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IL MIO CORPO

un film di MICHELE PENNETTA

SOGGETTO MICHELE PENNETTA, ARTHUR BRUGGER e PIETRO PASSARINI

CINEMATOGRAFIA PAOLO FERRARI · SUONO EDGAR IACOLENNA · MONTAGGIO DAMIAN PLANDOLIT e ORSOLA VALENTI

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SYNOPSIS

Oscar – presque plus un enfant – récupère de la ferraille pour son père qui la vend. Il passe sa vie dans des déchèteries sauvages où le reste des restes sédimente.

Aux antipodes, juste à côté, il y a w. Il nettoie l'église contre une hospitalité monnayée, il ramasse les fruits, mène les troupeaux, tout ce qui peut occuper son corps venu d'ailleurs.

Entre Oscar, le petit Sicilien, et Stanley, le Nigérian, rien de commun en apparence. Sauf le sentiment d'être jeté au monde, de subir le même refus, la même vague écrasante de choix faits par d'autres.





BIOGRAPHIE

Né à Varese (Italie) en 1984. Il a suivi et obtenu le Master en réalisation cinématographique à la Haute Ecole D'Art et de Design de Genève (HEAD) et l'École Cantonale d'Art de Lausanne (ECAL) en 2010. Son film de diplôme *I cani abbaiano* a été sélectionné dans plusieurs festivals.

En 2013 commence sa collaboration avec Close Up Films de Joelle Bertossa et réalise le moyen métrage *'A iucata* qui remporte le *Pardino d'Oro* à Locarno et est aussi nommé meilleur court-métrage Suisse. Il continue sa carrière en nombreux festivals internationaux en obtenant aussi le prix de meilleur film au Festival dei Popoli de Florence.

L'intérêt pour son pays d'origine et pour l'actualité le portent à écrire et réaliser son premier long métrage *Pescatori di Corpi*, en compétition internationale au 69th Festival de Locarno (2016). Son deuxième film *Il mio Corpo* est sélectionné en compétition internationale long-métrage au 51th Vision du Réel.



NOTE D'INTENTION

Il mio corpo est le troisième film que je tourne en Sicile. *'A Iucata*, mon premier film, était une immersion dans l'univers des courses clandestines de chevaux, tandis que *Pescatori di Corpi* s'employait à raconter le quotidien d'un équipage de pêcheurs clandestins et celui d'un réfugié vivant à bord d'un bateau abandonné. Ces deux réalités avaient comme toile de fond la thématique de la clandestinité en Sicile.

Ce nouveau film prolonge ainsi ma réflexion en tentant de la mettre en perspective avec la situation d'abandon dans laquelle se retrouvent les habitants de l'île. En séjournant longuement dans la région, j'ai en effet été frappé par le sentiment d'errer sur les lieux d'une ancienne catastrophe atomique : tout y semble désaffecté, comme si une bombe nucléaire avait explosé et qu'il avait fallu reconstruire à partir de rien. Comme si, précisément, rien ne s'était reconstruit et qu'il avait simplement fallu, dans ce décor, continuer de vivre. J'aimerais donner à voir cette « vie d'après », faire sentir cette atmosphère de fin du monde qui se dégage de ces lieux porteurs des stigmates d'une catastrophe non spectaculaire mais bien réelle : la fin d'une activité économique, le chômage endémique, la dégradation lente de l'environnement sur fond de la misère vécue par les migrants et la précarité des jeunes siciliens sans avenir et sans perspectives, contraints de tomber dans la clandestinité.

Dans le centre de la Sicile, qui est comme un huis clos duquel il est possible de sortir mais pas de s'éloigner, Oscar et Stanley vivent sans le savoir une quête initiatique, liés entre eux par cette situation d'abandon, à l'image de la région dans laquelle ils évoluent. Juxtaposés, les deux portraits tissent un réseau de situations individuelles qui se feront écho et sera ainsi possible de révéler les traces d'un drame caché. *Il mio corpo* montrent deux personnages ambigus et refusent d'adopter un point de vue manichéen qui ferait de ces jeunes hommes soit des victimes soit des héros. J'essaie d'interroger la part de responsabilité institutionnelle et individuelle dans les choix de vie de chacun.

