

Statement

"Cuchillo de Palo / 108" was born out of a reaction and the necessity of confronting the anger and pain that comes from seeing people's willful ignorance in the face of clear evidence. It arises from the need to film in order to bring to light that which is hidden, as a base from which to establish a commitment to reality.

In the blacksmith's workshop, Rodolfo was a "Cuchillo de Palo", "**a useless knife**", during the dictatorship, when anybody who thought or acted differently was subject to repression. A life condemned to silence, even within the family. **"Cuchillo de Palo / 108"** is an intense inner process in search of acceptance and reconciliation: the acceptance of Rodolfo, the father, society, and history, in order to reconcile with our past.

In front of the camera, people remember, contrasting their memories with the confused, associative memories of childhood. An attempt to reconstruct an image of the persecuted, the hidden, the "abnormal" in the words of the people who speak or avoid speaking, and by doing so, to capture the image of a society which was and still is imprisoned in a certain intolerance, silence and passivity.

Filming the present in order to recover a past that allows us to gain a better understanding of where we come from and to recognize who we are. Life turns out to be made of shadows too. This is what gives it meaning. Confronting what we haven't lived through means accepting that we carry the burden of history, family and society, whether we are aware of it or not.

The film makes part of the "unofficial history" visible through a personal story, which proves to be universal. This issue is not only related to the past and to Paraguay. It can make us think about how society's and individual's acceptance of identity can be crucial to the construction of a community's way of thinking. The film is an immersion into the difference of the "other" and in this way, a reconciliation with what each of us is made of. In the end, we all have to learn how to live with our ghosts.

Renate Costa – Estudi Playtime