



PORCELAIN

A SHORT MOVIE BY
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ELEONORA BOCCALATTE
ROBERTA DI SOMMA

PROJECT PRESENTATION

11 JANUARY 2023

A RIGHT PROFILE
PRODUCTION

ROMA



GENERAL INFO

ORIGINAL TITLE: Porcellana

ENGLISH TITLE: Porcelain

GENRE: Psychological thriller, Horror

LANGUAGE: Italian, Sub English

DURATION: 30'

LOGLINE:

A young girl with a profound obsession with teeth compromises all her relationships, falling into a deep psychosis at war with herself

WHO WE ARE

Hi everyone! We are Lorenzo, Eleonora and Roberta, the authors and creators of Porcellana, and together we founded the Right Profile, a team to create and develop innovative and high quality cinematographic projects.

We started this group united by a great knowledge and a strong passion for cinema, combining the strengths of each of us, thus creating a complete and efficient team. Lorenzo's talent for writing stories, creating dialogue and three-dimensional characters, and his eye for shots and images. Eleonora's great conscientiousness and organizational skills, her cinematic knowledge and directorial skills. Roberta's acting talent, her unique expressiveness, the ability to frame the movements of the actors in the scene, combined with her skills in the psychological field for the creation of the characters. Together we are the Right Profile.

LOCATION



Paestum



Napoli



Roma

PAESTUM



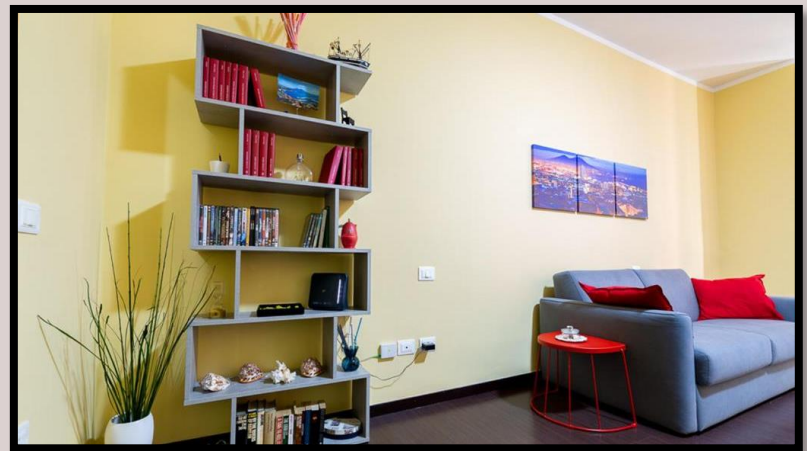
Mother's home



NAPOLI



Emma's house



ROMA



Park



Marco's house



SYNOPSIS

Emma, a 20-year-old girl, has lived her whole life hiding from herself and everyone else a weird obsession for a specific body part: teeth. This peculiar fetish, manifestation of a deep personality disorder, forced Emma up to that point to keep all her partners at a safe distance, afraid to show her true self and getting refused. One day Emma decides to change behavior, and accepts a blind date organized by her best friend Caterina. Emma meets Marco, and their first date is a success. Despite this positive meeting, Emma is still afraid that her deep desires and her obsession could scare Marco and ruin the relationship. These fears are confirmed and amplified by a conversation with Emma's mother, an intrusive figure in the girl's life. This dialogue with her mother reopens a wound that never healed, and the few certainties Emma had accumulated thanks to Caterina and Marco are completely gone. Emma regresses into a state of isolation and phobia of people around her, reaching a complete detachment from reality. Emma starts being haunted by her reflection in the mirror, which represents the manifestation of her hidden self. Emma believes she has no other choice, so she goes back to her old habits, and decides to sleep with Marco and never hear from him again. Emma withdraws into her loneliness and her apathy. Her mood change is noticed by Caterina, who faces her friend and forces her to explain what is going on. Emma does not explain in full detail what is the real problem, but she talks to Caterina about fear of intimacy and rejection. Caterina convinces Emma to open up completely with Marco, sure that the guy will understand and accept her. Then Emma goes back to Marco, ready to fully reveal herself. They sleep together, but this time Emma does not hold back, and tries aggressively to satisfy her peculiar fetish. The girl tries insistently to put her hands in Marco's mouth, but the guy stops her, shocked by the intensity of the girl's behavior.

