



*"This is my home. I belong here and I'm going to fight to stay."* Tania Mattos

# FROM HERE

A film by Christina Antonakos-Wallace



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## From Here, Home Viewing Kit

A film by Christina Antonakos-Wallace

89 minutes | USA, Germany | 2020

Website: <https://fromherefilm.com/>

Impact Website: <https://withwingsandroots.org>

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/fromherefilm/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/fromherefilm>

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/fromherefilm/>

Home Viewing Kit Produced in partnership with Nafasi Farrell, Narratives Unbound LLC

# Using this Guide

This guide was produced during COVID-19, a global health pandemic that has swept our world revealing the many gaps to resources that we need to survive together. The impacts of this pandemic have become more apparent with its destruction ravaging through our most vulnerable communities.

This guide is an invitation to engage in dialogue and is grounded in a belief in the power of our collective human struggle to find a place of understanding and belonging.

It is designed for those who may be sheltering at home, and want to use *FROM HERE* to engage with family, friends and communities in conversations that are undertaken in a spirit of openness. This documentary envisions conversations where we listen deeply to one another, share varying viewpoints and expand our thinking to create more powerful and dynamic communities. It is *from here* that we begin to reimagine belonging and take steps forward to hold us accountable for the liberation of all people.

## Message from the Filmmaker

Humans have always migrated to survive and thrive. And while migration is as old as humanity, its speed has increased. Migration is currently changing the face of nearly every society around the world. Goods, weapons, capital, pollutants, and information can move ever more freely, but humans cannot. Millions are denied their basic dignity because of being born on the wrong side of a border or trying to cross one.

Far-right politicians and parliamentarians around the world have moved into the highest offices by exploiting anti-immigrant rhetoric. Underlying this reality are very deep, often hidden beliefs about who really belongs.

*FROM HERE* counters the culture of fear with a culture of possibility. It's protagonists are caught in the crosshairs of polarized debates, but have chosen to transform their struggles into action to help shape the conversation.

Many things in my personal story drew me to make this film, including years of activism and some surprising firsthand encounters with xenophobia in Europe. Raised within the Greek-American community, I struggled to reconcile the tension between tradition and change in my own community. Ultimately, these experiences led me to believe that to create the multiracial democracies we hope for, we need narratives that speak directly to the unspoken beliefs of who does and doesn't belong. I was compelled to tell the stories of Tania, Sonny, Miman and Akim because of their powerful ways of creating belonging.

- Christina Antonakos-Wallace

## Synopsis:

FROM HERE is a hopeful story of Tania, Sonny, Miman, and Akim - artists and activists based in Berlin and New York whose lives and futures hang in the balance of immigration and integration debates. As the US and Germany grapple with racism, nationalism, and a fight over their national identities, our protagonists move from their 20s into their 30s and face major turning points in their lives: fighting for citizenship, starting families, and finding room for creative expression. Spanning a decade in two of the world's largest centers of immigration, this sensitive and nuanced documentary captures their journeys to redefine what it means to "belong" in societies that are increasingly hostile to their existence. FROM HERE offers four distinct visions of resistance and resilience—showing not only their struggle, but enormous power.

## Key Credits

Christina Antonakos-Wallace Director/Producer/Editor/Camera

Canan Turan, Creative Producer

Amy Benson, Co-Producer

Theresa Navarro, Co-Producer

Aletta von Viettinghoff, Editor

(Elizabeth) Alex Guy, Composer

Olga Gerstenberger, Associate Producer, Impact Producer

Chelo Alvarez-Stehle, Lead Impact Producer

Chrystian Rodriguez, Impact & Education Producer





## The Protagonists



MIMAN identifies as a German Roma with Balkan roots. He works as a social worker with Roma refugee families in Berlin.



SONNY: Sonny is a Sikh-American musician and social justice educator based in New York City.



TANIA is an undocumented activist, born in Bolivia and raised in Queens.



AKIM (Berlin): Is a graffiti and street artist from Berlin. He came to Germany from Vietnam in his elementary school years.

## General Discussion Questions

Immediately after watching *From Here*, take a few quiet moments to reflect on what you have seen and review the discussion questions below. Consider picking 1-2 questions that resonate with you and jot down a few notes before engaging in discussion.

We recommend 30-45 minutes for this conversation.

1. How are you feeling right now? What is the primary emotion in your body?
2. What is your family's experience with migration? If you don't know, why do you think that is?
3. Did you especially identify with one of the protagonists: Akim, Tania, Sonny and/or Miman. Why?
4. What is one thing you learned from a protagonist in the film about how to create change that you could apply in your own life or community?
5. Choose one of these quotes, and share why it speaks to you: (or how it connects to your story)
  - a. Tania: "I have cultural and social citizenship, but I don't have legal citizenship."
  - b. Akim: "People always try to force roots on me. On the other hand they describe me as the uprooted one. Plucked from different soil and planted somewhere else. I've had to mutate to survive."
  - c. Miman: "Why do we stay who we are?"
  - d. Sonny: "If all of us who believe in social and economic justice walk away from our communities because we think they are conservative, who is going to be challenging them to do better? And that means acting out of love. That's how we build solidarity."

# Taking action & Website info

## ACTION INVITATIONS

- Share Your Story <https://withwingsandroots.org/stories> -
  - Instructions & Upload Form [Here](#)
- Learn Immigration History: <https://withwingsandroots.org/timelines>
- Find a Local Immigrant Rights Organization:  
<https://www.informedimmigrant.com/service-organization-search/#>

Sign Up to Request a Screening when the film becomes available:

Email: [info@withwingsandroots.com](mailto:info@withwingsandroots.com)