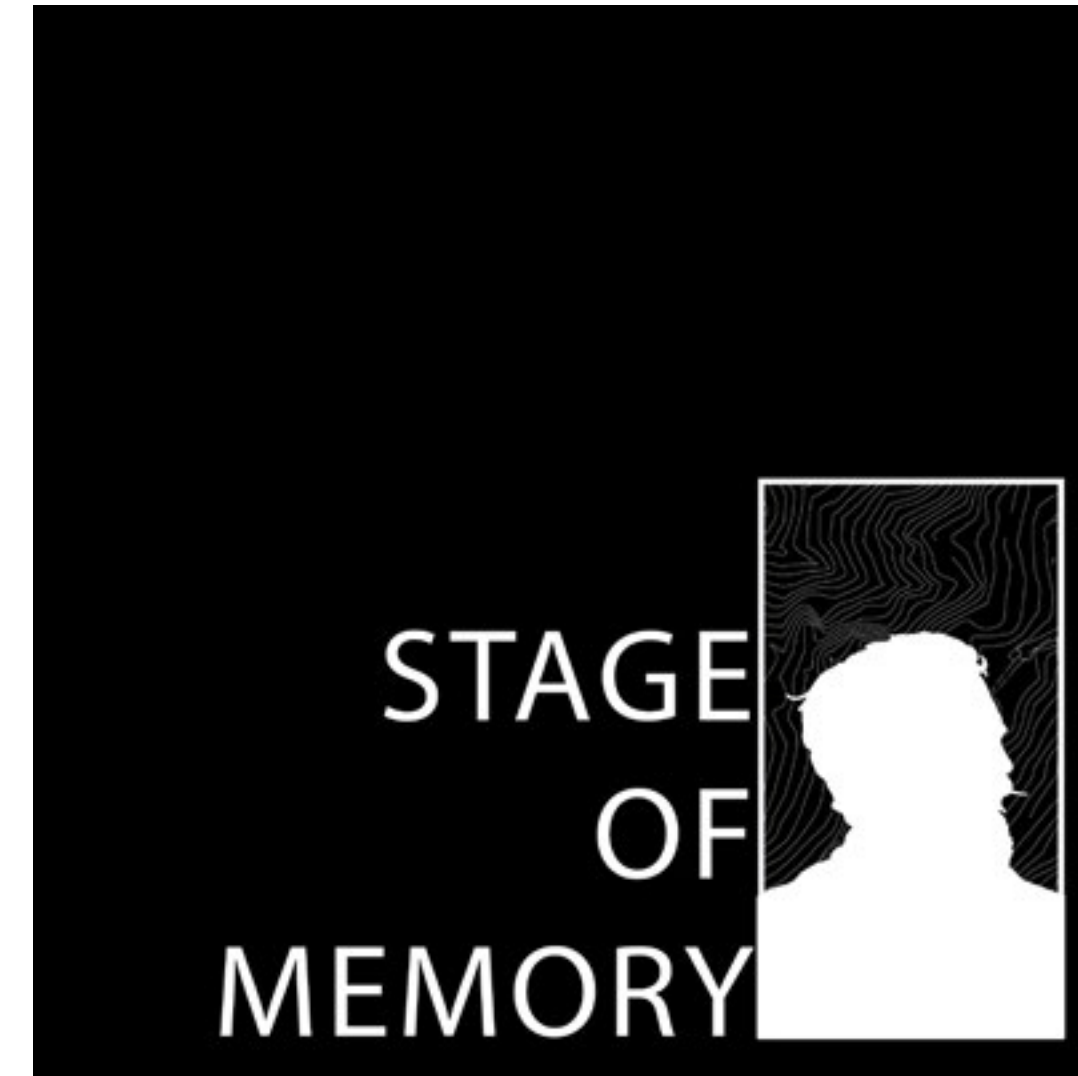
# STAGE OF MEMORY

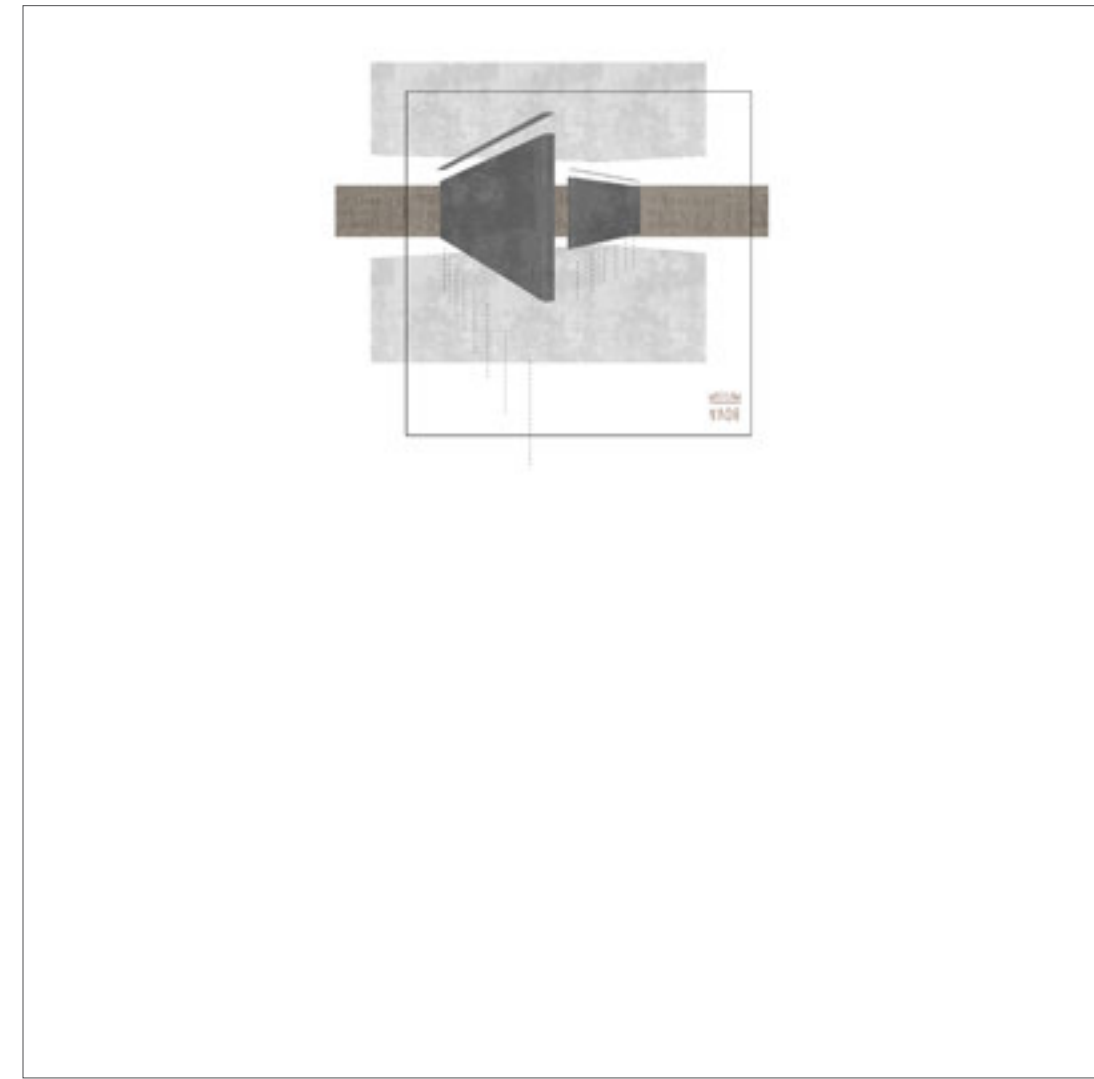
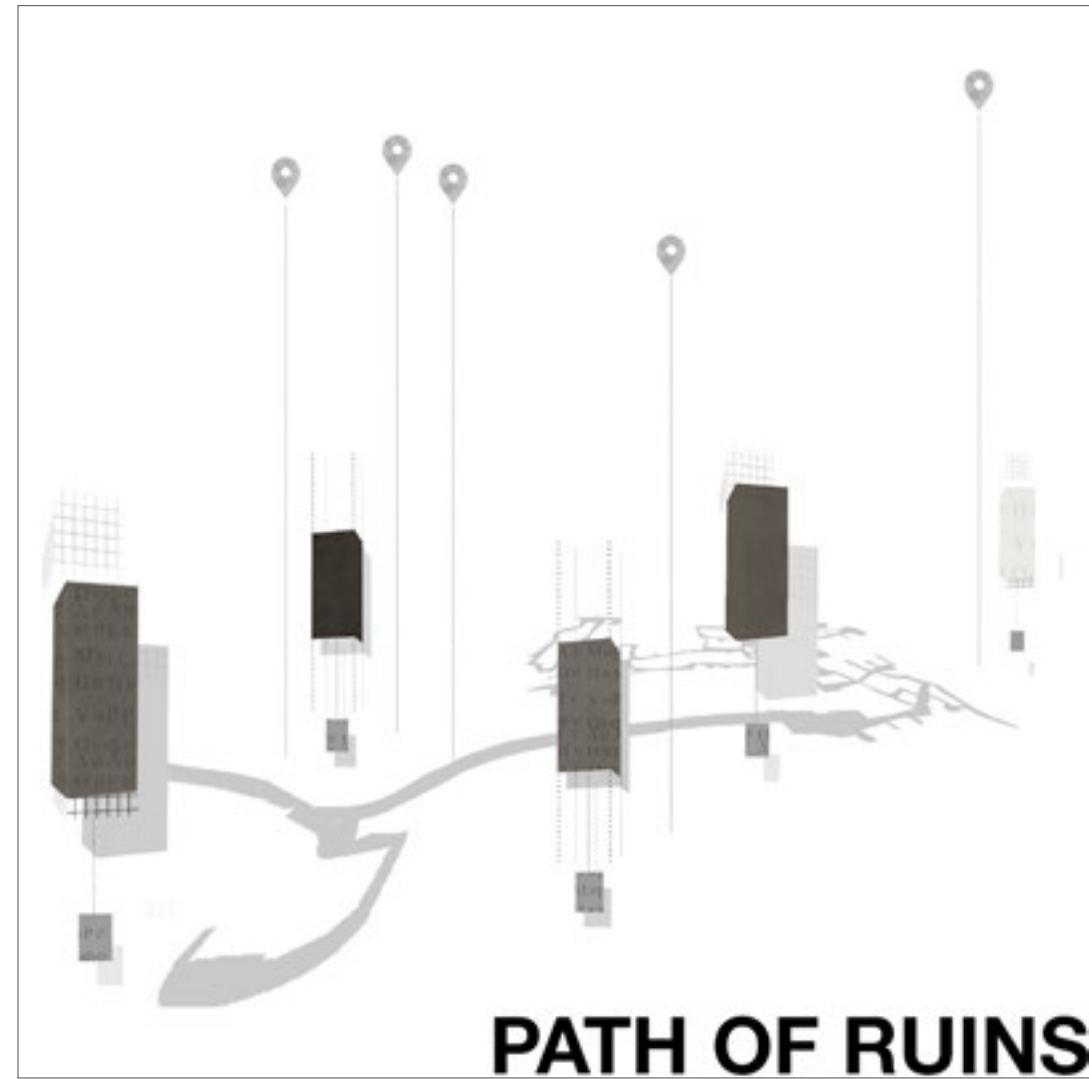
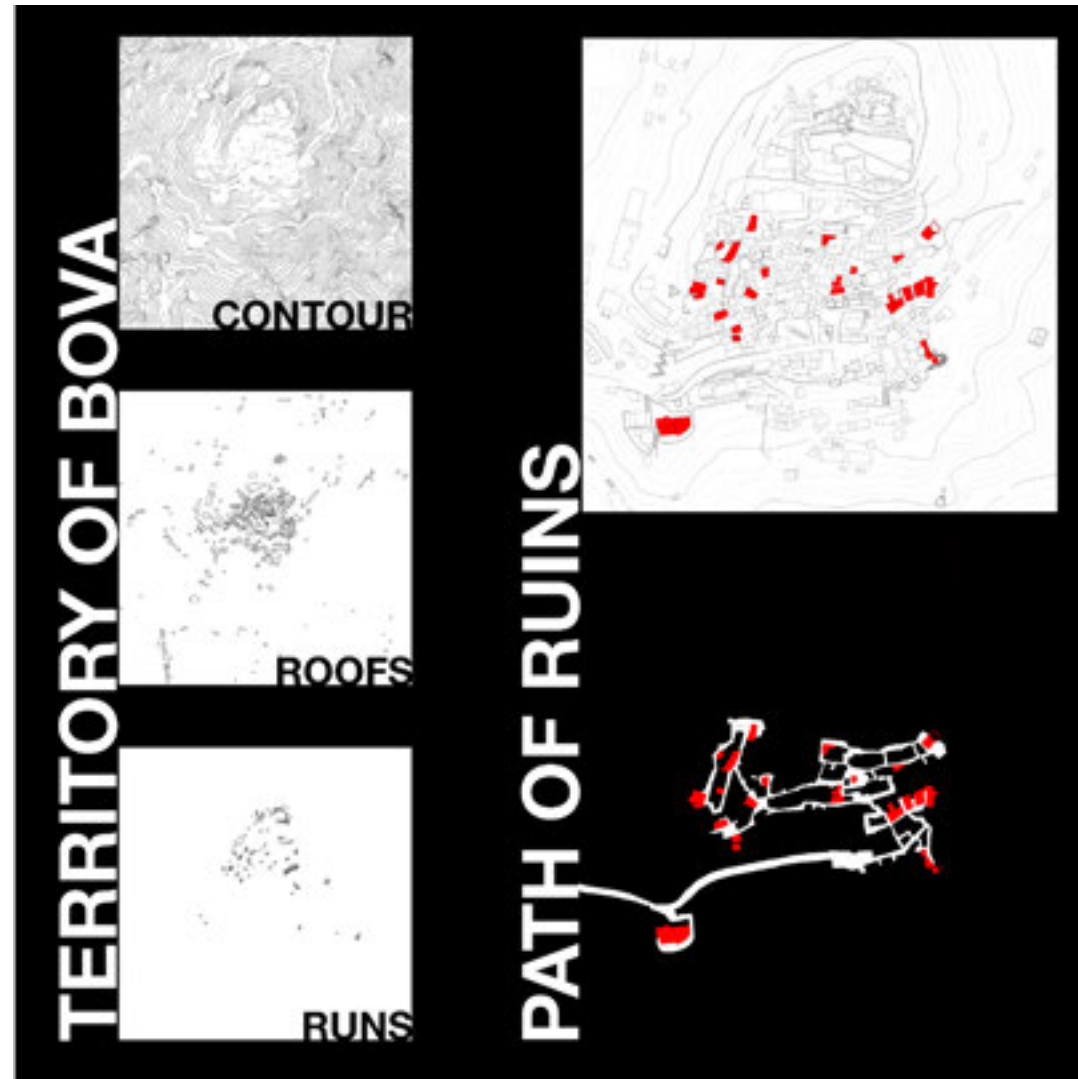
Our analysis begins with the journey undertaken by linguist Gerhard Rohlfs, during the first half of the 20th century, to study the language used in the Greek area. Our project proposes an ideological reinterpretation of the journey made by Rohlfs, through a linguistic and artistic path, focusing in particular in Bova Superiore.

It is the position of the ruins that determined the stages and therefore the route within the country, in order to revive the city. Giving a modern meaning to what has been done in the country.

Each ruin has a different peculiarity, some will contain the ancient artifacts currently in the museum of the Greek-Calabrian language “Gerhard Rohlfs”, in others will be installed totems bearing key words of the Greek language, in others there will be murals reinterpreting the photographs taken by the same Rohlfs during his journey.

The final stage of this journey will be the museum, in the same site where it is currently present, but changing the conception of it; conceiving it no longer as a cataloguing of artifacts, then an archive, but as a container conceived as a flexible, social space designed to engage audiences through multimedia workstations, exhibition areas, screenings, symposia, and events, etc.







**Vanessa Rizzo**

She is 28 years old and she was born in Cariati (Reggio Calabria). She is studying Architecture at the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria. In the last years she had the opportunity to improve her skills participating to course of architectural surveys. Topic of the course was Roghudi Vecchio, a town of "area grecanica". In 2017 she had the pleasure to study at the Skopje University in Skopje, Macedonia, where she got in contact with a different reality. She visited architectural university and the most important architectures. Her interests are architecture, photography, read and music.



**Elisabetta Nives Cullia**

She is 28 years old and she was born She is 23 years old and she was born in Vibo Valentia. She is studying Architecture at the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria.

In 2019 she had the opportunity to increase her skills participating to "VI architecture and urban design workshop", Ispica Coast (Acate).

In 2017 she had the pleasure to study at the "Skopje University" in Skopje, Macedonia, regarded a course on architectural design II. She compared herself with another reality and she knows the local architects visiting their university and the most important places of the city. Her interests are architecture, graphic, paint and music.