Michele Pennetta

FILMO- GRAPHIE

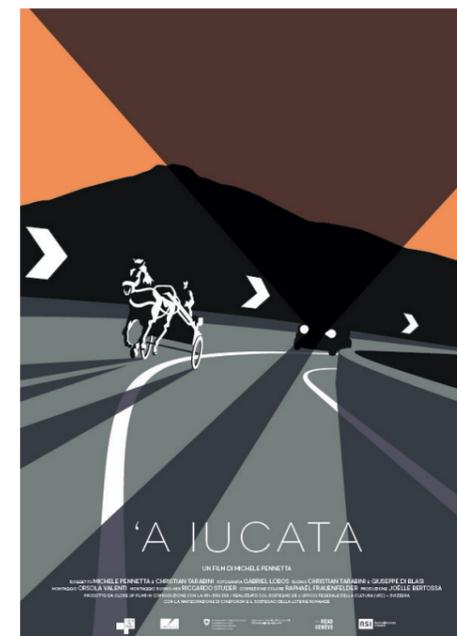


PESCATORI DI CORPI

<https://vimeo.com/149277269>
password: PDC_FINAL
vost français, anglais et italien

Festivals (sélection)

- > Locarno Film Festival – Cineasti del presente
- > Camden International Film Festival
Compétition Longs-Métrages
- > IX International Biennial of Art, SIART-Bolivia
- > 52èmes Journées de Soleure
- > Mostra Internacional del Cinema de Sao Paulo

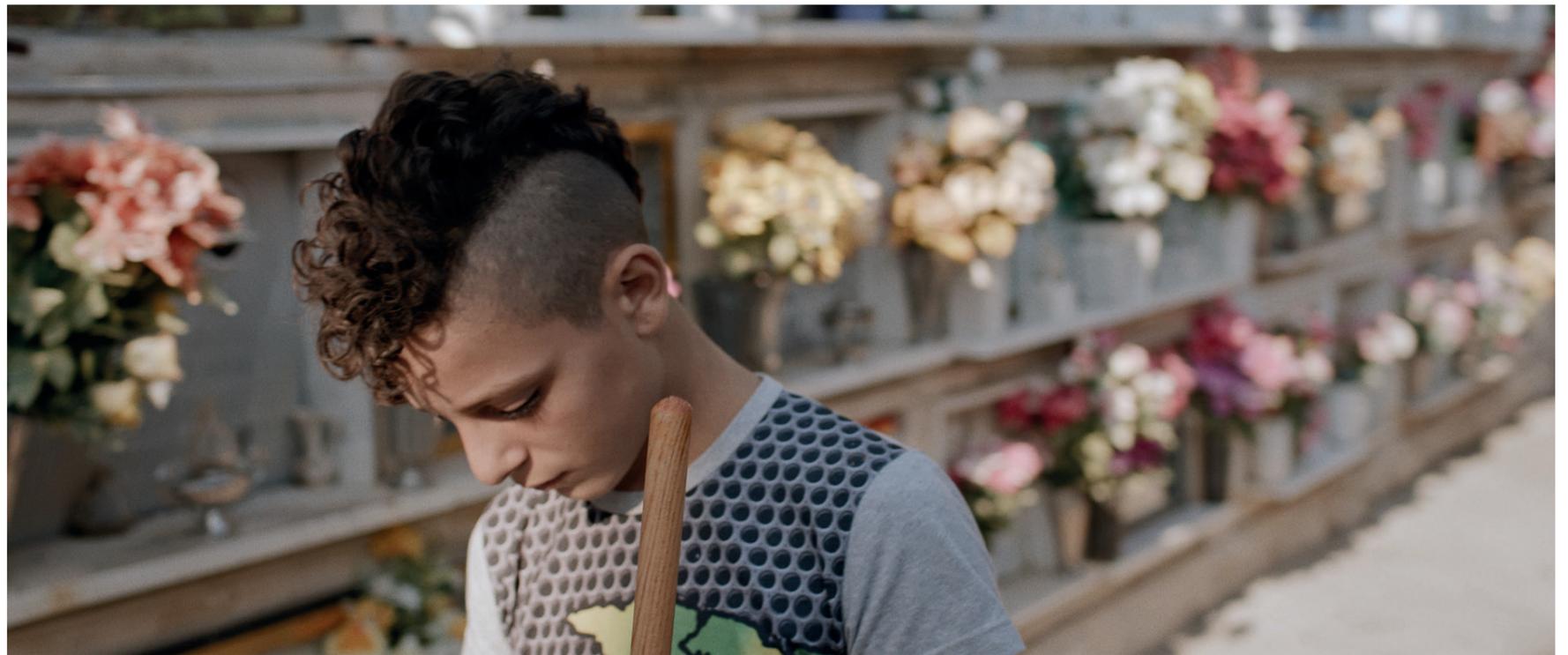


'A IUCATA

<https://vimeo.com/144005083>
TheBet_FR_2015

Festivals (sélection)

