



BLANQUITA

A film by Fernando Guzzoni

Chile, Mexico, Luxembourg, France, Poland
2022 – Color – 2:39 – 5.1 – 98 min



SYNOPSIS

Blanca, an 18-year-old foster home resident, is the key witness in a scandal involving kids, politicians and rich men taking part in sex parties. Yet, the more questions are asked, the less clear it becomes what Blanca's role in the scandal exactly is.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

This film is based on a year-long investigation of the “Spiniak Case”, a network of child prostitution and pedophilia led by a powerful Chilean businessman.

It was one of the most turbulent and confusing for the Chilean judicial, political and journalistic history of the last 15 years. After getting into the details of the case, through an extensive research of the numerous sources – news stories, case files, court records, and interviews – there was a character in this ill-fated story that fascinated me the most – Gema Bueno, “The key witness”, “the minor”, “Gema Malo”.

A twenty-year-old girl, who divided the public opinion and held the nation in suspense for nine months. She eventually ended up behind bars but society was torn about her case.

This story is inspired by those events but I turned them into a melodrama in which the media takes the important part in portraying the tragedy of the victims, murders and abuse of children by powerful people. Nothing in this case is what it seems to be. This film stands as a work of fiction that extracts real elements from the case and comes as a stand-alone story that could have taken place in many different countries.

Blanquita is an inquiry about personal truth, deception, ethics, and the interpretation of truth. Above all, it is about the double life of a girl or a girl whose lack of opportunities and constant let down by the very institutions which promised to protect her, pushed her to the limits. She seeks her revenge of class through her testimony against the powerful. My aim was to present a character confronted with the skepticism of some and the blind devotion of others, without judgment. A story about someone who tells the truth or who perhaps adapts her emotions to survive, for pleasure, for love, by necessity or narcissism.



DIRECTOR

Fernando Guzzoni

Filmmaker and screenwriter born in Santiago de Chile in 1983.

In 2008 he premiered his first documentary feature film *La Colorina* in the official competition of the Des Films Du Monde festival in Montreal, Canada. The movie participated in more than 20 international film festivals as BAFICI, Monterrey, Cartagena de Indias, Docúpolis among others. The film was awarded the Best Director Award at SANFIC, and Best Film at the Trieste Film Festival, Italy.

His first feature film *Carne de Perro* was written at the Residence of the Cannes Film Festival 2010–2011. The film was premiered at the 2012 San Sebastian International Festival where it won the “New Directors” award for the best movie.

Fernando Guzzoni toured more than 25 international festivals obtaining different recognitions: the Ingmar Bergman Award at the Gothenburg Film Festival, the choir at the Havana Film Festival, the Moviecity Award at the Valdivia Film Festival, the Oc Rail Award at the Toulouse Film Festival, etc.

His second feature film, *Jesús*, premiered at the official competition of the Toronto International Festival and then at the San Sebastian Festival 2016.

2022 *Blanquita*, Feature
2016 *Jesús*, Feature
2012 *Carne de Perro*, Feature
2008 *La Colorina*, Documentary



Interview with Fernando Guzzoni

By Marta Bałaga

It would be hard to imagine anything darker than the story you are telling here. What made you want to talk about children being abused this way?

Basically, the whole story was inspired by a real-life event. In a way, it brought together the whole Chilean society: the media, the church, the judiciary system. Although the film has many fictional elements, it is very similar to that case, where the abusers were able to walk free and the establishment was highly influenced by class bias.

The “Spiniak” case, as that’s what I am referring to, was an actual event that occurred in Chile in 2004 and 2005. It had to do with a pedophile network, led by a powerful businessman. Some politicians participated in it as well. It was a girl called Gemita who denounced the abuses of this criminal association and who, in some way, was the voice of the voiceless. Also because, as the film shows, the actual abused children were removed from the case due to neurological damage caused by drug abuse, for example. What fascinated me about this whole occurrence was the figure of Gemita. How she became a heroine, but with a twist. And how lying can sometimes turn into a moral exercise.