# CHORA TU VUA

## Widespread Museum of Sounds and Words

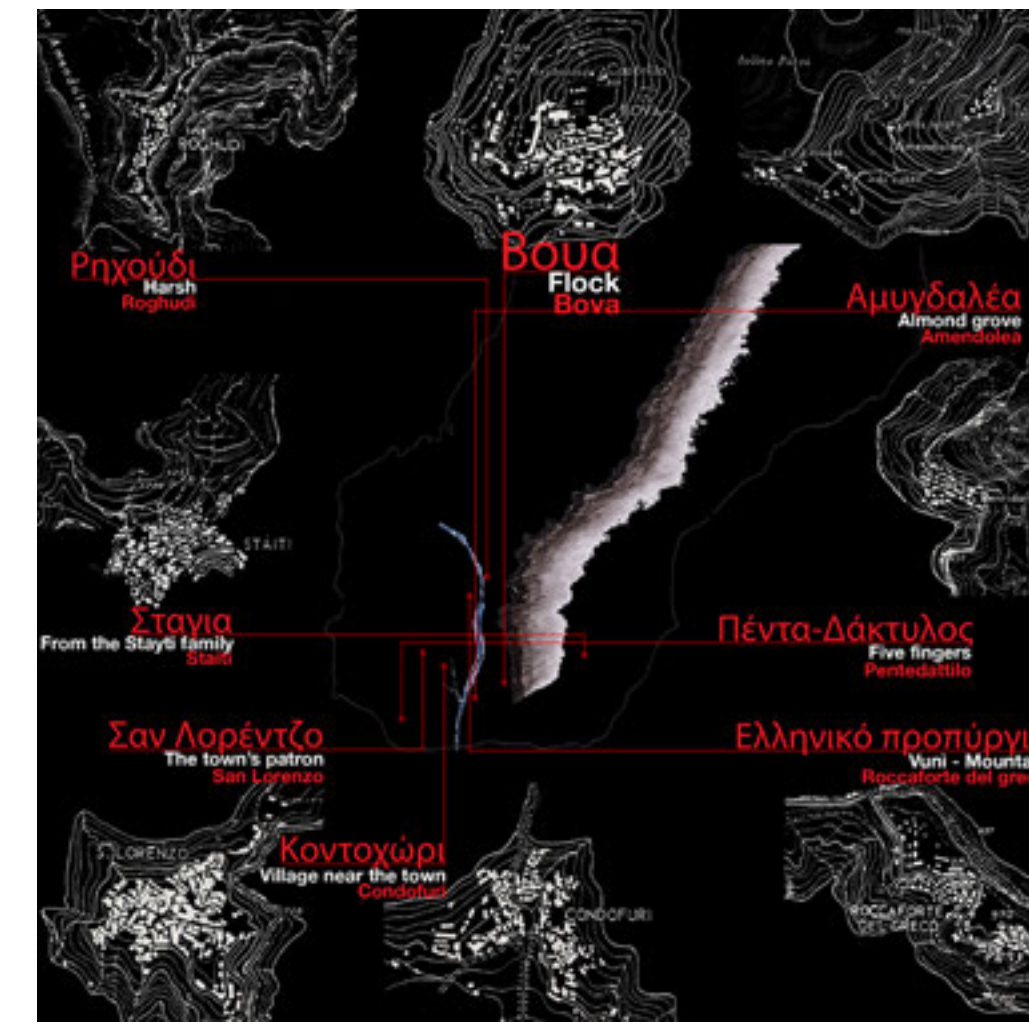
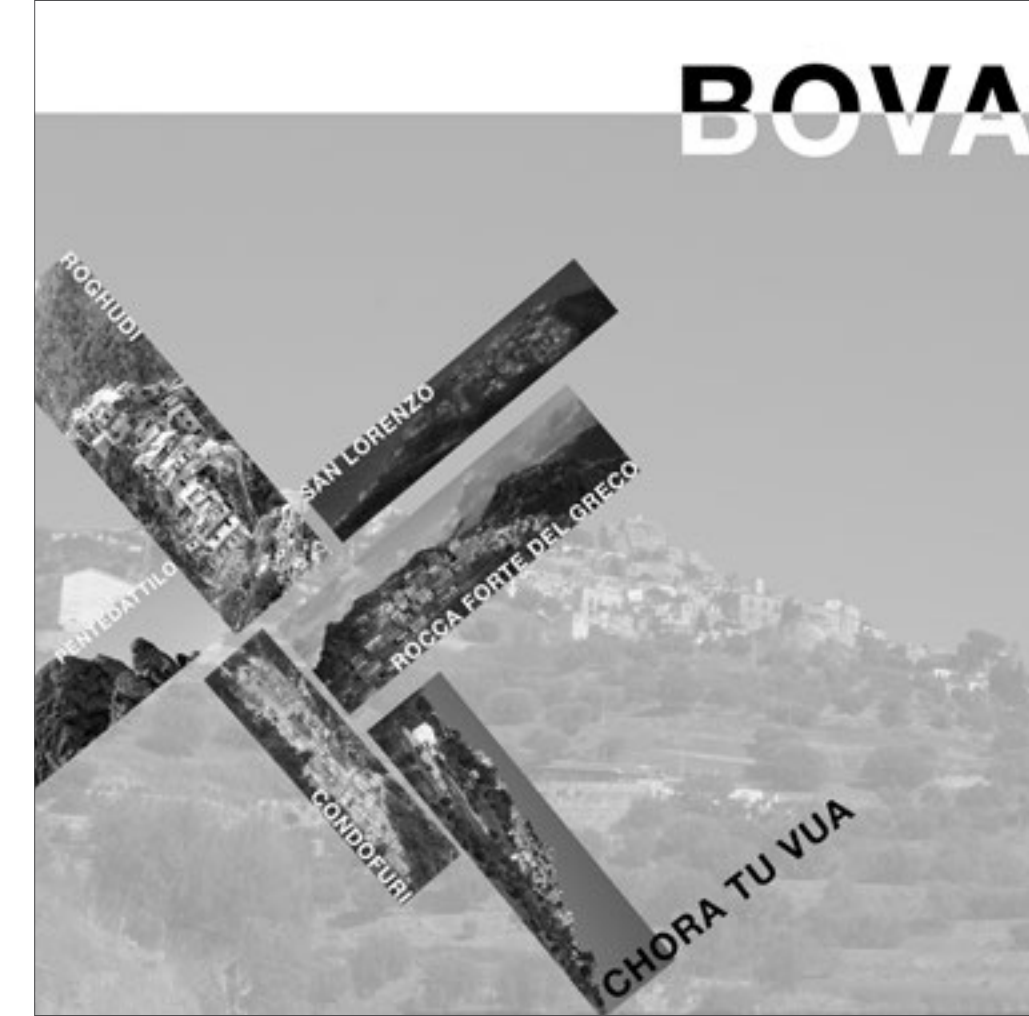
The theme of the project we have chosen is "widespread Museum of sounds and words", synthesized in 3 key words: paths, sounds and words. The key words arose from the numerous inspections carried out in the village of Bova, a village in the Greek area between 800 and 900 meters above sea level, facing the sea and overlooking the Amendolea river. It is one of the few villages where the Greek language is still spoken.

The many flights of steps and streets covered to reach the various salient points, the sounds reproduced by nature and also reproduced by the same language, spoken by very few people, gave birth to the idea of a diffused multisensory museum dedicated to Gerhard Rohlfs and the Greek language, which with audio sounds and words tells the story of Bova and spreads the language.

Reference points were the artists Bruno Munari, Emmanuelle Moureaux and Joseph Kosuth.

Bruno Munari was our source of inspiration for the project idea of the museum, with its NEGATIVE/POSITIVE and the SCHEME OF ARCHITECTURE MC N.1; it's a first work for the playful world designed for Castelletti in 1945, in an era in which Italy was a country to rebuild after the war. The idea is to decompose the plants and elevations into raw geometric shapes. In plan they will define the spaces served and serving, while in elevation the translation and superimposition of these first forms will create full and empty spaces.

From Emmanuelle Moureaux, with her installations able to "divide and create spaces through colours" and Joseph Kosuth and her works with neon, it's born the idea of installations distributed along the paths that recall sounds and words of the Greek language.



During the visits in the city of Bova, we thought about three words that could describe this village. The three terms chosen were: paths, sounds and words. Paths because characterized the village, sounds because they were audible in every of the city and words because it was one of few village where Greek was still spoken. Therefore we decided to focus idea on the use of the three term that will become project theme.