- > Nomination « Meilleur Court-Métrage »,
Prix du Cinéma Suisse 2014
- > Viennale International Film Festival, Autriche
- > Entrevues Belfort, France
- > Kasseler Dokfest, Allemagne
- > Festival dei Popoli, Firenze, Italie
Premio al Miglior Mediométraggio 2013
- > Doclisboa'13, Portugal
- > Festival de Locarno 2013
Pardino d'Oro 2013 de Locarno



FICHE TECHNIQUE

www.ilmiocorpo.com

Langues originale : sicilien et pidgin
Sous-titres disponibles : anglais, français, italien

Durée : 1h20 – Format : 2.39:1 – 25ips – 2k

Pays de production : Suisse, Italie
Support de projection disponible : DCP, ProRes

Numéro ISAN : 0000-0004-59C7-0000-X-0000-0000-C

FICHE ARTISTIQUE

ÉQUIPE

Réalisateur : Michele Pennetta

Image : Paolo Ferrari

Son : Edgar Iacolenna

Assistant réalisateur: Pietro Passarini

Monteurs : Damian Plandolit & Orsola Valenti

Monteur son et mixeur : Riccardo Studer

Étalonneur : Andrea Maguolo

PRODUCTION

Close Up Films – Joëlle Bertossa & Flavia Zanon

4, rue des Marbriers 1204 Geneva – Switzerland

joelle@closeupfilms.ch

www.closeupfilms.ch

Kino Produzioni – Giovanni Pompili

Via Giovanni Antonelli, 49, 00197 Roma RM – Italie

<https://www.kinoproduzioni.com>

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Michele Pennetta on ACID Cannes' 'Il Mio Corpo,' Loneliness in a Forgotten Italy

By Emiliano Granada



Credit: ACID Cannes

After a strong reception at Visions du Réel, Varese-born director Michele Pennetta will screen "Il Mio Corpo," his second feature, in Paris on Sept. 25. The Swiss-Italian production continues an exploration of the Sicilian terrain that first started with the short film "A Iucata" and continued with Pennetta's debut feature "Fishing Bodies."

Produced by Close Up Films and Kino Produzioni, the film silently follows the life of Oscar, a Sicilian kid that works collecting scrap metal for a harsh father, and Stanley, a Nigerian migrant determined to adapt to a new life. Their so close yet so distant lives demonstrate a shared desire to emancipate themselves from an isolated, almost forgotten world. Nour Films distributes.

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Variety talked with Michele Pennetta about his latest feature, participating at ACID Cannes.

Sicily is clearly another character in the film and in a way it has been for your last three films. What about the island stands out to you?

Before making the first film I had never been to Sicily. I was born in the north of Italy and studied in Switzerland. But I was always fascinated by the south, so after film school I wanted to make my first film there. I'd read an article on illegal horse racing and I wanted to go to Catania to see if I could get into that world. For me Sicily was a shock. I found myself in an incredible territory, a magical land that, beyond its beauty and cinematographic potential on every street and every corner, seemed to me a mirror of the rest of Europe in the sense that every paradox of the European Union was condensed on this small island. From there the idea of continuing deeper into a portrayal of Sicily formed in my head.

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Early on you deconstruct the tourist, romantic image many have of Sicily. And, even if thematically they are quite different, what comes across in each of your films is an intention to portray lonely characters in an Italy lost in time. Could you comment?

We all have a romantic imagination of Sicily. I think with "Il Mio Corpo" I finish a journey with its final scene. In "A Iucata," I speak of the father and son relationship from the passage of this profession of raising horses for the races. In the second film, "Pescatori di Corpi," I wanted to contribute to the discourse on illegal immigration, but from the unspoken point of view of the fisherman who work illegally. The three films are linked in a way through the exploration of a hidden Sicily. It could be compared to the Italian literature of Pirandello, a Sicilian author who examined these themes, and whose work inspired this last film.

