

ANALYSIS OF THE TORMENTA CAMPAIGN (2024): CONFLICT AND DUALITY IN O BOTICÁRIO'S MOTHER'S DAY CAMPAIGN

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ABSTRACT

Storytelling is a tool used to captivate and hold the listener's attention, with the purpose of transmitting beliefs, values, and legacies to the audience. Its use is fundamental in advertising campaigns, as its application results in unique and memorable productions, especially on commemorative dates, such as Mother's Day. In this context, this study seeks to analyze the advertising campaign "Tormenta" by the company "O Boticário," by examining its narrative elements, identifying the type of campaign appeal, noting the use of melodrama, and associating it with data related to anxiety and depression. Based on the structure presented by Xavier (2015), it was possible to define the idea, object of desire, transformation, time, rhythm, space, conflict, and characters of Tormenta, which has a Dionysian appeal as it is focused on the emotions and humor of the mother and son. Through the depiction of challenges faced during adolescence, by showcasing the duality of conflict and love, aligned with a song by Billie Eilish, the presence of anxiety and depression within the family during the adolescent phase is noted, as it is a period of self-discovery. Finally, it is observed that the campaign functions as an exercise in Cultural Branding, strategically using melodrama and neuroscientific appeal to address the sociocultural conflict of mother-son relationships during adolescence, thereby aiming to elevate the brand to an iconic status that connects emotionally with a global audience.

Keywords: storytelling, campaign analysis, challenges in adolescence.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Humans have always been good storytellers, as it was through them that they could transmit their beliefs, values, and legacies to other generations. These narratives used various tools (cave paintings, songs, books, videos, the internet) that allowed for the social and cultural development of countless peoples. In this context, the importance of how these means are used to captivate and hold the listener's attention is highlighted, with the purpose of ensuring the audience retains the information transmitted.

Among the ways to capture the public's attention is storytelling, a communication tool that appeals to the senses and emotions through a narrative presented in a sequence of events (NÚÑEZ, 2007). This tool is fundamental in advertising campaigns, as its application results in unique and memorable productions capable of leading the audience to purchase/adhere to an idea, product, or service, especially when related to commemorative dates.

One such date is Mother's Day, where advertising campaigns have a strong emotional appeal and serve as a reminder for children to buy different gifts (chocolates, jewelry, perfumes, and clothes) as a form of gratitude for all the affection, dedication, and love transmitted by them. Thus, with the aim of attracting customers, the company "O Boticário" uses the commercial "Tormenta," which addresses the maternal challenges during childhood and adolescence, making an impact by showing moments of sadness, anxiety, and anger from the children through flashbacks.

In this scenario, this research's general objective is to analyze the advertising campaign "Tormenta" by the company "O Boticário," for Mother's Day 2024, through its narrative elements (idea, object of desire, transformation, time, rhythm, space, conflict, and characters). Through an exploratory research with a qualitative approach, the study seeks to describe the advertising campaign "Tormenta" in order to structure the items to be analyzed. It aims to analyze and detail the elements and the structure of the storytelling used in the commercial, according to Xavier's (2015) model, to guide the analysis used in the commercial to guide the analysis. And, to superficially relate the commercial video to current data and situations in the Brazilian daily life, especially regarding data on depression in Brazil.

Thus, this research can serve as a basis for future studies, by using already established storytelling analysis structures. It demonstrates how advertising campaigns linked to commemorative dates can win and retain customers, as exemplified by Mother's Day, which is expected to move \$13.23 billion in retail sales volume in 2024 (BENTES, 2024).

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Storytelling

Storytelling is the practice of telling real or fictional stories, verbally or otherwise, with the purpose of moving and informing listeners (DOMINGOS, 2008, p. 97). This term has various concepts with scientific, empirical, philosophical, or theological origins, thus having objective or subjective points of view.

Based on Xavier (2015, p. 11-12), storytelling is described as a *techneart*, that is, the blend of technique and art to deal with stories. It can be defined in three ways:

- Pragmatic Concept (objective): the practice of techniques and arts to elaborate and chain scenes with an engaging meaning, with the purpose of capturing people's attention and enabling the assimilation of the central idea.
- Pictorial Concept (objective): the practice of techniques and arts to shape stories, as if they were jigsaw puzzle pieces, in order to make them memorable.
- Poetic Concept (subjective): the practice of techniques and arts to stack narrative bricks, which result in imaginary monuments full of meaning.