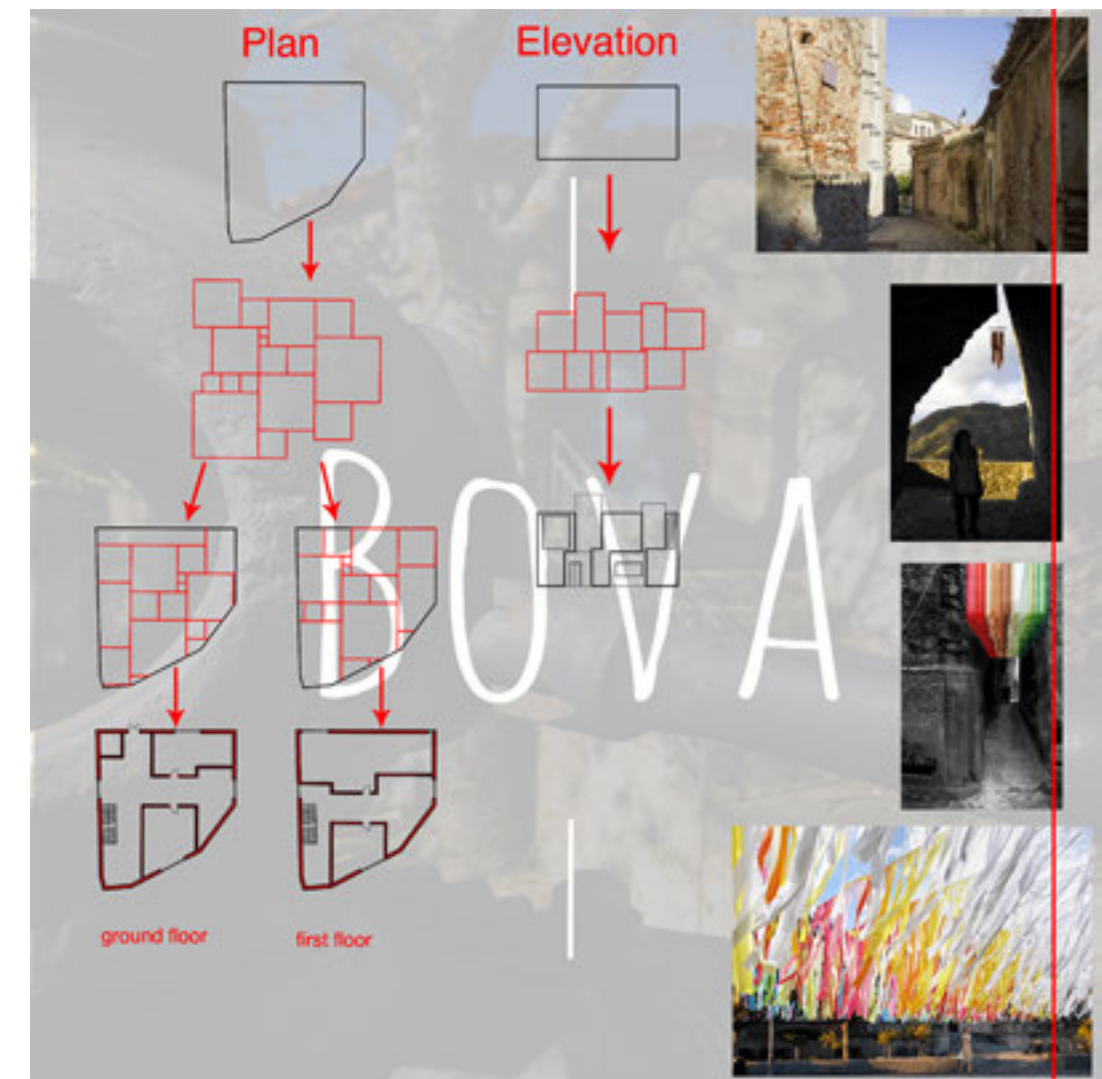
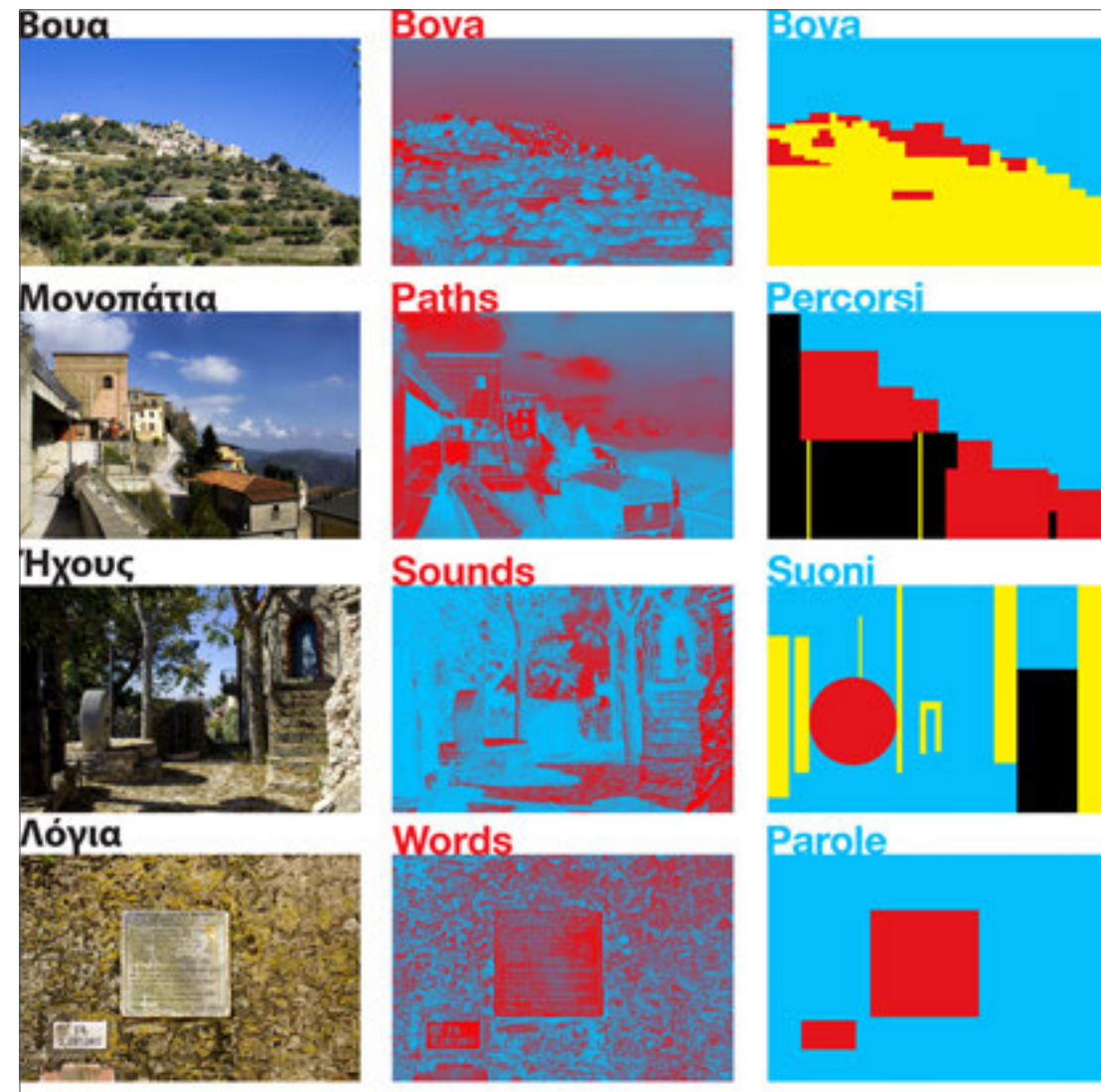
To focus our idea we will create widespread museum in the village of Bova, realizing thematic paths of sound and words, this paths will lead to viewpoints where it was possible admire the city of Bova and the neighboring country located in the creek of Amendolea.

In the map shown here we have indicated which paths will be chosen and which will be focus of our project, where the widespread museum will be concentrated, starting from the museum of language.

On the way we planned to make sensorial installation, the children, the elderly, the blind, the deaf can see what Bova is and what is characteristics are. The walls will be colored and the words that can describe the city will be written. The itinerary will be guided with multimedia installation that will tell the story of the village and will make them hear words in ancient Greek.

Being the starting point of our thematic route we planned to reorganize the internal structure of the Gerhard Rohlfs Museum, as today it is simply adapted. We will mainly focus on the rearrangement of spaces where we intended to install multimedia tools for understanding the Greek language and maybe even the quick learning of a few words, in the few minutes of the visit of this.

At the end of this we can say that our project idea came out about after a study on the figure of Bruno Munari and his works, including boxes of architecture number one.





**Federica Fazio**

She is 23 years old and she was born in Palmi (Reggio Calabria). She is studying Architecture at the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria. In the last years she had the opportunity to increase her knowledges for graphic, history of art, relief and restoration as her passion fields. Besides, she got out other interests for new technologies and tools as support for her all interest areas.

Her interests are architecture and photography, that I usually study in my free time.

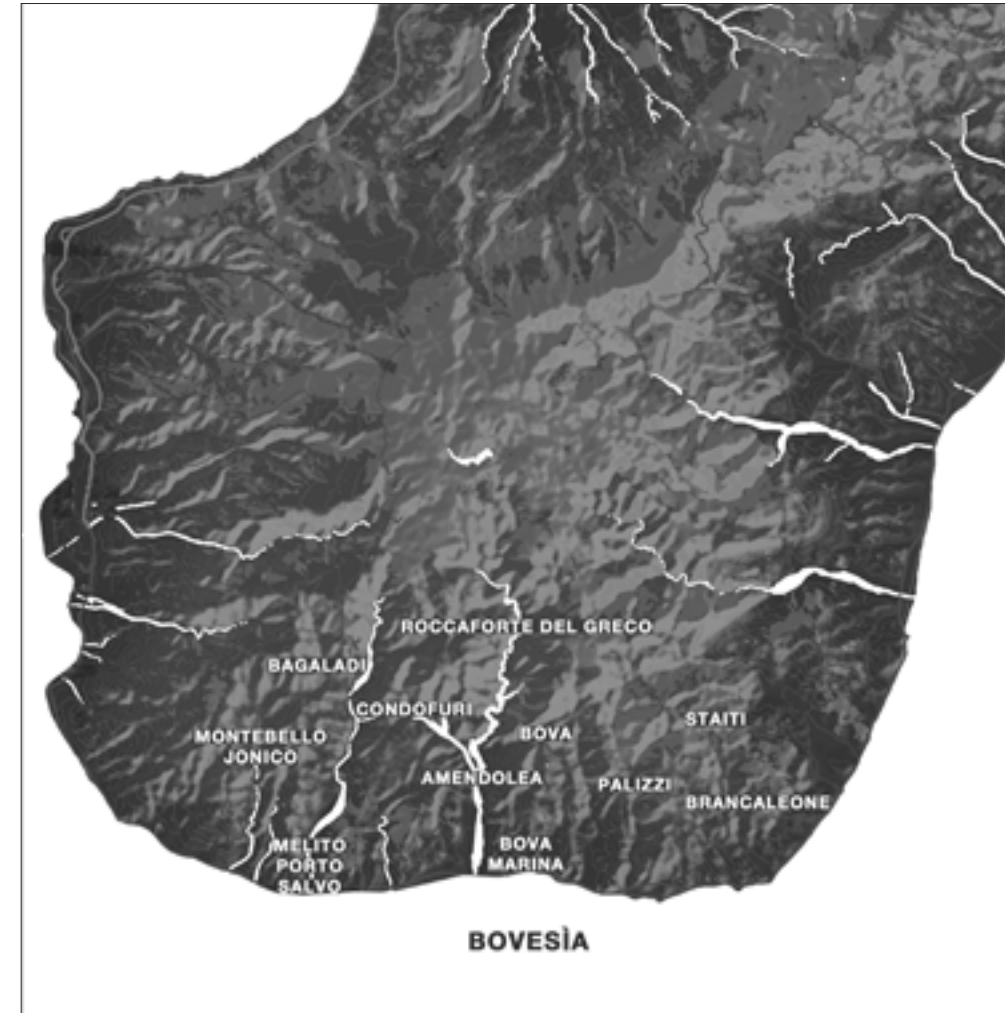
# BOVA

# BOVA

The project idea comes from the awareness that the Greek-Calabrian language has been handed down over time, orally, through songs and verses that referred to particular moments in human life. We talk about moments that begin with the birth of the individual and continue with the engagement, marriage, toasts and funeral celebrations. Many pieces are linked to religious tradition, born to celebrate the Christmas novena and Easter holidays. Songs were sung even for sowing, as a good omen for the harvest. Therefore, the music of the tradition of Bova and the Grecanic area is taken by us as an object of study, as the main means of transmission of the culture of the valley of Amendolea.