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The film manages to narrate through a very stylized image without ever losing a clear sense of intimacy with its characters. Could you talk about working with them?

The basis for documentary work is research. I spent a year looking for the family dynamics and context I found with Oscar. The work with them was enormous, psychological work. We spent a lot of time with them, most of it without filming, and this was the obligatory step to ensure the degree of naturalism that we wanted. We filmed based on the characters' everyday lives. The beauty of making these types of films is that sometimes what you find surpasses every expectation. We got a lot of gifts from our characters because there was, first and foremost, a trust and friendship between them and our team.

Narratively and formally the film blurs the dividing line between documentary and fiction. What was the core concept behind your approach?

From a formal point of view, as you said, it is not a classic documentary. It was conceived in a very cinematic way, we even shot in scope. With very little dialogue, for me the formal act of filming is fundamental because it adds information in the absence of words. I have always imagined Sicily as an almost post-apocalyptic but contemporary western. The impression I got the first time I went was as if a bomb had exploded and what remained was the remains of the remains, the sediment of the sediment. These people who remained were part of the foundations. We wanted see these characters move in a formal, precise way that underlines how they live, the insolation. I think, with DIO Paolo Ferrari, we found a formal device that allowed us to portray that.

Il mio corpo
Credit: ACID Cannes

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f **SCREEN**DAILY

'Il Mio Corpo': ACID Review

BY WENDY IDE | 24 JUNE 2020

A hardscrabble life in Sicily is illuminated by Michele Pennetta's heartfelt doc



SOURCE: SWEET SPOT DOCS
'IL MIO CORPO'

Dir. Michele Pennetta. Switzerland, Italy. 2020. 80 mins

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Zoë Kravitz ("High Fidelity"), Jai Courtney ("Stateless")
Jun 25, 2020 • 52 min

Miley Cyrus ("Black Mirror"), Logan Lerman ("Hunters")

A Variety and iHeartRadio Podcast

This lovely, heartfelt observational documentary finds a melancholy harmony between the two lives, both young men who find themselves discarded before they have had a chance to make a mark on the world.

A teenager on the awkward, ungainly cusp of adulthood, Oscar scrapes a living with his brother and father by picking through fly-tipped junk for scrap metal to sell. Nigerian immigrant Stanley cooks his memories of home into the food he shares with his roommate Blessed and sweeps a church in return for groceries. Oscar and Stanley's lives interact only once, but they share a similarly hardscrabble, hand-to-mouth existence lived on the periphery of Sicilian society.

The empathy of the filmmaking is undeniable and is present in every intimate frame

The third of Michele Pennetta's films to explore the underbelly of Sicily, *Il Mio Corpo* follows *A iucata*, a short which won a Leopard of Tomorrow prize at Locarno 2013, and *Pescatori di Corpi*, which weaves together the lives of illegal fishermen with a Syrian migrant who lives on a boat. While not as emphatically timely as something like Gianfranco Rosi's *Fire At Sea*, the film does share Rosi's eye for revealing character details and a lyrical approach which finds beauty in the most unlikely of places. Pennetta's accomplished film should find a receptive audience on the festival circuit and establish him as a talent to watch.

In the opening shot of a film which brings a wide-screen drama to the dusty no man's land of Sicily's interior, Oscar and his brother rattle around in the inside of their father's truck. Exhausted, Oscar sleeps, and his almost-adult face softens into that of a child. The truck, his father says, as he pats it affectionately, is "our breadwinner." Unable to resist taking a dig at his two oldest boys, he adds. "Not you." Oscar, in particular, seems to be the target of his father's ire. "Why were you born without a brain?" he carps as his son struggles to haul the rusted husk of a washing machine up a sheer face of sun-baked scree.

The family tension smoulders and sparks, flaring up in a remarkable mealtime scene in which the sons, shifting uncomfortably, wordlessly speak volumes about what must have been a thoroughly miserable childhood caught in a parental war zone. "If she loved you," says the father their mother, "she would have come back." The boys escape the airless ill will of their overcrowded family home and cycle, freewheeling downhill into the town below. The camera accompanies them, in a blissful

fluid single shot, capturing a momentary broadening of horizons and a glimpse of freedom.

