



From Valencia to Latronico

This newsletter traces NARRADRAMA's journey from its first international meeting in Valencia (December 2025) to the Narrative Editing Workshop held in Latronico, Basilicata (February 2026). These were two distinct yet complementary stages: the first focused on openness and creation; the second on editorial consolidation and decision-making. Between these two stages, the participants—young people from Italy and Spain aged 16 to 20—moved from lived experience to the written word, and from the written word to the published page.

Following an initial phase of broader international cooperation, NARRADRAMA continued to develop in its current form, with MTS Edizioni (Italy) and ESA (Spain), moving towards its final milestone: the presentation of the collective book at the Turin International Book Fair in May 2026.

Valencia, December 2025: Where Everything Began

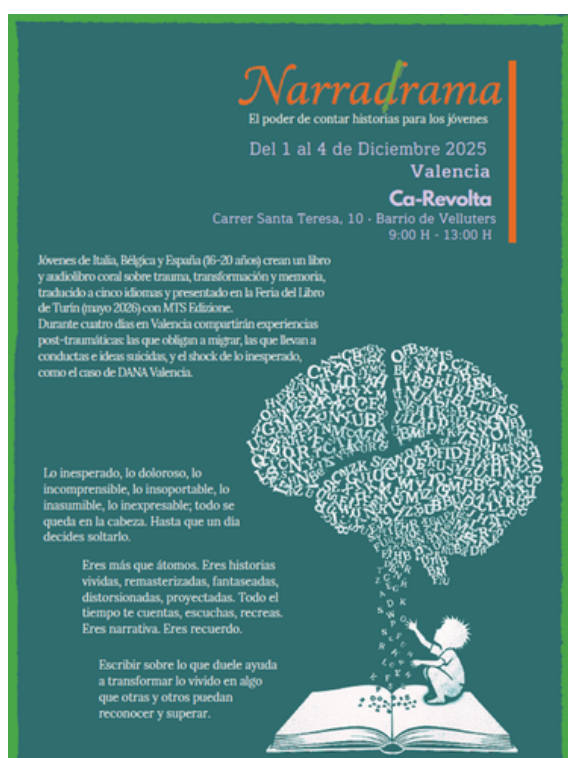
AN ALCHEMICAL ALEMBIC CALLED FICTION

The Artistic Residency in Valencia was the starting point of the entire project. For four days, eighteen people from different European countries met for the first time at Ca-Revolta, a creative space in the historic Velluters neighbourhood. Young people from Italy, Spain, and other countries came together to explore what it means to share painful experiences: those that force people to migrate, those that lead to suicidal thoughts, and the shock of the unexpected, such as the devastating DANA storm that had struck Valencia just weeks earlier.



The Threefold Nature of Trauma Through the Lens of Narradrama

Trauma leaves deep scars when a violent, threatening, or repeated experience overwhelms a person's ability to cope. Its effects alter one's perception of the world, one's relationship with oneself, and one's connection with others; this is why we speak of trauma as having a threefold dimension, affecting subjectivity, intrasubjectivity, and intersubjectivity. In response, Narradrama offers a path of reinterpretation: by transforming inner narratives into literary and autofictional stories, it enables the externalisation of pain, the processing of experience, and the beginning of a gradual process of healing, well-being, and personal reconstruction.



What emerged at Ca-Revolta was not a conventional workshop. In the words of its artistic director, Domingo Ferrandis, it was an alchemical alembic in which fiction acted as a catalyst. Eighteen people who had never met before began to recognise one another through storytelling, building in just four days a sense of trust that rarely emerges in such a short time. Each person came from a different background, with different experiences, ideas, ideologies, cultures, and religions. Even so, there was listening, there was empathy, and there was a shared attentiveness that rarely arises in encounters of such short duration.



“When storytelling tunes into the frequency of emotion, people cease to be strangers and become metaphors, revealing a tenderness capable of holding even pain within a shared story.”

– Domingo Ferrandis, Artistic Director of ESA

LIMBIC SYNCHRONY: ONE GROUP, ONE ENERGY

One of the main challenges was to create a safe space in which each participant could express themselves without fear. Throughout the sessions, this environment was shaped through movement, body expression, and writing, fostering an atmosphere of trust and creative openness in what Domingo Ferrandis calls “limbic synchrony.”

Among the most significant activities, the Cardumen exercise allowed participants to experience collective creation through the body, generating connection, attentive listening, and a strong sense of group harmony.

