A FILM BY MARCO BELLOCCHIO

DORMANT BEAUTY

(BELLA ADDORMENTATA)
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Italy/France – 2012 – DCP – Color – 2.35 – Dolby Digital – 115 min

TONI SERVILLO  ISABELLE HUPPERT  ALBA ROHRWACHER
MICHELE RIONDINO  MAYA SANSA  PIER GIORGIO BELLOCCHIO
GIAN MARCO TOGNAZZI  FABRIZIO FALCO  BRENNO PLACIDO

with the participation of ROBERTO HERLITZKA

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Eluana Englaro becomes a national tragedy in Italy when the decision is taken to put an end to her life after seventeen years of vegetative state. This drama will affect the lives of four characters having their own beliefs.

A senator, struggling to vote a law with which he profoundly disagrees, is torn between his conscience and his loyalty towards the leaders of his party. His daughter, a pro-life activist, while demonstrating in front of Eluana’s clinic falls in love with Roberto, who is with his brother in the opposite group, advocating secular values.

A famous actress turns towards faith and miracle cures in hope of bringing her daughter out of an irreversible coma, thus neglecting her son who longs for his mother’s love. And the beautiful Rossa, lost in despair and determined to die, is saved by the young doctor Pallido and reawakens to life.

These converging stories are connected by a unique emotional thread: a reflection on the meaning of life.
DIRECTOR’S NOTES

My inspiration for this film was the intense emotion surrounding the very long and very public death of Eluana Englaro.

I was shocked in particular by the reactionary outcry from the Italian people, the media, the political class, and the Church, all in such sharp contrast to my own sense of solidarity with and admiration for the woman’s father.

I realized, however, that by holding fast to only one side of the controversy, I would be at risk of pinching off my imagination. I knew I would have to broaden my horizons, to let time expand my perspective…

I would have to wait… And so I waited two years, before resuming work on the idea, thereby deepening the process and giving rise to other stories completely unrelated to Eluana. These new plotlines stand on their own, drawing on eras long before the Eluana episode, drawing on my entire life: my childhood, my adolescence, my family, my Catholic upbringing, my political compromises, my moral principles, the importance of intellectual consistency, and finally the refusal to give up when faced with a situation both life-threatening and yet full of potential for recovery – even for rebirth, as with Rossa and Pallido.

Such has been my path, which subsequently determined style, imagery, and dramatic structure – or perhaps which allowed those elements to evolve as if on their own. During filming, the work was in large part improvisational, although we generally followed the dialogs, which were cut down in editing.

Without Eluana’s death, there would have been no Dormant Beauty to awaken. Although this film assumes no prejudgments, no foregone conclusions, it is certainly not a neutral work – I do not believe that neutrality exists in art. The film is sincere and non-ideological; it is not some kind of manifesto and I remain open to other point of views. I am hopeful that the film’s themes will generate spirited discussion and that my work will find a resonance.

Marco Bellocchio
PRODUCTION NOTES

At our first meeting, Marco Bellocchio told us how the idea for the film took form during a conversation with his daughter, who was upset by the Eluana Englaro case. For his adolescent daughter, as well as for the entire country, the suffering of that “Dormant Beauty” posed, for the first time, complex ethical questions, namely the dilemma of defining the line between free will and the end of life. As a result, the last days of the woman’s life, in February 2009, were the subject of strong media attention, to record every heart-flutter of the drama, including the inevitable clashes between the secular and Catholic fringes. This very public crisis became the film’s framework: the TV coverage providing a sort of metronome ticking for the lives of our protagonists, who suddenly find themselves having to deal with unresolved issues of their own, forced against their will to experience existential awakenings.

Yet, the completed film went beyond the core premise. It is not so much a story about euthanasia then it is about the clarity of ideas and thoughts becoming actions, about human relationships, the inability to communicate, and the true nature of love.

The emotions driving the film are multifaceted: the solitude when faced with life’s most vital decisions; the need to share love; the chasm between the deepest needs of the individual and the demands from the political sphere. Within this psychological climate, the great filmmaker Marco Bellocchio brings his characters to life, passionately and tenderly – the political scene fading in and out of focus as a backdrop, as a flowing continuo of blurred communiqués.

There are two overarching issues by which we can take the measure of this film: the value of life, and the moment when life ceases. The first problem is eternal; the second modern.

The film’s stance on the value of life seems to be absolute: life is always to be defended, even against those who no longer want it for themselves and want to die. In that sense, the “yes” to life would seem to argue against euthanasia, the unique predicament when one still has life yet chooses to renounce it.

The second problem, the actual endpoint of life, is an entirely modern conundrum provoked by technological advances progress. We can nowadays define exactly when “technically” one passes from life to death. The film’s thesis seems to be that human life must be defined as incorporating both consciousness and interrelation. When a body can no longer survive independently, when one has irreversibly lost the capacity for consciousness and interrelation, then that person can no longer be said to be alive. Such is the moral-philosophical atmosphere that invests the film, evoking an exploration both passionate and lucid, masterfully embodied in a cinematic language at once vibrant and enlightening.

