WESTERN STORY grows out of a personal imaginary, but it isn’t just about where I come from, it’s an interrogation of what kind of freedom we can still allow ourselves today, and at what cost. The film borrows the language of the western, a genre I absorbed as a child, and turns it inside out. In classic westerns freedom belonged almost exclusively to men. Here it belongs to two women who come to claim it much later, but with radical urgency.

Bruna and Pina aren’t classic heroines or role models. They’re imperfect, contradictory, marked both by time and the choices they’ve made. One has built her identity out of remaining so independent, until she lost touch with the people she loves. The other has spent her life living for others, and forgot what it feels like to want something for herself. Together, they come to a point of no return, either they change, or they finally settle into a life they never fully chose. I want the film to accompany us through that moment without rhetoric, looking for something physically true in bodies and gestures.

I’m drawn to women who, at midlife the world tends to render invisible, choose to put themselves back into the game - to risk, to fail, to want things again. Not as some nostalgic grab at youth, but as something present and necessary.

Formally, the film is in conversation with the western without ever becoming an imitation of it. Real landscapes, real light, horses, fire, duels, all recognizable, but shot with a contemporary eye, closer to the body than to the myth. The camera will move between wide, epic framing and something more intimate, trying to hold both scale and vulnerability at once. Movement matters here - in the way the women’s bodies gradually shed rigidity and habit, and in the direction itself, which follows that unfolding without ever underlining it. Sound works the same way: long stretches of silence where nature takes over, broken by dialogue that’s spare but emotionally exact.

The work with the actresses will be instinctive, open-ended. I want characters who carry a shared history you can feel even in what’s left unsaid - friendship, love and dependency all tangled together - something we’ll find in the process, not impose on it.

Even the production is part of the statement: WESTERN STORY as a spaghetti western in reverse - an American director shooting in Italy with an Italian crew, building a bridge between two traditions instead of romanticizing either one.

In the end, this film is a simple gesture: to put freedom back at the center, not as an idea, but as something lived, imperfect, often arriving too late. A last shot at it, maybe. But a necessary one.