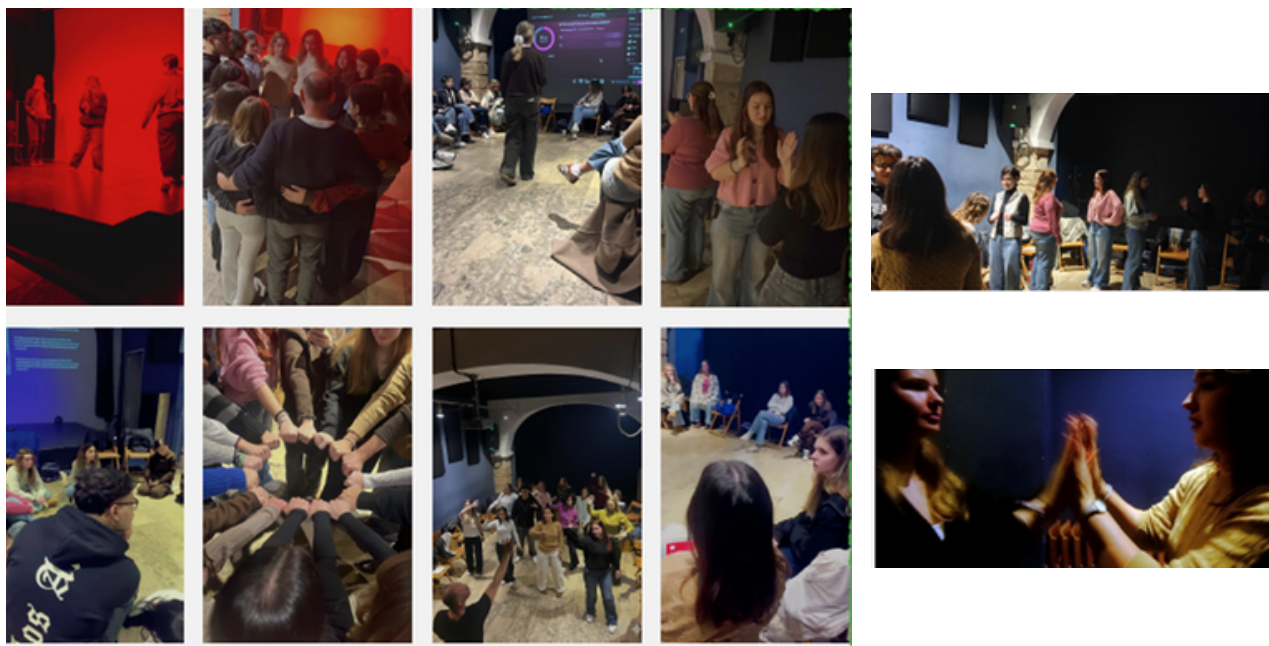
As a result, new bonds, empathy, and a shared creative dynamic emerged, as individual stories began to intertwine within a collective narrative.



THE THEMES: NAMING WHAT SUFFOCATES US

Valencia’s narrative work was rooted in the conviction that writing about pain can help transform lived experience into something others may recognise and, perhaps, overcome. The themes explored were as diverse as the participants themselves: experiences of migration, situations of exclusion, suicidal thoughts, family trauma, the impact of natural disasters, loneliness in adolescence, and fear of the future. The unexpected, the painful, the incomprehensible, the unbearable, the unacceptable, the inexpressible: everything that remains in the mind until, one day, we decide to let it go.

We are more than atoms: we are particles of stories. Some luminous, others harsh; some amplified, others distorted; some imagined; others still to come, yet already projected, sometimes with desire, sometimes with fear. In the end, we are stories told and heard, memory in the present dreaming of the future. And each of us carries our own narrative, rewritten and erased a thousand times, as if life were a palimpsest.



THE TOOLS: BODY, VOICE, AND WRITING



The methodology combined autobiographical writing, autofiction, physical expression, and drama therapy. The process unfolded gradually: from building trust and openness, to exploring memories through writing, structuring narratives, voicing and dramatizing them, and finally rewriting and collective closure.

The choice between narrating in the first or third person played a fundamental role in the process, as it directly influences the degree of emotional closeness to, or distance from, the story itself.

While third-person narration can offer a protective distance, first-person narration allows for greater involvement and a stronger sense of ownership. Each participant chose the position they felt most able to sustain at that moment.

The project also incorporated texts by contemporary authors such as Mónica Ojeda and Viola Di Grado, whose work explores pain and resilience, using them as sources of inspiration. Literature was presented not as a model to be imitated, but as concrete proof that it is possible to give form and voice to complex experiences.

A WORK BORN FROM TENDERNESS

The Valencia experience showed that spontaneous generosity can become the driving force behind the writing of a book. A collective work that aspires to uproot what hurts, what suffocates, what separates us from everyday life. A work that offers a path for confronting what wounds us and makes us feel smaller. Because if there was one thing we could be certain of, it was that the people who shared those days in Valencia were wonderful, affectionate, and deeply compassionate. Only love truly matters, although before we can love life, we need at least a small gesture of tenderness towards ourselves.