Elsewhere on the island, Stanley's fractious affection for his friend Blessed is an anchor in his drifting days. While Stanley has a two-year visa, Blessed is still waiting to hear whether his application for asylum will be granted. It's a source of stress between them. Shortly after Blessed's request is rejected, he vanishes from Stanley's life and from the film. A heartbreaking shot shows Stanley staring at the empty bed in the sparsely decorated room they shared.

The intersection between Oscar and Stanley's worlds is, we assume, scripted: a night time encounter which sees Oscar, lost by his father and brother during an after hours scrap hunt, curl up and sleep in Stanley's bed in a derelict house, while Stanley silently watches over him. The tacit kinship we glimpse between them might be projection on the part of the audience; but the empathy of the filmmaking is undeniable and is present in every intimate frame.

Production companies: Close Up Films, Kino Produzioni

International sales: Sweet Spot Docs, anna@sweetspotdocs.com

Producers: Joëlle Bertossa, Flavia Zanon, Giovanni Pompili

Cinematography: Paolo Ferrari

Editing: Damian Plandolit, Orsola Valenti

Screenplay: Michele Pennetta

Featuring: Oscar Prestifilippo, Stanley Abhuumen, Roberto Prestifilippo, Marco Prestifilippo, Blessed Idahosa

Da spettatore ad autore

Di Muriel Del Don

Quando Michele Pennetta arriva alla stazione di Nyon è una giornata piovosa e capricciosa ma lui sembra non accorgersene. Sorriso contagioso e sfavillante sciarpa colorata, il giovane regista italiano ma losannese d'adozione ci accoglie con entusiasmo nel suo mondo. Malgrado sia tornato da poco in Svizzera dopo un'intensa fase di postproduzione a Roma dove ha ultimato «Il mio corpo», l'energia di Pennetta sembra intatta. «Questo film rappresenta una sorta di rottura rispetto al passato, un'evoluzione tecnica ma anche un cambio per quanto riguarda la troupe che mi ha accompagnato durante le riprese» ci spiega pacatamente. In effetti, rispetto ai suoi film precedenti («A iucata» e «Pescatore di corpi»), il numero di collaboratori è aumentato e questo lo ha aiutato a gestire con maggiore consapevolezza gli inevitabili imprevisti ma anche il rapporto con i protagonisti che da stretto è diventato intimo e profondo.

Per Michele Pennetta il cinema non esisterebbe senza umanità. Non quella di paccottiglia fatta di sentimenti edulcorati ma piuttosto quella dimenticata, intensa e fragile dei suoi protagonisti. «Penso che il fatto di riuscire a penetrare in ambienti "difficili" sia un pregio che mi accompagna da sempre», ammette come se ci riflettesse per la prima volta. Il suo ultimo film «Il mio corpo», ne è un'ulteriore conferma.

Dalla SUPSI all'ECAL

La toccante fragilità e complessità dei suoi protagonisti si riflette anche nel percorso di formazione cinematografica di Pennetta, fatto di incontri fortuiti ma decisivi, di errori che si trasformano in occasioni e di viaggi in luoghi ancora sconosciuti. Sebbene nato vicino a Luino, in un mondo decisamente lontano dagli sfarzi di Cinecittà, il cinema fa comunque parte del suo DNA e questo lo spinge a intraprendere degli studi prima all'Accademia di Brera dove rimane però solo sei mesi, e successivamente alla SUPSI e all'ECAL.

La SUPSI è apparsa nella sua vita come per magia, mentre sfogliava uno storico giornale di annunci di Varese. La pubblicità per le porte aperte della scuola lo attira e spinge a tentare la fortuna. «È stata un'esperienza bellissima, in tre anni ho imparato molto. Era un'annata particolare la mia, anche perché capitanata da Gregory Catella», ci spiega Pennetta. Gregory Catella è stato un personaggio chiave nel suo percorso artistico, un nume tutelare che gli ha permesso di «capire veramente come fare cinema». Il Master all'ECAL è stato altrettanto



© Olga Cañero

Michele Pennetta
Regista

decisivo per la sua carriera, permettendogli di incontrare altri due pezzi grossi del cinema del reale: Claudio Papienza e Jean Louis Comolli che lo seguiranno durante l'ultimo anno per il suo film di diploma «I cani abbaiano». Grazie al loro atelier Pennetta ammette di aver scoperto cos'è il «vero documentario», l'importanza fondamentale del punto di vista.