In this sense, storytelling acts as more than just a technique; it is a strategic tool for immersion. According to Salmon (2010, p. 24), modern advertising uses narratives to replace logical reasoning with emotional belief, creating universes where the brand stops selling products and starts selling meaning. This effectiveness is validated by neuromarketing; as Lindstrom (2008, p. 22) points out, well-structured stories activate the limbic system and create 'somatic markers', linking the brand to deep emotional states in the consumer's subconscious.

That is why, in addition to being an application of techniques and arts, storytelling connects directly with narrative, transforming speeches and actions into stories that attract attention, motivate, and/or convey a message to the audience (SAPPI, 2019, p. 16; SOUZA, 2018).

However, for good storytelling, a logical connection and sequence between the ideas presented are necessary to prevent the story from dissolving in an excess of emotionally appealing information and failing to reach the audience (CASTRO, 2013). The effectiveness of this logical connection lies in the conflict. According to McKee (2003, p. 210), a story only comes to life when forces of antagonism challenge the protagonist. Without conflict—represented in advertising by daily struggles or relational tensions—the narrative loses its ability to generate empathy, and the final transformation becomes irrelevant to the audience.

2.2 Analysis of advertising campaigns

Storytelling has been used since the beginning of humanity as a way to transmit beliefs, values, and legacies to other generations, whether through oral tradition or other tools. Currently, its use becomes essential in promoting companies and products through stories that touch people and influence them to the point of leading to a purchase, a change in behavior, or a different view of the establishment that performed the promotion. Therefore, storytelling converges with what Holt (2004, p. 6) defines as 'Cultural Branding.' Iconic brands use narratives to address acute cultural tensions—such as the generational conflicts between parents and children—offering a 'myth' that provides emotional resolution to these real-life dilemmas.

In accordance with Carneiro (2023, p. 2), this communication tool is increasingly important for companies, especially when aligned with content marketing, the persona, and the responses to the intentions and needs of its target audience. This is because, through it, emotional connections are built with the public, humanizing the brand and making its messages memorable.

However, all tools have their pros and cons, and storytelling is no different, as it can mislead the consumer about what is presented through misleading or abusive advertising. Therefore, it is necessary for the supplier/broadcaster to maintain the factual, technical, and scientific data that support their message, as presented in Article 36, Sole Paragraph, of the Consumer Defense Code (BRASIL, 1990).

Therefore, displaying a campaign that uses metaphors, analogies, and imaginary stories (through narrative) is not wrong, as long as it is clear and used as a playful resource. In this

way, the stories presented will not mislead any customer with false information, whether misleading or abusive (PALACIOS; TERENCEZZO, 2016).

The definitions of misleading or abusive advertising are in Article 37 of the Consumer Defense Code, which prohibits the dissemination of any of them.

Art. 37. Any misleading or abusive advertising is prohibited.

§ 1º Misleading is any mode of information or communication of an advertising nature, entirely or partially false, or, by any other means, even by omission, capable of misleading the consumer regarding the nature, characteristics, quality, quantity, properties, origin, price, and any other data about products and services.

§ 2º Abusive, among others, is advertising that is discriminatory in any way, that incites violence, exploits fear or superstition, takes advantage of a child's lack of judgment and experience, disrespects environmental values, or that is capable of inducing the consumer to behave in a harmful or dangerous way to their health or safety.

§ 3º For the purposes of this code, advertising is misleading by omission when it fails to inform about an essential piece of data about the product or service (Brasil, 1990).

Palacios and Terenzzo (2016), besides highlighting the misuse of storytelling, also point out three types of benefits it generates:

- Inherent benefits: found in any story and linked to the quality of the narrative. Their objectives are to captivate attention and entertain; awaken imagination; facilitate the acceptance of messages; and ensure relevance through context.
- Specific benefits: found only in certain types of stories, requiring special attention from the direction throughout their planning. Their objectives are to transmit Verisimilitude (to be plausible); instruct on how the world works; say who we are; say who we are not, but could be (empathy); give sense and meaning to things and events; and generate a fan culture.
- Corporate practice benefits: these are linked to the reality of business. Their objectives are to optimize management and present knowledge; engage multiple stakeholders; influence consumption behaviors; add value; reduce media investment; and optimize creative potential.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Classification

In accordance with Helen Casarin and Samuel Casarin (2012, p. 29-48), research should begin with an existing body of knowledge on the topic, adopting systematized procedures that follow a rigorous scientific methodology. For the authors, a research study can be characterized by its: nature; approach; objectives; and methods (technical procedures).