It’s interesting that you don’t actually show the violence. It’s just being recounted, usually in a very matter-of-fact way. Why such a decision?

I think that this film is mainly about words. About the ever-changing status of the truth, about how words can create their very own reality. I feel that oral narratives form the very core of this story. I found it much more interesting to leave the horror of such abuse behind. Not to mention I didn’t want to veer into sensationalism.

Actually, there is one word that has accompanied me throughout the whole writing process. It’s “telepathy,” where “tele” means far and “pathos” means pain. In other words, Carlitos shares his pain with her and she also shares her pain with the others, because it’s related to the abuse she suffered from the hands of her father. Telepathy is a psychic transmission, but in this case it’s all about spoken communication that puts words at the center.

I am wondering if dealing with such topics, and going into so much detail, was hard for you too? You don't seem too optimistic about any possible change in the future.

I don't think it has to do with being optimistic or pessimistic. Such dichotomy simply doesn't work in these cases. What interests me has to do more with questioning complex facts, with looking for nuances and grey areas, with trying to understand human complexity and structural violence. I wanted to explore how human rights and the rule of law usually work, and show how sometimes, it only seems to apply to certain people.

It's really a film about those in power, those who can use people in whichever way they want. And those who are just trying to survive. How did you want to show these two worlds interact?

I'm interested in the concept that [Italian philosopher] Giorgio Agamben called "Homo Sacer." It referred to the people who do not have access to human rights, who are outcasts, who have no power. People who, by some kind of accident, ended up brushing against those in power. But usually, the so-called elite is also the one who dictate its rules.

Your protagonist strikes me as quite hard to read. How did you see this character?

I actually think that her actions and her decisions are pretty clear, but she is not some sanctified female character. On the other hand, the movie is about a lie or half-truth, the things that she leaves out, so I thought it would be good to avoid any preaching. I like the idea that this character is a time bomb, and that her personality tends to lean more inwards.

Ultimately, this film is a game where everyone is wearing a mask, everyone is playing a role. No one dares to show their true face. In this sense, the street is a place where they just keep on performing, engaging in a struggle that's not unlike the one shared by Manuel or Blanquita.

Blanquita could be seen as a victim or as someone who actively seeks revenge for what happened to her in the past. Did you think of some concrete examples of such heroines?

I like the idea of a complex protagonist who has two sides to her – not just your typical, naïve Hollywood heroine. Spanish feminist, Clara Serra – whom I admire a lot – used to say that feminism should also defend the idea that a woman doesn't always have to be good.

I like to think that Blanquita, just like any other human being living in such a precarious structure, wanted to gain access to materials goods, but also to dignity and justice. And somehow, after this case, she has managed to rebuild her identity and received the respect and attention that she was always denied.

The film marks yet another collaboration with [Chilean actor] Alejandro Goic. Do you like to come back to the same people when you work?

Yes, Alejandro is an intelligent, sensitive actor and a good friend of mine. And I like to work with friends, a lot. They can be technicians or actors, doesn't matter. It's always more comfortable when you already know each other. This way, you can establish a sustained dialogue which can then develop over time.

Your DoP, Benjamín Echazarreta, lensed the likes of Gloria or A Fantastic Woman before. How did you want this film to look?

The idea was that it should have some overtones of a thriller, feel "wintery" and have a very defined, yet not clinical look. We decided to work with two different types of lenses this

time, some dating back to the 1950s and some of them modern, combining both aesthetics as a result. Building up a certain atmosphere that would hopefully feel claustrophobic and nightmarish to the viewer.

There has been a lot of talk recently about "always believing the victims." Which is why, I guess, this film could be seen as controversial? Are you ready for that?

I think that the film is precisely about the victims. It's defending the victims. It talks about the "black hole" of impunity and how the broken judiciary system leaves abused children behind. Blanquita's character is a direct response to the system's failures. Besides, she is a girl who was also abused in the past and nobody believed her, so I don't think of this story as provocative or irresponsible.

