

Anita

written and directed
by Giulia Palaia



FRABIATOFILM TAIGA

dossier
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The project

Logline

An apathetic, sleepless young woman is reluctantly drawn into her neighbor's emergency - a car trip to the vet - that pushes her out of her comfort zone and into an unexpected sense of solace.

Synopsis

In a desolate Adriatic town abandoned to unbearable heat and sea pollution, 25-year-old Anita lives in isolation, drifting between work, compulsive scrolling and sleepless nights. Trapped in a monotonous routine, she reflects on the weight of the world's injustices and the childhood dreams she has long since abandoned.

Her solitude is interrupted when Olivia, a frantic neighbor, asks for help rescuing an injured stray cat. Reluctantly, Anita steps outside for the first time in ages, facing the oppressive midday heat. What begins as an errand turns into a surreal journey, through silent streets, a gas station and a hidden veterinary clinic inside an deserted town. There, she finds herself in an underground room where men and women are knitting and embroidering. Invited to join, Anita hesitantly follows their rhythm, finding unexpected solace in the movement of her hands.

Drifting between wake and dreams, she finally falls asleep.

When the cat is treated and the two girls can leave, it's lastly raining.

Title

Anita

Language

italian

Director and author

Giulia Palaia

Visual style

surreal, metaphysical

Duration

15 min

Theme

search for meaning

Genre

Dramedy

Project state

Script 2nd draft

Location

Adriatic riviera

Project path

2024-2025 - MASO #1

2025 - pitch ISFF Clermont Ferrand

Tone

Light, nostalgic

Productions

Frabiatofilm, Taiga

Anita cannot sleep
Giulia Palaia

Directors note

Dystopia, is that us? Surely this is the perception that is gaining traction.

Galimberti calls it "disagiotopia" (discomfortopia?), the one that afflicts us, millennials and gen z. It makes its way thanks to the nihilism that "penetrates our feelings, confuses our thoughts, erases perspectives and horizons, exhausts our souls, saddens the passions, making them lifeless."

Indeed, Anita does not sleep and therefore does not dream, crushed by the multiple problems, global and personal, that make her powerless. She moves within the everyday life of a town on the Romagna Riviera, which in winter empties out and becomes vacuous, ghostly, dystopian in fact. It too is a victim of a system that uses and discards objects, people, cities.

"Fear is arguably the most sinister of the demons nesting in the open societies of our time," said Bauman. And we know that, without the right care, fear leads to the dark side. In this case, the cure for Anita is a place, a community of people, completely abstracted from the world, but deeply rooted in ancient human gestures, that of sewing or knitting, repetitive and rhythmic, like a mantra, detached from productive and consumerist intentions. A symbolic act of reconciliation with herself and the world around her that finally leads her to rest, at least for one night.

Professionals

[involved so far]

Anita

Alessia Perillo

Olivia

tbd

Writer and director

Giulia Palaia

Producer

Michela Parlavecchio

Production coordinator

Luca Bedini

Creative producers

Marianna Pasina

Alessio Vasarin

Director of photography

Eva Basta

Music

Bianca Giacomoni

Daniele Alessi

Editor

Alessio Vasarin

Production designer

Elena Beccaro

Direct sound

Carolina Stichter

Make up artist

Maria Elena Miori

Colorist

Silvia Pozzi

Missaggio audio

Silvia Brizzi

Fotografa di backstage

Emma Gasparini

Anita

Description

Anita is a young woman, marked by an intense, restless energy. Her mind is always racing, filled with unspoken questions and an almost childlike curiosity about the world around her. Despite her intelligent and sharp demeanor, she carries an air of fragility, as if she's constantly walking the thin line between wonder and worry. Her sleepless nights are not just a physical condition but a reflection of her inner turmoil - an ever-present longing for answers she cannot articulate. While she tends to keep people at a distance, those who look closer can see her warmth and her quiet determination.

Alessia Perillo



Style



Anita cannot sleep
Anita
Giulia Palaia

Moodboard

References

Undone, tv series, Hisko Hulsing, USA 2019

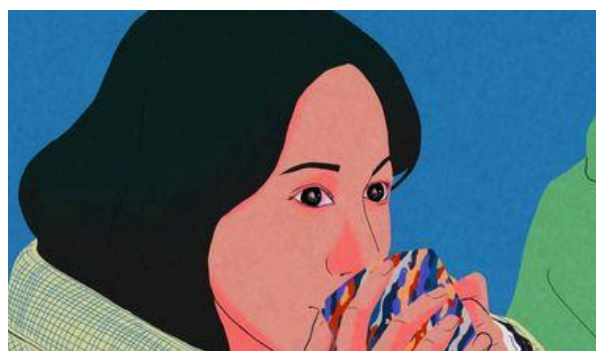
Les navets blancs empêchent de dormir, Rachel Lang, Belgium France 2011

