

Going Down "The Basement" with Darrell Fusaro

Marina Melchionda (December 03, 2009)



"The Basement", by Darrell Fusaro and Jeff Trujillo, is now available on DVD. The documentary is the account of Mr. Fusaro's grandfather's murder and the effect it had on his family and this town. A special price is offered to i-Italy's readers

"There is nothing more rewarding after the viewing of the movie or the performance of the play than to have audience members come up and say 'Me too'". With these words, Los Angeles Actor, Journalist, Author and Cartoonist, Darrell Fusaro comments on the success of his play and documentary "The Basement."

After 40 years of silence, Mr. Fusaro recounts in his work the circumstances of his grandfather James Fusaro's mafia-style murder. He overheard the details of his grandfather's murder at the age of 8,



while hiding in the basement kitchen. in their house in Clifton, New Jersey

From that time on, his and his family's lives had completely changed. The shame and offense that arose from such a tragedy covered its memory with a shadow of silence, a silence that finally allowed malignant suspicions to destroy the bonds within his family.

"The Basement", just released on DVD, is a particular kind of documentary. It can

touch people, and the inner chords or their souls. It captures the audience in the first few minutes, and involves them in a story that is deeply moving because there could be thousands like it in America: the one of small child growing up with the image of his grandpa being killed before his eyes. "Just watching him on the stage inspires you"; "He was brave in deciding to write down this one-man-show"; "I could not stop crying, I was completely involved after the very first five minutes": these are some of the most common comments those who went to one of the many performances in the US and Canada shared with the media.

It was the success of the show that induced Mr. Fusaro to produce a documentary, in collaboration with director Jeff Trujillo. The work was also acclaimed by journalists, critics, and experts in the fields. "Fusaro's gift for language and formidable talent as an actor warms the heart and tingles the spine!" said Martin Hernandez of [LA WEEKLY](#) [2]; "Fusaro's family is our family; but his commitment to telling its saga is surely as heroic as acting ever gets", commented drama-logue Bruce Field.

The work also benefited from institutional support. Guido Fink, Director of the Cultural Office at the Italian Consulate General of San Francisco, defined it as "An incredible true story filled with raw emotion, mystery, humor, tragedy and triumph."

"I know what happens to a family when a murder occurs, it eats you up inside", said Mr. Fusaro, explaining the reasons that led him to start to his personal mission of retracing the memories of this unforgotten past. Neither the police nor his family have never found out who were the authors, the instigators, or the reasons that led to the homicide. Mr. Fusaro, who lives in Los Angeles with his wife, went back to his town of origin to rediscover the places and the community that functioned as the background of the story of his family from that moment on. It was when he went to play a benefit performance of his play at his alma mater Clifton High School that his friend Jeff Trujillo convinced him to transform the play to a film. It was a story that had to be shared with many other people, he thought.

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The outstanding images and the information collected in the documentary still needed to be accompanied by the right music.

This is where Mr. [Gaili Schoen](#) [3], author of successful documentary soundtracks, such as the [PBS](#) [4]Special, "Annie Leibovitz: A Life Through A Lens" came into play. He literally fell in love with the story and offered his collaboration to Mr. Trujillo and Mr. Fusaro.

The movie also gain the favor of [Echelon Studios](#) [5], which immediately offered them a distribution deal bringing The Basement to the attention of the American and International film markets. The movie is now available On-Demand, on Netflix, and on DVD.

The DVD is available to I-Italy's readers direct from distributor for just \$9.98 US. A savings of \$6.00 US below suggested retail price. [Order the DVD online!](#) [6]

An accomplished painter whose works have exhibited side by side with



Andy Warhol's, Darrell Fusaro is also an actor and cartoonist.

He cartoons weekly and is a Producer of local news segments that air on CNN's Headline News. And yet, with no pretense, he comes across as the

regular guy next door.

Pictures of Darrell Fusaro's family in the actual basement

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