Thus, concerning its nature, this research is classified as basic, as it aims to develop scientific knowledge about storytelling without a specific practical application, but with the goal of adding to the body of knowledge on the subject (CASARIN, HELEN; CASARIN, SAMUEL, 2012, p. 30).

Regarding its approach, the research is primarily characterized as qualitative, as it is linked to the interpretation of information collected about storytelling, the types of analyses used from 2020 to 2024, and the observations highlighted in the "Tormenta" campaign. Furthermore, it is also quantitative, due to the use of numerical data on anxiety and depression, which serves as an invitation to reflect on the challenges faced by parents and children during the adolescent phase (NASCIMENTO; SOUZA, 2015).

In terms of its objectives, it is characterized as exploratory, as it seeks to provide content and develop hypotheses about storytelling through the analysis of the campaign, with the purpose of assisting in future studies (CASARIN, HELEN; CASARIN, SAMUEL, 2012, p. 40; GIL, 2022).

Regarding its technical procedures, it is characterized as bibliographic, due to the consultation of books, journals, and academic publications on storytelling and analyses of campaigns already conducted by other authors. It is also documentary, due to the use of parliamentary publications (Consumer Code) and the "Tormenta" video as bibliographic support (GIL, 2022; MARCONI; LAKATOS, 2017).

3.2 Campaign Characterization

The advertising campaign "Tormenta" from the company "O Boticário" was released on April 16, 2024, with the purpose of inviting the public to reflect on the difficulties that parents and children face during adolescence. The video has two versions (with and without accessibility

features) that showed different results on YouTube, as per the table below (OBOTICÁRIO, 2024).

Table 1 - Comparison of videos from the "Tormenta" campaign between April 16 and July 2, 2024

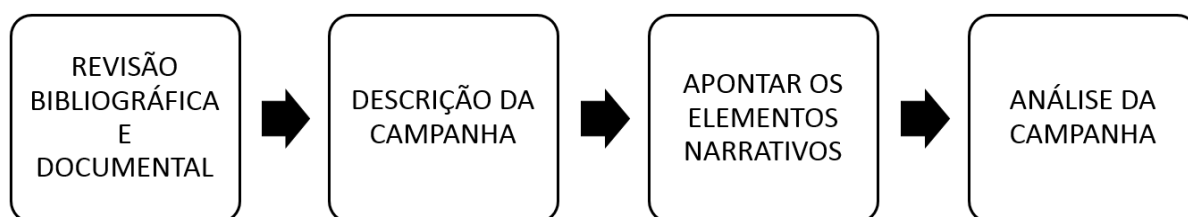
	VIEWS	COMMENTS	LIKES
WITHOUT ACCESSIBILITY (Captions)	681.245	1.022	13.000
WITH ACCESSIBILITY (Audio Description, Captions, and Libras)	10.081	36	201

Source: Author's own work, 2024.

"Tormenta" was conceived by AlmapBBDO and produced by MyMama Entertainment, using a special studio that simulated the movement of a house (boat) during a storm. With an integrated campaign across the brand's various channels and offering different types of experiences, it involved 200 people who worked on approximately 30 hours of shooting (AlmapBBDO, 2024; Forbes, 2024).

To achieve the proposed objective, the research followed four stages, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Research Stages



Source: Author's own work, 2024.

The first stage consisted of two moments of bibliographic and documentary research, with the purpose of providing theoretical and structural support for the campaign analysis.

- Storytelling: search for concepts, pros, and cons;
- Analysis of campaigns conducted: use of the Google Scholar search engine, employing the descriptors "advertising campaign," "analysis," "copywriting," and "storytelling" in the period from 2020 to 2024, which resulted in 19 results. However, those that were not analyses or had access errors were removed, leaving only 7 academic publications (articles, dissertations, theses, and book chapters).