The objective of our project is to consolidate the cultural heritage in view of its transmission to the future, drawing on the musical tradition, trying to restore the value of identity to the place, given by elements that are inextricably linked to many aspects of the human condition of those who live there.

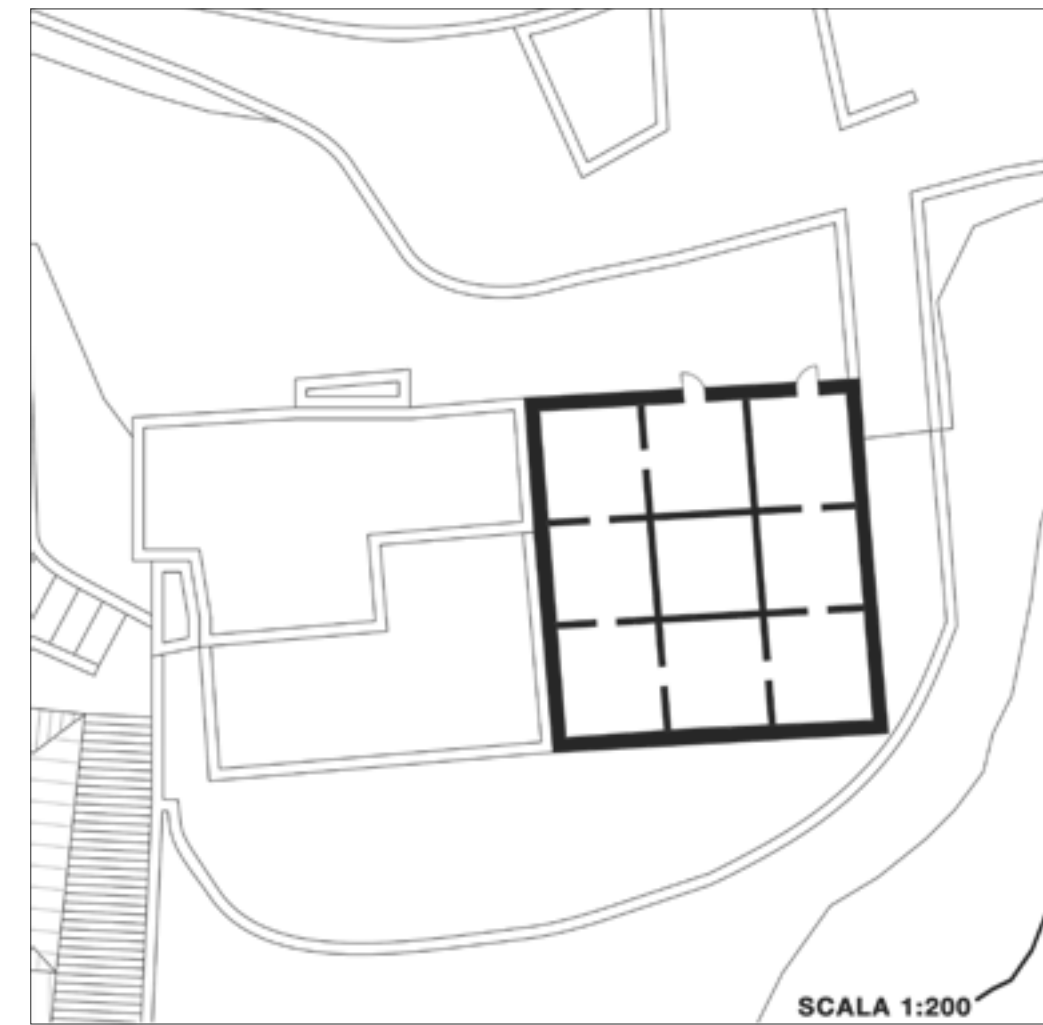
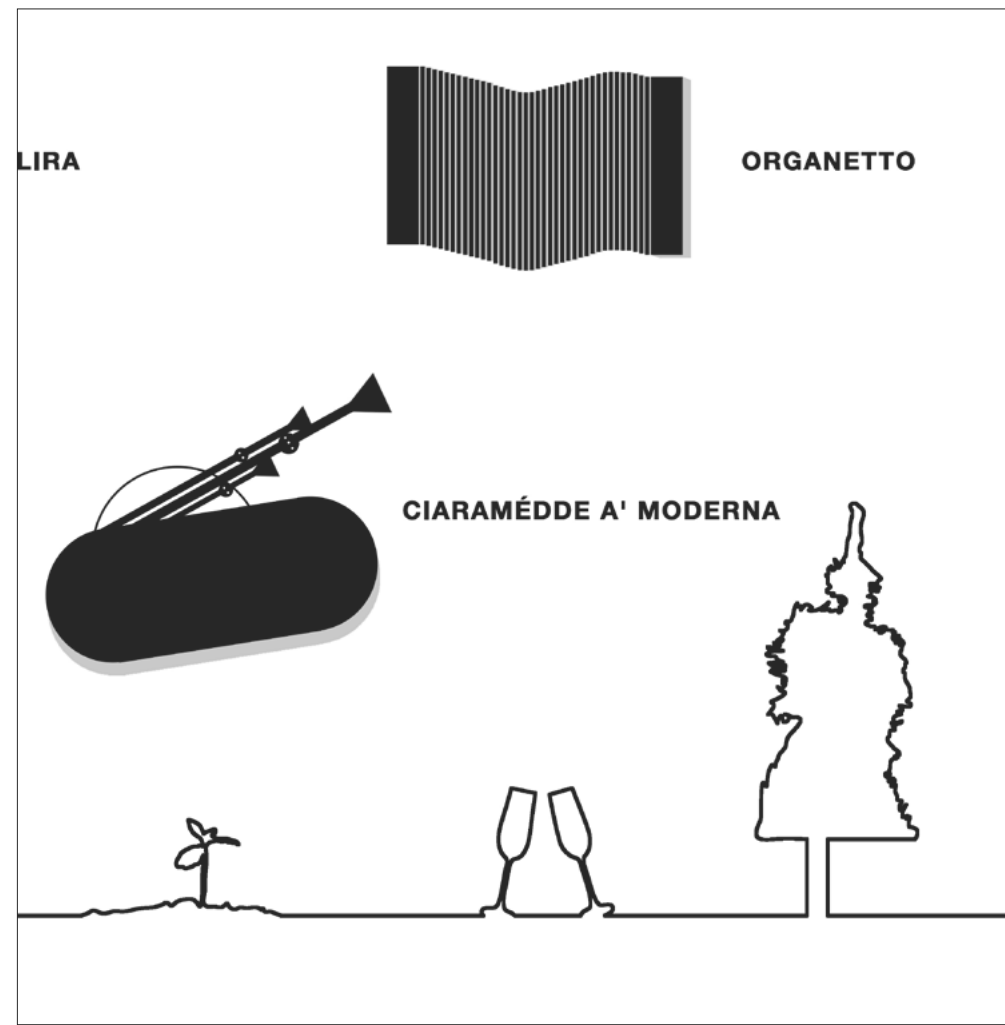
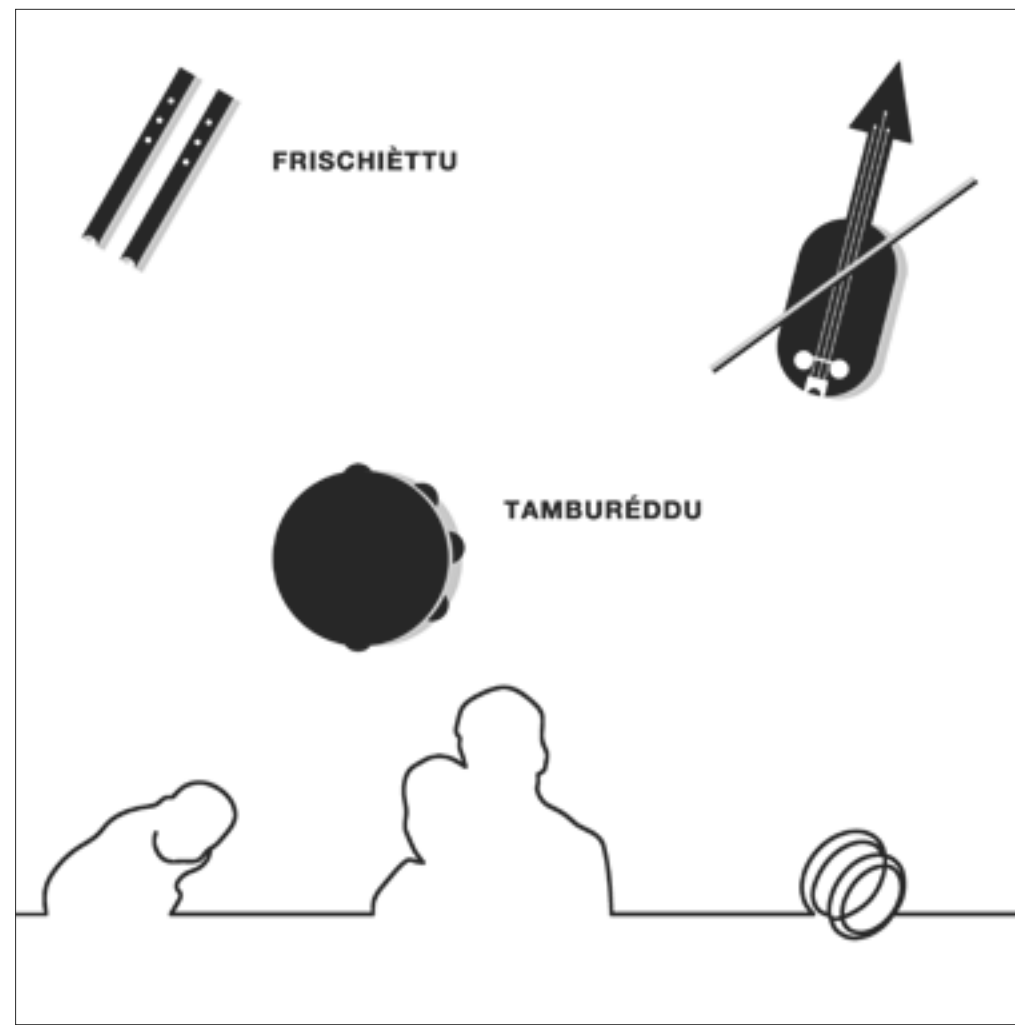
We want the visitor to be able to completely immerse himself in an obligatory experiential path, that can live every single emotion transmitted by melodies born to tell the story of the life of a man and his culture.