“If you manage to help even one person ask for help, confront their past, speak out about their present, or realise that there are other voices who have lived through similar situations and overcome them—if you can show them that it is possible to move beyond certain forms of abuse or traumatic experiences, then you will have fulfilled your purpose.”

— Domingo Ferrandis, Artistic Director of ESA



Valencia was the beginning of something that continues to this day. The residency planted the seeds of stories that would continue to grow over the following months in local workshops in Italy and Spain, eventually taking the form of a book published in Latronico. The ESA team is grateful for the warm welcome offered by Quique Sanmartín in Valencia, for the support of Ana María Solís, and for the affection and dedication of MTS Edizioni’s coordinator, M^a Teresa Sisinni, and her team.

Latronico, February 2026: From Text to Book

From February 16th to 18th, 2026 · Sal n Sandro Pertini · Latronico, Basilicata

The Latronico Narrative Editing Workshop marked the second international stage of the project and took place in the heart of Pollino National Park. This place of ancient origins—whose name may derive from the Greek and mean “hidden place”—provided the ideal setting for transforming the narratives born in Valencia into structured literary texts, ready for publication.



DAY 1: THE WORD AS A TOOL

The first day began with a creative warm-up session led by Domingo Ferrandis, followed by a collage workshop led by Lucia Mitidieri and Moira Forastiere (MTS Edizioni). The technique used was Tina Festa's Caviardage: a form of erasure poetry in which each participant begins with an existing text and removes what they do not need, keeping only the words that resonate. From the same page, each person created something completely different: a true reflection of their own voice and emotional state.



In the afternoon, the group visited the Atelier del Non Ancora, a permanent local laboratory dedicated to contemporary sound and visual expression, with a clear social mission: to promote a culture of solidarity capable of countering situations of disadvantage. The visit expanded the reflections sparked by the workshop, exploring the boundary between individual expression and collective impact.



DAY 2: MATERA AND LIVING MEMORY

The second day began with an official visit to Latronico Town Hall, where the mayor welcomed the group. Before departing for Matera, Pasquale La Rocca—a cross-country skiing champion and the author of a book on willpower—spoke about how personal storytelling can become a tool for resilience.



In the afternoon, the group travelled to Matera for a two-and-a-half-hour guided tour of the Sassi: the canyon, the rock-hewn churches, the house museums carved into the rock, and the ancient history of this city, which was the European Capital of Culture in 2019. A landscape that speaks for itself of layers, memory, and what endures through time.



DAY 3: FROM DRAFT TO BOOK

The final day was dedicated to the publishing process: macro-editing (narrative structure, character consistency, plot arc) and micro-editing (language, rhythm, word choice, narrative voice). Participants worked directly on their own texts, in pairs and in small groups, experiencing first-hand what it means to give and receive narrative feedback. The day concluded with a certificate ceremony: a meaningful moment that celebrated not only the skills acquired, but also each participant's personal growth. A visit to the Parco delle Terme—with installations by Anish Kapoor, Michelangelo Pistoletto, and Alessandro Armento—then brought the workshop to a close, in keeping with the narrative themes explored.



Results: What the Project Has Transformed

Italian participants – MTS Edizioni

The MTS Edizioni team observed significant improvements not only in technical writing skills, but above all in the emotional sphere. Participants with experiences of trauma and depression showed greater openness and a stronger ability to express themselves, even in the school environment. The previous local workshops had already laid the groundwork for the final editorial work carried out in Latronico.

Spanish participants – ESA

The Spanish group developed narratives primarily in the first person, with an approach close to that of a personal diary. They also experimented with visual elements—images and illustrations—to complement the written texts, which arrived in Latronico at an already advanced stage of development. Peer review confirmed the quality and strength of the material produced

EDITORIAL STRATEGY AND NEXT STEPS

Following the strategic discussion held during the Latronico workshop, the editorial proposal for the final collective volume was approved. The chosen solution balances the authenticity of the texts in their original languages with multilingual accessibility

Paperback edition:

Narrative texts in the original languages (IT, ES). Multilingual introductions and methodological sections (IT, ES, EN).

Electronic book (eBook) accessible via QR code:

Full translation of all texts into the project's four languages.

The book will be presented at the Turin International Book Fair (SaTo26) in May 2026, at the MTS Edizioni stand. The project is also developing an audiobook as a complementary output.

“You are more than atoms. You are stories lived, reworked, imagined, distorted, projected. You are constantly telling yourselves stories, listening to yourselves, recreating yourselves. You are narrative. You are memory.”

– Domingo Ferrandis, Artistic Director of ESA

#Narradrama #ErasmusPlus #YouthNarrative
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