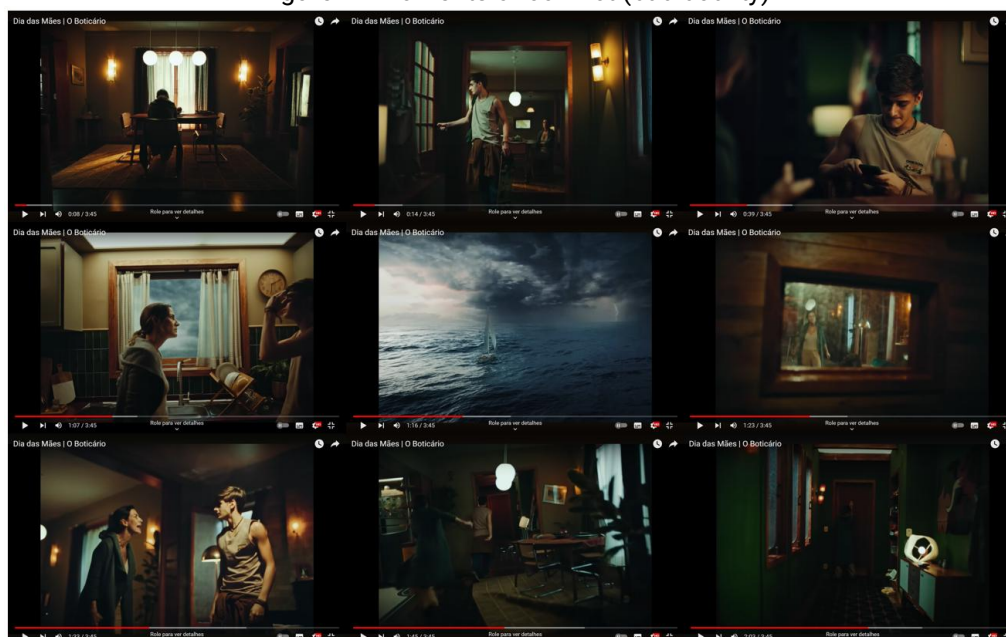
The second stage consisted of the description of the advertising campaign "Tormenta" by the company O Boticário, which was complemented with images from the video available on YouTube. In the third stage, the narrative elements of "Tormenta" were identified (idea, object of desire, transformation, time, rhythm, space, conflict, and the characters). The last stage involved the analysis of the campaign, using the narrative structure of Xavier (2015) and other strategies found in the bibliographic and documentary research, such as indicating the type of campaign appeal (Apollonian or Dionysian), pointing out the use of melodrama between music and story, and finally, how the presented story connected with real-world data.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

4.1 Campaign Description

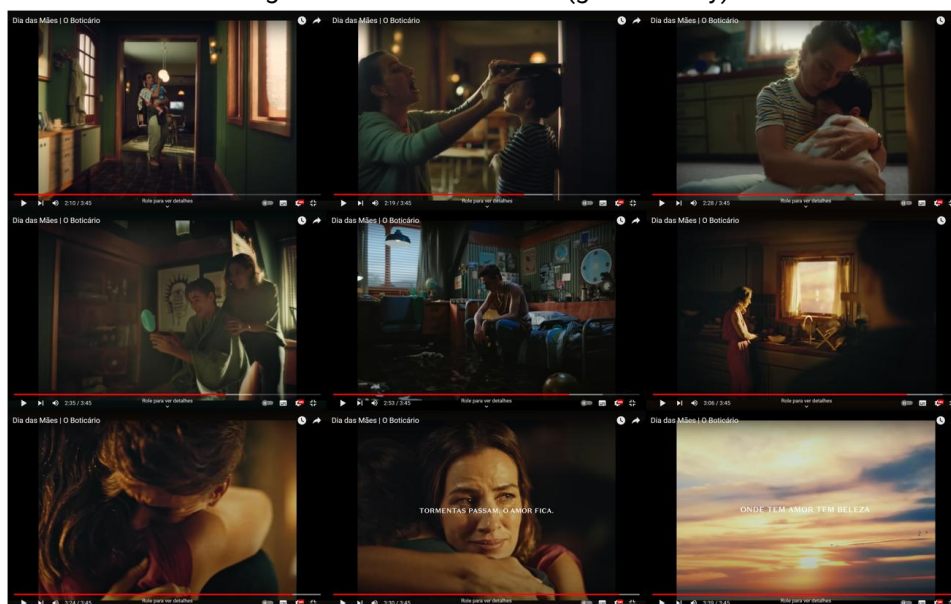
The "Tormenta" campaign is divided into two parts, with a duration of 3min45s in the non-accessible version and 3min47s in the accessible version (OBoticário, 2024b; 2024c). The first part directly addresses the conflicts between mother and son during adolescence, extending up to 2min8s (Moments of conflict/bad moments). The second part highlights memories from birth to youth, with events where the mother cares for and comforts her child (Moments of love/good moments). Thus, the duality found in "O Boticário's" campaign is justified by the family experience (collective), where good and evil coexist, completing each other (MAFFESOLI, 2004, p. 152).