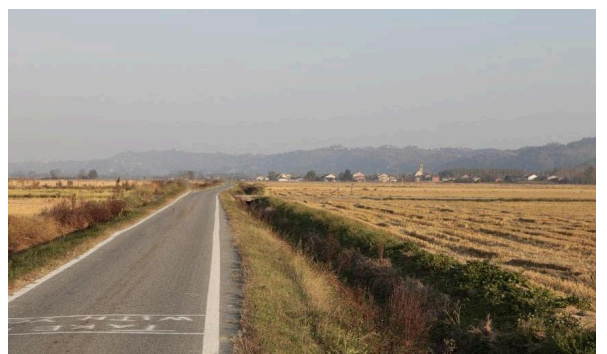
I'm not ok with this, tv series, USA 2017

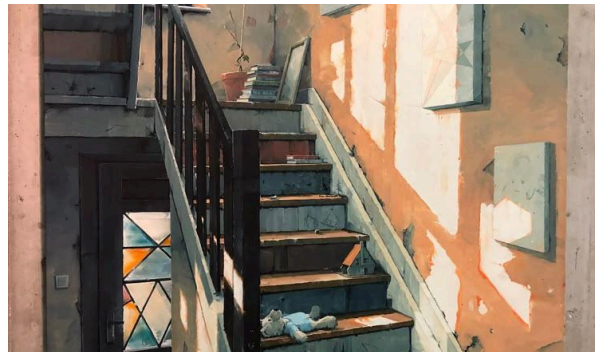
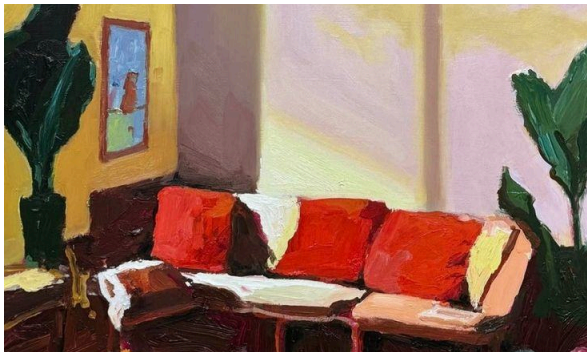
Shiva baby, Emma Seligman, USA, 2018

Frances Ha, Noah Baumbach, USA 2012

Baden Baden, Rachel Lang, Belgio Francia 2016







Treatment

17/01/2025

In summer, the Adriatic coast is deserted due to unbearable heat and sea pollution. Tourism has shifted to the north.

Among the few remaining residents, in a half-abandoned high-rise overlooking the sea, lives Anita, a young 25-year-old woman. She stands on a broken-down sofa-bed of a cluttered studio apartment, dressed in faded pink and blue pajamas.

Days and nights follow one another as Anita remains there, shifting her attention between work and compulsive scrolling, between laptop and phone. She doesn't leave the house and lives on the takeout food of the only restaurant left in town.

Occasionally she lies down, trying to cover herself with a blanket too small for her, but she doesn't close her eyes.

In this alternation of day and night, in a voiceover monologue, Anita talks about her discomfort and the feeling of immobility that permeates her life. She reflects on how occupation and new experiences are expected to distract from pain, but for her every attempt is met with a sense of futility. She recalls a quote by John Frusciante that once seemed revelatory to her, while she now experiences an ongoing confrontation with the weight of the world's injustices.

She recalls her childhood dreams in which she imagined herself a savior of the world, while now she feels crushed by the knowledge that every decision involves loss. Immobilized by a sense of worthlessness, she takes refuge in a monotonous routine in her studio apartment, unable to act, overcome by heat and anxiety.

The monologue continues with Anita talking to another girl, walking alongside her on a small street in a seaside town at noon. This person holds a cat, wrapped in a bloodstained towel, and looks around pointing toward a small single-family house.

Anita concludes by wondering what she really needs in life, hinting that the bare minimum might be enough for her, but admits that she is not allowed to sleep either. Then, almost lost in thought, she interrupts herself, apologizing and asking what the question was.

The other person, focused on the door of the house in front of which they arrived, shows little interest in Anita's speech, and reaches out to ring the doorbell.

Anita is back in her apartment, and her routine is interrupted, as if awakened by the ringing of the doorbell.

The door phone is answered by a woman who introduces herself as Olivia, the neighbor. In an agitated tone, she apologizes for the trouble, justifying that she had nobody else to call, and asks for her help in taking the cat, who has just been run over along the road, to one of the few veterinary clinics left, a 20-minute drive away.

Anita says she is very busy and unable to move. But Olivia is so insistent that she forces Anita to go out in her pajamas.