SYNOPSIS

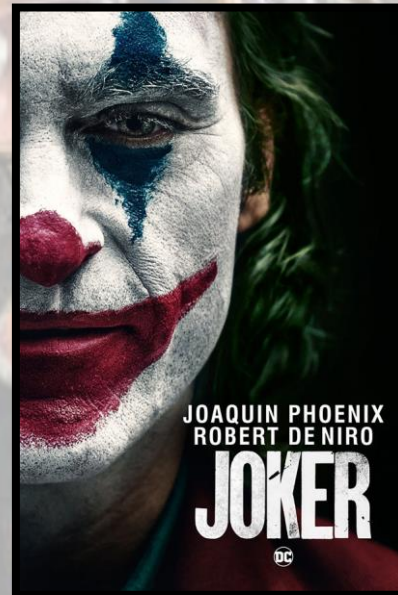
Marco kicks her out, and Emma ends up more vulnerable than ever. She seeks comfort in Caterina, her only safe harbor. Emma convinces herself that the only person that can really understand her is her friend, and no one else. After a movie night, Emma and Caterina kiss. Everything seems to go smoothly, until Emma tries again to satisfy her fetish. She tries aggressively to stick her fingers into her friend's mouth, but Caterina gets scared and pushes her away. Caterina was idealized as her only safety net, so her rejection is the last drop. Emma goes into panic mode, she starts screaming against her friend, who tries to calm her down without success. Emma falls into a state of complete dissociation from reality. In the final climax, from the mirror appears Emma's mother, which reminds Emma that no one can ever love her for who she is, and that now she is totally alone. Completely worn out, Emma faints. But the story has a happy ending: these violent episodes convince Emma to go to therapy. After one year of analysis, the girl's psyche gets better, at the point that she can control her obsession with teeth, and she decides to enroll at the faculty of dentistry.

VISUAL APPROACH

1. BLACK SWAN (2010)



2. JOKER (2019)



3. EUPHORIA (2019)





BLACK SWAN

(Darren Aronofsky, 2010)

Black Swan shows the same concept that we want to represent. The use of images and mirrors, the relationship mother-daughter, the interaction of the protagonist with the external world, they all create a perfect balance between art and psychological disorders. It is a full immersion inside the protagonist's mind, haunted by herself and her reflection in the mirror, symbol of her wicked part. In this movie, there is a deep knowledge of the psychology behind mental disorders, which are represented in an allegoric way, and never didactic.





JOKER

(Todd Phillips, 2019)

In *Joker*, the sadness and progressive isolation of the protagonist is caused by a mental disorder deeply rooted in his personality, at the point of becoming part of his character. A pathological condition is a cruel life companion, around which are shaped the interactions with others, and because of this condition, all other people become the enemy. In this movie too is represented a deeply flawed mother-son relationship that causes the psychological disorder of the protagonist.





EUPHORIA

(Sam Levinson, 2019)