La sensibilità dei silenzi

Pennetta non si accontenta di filmare i protagonisti dei suoi film, quello che cerca è una connessione, un contatto diretto e umano prima delle riprese. «Passo molto tempo con i protagonisti prima di girare. Nel caso di «Il mio corpo» sono stati parecchi mesi. Sto con loro al quotidiano senza tirare fuori la cinepresa. Per arrivare al grado di naturalezza che voglio ottenere ci lavoro molto, è molto faticoso» ci confessa, come a voler sottolineare il fatto che il cinema del reale è fatto anche (e forse soprattutto) di imprevisti e perenni rimesse in discussione.

Nei film di Pennetta i personaggi sembrano aver dimenticato completamente la cinepresa concedendosi allo sguardo dello spettatore come se non esistessero intermediari. Forse, come ci spiega lui stesso, le difficoltà linguistiche (arrivato a Losanna per il Master non parlava una parola di francese) l'hanno spinto

a raccontare delle storie con un minimo di dialoghi, privilegiando l'immagine rispetto alla parola. Una difficoltà che si è trasformata in forza e che l'ha obbligato a percorrere strade meno battute.

Joëlle Bertossa della ginevrina Close Up Films, produttrice di tutti i suoi film a partire da «A iucata», sottolinea questa sua indole umana e la potenza estetica dei suoi lavori: «è sempre un piacere lavorare con Michele. È preciso nelle sue intenzioni e molto rispettoso della sua équipe e delle persone che filma. Il suo lavoro è delicato e sottile e una bellezza fragile si sprigiona dai suoi film».

Quali sono i suoi progetti per il futuro? Indubbiamente la selezione del suo ultimo lungometraggio «Il mio corpo» a Visions du réel rappresenta un ottimo inizio e un'occasione d'oro per far conoscere il suo lavoro. La realtà è e rimarrà sempre il punto di partenza dei suoi film anche se ammette di star scrivendo una finzione che si svolgerà tra l'Italia e i Balcani. «Il mio corpo» marca la fine della sua parentesi siciliana ma l'Italia non ha ancora smesso di affascinarlo.

► Testo originale: italiano

Il ritratto

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Cannes ACID: Il Mio Corpo by Michele Pennetta



Kees Driessen



June 25, 2020 at 9:09 am

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Two young men on the same island. They are both tired, their heads resting against the window of a van or a bus as they fall asleep. They are poor, cleaning up after others. They don't know each other and have never met. Their lives have very little in common. But their bodies go through the same motions, in the same country, under the same sun.

That is the story of Il mio corpo ('my body', a reference to a christian prayer), sophomore feature of Italian documentarian Michele Pennetta, screening in Visions de Réel International's Feature Doc Competition. It is the final part of what he calls a Sicilian trilogy on illegality, after the short 'A iucata (2013) on illegal horse racing, winner of a Golden Pardino 'Leopard of Tomorrow' at the festival of Locarno, and his debut

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On this poster you see a man in flip-flops and a bathrobe walking in the middle of a burning pit. The pit is fenced and filled with dirty water. The man cleans himself and enters the water to swim in it. It happens throughout the entire film.



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feature Pescatori di corpi (Fishing Bodies, 2016) – another 'body' title (with similar religious connotations), about clandestine Sicilian fishermen and a Syrian refugee.

In Il mio corpo one of the men is a youngster, Oscar. He works with his older brother for his junk-dealer father, a man who has beer for breakfast. They drive around Sicily, collecting scrap metal from illegal landfills, looking for anything that's worth something. It's a barren land, under a burning sun. Oscar drags metal bars, fences, and boilers to his father, who is shouting a constant stream of abuse. "Don't pick up the rocks!" "Sleep at night!" "Don't talk back or I'll chuck a rock at your head!"

When Oscar, proudly, shows an intact Madonna statue he has found among the rubble, his father calls out: "Don't break it or I'll break you." When they drive home, his father says: "I'll trade you for a black person, the first chance I get."