Anita comes out of the apartment building. It's noon. She is breathing hard because of the unbearable heat. She recognizes Olivia and the cat, claiming to have déjà vu. She makes an approach to pet the cat, but sees the bloodstained towel and backs away impressed. Then she walks to the car, making up her mind about the parking spot, admitting that she has not used it in a long time.

Sitting on the seat Anita tries to remember how to position herself. Olivia gets into the car, intimating her to hurry.

Anita turns the key with the right hand, while putting the left hand on the wheel, taking it off quickly screaming from the burn; the car starts only after several attempts, leading Olivia to become increasingly agitated.

After a few minutes of driving, the car warns with a sound that there is a shortage of gasoline.

At the first gas station Anita pulls over. Olivia offers to pay and hands her a 20€ bill.

The bill goes in and out a couple of times, then finally is accepted by the car. Meanwhile, Anita looks around, noticing that there is no one on the street.

Reentering the car Anita casts an eye on the cat and smiles, pointing out to Olivia that he is all in all serene, because he is asleep. But Olivia is startled, fearing that he is actually dead. Anita takes courage and reaches out a hand to the bloody blanket to confirm that he is breathing. The cat wakes up.

When Anita has already restarted the machine, she notices that Olivia is very tense and hyperventilating. Then, trying to maintain concentration on the road as well, Anita tries to calm Olivia by helping her take deep breaths, lengthening her exhalations and shortening her inhalations. Olivia calms down.

Anita asks Olivia about the cat, what its name is, how long he has lived with her. But Olivia answers surprised that she does not know what the cat's name is, that it is not hers, but she found it on the street after it was run over.

Astonished Anita is about to argue back when Olivia points her to a parking lot in front of the clinic.

Arriving at the door, they read on a paper that the doctor is not there and that they need to go knock somewhere else.

The two walk looking for the right house number among the houses across the street.

Anita, noticing that nobody is living in those streets, talks to herself about nothingness and the end of the world. Olivia walks a few meters in front of her and looks at her to hurry her along on the driveway to the entrance of a small single-family house that seems abandoned too.

Then she rings the doorbell.

A man opens the door and, before the two girls introduce themselves, looks at the cat and calls out the doctor's name. Anita looks at the inside of the house, the shutters are down and everything is dark. While waiting, Olivia asks Anita if she is not a Flat Earth person. As Anita turns away in amazement at her question, Olivia tells her that the world does not end, that if you go around you come back to where you started.

They are interrupted by the arrival of the doctor, who is coming from the staircase leading to the basement floor. She has a cloth and threads in her hand, which she hastily places on a dresser in the hall. She tells them to follow her to the clinic. Then she looks at Anita and advises her to wait there for her friend.

Anita, making no with her head, goes to follow Olivia, who, however, reassures her that she is calmer and will be able to go even without her and leaves together with the doctor.

Anita follows the man who had opened the door to the basement and looks around frightened, until she arrives in a room full of hand-embroidered or needleworked cloth and blankets, and all over the room are people, men and women of different ages, intent on working with threads and cloth.

Anita, increasingly lost, is invited by a lady to sit beside her on a bench and there she explains how to use the needles. Anita sits uncomfortably and tries to follow the woman's instructions. Anita picks up the rhythm and is increasingly focused on the movements of her fingers weaving the wool with the needles.

Anita is asleep in her studio apartment. Everything is quite clean and tidy. A warm morning light filters through the curtains onto her face. The cat gets on the couch and purrs rubbing up against Anita. She smiles and tells him she is awake and she's going to feed him soon.

Her phone rings, it is Olivia calling. Anita answers happily, while Olivia is telling her to wake up.

Anita wakes up in the knitting room. She was sleeping along the bench in a fetal position. Someone has covered her well with one of the blankets. Olivia is talking to her, saying that the cat is fine and tells her that the vet has stitched up his wounds and bandaged two broken paws and that he will recover soon. Anita smiles at the cat in Olivia's arms.

It is almost sunset when the two girls are returning to the car. Anita stops abruptly, sensing something. Olivia watches her, uncertain. Silence settles around them. Then, tiny raindrops begin to stain the asphalt. They look up, dark clouds gather overhead.

Olivia hesitates, but Anita moves without a word. She walks toward the sea, passing the road, the dunes, until she reaches the beach. Red flags dot the shoreline, fluttering in the wind.

She slips off her shoes and steps into the shallow water, ignoring the warnings. Rain cools her skin as the sea stretches into the darkening horizon.

Giulia Palaia



Biography

I studied architecture, graphic art and relational design between Venice, Paris and Milan. I came back to Bolzano, my hometown, where I started working as visual designer and approached cinema as an author, giving voice to a personal investigation, exploring female figures in dialogue or conflict with their doubles. Selected by IDM Film Funding, I pursued a filmmaking mentorship with the script editor Isabella Weber. I developed a photographic editorial project, *Ius Sepulchri*, at Yogurt Lab, which was further expanded during the FortezzaDonna artistic residency at the Fortezza Fortress. I'm currently producing my third short film *Tomorrow at dawn* and writing *Delcisa*, with which I participated in the Veneto Writing Lab. I've participated at the Short Film Training Program MASO, developing *Anita* with the producer Luca Bedini.