Finally, considering the film will be perceived as supporting secular values, it is worth to remember, the great twentieth-century Catholic philosopher, Jean Guitton, who wrote: “It seems to me entirely in accord with God’s plan for humanity, to bring an end to needless suffering.”

Riccardo Tozzi
**Marco BELLOCCHIO**

Marco Bellocchio was born in Piacenza, Italy, in 1939. In 1959, he suspended his studies in philosophy at the Catholic University in Milan to enroll at the Experimental Center for Cinematography in Rome. In 1961-62 he made the short films Abbasso lo zio, La colpa e la pena, and Ginepro fatto uomo. He then transferred to London, where he attended the Slade School of Fine Arts. His feature-length debut, I pugni in tasca (Fists in the Pocket), was presented at Locarno in 1965 and attracted international attention.

In 2011 he received the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the Venice International Film Festival.

His filmography includes:
- 1965 – I pugni in tasca (Fists in the Pocket)
- 1967 – La Cina è vicina (China is Near)
- 1967 – Discutiamo, discutiamo (one of five segments from the anthology Amore e rabbia/Love and Anger)
- 1969 – Paola
- 1969 – Viva il primo maggio rosso (documentary)
- 1971 – Nel nome del padre (In the Name of the Father)
- 1972 – Sbatti il mostro in prima pagina (Slap the Monster on Page One)
- 1974 – Nessuno o tutti (later known as Matti da Siegare, made with S. Agosti, S. Petraglia, and S. Rulli)
- 1976 – Marcia trionfale (Victory March)
- 1977 – Il Gabbiano
- 1980 – Vacanze in Val Trebbia (Vacation in Val Trebbia, docu-fiction)
- 1980 – Salto nel vuoto (A Leap in the Dark/Leap into the Void)
- 1982 – Gli occhi, la bocca (The Eyes, the Mouth)
- 1984 – Enrico IV (Henry IV)
- 1986 – Diavolo in corpo (Devil in the Flesh)
- 1988 – La visione del Sabba (Evil Sabbath)
- 1990 – La condanna
- 1994 – Il sogno della farfalla
- 1996 – Il principe di Homburg (The Prince of Homburg)
- 1999 – La balla (The Nanny)
- 2002 – L’ora di religione (My Mother’s Smile)
- 2002 – Addio del passato (documentary)
- 2004 – Buongiorno, Notte (Good Morning, Night)
- 2005 – Il regista di matrimoni (The Wedding Director)
- 2006 – Sorelle
- 2009 – Vincere
- 2011 – Sorelle Mai
- 2012 – Bella addormentata (Dormant Beauty)

**Toni SERVILLO (Beffardi)**

Born in Afragola, Italy, in 1959, Toni Servillo founded the Theater Studio of Caserta in 1977. In 1987, following collaboration with the group Falso Movimento, he served as both actor and director, staging theatrical works nationally and internationally. The company included the founding members of Teatri Uniti, and the performances included both classic and contemporary pieces by such playwrights as De Filippo, Moscato, Pirandello, Viviani, Molière, Omero, Marcoaldi, Trevisan, and Goldoni. He has also directed operas, including those of Martin y Soler, Mozart, Cimarosa, Mussorgsky, Strauss, Beethoven, and Rossini.

From 1992 to the present, he has appeared in films directed by Mario Martone, Antonio Capuano, Paolo Sorrentino, Elisabetta Sgarbi, Fabrizio Bentivoglio, Andrea Molaioli, Matteo Garrone, Stefano Incerti, Claudio Cupellini, and Nicole Garcia, for which he has received numerous awards, including the Grolla d’Oro, the Nastro d’Argento, and the David di Donatello.

In 2008, he received the Best European Actor award from the European Film Academy for his roles in Gomorra and Il Divo.
Isabelle HUPPERT (Divine Mother)

Isabelle Huppert is a graduate of the Academy for Dramatic Arts in Paris; she debuted at the age of sixteen in a small role in Faustine et le bel âge by Nina Companéez. Her subsequent work included roles in dozens of films, including: César et Rosalie by Claude Sautet (1972); Les valseuses by Bertrand Blier (1974); Rosebud by Otto Preminger (1975); Le Dentellière/The Lacemaker by Claude Goretta (1977); Violette by Claude Chabrol (1978); Heaven’s Gate by Michael Cimino (1980); The Inheritance by Marta Meszaros (1980); L’oulu by Maurice Pialat (1980); Every Man for Himself by Jean-Luc Godard (1980); Deep Water by Michel Deville (1981); Lady of the Camellias by Mauro Bolognini (1981); Passion by Jean-Luc Godard (1982); The Trut by Joseph Losey (1982); The Story of Pierre by Marco Ferreri (1983); Cactus by Paul Cox (1987); The Possessed by Andrej Wajda (1987); Story of Women by Claude Chabrol (1991); Madame Bovary by Claude Chabrol (1991); Malina by Werner Schroeter (1991); Love After Love by Diane Kurys (1993); The Separation by Christian Vincent (1994); La Cérémonie/A Judgment in Stone by Claude Chabrol (1995); Elective Affinities by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani (1996); The Swindle by Claude Chabrol (1997); Keep It Quiet by Benoît Jacquot (1999); Thank You for the Chocolate by Claude Chabrol (2000); Sentimental Destinies by Olivier Assayas (2000); Comedy of Innocence by Raul Ruiz (2000); The Piano Teacher by Michael Haneke (2001); Two by Werner Schroeter (2002); 8 Women by François Ozon (2002); Time of the Wolf by Michael Haneke (2004); My Mother by Christophe Honoré (2004); Gabrielle by Patrice Chéreau (2005); Comedy of Power by Claude Chabrol (2006); Private Property by Joachim Lafosse (2007); Home by Ursula Meier (2007); White Material by Claire Denis (2008); Villa Amalia by Benoît Jacquot (2009); Copacabana by Marc Fitoussi (2010); Captive by Brillante Mendoza (2011); My Worst Nightmare by Anne Fontaine (2012); Love by Michael Haneke (2012); and In Another Country by Hong Sangsoo (2012).

