



Porco Rosso  
Circolo Arci



## ISULA MESTIZA

"To survive the Borderlands  
You must live *sin fronteras*  
be a crossroad."

(Gloria Anzaldua, 1987)

*"Isula mestiza" brings together the Sicilian isula/isola ("island") with the concept of mestizaje developed by Gloria Anzaldúa — understood as a condition of "mixture," of being shaped at once by plural elements of identity, gender, languages, and cultures — and evokes Sicily as a borderland along the Central Mediterranean route. An island that, in the face of a Europe imposing ever more racist and repressive border policies, forcefully asserts its mestiza and migrant soul — by choice, by history, by geography, and by culture. As a socio-legal support and listening space, we have chosen this name to highlight the human relationships that take shape in our space, beginning in Ballarò, a neighborhood in the beating heart of Palermo, giving prominence to the movements, to the daily acts of freedom and ordinary resistance, carried forward by the people — with infinitely plural gazes — who pass through it.*

### Ten springs full of love and fights:

#### a new column from the Sans-Papiers desk

This spring, the Sans-Papiers desk of Arci Porco Rosso turns ten. Ten years of love and fights; ten years of relationships and bonds built day by day against exclusion, racism, and precarity, in a space that becomes a public square every time we open the shutter in Ballarò, Palermo.

Since 2016, the Sans-Papiers desk has been a mutual aid stronghold, building networks of solidarity in this Sicilian borderland. Within those margins we live in, we create practices of radical care to remind ourselves that charity and exclusion are not the only possible response. Some of us do it because they were born here, others by choice, necessity, chance, or pride.

Since 2016, every Wednesday afternoon from 4 to 7 pm, the Desk's activists have offered listening, information, socio-legal support, and guidance through the social and healthcare services available in the area. The desk is sustained by a militant, multidisciplinary team: social workers, legal practitioners, cultural mediators, and activists committed to turning support into a daily practice of resistance against structural inequity, grounded in anti-oppressive politics.



For us, “doing desk work” means bringing together listening, multilingual communication, legal and social support, and the weaving of relationships. It means looking collectively at the different layers of oppression that shape our everyday lives, identifying the breaking points of an absurd bureaucracy and turning them into points of leverage from which to claim collective rights and freedoms. It means disrupting the logic of “service provision” and creating instead an exchange rooted in listening, reciprocity, kindness, and rage. These are small acts of everyday wonders, born from our commitment to always stand with those forced to bear the violent consequences of border regimes and racist laws that make life impossible for so many of us, our friends, and our comrades.

It is through this listening and this openly partisan practice that we build alliances with those who enter our space, tracing possible strategies together for navigating institutional systems of control. This is a practice sharpened over years of encounters and clashes with everyone who has moved through this space.

We have always claimed socio-legal support as a militant practice: a tool for self-determination and for struggle against the dynamics of racialisation and blackmail produced by migration policies and intensified by healthcare, housing, and labour policies. Like many other collectives in Sicily and beyond, this practice creates a space for meeting, sharing, and confronting the everyday obstacles faced by people marginalised by the repressive state.

Being sans-papiers, undocumented, is not a crime. It is a condition produced by increasingly repressive and discriminatory laws and regulations of the State. And it can happen to anyone. That is why our doors are open to everyone, regardless of citizenship, including Italian citizens.

With this monthly column, “Isula Mestiza” we will keep you updated on the everyday acts of radical care that we try to turn into collective fights. You will read about

residency registration, access to healthcare, job seeking, digital identity systems, and public shelters. Starting from these small stories, we will try to trace a more precise map of the borders that govern everyday life, so that one day Europe's borders may be torn down once again.

To learn more, visit our website: [Arci Porco Rosso](http://Arci_Porco_Rosso), write to us at [sportellosanspapiers@gmail.com](mailto:sportellosanspapiers@gmail.com), or follow us on Instagram @arciporcorosso.

And if you want to support us, with just **5 euros a month** you can become a **Porco d'Oro**: a monthly donation that helps keep the shutter open every week of the year.

