

A film to combat anorexia

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A film about anorexia is being made by two men from near Varese, Paolo Boriani, from Luvinata, and Marco Pozzi, from Venegono Superiore; the film, *MalediMiele*, is being produced by 3per, a new production company founded by the two men, together with Riccardo Vitanza. Shooting of the film, which will be in cinemas in 2010, ended in Milan a few days ago, taking advantage of the Christmas holidays of the 15-year-old actress who plays the main role.

The full-length film deals with one of the most dreadful problems of young people, telling the story of Sara, a teenager who is affected by anorexia. The main part is played by Benedetta Gargari, a young up-and-coming actress, who has already starred in successful TV series, and in two films directed by Ferzan Ozpetek, "Facing Windows" and "Saturn in Opposition". Among the other actors, there are Gian Marco Tognazzi, Sonia Bergamasco and Isa Barzizza.

"*MalediMiele* puts aside any voyeuristic complacency, and tries, without being morbid, to take the audience into the dimension of the disease, and to show them the world through Sara's eyes," said the director, Marco Pozzi, who wrote the film *Venti* (Twenty), and the documentary *Senza Tregua* (Without Truce), which was presented at the Venice Film Festival in 2004. "The film also seeks to present the existential emptiness and the communication difficulties of a middle-class family. The important presence of Sara's character, played by Benedetta Gargari, helps the audience to enter an environment that, without stereotypes, leads them, through images, to a visible universal value that makes everyone immediately reflect."

"My approach to the topic was very long and difficult," Pozzi went on. "I haven't shown

a vanishing body, but the mental dimension of a disease, into which I wanted to accompany the audience. It's the world of a highly imaginative but mistaken environment. The problem was how to translate that world into images, without being too literal. Visually, it will be a striking film, thanks also to the excellent screenplay."

When writing the screenplay, the director and the co-writer, Paola Rota, also studied the role played, for people with this disease, by the Internet, where anorexia has found a rich spreading ground. "I wondered how much of this research should be brought into the film," the director added. "The Internet is filled with sites for anorexics and bulimics. We pretended we were anorexics, and we looked at the problem from inside; we realised how important the Internet is. Leaving it out would have been very wrong. These young people use the Web to communicate with each other, and to provide information about this problem. In the past, anorexics were isolated, but now there is a place where they can share their conditions and find support. The audience must open their eyes to this problem."

MalediMiele is also likely to be released in cinemas. "The ideal thing would be for the film to be presented during an international film festival, like Cannes," add Marco Pozzi and Paolo Boriani, 29, who also worked as assistant director. "The film is all about Sara, rather like Rosetta in the film by the Dardenne brothers. Benedetta was on the set during 40 of the 42 days of filming. In every respect, this is an independent film, it's different from large productions, but also from the canons of television. It's an unusual film to categorise, it isn't the story about an anorexic girl, but about anorexia, about an adolescent that falls ill with anorexia, a disease that destroys lives and entire families." In the meantime, editing of the film has begun. A first part is now ready, and Pozzi will have the final product in the next few weeks.

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