But yes, I'm prepared for anything. I understand this binary logic that seems to drive today's world and that the "woke" culture tends to ignore all the grey areas. But I don't care, because, as Pasolini once said, I'm not interested in appeasing the morality police or in progressive punitivism. Which is, in my view, nothing more than just another form of fascism.

A man in a grey jacket is walking through a crowd of people in a dimly lit setting, possibly a public space or a transit area. The background is dark with some blurred lights and other people, creating a sense of movement and a candid moment.

CREW

Director: Fernando Guzzoni

Screenplay: Fernando Guzzoni

Cinematography: Benjamín Echazarreta

Editing: Jarosław Kamiński, Soledad Salfate

Art Direction: Natalia Geisse

Production Design: Estefania Larraín, Angela Leyton

Costume Design: Francisca Román

Sound Design: José Miguel Enríquez Rivaud

Sound on Set: Federico González Jordán

Music: Chloé Thevenin

Production Company: Quijote Films

Co-Production Companies: Varios Lobos, Tarantula,
Bonne Pioche Cinema, Madants

Producer: Giancarlo Nasi

Co-Producers: Pablo Zimbrón, Donato Rotunno,
Pascal Guerrin, Yves Darondeau, Emmanuel Priou,
Beata Rzeźniczek

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Hubert Bals Fund

Co-Financed by: Polish Film Institute

CAST

Laura López

Alejandro Goic

Amparo Noguera

Marcelo Alonso

Daniela Ramírez

Ariel Grandón



PRODUCERS

QUIJOTE FILMS

Quijote's projects include *Jesús* by Fernando Guzzoni, premiered at Discovery of the Toronto Film Festival and the Official Section of the 2016 San Sebastian Festival; *Chile Factory*, premiered at the 2015 Cannes Directors' Fortnight; *Land and Shade (La tierra y la sombra)* by César Acevedo, premiered at the International Critics' Week section at the 2015 Cannes Film Festival where it won the *Caméra d'Or Award*, *France 4 Visionary Award* and *SACD Award*, *Oblivion Verses (Los versos del olvido)*, by Alireza Khatami, won the *Orizzonti Award for Best Screenplay* and the *FIPRESCI Prize* in the Venice Film Festival; and *Marilyn* by Martín Rodríguez Redondo, premiered at the Panorama section in 2018 Berlinale. Its latest projects are *The Man of the Future (El hombre del futuro)* by Felipe Ríos, premiered in the Official Selection at 2019 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival; *Lina from Lima (Lina de Lima)* by María Paz González, premiered at Discovery of Toronto Film Festival; and *White on White (Blanco en blanco)* by Theo Court, winner of the *Orizzonti Award for Best Director* and the *FIPRESCI Prize* in the Venice Film Festival.





VARIOS LOBOS

Varios Lobos is a Mexican Film Studio dedicated to developing cinematographic projects with an ambitious artistic vision. Established more than 12 years ago, credited with 20+ feature films, advanced knowledge of international markets and funds, the company has co-produced with several national and international companies from Spain, Chile, France, UK, USA, Colombia, among others. Tragic Jungle by Yulene Olaizola is their most recent released project and it premiered at the 77th Venice International Film Festival. Among its projects are Les Tenebres by Daniel Castro Zimbrón, premiered in the Warsaw International Film Festival, Huachicolero by Edgar Nito, premiered at Tribeca International Film Festival and Wind Traces by Jimena Montemayor, premiered at Busan International Film Festival.



TARANTULA

With its solid experience in coproduction, Tarantula in Luxembourg and Belgium centers its editorial policy around a successful script and good human relationships between producers and directors. To see these artistically ambitious projects through to fruition, Tarantula combines its expertise with that of other European countries. Its first feature film which was noticed in the official selection at the Cannes Film Festival (in *Un Certain Regard*), *A Piece of sky* by Bénédicte Liénard, opened the way to international opportunities for Tarantula. Since then, Tarantula has been contributing to the vitality of audio-visual production with films like *Private Property* by Joachim Lafosse, *Carré Blanc* by Jean-Baptiste Leonetti, *Mobile Home* by François Pirot, films co-produced by the two companies as well as *Frères d'Exil* by Yilmaz Arslan (winner of the Silver Leopard at Locarno in 2004), co-produced by Tarantula Luxembourg and *Batalla en El Cielo* by Carlos Reygadas and *Congorama* by Philippe Falardeau, co-produced by Tarantula Belgium.