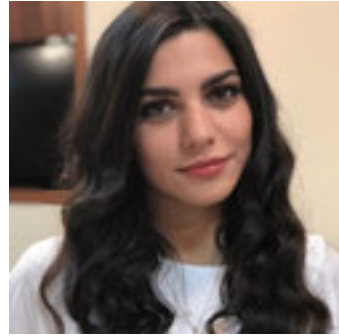


OLI MU LÈGU TRÀGUDA TRÀGUDA... TUTTI MI DINNU CANTA CANTA

"NÒVI IÒRNA DI NUVÉNA, NÒVI IÒRNA DIJUNÀTI, LU DIJÙNU 'CCHI FACÌTI OH A MARIA NCI PRISINTÀTI.."

"AH... SI NON VA U TAMBURÉDDU NON SI POTI SONÀRI", DIEGO: "U SONU, U TAMBURÉDDU U IÙTA [LO AIUTA] ASSAI... SI NO NON C'È NENTI"





**Ilaria Fiumara**

She is 25 years old and she was born in Polistena (Reggio Calabria). She is studying Architecture at the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria. In the last years she had the opportunity to improve her skills participating to many projects, exhibitions and workshops such as:

- “Radicepura Garden festival”, with the project “Sound discovery”;
- “Bamboo #Pavillion”, with the project “Bamboo wave”;
- “Urban Planning Workshop City of Acri” with the project “Bacri”.

She collaborated for making the redevelopment project related to the Macramè consortium building in Reggio di Calabria. Her interests are architecture, art, photography, cinema.



**Giovannamaria Giustra**

She is 25 years old and she was born in Reggio Calabria. She is studying Architecture at the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria. In the last years she had the opportunity to improve her skills participating to many projects, exhibitions and workshops such as:

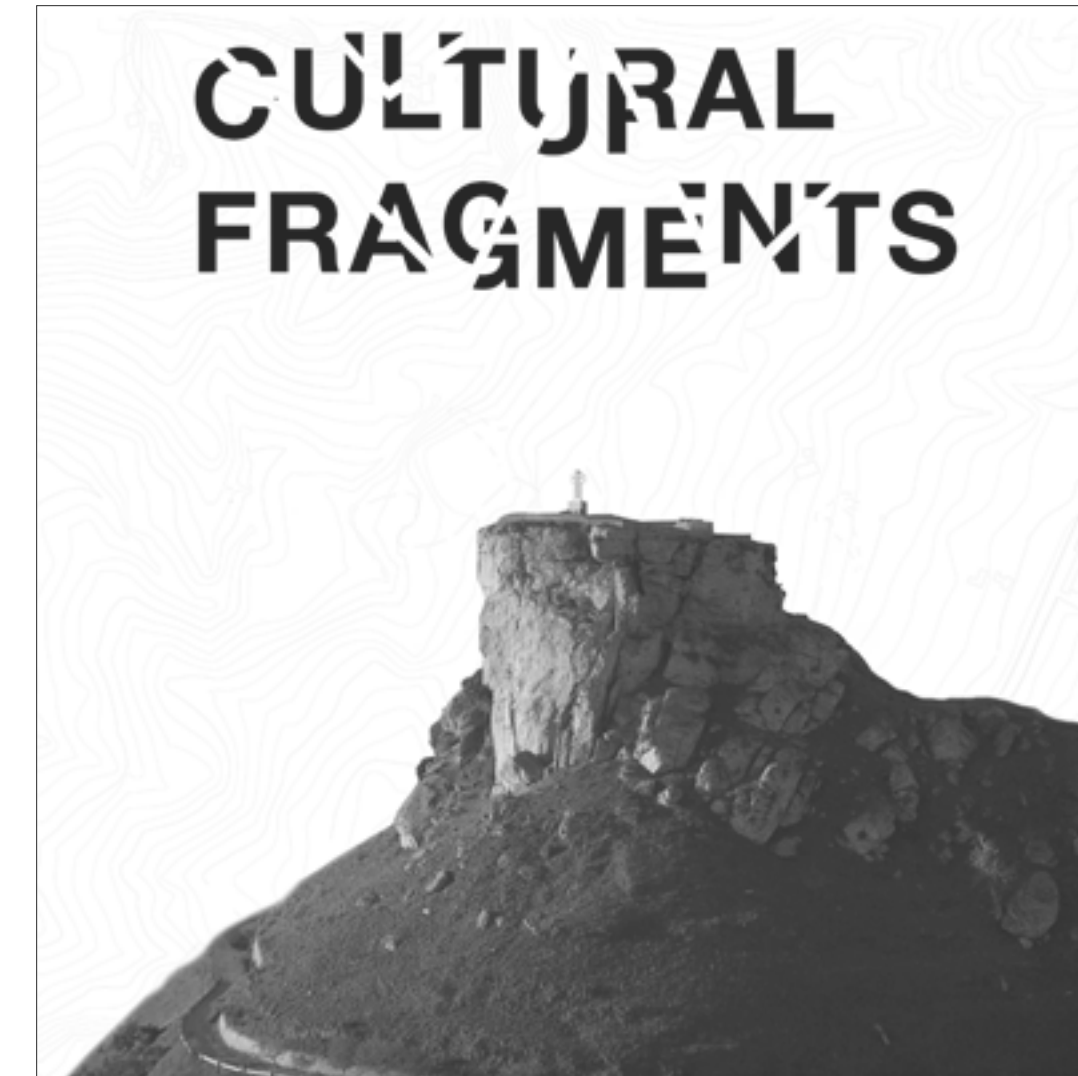
- “Radicepura Garden Festival”, with the project “Sound discovery”
- “Urban Planning Workshop City of Acri” with the project “Bacri”
- “Bamboo #Pavillion”, with the project “Bamboo wave”.

She collaborated for making the redevelopment project related to the Macramè consortium building in Reggio di Calabria. Her interests are architecture, art, travel.

# CULTURAL FRAGMENTS

The exploded museum, unlike the traditional one, creates its own itineraries within a geographical area. Places, events, ancient crafts and historical figures are united through thematic itineraries. The narration is entrusted to a system of signs that, in a linear and complete way, tells the distinctive characteristics of the territory.

The peculiarity of this museum is that it is not all here. The population also has its leading role in enhancing the places where it was born and raised. Through meetings, educational activities and conservation actions, the inhabitants become responsible owners of the diffused museum. A museum for all and for all. In this narrative context, the museum succeeds in attracting tourists to little-known areas of the territory, in an area that will allow visitors to experience an active experience through the places to be reached, the details to look for and the stories to breathe. In fact, our design strategy involves the identification and subsequent recovery of 8 ruins found in the alleys of the village of Bova, to be used as “containers” for exhibitions, artisan workshops, and spaces to design and implement cultural projects. They then become, both small fragments of a single large museum, and fragments of the cultural history of Bova that are then connected to the pre-existing of the village. These projects have as their main objective the discovery of the ancient Greek of Calabria, through the experimentation of new models of listening, sharing and production, with the active participation of citizens, residents and non-residents, who take on the role of cultural inhabitants. The aim is to experiment with new alternatives focused on the care and enhancement of cultural heritage. Culture, knowledge, innovation and creativity are the possible options to build a future in the village of Bova and more generally in the territory of the Calabrian Grecanic area.



**BOVESIA**

THE GRECANIC AREA GUARANTEES TREASURES TO "SPEAK" THIS ADDED VALUE IS LOCATED IN THE ELLENOFON ISLAND, OR A PORTION OF TERRITORY OF THE GRECANIC AREA NOTE AS BOVESIA, WHICH KEEPING MINORITY LANGUAGE GROUPS. THIS "ISLAND" CONTAINS THE CENTERS WHICH ARE PLACED AROUND THE MAJESTIC FIENDARA OF THE AMENDOLEA, WHICH HAS REPRESENTED SINCE THE MAGNOGRECI TIMES THE BEATING HEART OF THE GREEKNES OF THE IONIAN SIDE.