Awards: BAFTA Best Actress for Le Dentellière/The Lacemaker; Best Actress at the Cannes Film Festival for Violette; Best Actress at the Venice International Film Festival for Story of Women; Best Actress at the Moscow Film Festival for Madame Bovary; Best Actress at the Venice International Film Festival and César Best Actress for La Cérémonie/A Judgment in Stone; Best Actress at the Cannes Film Festival and Best European Actress for The Piano Teacher; Orso d’Argento and European Best Actress, ensemble cast, for 8 Women.

Alba ROHRWACHER (Maria)

Her debut on the big screen was in 2004 in L’amore ritrovato by Carlo Mazzacurati, followed by many more, including: Melissa P. by Luca Guadagnino (2005), My Brother is an Only Child by Daniele Luchetti (2005), Nelle tue mani by Peter del Monte (2008), Giorni e nuvole/Days and Clouds by Silvio Soldini (2007), Caos calmo/quiet Chaos by Antonello Grimaldi (2008), Io sono l’amore/I Am Love by Luca Guadagnino (2010), L’uomo che verrà by Giorgio Diritti (2010), Cosa voglio di più/come Undone by Silvio Soldini (2010), La solitudine dei numeri primi/The Solitude of Prime Numbers by Saverio Costanzo (2010), Missione di pace by Francesco Lagi (2010), Sorelle Mai by Marco Bellocchio (2010), and Bliss by Doris Dorrie (2012).

Since 2003, she has also worked in theater, performing in such works as The House of the Spirits directed by Della Seta and Sevald (2003), Bric-a-Brac directed by L. Lupaioli (2004), Il mondo salvato dai ragazzini directed by V. Cruciani (2005), Lisa directed by L. Gioielli (2006), and Noccioline directed by V. Binasco (2007).

Her many awards include two David di Donatello, for Giorni e nuvole/Days and Clouds (2008) and for Il papa di Giovanna/Giovanna’s Father (2009); three Ciak d’Oro, as Best Debut Actress in 2008, and as Best Actress in a Leading Role for Cosa voglio di più/come Undone and for La solitudine dei numeri primi/The Solitude of Prime Numbers (2011); a Nastro d’argento for La solitudine dei numeri primi/The Solitude of Prime Numbers (2011); the Premio Esercenti (2007); the Golden Graal (2008); the Premio Flaiano (2008); and the nomination for Shooting Star at the Berlin Film Festival in 2008.
CREW

Director   MARCO BELLOCCHIO
Story   MARCO BELLOCCHIO
Screenplay  MARCO BELLOCCHIO

Casting Director   STEFANO RULLI
Director of Photography   DANIELE CIPRI
Editor   FRANCESCA CALVELLI
Production Designer   MARCO DENTICI
Costume Designer   SERGIO BALLO
Sound   CARLO CRIVELLI
Music   MATTEO CARLESIMO
Camera Operator   LUCILLA CRISTALDI
Assistant Director   SIMONA BATISTELLI
Production Manager   ANTONELLA IOVINO
Line Producer   GIAN MARCO TOGNATI
Production Delegate   FABIO CONVERSI

A CATTLEYA production with   RAI CINEMA

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LA SOFICA LA BANQUE POSTALE
MAGE 5 and LA SOFICA MANON 2
FABIO CONVERSI
MATTEO DE LAURENTIS
FRANCESCA LONGARDI
RICCARDO TOZZI
GIOVANNI STABILINI
MARCO CHIMENZ

CAST

Uliano Beffardi
Divine Mother
Maria
Roberto
Rossa
Dr. Pallido
Divine Mother’s Husband
Federico
Pipino
The Psychiatrist
The Persuader
The Mother

TONI SERVILLO
ISABELLE HUPPERT
ALBA ROHRWACHER
MICHELE RIONDINO
MAYA SANSA
PIER GIORGIO BELLOCCHIO
GIAN MARCO TOGNATI
BENNO PLACIDO
FABRIZIO FALCO
ROBERTO HERLITZKA
GIGIO MORRA
FEDERICA FRACASSI