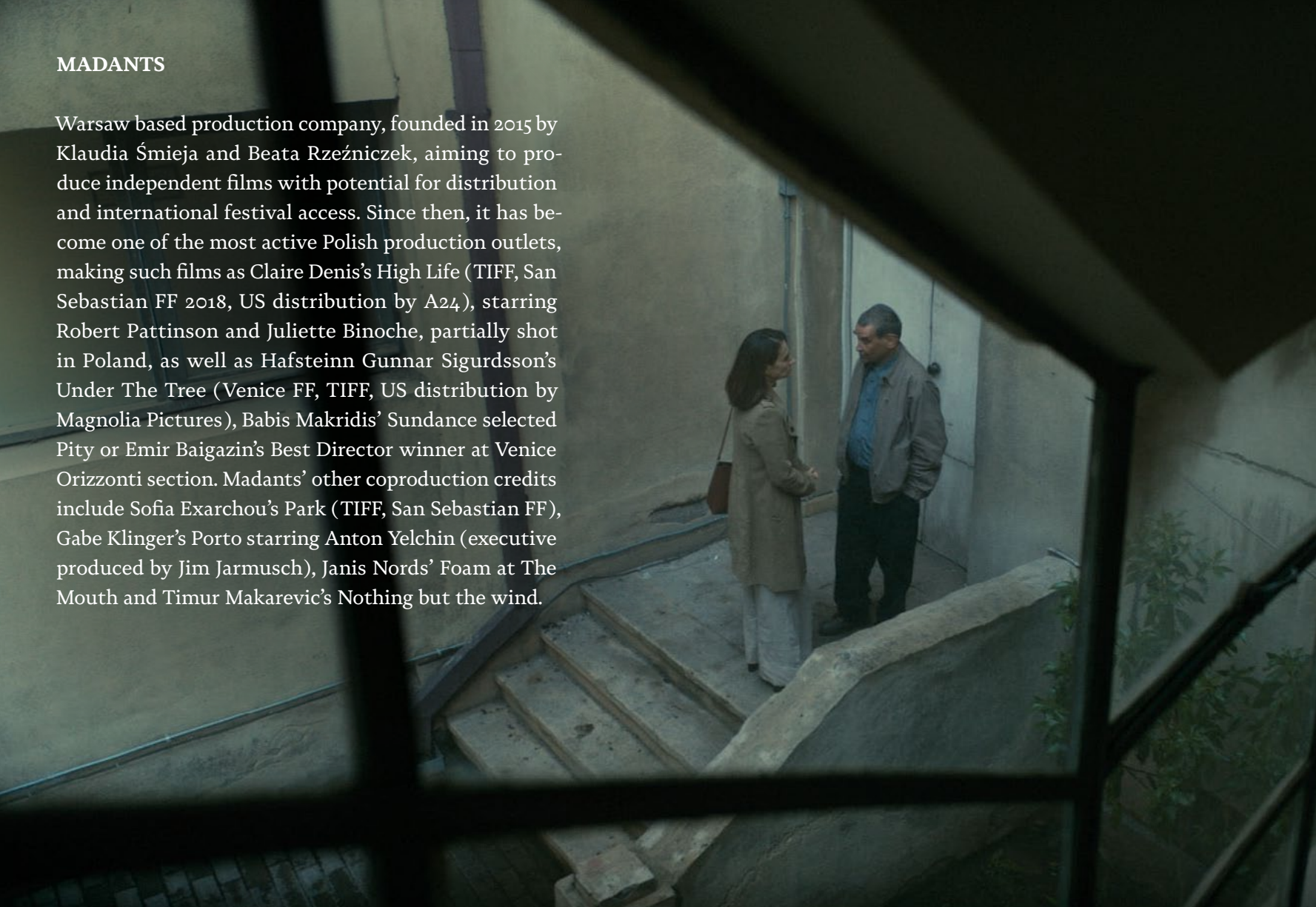


BONNE PIOCHE CINEMA

French film and television production company created in 1993 by Yves Darondeau, Christophe Lioud and Emmanuel Priou. Essentially specialized in documentaries, it's notably known for having produced *The March of the Emperor*, great world success and Oscar for the best documentary film in 2006, but also *In the skin* by Jacques Chirac, first Cesar for the best documentary film in 2007. It also produces documentary series for television such as *Rendez-vous en terre inconnue* or *J'irai dormir chez toi* and feature films. Earlier in its history, this company has also produced music videos, show recordings as well as advertising or institutional films. Bonne Pioche was honored with a special mention for the French Television Producer's Procirep Prize in 2005. It was also mentioned in Realscreen's Global 100, a ranking of the 100 most influential independent production companies in the world, 2006 and 2007.

MADANTS

Warsaw based production company, founded in 2015 by Klaudia Śmieja and Beata Rzeźniczek, aiming to produce independent films with potential for distribution and international festival access. Since then, it has become one of the most active Polish production outlets, making such films as Claire Denis's *High Life* (TIFF, San Sebastian FF 2018, US distribution by A24), starring Robert Pattinson and Juliette Binoche, partially shot in Poland, as well as Hafsteinn Gunnar Sigurdsson's *Under The Tree* (Venice FF, TIFF, US distribution by Magnolia Pictures), Babis Makridis' Sundance selected *Pity* or Emir Baigazin's Best Director winner at Venice *Orizzonti* section. Madants' other coproduction credits include Sofia Exarchou's *Park* (TIFF, San Sebastian FF), Gabe Klinger's *Porto* starring Anton Yelchin (executive produced by Jim Jarmusch), Janis Nords' *Foam at The Mouth* and Timur Makarevic's *Nothing but the wind*.