**POTAMÒ**  
RIVER - FIUME

**AMIDDALÌA**  
AMENDOLEA

**GA**

**CHALÒMENO**  
RUIN - ROVINA

**TO MUSIÒ**  
MUSEUM - MUSEO

**CHORIÀTICO**  
RUSTIC COTTAGE - CASETTA RUSTICA

**STORIA**  
HISTORY - STORIA

THE EXPLODED MUSEUM, UNLIKE THE TRADITIONAL ONE, CREATES ITS OWN ITINERARIES WITHIN A GEOGRAPHICAL AREA. PLACES, EVENTS, ANCIENT CRAFTS AND HISTORICAL FIGURES ARE UNITED THROUGH THEMATIC ITINERARIES. THE NARRATION IS ENTRUSTED TO A SYSTEM OF SIGNS THAT, IN A LINEAR AND COMPLETE WAY, TELLS THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TERRITORY.

**CUSCUGLIÀZO**  
FRAGMENT - FRAMMENTARE

OUR DESIGN STRATEGY INVOLVES THE IDENTIFICATION AND SUBSEQUENT RECOVERY OF 8 RUINS FOUND IN THE ALLEYS OF BOVA, TO BE USED AS "CONTAINERS" FOR EXHIBITIONS, ARTISAN WORKSHOPS, AND SPACES TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT CULTURAL PROJECTS. THEY THEN BECOME, BOTH SMALL FRAGMENTS OF A SINGLE LARGE MUSEUM, AND FRAGMENTS OF THE CULTURAL HISTORY OF BOVA THAT ARE THEN CONNECTED TO THE PRE-EXISTING OF THE VILLAGE. THESE PROJECTS HAVE AS THEIR MAIN OBJECTIVE THE DISCOVERY OF THE ANCIENT GREEK OF CALABRIA, THROUGH THE EXPERIMENTATION OF NEW MODELS OF LISTENING, SHARING AND PRODUCTION, WITH THE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS, RESIDENTS AND NON-RESIDENTS, WHO ASSUME THE ROLE OF CULTURAL INHABITANTS.

**I CHALAMÌA**  
RUIN - RUDERE

**PALÈU**  
ANCIENT - ANTICO

**AFINNO**  
LEAVE - ABBANDONARE

**IST**

# CULTURAL FRAGMENTS

LANGUAGE ITINERARY  
TRADITIONS MEETING  
ART CULTURE SHARING

LIQUA ITINERARI  
TRADIZIONE  
INCONTRO  
ARTISTICO  
CONDIVISIONE

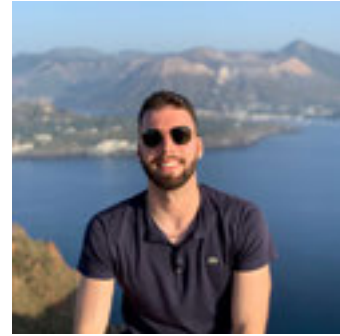


**Giuseppina Matranga**

She is 23 years old and she was born in Corigliano Calabro. She studying Architecture at the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria.

In the last years she had the opportunity to improve her skills participating to many projects and exhibitions such as "Radicepura Garden Festival".

In 2018 she had the pleasure to study at the Lusiana University in Lisbon, Portugal an Erasmus Student. Her interests are architecture, art, photography and travelling. Her participation in this project is dictated by the strong bond that unites her homeland (Calabria) and the theme of multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism.