Latest works

Delcisa

Feature fiction film in development
Role: Screenwriter, Director
Development: 2021 Veneto Writing Lab, with Giacomo Durzi | 2023-24 mentoring with Isabella Weber

Anita

Short fiction film in development
Role: Screenwriter, Director
Production: Taiga, Frabiatofilm
Development: MASO #1

Domani all'alba

Short fiction film in post-production
Role: Screenwriter, Director
Development: 2023 What's the story

***Una notte*, 2024, 18', by Alessio Vasarin trailer**

Role: Co-story, Assistant Director
Production: Frabiatofilm
In distribution, Official Selection: Lovers Film Festival 2024

***Metànoia*, 2023, 8'**

Created for BZ48H 2023
Role: Director, Director of Photography
Production: Le Cinematografe
Best Short Film Award - Rai Alto Adige Award
- Best Performance Award

***Due madri*, 2023, 17', screener**

Role: Screenwriter, Director
Production: Frabiatofilm
In distribution, Official Selection: Bolzano Film Festival, Local Heroes Section 2024 | Screening at TSFM Summer Edition #1 | Filmfest Dresden 2024, Diskurs Europa !

***Agriope*, 2022, 9'**

Role: Screenwriter, Director
Production: Frabiatofilm
Official Selection at MARteLive 2022, CortoConfine IFF 2023, Cortintelvi 2023, Amicorti IFF 2023, Settimo Short Film Festival 2023

Frabiatofilm

Frabiatofilm is an Italian film production company founded in 2014 and based in Bolzano, Italy. It deals with both fiction and animated short films, with the dream of enriching people's imaginations with powerful stories.



Michela Parlavecchio

I'm an Italian producer and screenwriter from Bolzano. I graduated in Literature with a thesis on apocalyptic cinema, and in 2014, during my studies, I co-founded the production company Frabiatofilm in Bolzano with Alessio Vasarin. I continue to expand my cinematic knowledge by participating in various production workshops, including Forward (2021), led by Nadia Trevisan and Erica Barbiani.

I work as a producer alongside Alessio Vasarin and director Giulia Palaia. Between 2021 and 2022, I completed a mentoring program with producer Giovanni Pompili. At the same time, I have been pursuing screenwriting, attending two film writing courses at the Holden School. Since 2021, I have also served as Vice President of the Cinema category within the Union of Commerce, Tourism, and Services of South Tyrol.

Latest works

Alfio (in production)

animated shortfilm by Marianna Pasina
Production: Frabiatofilm

Una notte, 2024

fiction shortfilm
Production: Frabiatofilm

Due madri, 2023

fiction and animated
shortfilm by Giulia Palaia
Production: Frabiatofilm

Rosse formiche rosse, 2022

fiction shortfilm by Alessio Vasarin
Production: Frabiatofilm

Agriope, 2022

fiction shortfilm by Giulia Palaia
Production: Frabiatofilm

Agosto, 2021

fiction shortfilm
Production: Frabiatofilm

Taiga

Taiga is a documentary film and television production company based in Modena, Italy.

Luca Bedini



I'm a director and producer based in Italy. After a degree in Communication Sciences, I started working as a freelance videomaker and video journalist for independent web TVs like Fuori.Tv and Current Tv. In 2009, I attended the Documentary Development Campus Master's program, where I improved my documentary writing skills under the guidance of Edoardo Fracchia and Stefano Tealdi from Stefilm. In 2012, I founded Pongofilms, a production company that produces commercials, corporate videos, animations and documentaries. In 2016, I co-founded Taiga, a company specialized in documentary production.

Over the years, I have grown as an author, director, and producer, creating documentaries for both film and television. In 2022, I was selected for the IDS Academy Series, a training program focused on developing documentary series. In January 2024, I served on the jury for the short film section at Fipadoc, and in June 2024, I was chosen as a producer for the Italian leg of Emerging Producers.

Latest works

Saman

written and directed by Luca Bedini e Gabriele Veronesi. Sky Crime, 2025

Aids - La Nostra Battaglia (2x50')

written and directed by Luca Bedini. History, 2021.

Jihad Summer Camp (1x15')

written and directed by Luca Bedini. In distribution at international festivals from 2021 including Fipadoc and Visioni dal Mondo

AEmlia - Il grande processo alla 'Ndrangheta (2x50')

written and directed by Gabriele Veronesi. History, 2020

I Mostro di Modena (2x50')

written and directed by Gabriele Veronesi. Crime+Investigation, 2019.

Let's keep in touch!

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