FESTIVALS

World Premiere: Venice Film Festival 2022
– Orizzonti

FILM INFORMATION

Original Title: Blanquita
English Title: Blanquita
Genre: Drama
Countries: Chile, México, Luxembourg,
France, Poland
Language: Spanish
Year: 2022
Duration: 98 min
Picture: Color
Aspect Ratio: 2:39
Sound: 5.1
Available Format: Dcp

CONTACTS

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FILM INSTITUTE with LAURA LÓPEZ & ALEJANDRO GOIC original score by CHLOÉ THEVENIN editors
SOLEDAD SALFATE & JAROSŁAW KAMIŃSKI PSM director of photography BENJAMÍN ECHAZARRETA
(A.C.C.) art director NATALIA GEISSE production designers ESTEFANÍA LARRAÍN & ANGELA LEYTON
costume designer FRANCISCA ROMÁN key make-up ADAM ZOLLER sound designer JOSÉ MIGUEL
ENRÍQUEZ RIVAUD sound recorder FEDERICO GONZÁLEZ JORDÁN sound mixers JAIME BAKSHT
CAS & MICHELLE COUTTOLENC CAS line producer NICOLÁS SAN MARTÍN post producer JAVIER
VELÁZQUEZ DORANTES music supervisor INGRID VISQUIS associate producers JAN NASZEWSKI
& MARCIN ŁUCZAJ executive producers CONSTANZA ERENCHUN PAULINA VALENCIA LUIS ARENAS
JIMENA MONTEMAYOR FERNAND DE AMORIN KLAUDIA ŚMIEJA-ROSTWOROWSKA delegate executive
producer FERNANDO BASCUÑÁN coproduced by PABLO ZIMBRÓN ALVA DONATO ROTUNNO PASCAL
GUERRIN YVES DARONDEAU EMMANUEL PRIOU BEATA RZEŻNICZEK produced by GIANCARLO NASI
written and directed by FERNANDO GUZZONI

QUIJOTE
CINE



VARIOS LOBOS



TARANTULA

BONNE PIOCHE
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