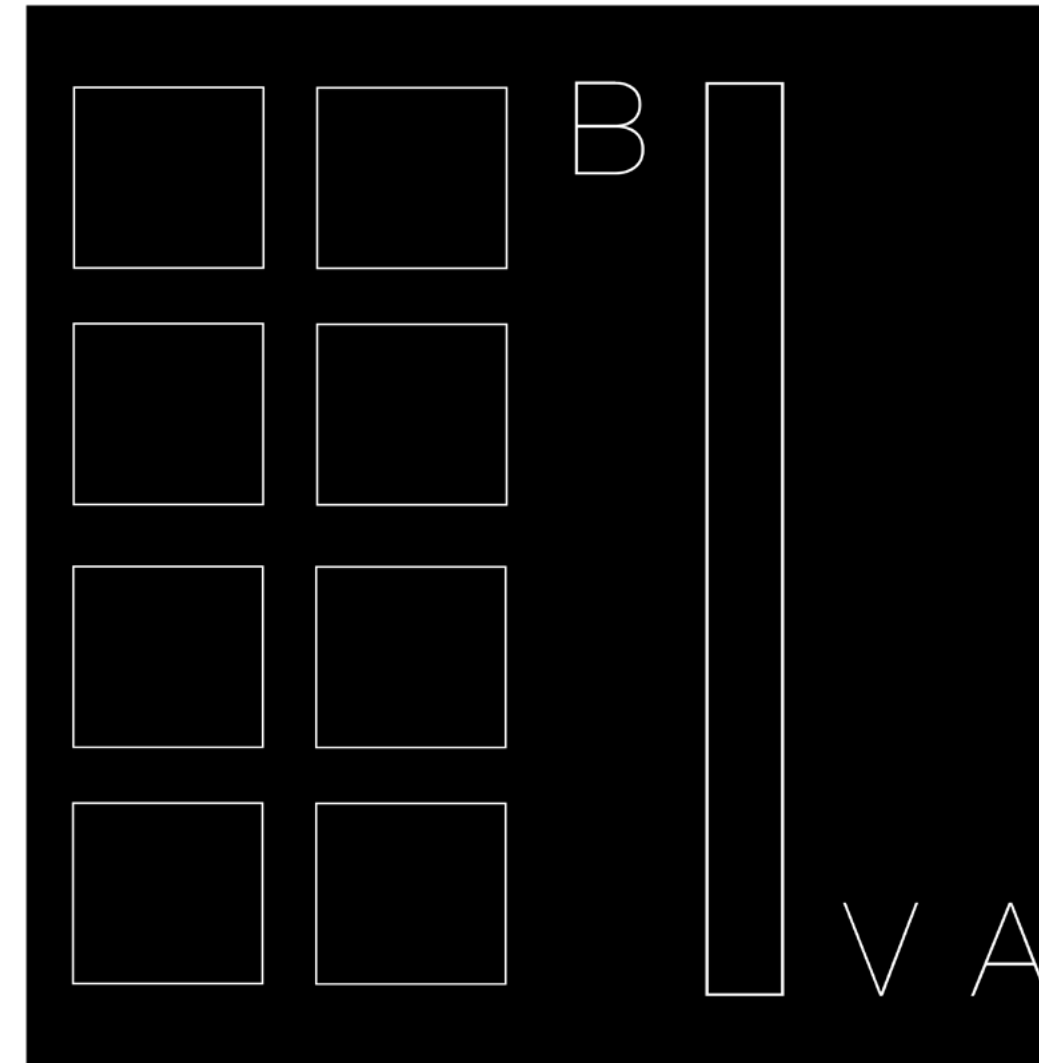


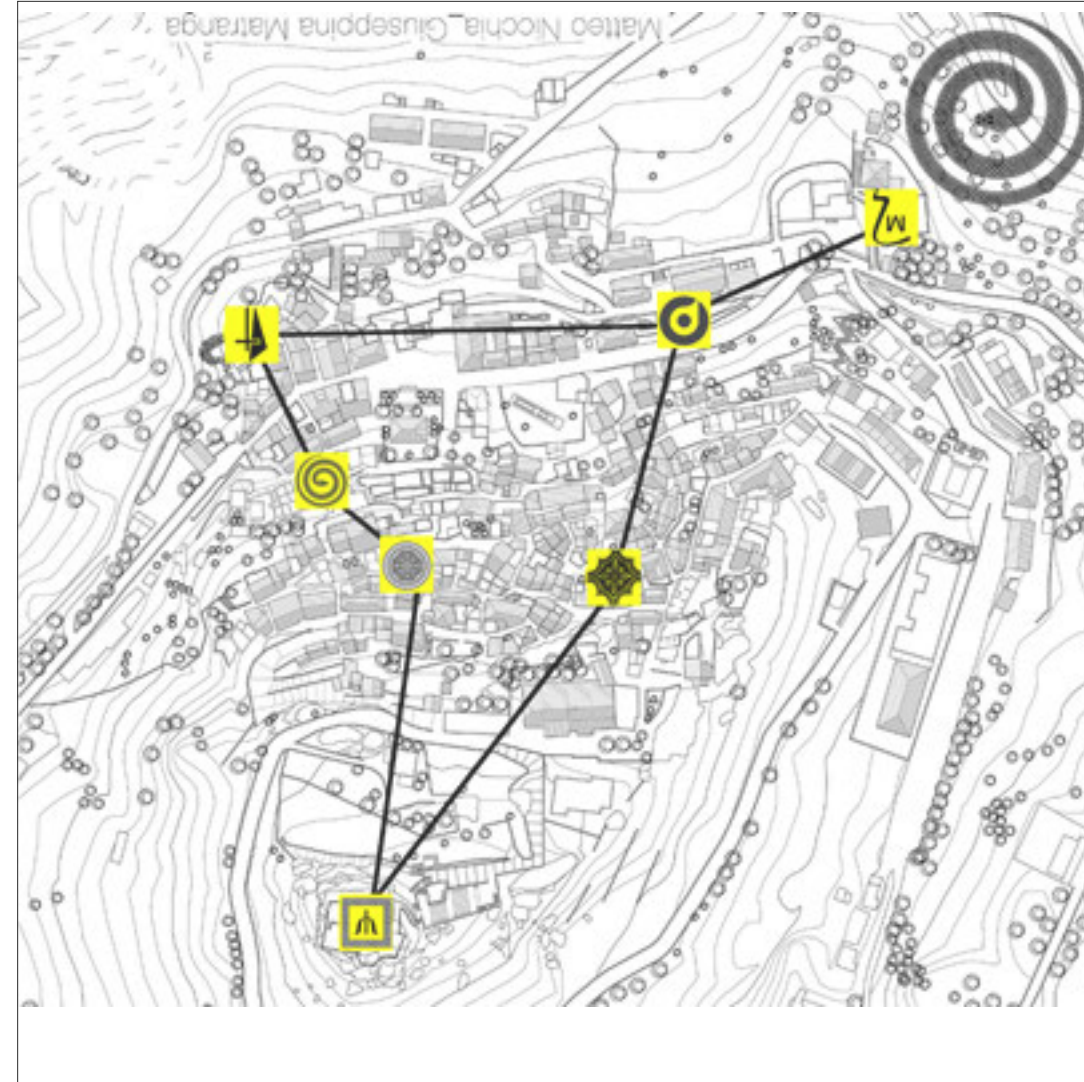
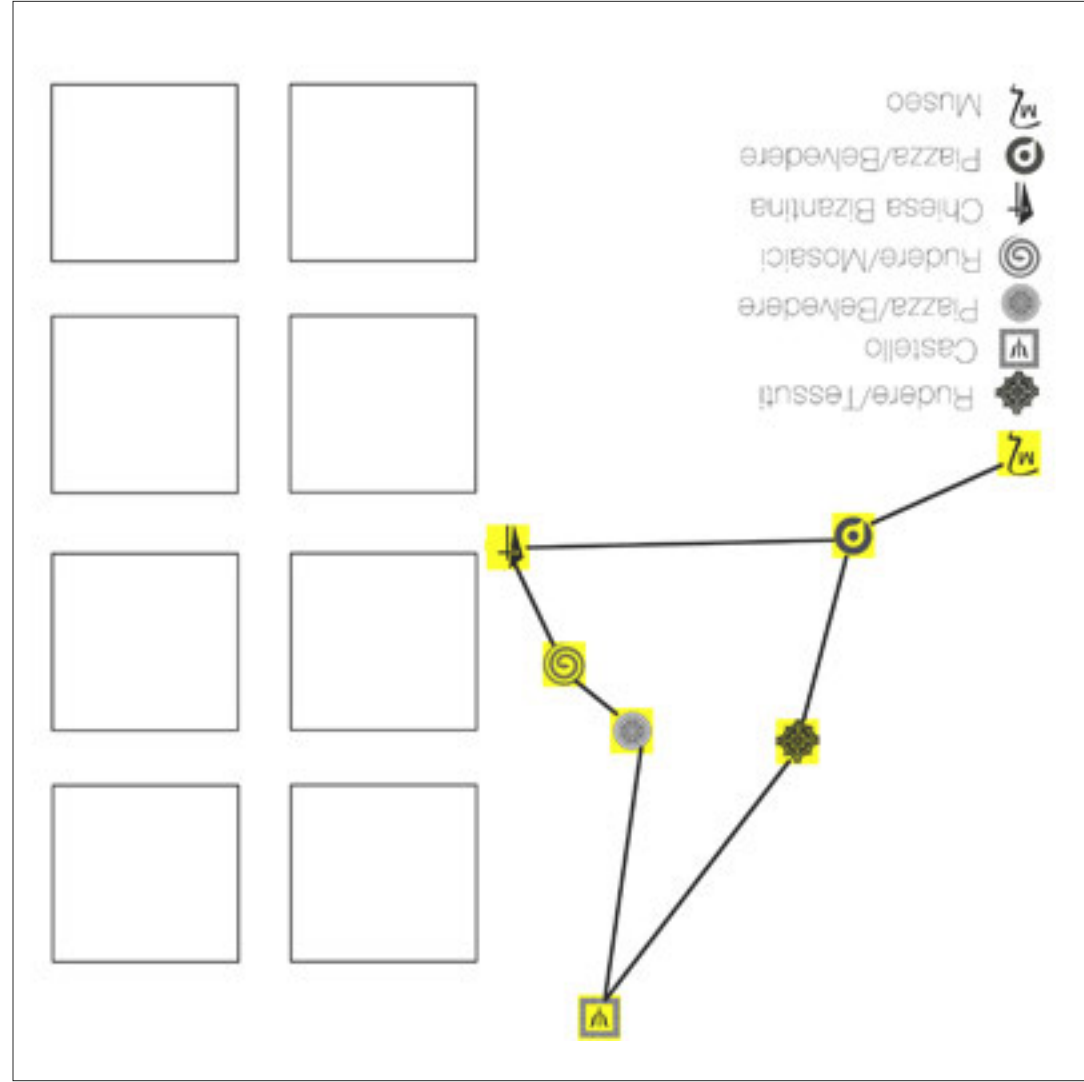
**Matteo Nicchia**

He is 23 years old and he lived in Lipari. He is an Architecture's student at the Mediterranean University of Reggio Calabria. During his studies he had the opportunity to improve his skills participating to several contests. His interests are taking pictures and restoring antique furniture, architecture, art, traveling, cooking and cultivate different species of plants.

# BYZANTINE SPEAKS

The Byzantine period of Calabria, also known as the second Greek colonization, lasted about five centuries, ending with the Norman occupation. Calabria is a region, disputed between two seas, which represents a piece of Eastern history set in Southern Italy. Under the Byzantine rule the region, which more than a thousand years ago had been part of Magna Graecia, underwent a second Greekisation. During this period the Greek culture left deep traces that reached us. In the IX century the Byzantine Calabria goes from Reggio to Rossano and in this period in the rural area churches, oratories, hermitic caves and monastic settlements spread. After the Byzantine conquest, religion played an important role, the rite practiced was the Greek one and the religious message was entrusted to the frescoes, which become an iconic symbol together with the mosaics. The mosaics were the most frequent type of decoration for the walls, floors and vaults of Byzantine churches, because the luminous effect produced by the colored or gilded glass tiles expressed well the mystical character of Orthodox Christianity. In this scenario fits the village of Bova, an ethno-architectural jewel of Byzantine art. The Greek civilization has very ancient origins, starting from the VIII century with the Magna Graecia to strongly characterize it in the Byzantine period. Even today we can breathe the Byzantine culture, both in its uses and traditions, and in the Greek Calabrian language spoken by a group of elderly people. Testimony of Byzantine art and culture is the Church of the Holy Spirit, in which the Mass in the Byzantine Greek rite was celebrated.










**Agostino SINVALLA**  
Calabrian poet considered the most virtuous interpreter of the popular poetry of the Greek area. Poeta calabrese considerato tra i più virtuosi interpreti della poesia popolare dell'area grecanica.







**Ghorio Dicòmmu (GC)**  
Ghorio dicòmmu  
pos eienàstise palèo  
glossa dichimu  
plèo den tragudào  
Thorò to spiti  
ti einasti palèo  
ciòla t'ambeli  
ti eienàsti ghierondàro.  
Condoferro apisso  
ce clònda pào jati  
tin màna den eho plèo.  
Ce essa filisa, paracató  
mi fighite appòde ando horio  
Mathete tin glossa ton pedio  
jati imme palèo ce egò pào.

**PAESE MIO (IT)**  
Paese mio  
come ti sei fatto vecchio  
lingua mia  
più non canto  
Vedo la casa  
ch'è diventata vecchia  
la vigna pure  
che s'è appassita  
Ritorno indietro  
e vado piangendo perché  
la mamma non ho più  
E voi amici, per favore  
non fuggite il mio paese  
Insegnate la lingua ai bambini  
ch'io sono vecchio e passato oramai.

**CASTEL AREA**



OUR PROJECT THEME CONCERNS THE RECOVERY OF THE GREEK-CALABRIAN LANGUAGE THROUGH THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE LANGUAGE MUSEUM DEDICATED TO GERHARD ROHLFS, LOCATED IN THE VILLAGE OF BOVA. THE INSTRUMENT WE HAVE CHOSEN IS A THEMATIC ITINERARY, WHICH STARTS WITH THE VISIT OF THE MUSEUM AND THEN RUNS THROUGH THE STREETS OF THE TOWN UP TO THE CASTLE. THE THEME OF THIS PATH IS THE RE-ENACTMENT OF GREEK POETRY THAT DESCRIBE THE PEASANT AND PASTORAL CULTURE THAT HAS CHARACTERIZED THE LIFE OF THESE POPULATIONS FOR CENTURIES. POETRY, AND ALSO MUSIC, ARE USED AS A SIMPLE AND DIRECT WAY TO LET VISITORS KNOW THE GREEK OF CALABRIA THROUGH THE SMALL STREETS OF BOVA. THE PATH INCLUDES TEN STAGES IN THE MAIN VIEWPOINTS OF THE VILLAGE, IDENTIFIED AS KEY PLACES; HERE THERE ARE VARIOUS ARTISTIC, MUSICAL, MULTIMEDIA AND INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES. THE FULCRUM OF THIS ROUTE ARE THE RUINS OF THE NORMAN CASTLE. HERE IS POSSIBLE TO SEE THE WHOLE VILLAGE, THE AMENDOLEA RIVER AND THE PROMONTORY, UP TO THE SEA. OUR AIM IS TO PROPOSE A SIMPLE BUT VERY COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITY IN ORDER TO PROMOTE THE RECOVERY OF THE GREEK LANGUAGE.

# Colophon

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