The use of light, of color contrast and the visual approach in *Euphoria* represent and describe the characters' mental state. The photography directly communicates sensations often intense using lights and colors to represent symbolically the psychology of the protagonists. In this way, the emotions and mood of the characters twist reality, modifying the shape of the surroundings and pulling the viewer inside their inner world.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Porcellana was born from the desire to allegorically represent the inner world of a person suffering from psychological disorders. Mental disorders have increasingly become part of the collective imaginary, especially after the pandemic and the 2020 lockdown. Yet, nowadays, there are still few cinematographic works that make psychological disorder the center of their narrative. Titles such as *Black Swan*, *Joker*, *Euphoria*, include characters with severe mental disorders in a brilliant way. And the number of positive reviews and awards won (over 100 in total) underlines how the theme is always relevant, interesting and of fundamental importance. Unfortunately, however, titles capable of describing psychological disorders in a truly exhaustive but not didactic way are still the minority of international cinematography works. Most of the works represent such important and delicate themes in a way that often appears superficial. *Porcellana* aims to show the thoughts and actions of a person suffering from mental disorders in a profound but innovative way, using metaphors, images, dialogues and colors. Specifically, *Porcellana* tells the story of Emma, a twenty-year-old girl suffering from borderline personality disorder with psychotic tendencies and other disorders similar to nervous bulimia. Emma shows great difficulty establishing stable romantic relationships for fear of reaching deep levels of intimacy and being forced to show her true self. In fact, Emma hides an obsession that deeply shames her and that she has never shown to anyone: a fetish for teeth shifted into the private sexual sphere.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Like many mental disorders, the main origin of her discomfort comes from the dysfunctional relationship with her mother, a prevaricating and haunting figure who perceives her daughter's life as an extension of herself and not a person with her own identity. The inability to free herself from this morbid relationship, combined with the absence of a father figure, led Emma to develop several symptoms of the borderline personality disorder, including the splitting of the self into good and bad parts, strong sexual promiscuity, fear of intimacy and abandonment. Furthermore, the mother's fixation with cleaning her teeth established in her daughter a morbid obsession with the mouth and teeth shifted onto her sexual life. However, in the story there are also positive figures, such as Caterina, Emma's best friend who will try in every way to help the girl establish a lasting relationship, even if she does not understand the real and complex reasons behind her friend's difficulties. And the figure of Marco, a boy genuinely interested in Emma, with whom she will try to establish a real relationship of openness and trust. Despite the efforts of the protagonist and the positive influences around her, a meeting with her mother will be yet another trigger that will lead Emma to take refuge in her old dysfunctional patterns and even to fall into a state of apathy and dissociation. The girl will fall deeper and deeper into this dissociative condition which will gradually lead her to psychotic episodes in which reality and dream get confused. The girl will begin to see distorted images in the mirror, images of the evil side of herself, images that will haunt her relentlessly. Emma will end up identifying with the evil part of her, pushing away both Marco and Caterina in a bad way. The story will end in the final climax, in which the image of the girl will merge with the image of her mother, leading Emma to completely lose the sense of reality.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Porcellana describes the life and thoughts of a girl with borderline personality disorder, with tendencies to slip into psychotic thinking (hallucinations, delusions, paranoia, etc.) after exposure to specific triggers. Within the personality framework of the protagonist, there are also analogies in the psychological sense with bulimia, an eating disorder. Nervous bulimia in porcelain is addressed in a totally allegorical way. In eating disorders, food acts as a bridge in the relationship between mother and daughter, constituting the vehicle through which the mother exercises power over her daughter, while the latter tries unsuccessfully to extricate herself from it. In *Porcellana*, however, the symbol of this bond between mother and daughter is expressed by the obsession with teeth. In bulimia nervosa, the daughter perceives the mother's body as a foreign but infesting body, which is assimilated as an evil part of the self and that the daughter wants to get rid of. In this disorder, in fact, the food binges and the consequent vomiting represent the painful attempt to re-establish one's boundaries, in an endless loop. In *Porcellana*, it is the teeth that represent the object of the ambivalent relationship between mother and daughter. Therefore, teeth represent the control that the first exercises over the second, the obsession that their teeth must be clean and perfect, an ideal that for the protagonist represents a symbol of an intimate, reassuring relationship, relationship that at the same time deeply scares her and that she would like to flee. There is very little knowledge about the real experiences of mental disorders, which usually tend to be labeled based on visible symptoms. The intent is to overcome the diagnostic label and get deeply into the inner dynamics that distress and that are often not visible from the outside.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Addressing the disorders covered in *Porcellana* with specific terms has the sole purpose of making the subject we are talking about more familiar and concrete. The intent of this project is to show experiences that are rarely understood, to tell the difficulties and the infinite loops into which people with mental disorders can fall without the help of adequate support. Our hope is to help promote a better understanding of the issue, avoiding stigmatization, so that such issues can be addressed without prejudice and with greater knowledge. All this through a narration that is never didactic, without ever explicitly naming the topics mentioned above, using exclusively the cinematographic language, which sets itself the task of accompanying the viewer into these unknown worlds through images, lights, dialogues of real life.

P.S. Obviously this is not the right place to talk in detail about psychological disorders, far from us to carry out a close examination of them. For more information, see the bibliography.

Sources:

Gabbard, G.O. (2015). *Psychodynamic psychiatry*. Fifth edition based on the DSM-5. Raffaello Cortina Publisher

Kernberg, O. (1975). *Borderline Conditions and Pathological Narcissism*. Aronson

FUNDINGS

The funds raised thanks to your generous participation will be used to create a high-quality project and adequately pay all the people who work in the complex mechanism behind the creation of a cinematographic project. All the essential roles to produce the short film, director of photography, sound engineer, assistant director, operator, editor, electricians and many others, will be covered by young and talented people who, like us, have an unbridled passion for cinema and a great desire to learn and work. Our intent is to adequately pay everyone involved, avoiding devaluing their work as often happens with younger workers. We know everyone personally, and for us their efficiency, mutual respect for roles and duties, the scrupulosity and commitment with which they dedicate themselves to the work they love, are invaluable qualities and represent a fundamental part of the entire process. For this reason, it seems to us necessary and right to guarantee them compensation appropriate to their merits. The funds will also be used to finance the use of equipment that allows the creation of high-quality material, so that the final product is packaged in the best possible way and is usable for all spectators who want to see it. And finally, a small part of the funds will go to finance entries to various film festivals, so as to show the short to as many people as possible and promote better understanding for people with psychological disorders, eliminating stigmatization. Thank you all for the support!

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