Cut to a church. Stanley, a Nigerian immigrant and our second protagonist, is quietly sweeping the floor. He also is in a difficult Father-son relationship – Father with a capital F. The priest not only lets Stanley clean the church, but also arranges other jobs for him. We see Stanley harvesting grapes and herding sheep. Still, Stanley's Nigerian friend tells him, "You can't even pay the rent!"

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Is Stanley being taken advantage of, or is the priest – who remarks how times are hard, even for Italians – his saviour? And is Oscar being taken advantage of? Or is his father, in his own way, providing for the family as best he can?

Pennetta doesn't judge, but he does take sides: his love for his main characters is obvious. As is his love for Sicily, its rugged interior, the barren hills under the blazing sun, and the endless blue sea where Stanley swims, looking out over the water he once crossed on a dangerous journey. It is beautifully framed, and Pennetta credits his seasoned cameraman Paolo Ferrari for the impressive imagery, sometimes giving *Il mio corpo* the feel of a fiction film.

And it is in the images that Oscar and Stanley are most similar. Working in the fields, walking across the land, falling asleep. Often the documentary cuts between similar shots and situations, as if, although they never met, their parallel lives follow similar rhythms, echoing each other on a more basic level. Stanley's night out dancing rhymes with Oscar enjoying a bike ride downhill. And both, we learn, have been raised by their fathers, after their mothers left.

That last bit of information comes to us through conversations (between Oscar

and his father, and between Stanley and his friend) that feel orchestrated by the filmmakers. There are no interviews in *Il mio corpo*, and no voice-overs; apparently the filmmakers felt the need for at least some background information. But *Il mio corpo* is not about these specifics, but about the far more general idea that everywhere, we, our bodies, share the same spaces, the same countries, the same islands, with marginalized, tired, hard-working people we will never meet, and who will never meet each other (unless some filmmaker decides to arrange it).

It is tempting to consider how *Il mio corpo* would have turned out if even the little bit of exposition it does contain had been left out. In an interview for the *Visions du Réel* website, Pennetta admitted to some re-enactments, but stressed that many things were filmed simply as they found them, including some one-shot long takes. He specifically mentioned Oscar's waking-up scene, where the only intervention consisted of months of gaining trust, to eventually be allowed entry into Oscar's apartment, even before the family had fully woken up.

It's the tenderness with which the filmmakers approach their protagonists at such moments, that slowly reveal the deeper layers of their story. Where we discover, above all, a deeply human

sadness. It is that feeling which, together with the beauty of their faces, their bodies and their land, raises Il mio corpo to the point where Pergolesi's Stabat Mater, played during the end credits, feels earned.

Director: Michele Pennetta
Countries: Switzerland/Italy
1h 20mins

This review was first published in the Business Doc Europe coverage of Visions du Réel 2020.

Tags

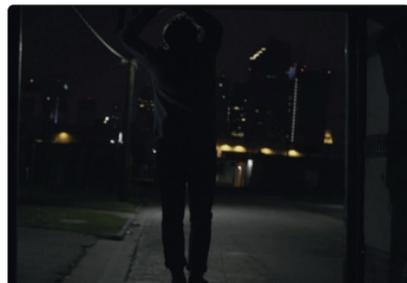
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Cannes Docs: Geo-diversity assessed during Marché



CLOSE UP FILMS presenta

IL MIO CORPO

un film di MICHELE PENNETTA

SOGGETTO MICHELE PENNETTA, ARTHUR BRUGGER E PIETRO PASSARINI
CINEMATOGRAFIA PAOLO FERRARI SUONO EDGAR IACOLENNA MONTAGGIO DAMIAN PLANDOLIT E ORSOLA VALENTI
SOUND DESIGN & MIX RICCARDO STUDER COLOR CORRECTION & MASTERING ANDREA MAGUOLO
PRODOTTO DA CLOSE UP FILMS-JOELLE BERTOSSA E FLAVIA ZANON CO-PRODOTTO DA KINO PRODUZIONI-GIOVANNI POMPILI
CON RSI-SILVANA BEZZOLA RIGOLINI E RAI CINEMA CON IL SOSTEGNO DI UFFICIO FEDERALE DELLA CULTURA (UFC)
CON LA PARTECIPAZIONE DI CINEFORUM E IL SOSTEGNO DELLA LOTERIE ROMANDE