Figure 2 - Moments of conflict (bad duality)



Source: Adapted from OBoticário (2024b).

Figure 3 - Moments of love (good duality)



Source: Adapted from OBoticário (2024b).

The story begins with a worried mother waiting at home for her son, who was out. When he arrives, he is asked where he was, a question he answers with a lie that is quickly unmasked. The mother says she wishes she at least knew where her son goes and what time he would arrive. However, he doesn't take his eyes off his phone, ignoring her questions. Upon getting up, the young man is followed by her, an action that results in an argument (the moment when the environment transitions - the house becomes a boat in a storm).

The young man goes to his room, where he sits on the edge of his bed, while his mother leans her head against the door, lost in thought (a new transition, where the lights go out and come back on with a flashback of moments that both mother and son have faced).

Memories are shown of when she: carried him in her arms; bathed him; marked his height on the wall; put on makeup while he played next to her; comforted him when he lost in sports; and also, when she cut his hair during his teenage years.

After the moment of reflection, the son goes to his mother in the kitchen, where they look at each other without exchanging words and hug, an action that leads the young man to apologize and receive an "I love you!" from her.

4.2 Narrative Elements

After indicating the two moments of duality and describing the "Tormenta" advertising campaign, it became possible to identify the narrative elements pointed out by Xavier (2015, p. 79-98).

The idea directs the narrative's trajectory by indicating what the story is about and its reason for being worth telling (XAVIER, 2015, p. 82). In the campaign, it is the reflection on the challenges faced by mothers and children during adolescence, since both feel lonely and sad during this phase (HARVARD, 2022 apud OBOTICÁRIO, 2024a; OBOTICÁRIO, 2024a).

The object of desire, on the other hand, refers to the goal that the characters seek to achieve during the narrative (XAVIER, 2015). In "Tormenta," it is the establishment of harmony between mother and son, complemented by the campaign's final message: "Storms pass, love remains. Where there is love, there is beauty."

According to Xavier (2015, p. 88), transformation refers to the changes that occur in the characters during a narrative (life), which can be physical, emotional, cultural, professional, social, or of another kind. In the story presented by O Boticário, it is a change that involves the emotion and psychology of both mother and son, who move from a moment of sadness and conflict to one of support and empathy.

Time is the basic (and also musical) unit present in stories, which can be of a narrative and expository type. In the campaign, the first delimits the period in which the events of "Tormenta" occur, through flashbacks, that is, in a fragmented way. The second is located in the viewer's actions, who controls the speed and the number of times they watch the campaign on YouTube (XAVIER, 2015 p. 89-91). This element allows the public to journey through the characters' family story and sympathize with the plot, inviting them to reflect on the challenges of adolescence and/or moments in their own lives.

Rhythm is an element characterized as a musical measure, present in the characters' speeches and actions, as well as in the pace of the story (XAVIER, 2015 p. 92-93). In the campaign, it is identified in the conversations, which already begin with a slightly heated tone and increase

with the start of the argument between mother and son. And also, in the background music "When the Party's Over" by Billie Eilish, whose voice begins to be heard around 1min10s, at the moment of the metaphorical transformation of the house into a boat in the middle of a storm. During the song, there are small pauses between the transitions of the environment, especially in the separation of the narrative's present and past. This composition features a soft and melancholic melody that evokes sadness, depression, and anxiety, states faced by mothers and children during the adolescent phase (HARVARD apud OBOTICÁRIO, 2024a). The lyrics of the song resonate the feelings of emotional ambiguity, loneliness, and internal conflict experienced by the characters.

The space where the events of "Tormenta" occur is the characters' house/boat, a metamorphosis that represents the conflict between mother and son.

The conflict consists of the challenges to be overcome; thus, it is the element that drives the story (MCKEE, 2003), since without it there would be no story (HOLT, 2004, p. 3). Its origin can be characters, external issues, and even villains (XAVIER, 2015 p. 95). In the campaign, it is linked to the mother and son through the collective conflict (through their fight) and individually (concerning the feelings generated by the friction of the struggle).

In summary, "Tormenta" features two characters whom we follow at different moments of their lives. The worried mother, who conveys love, affection, and care, despite the conflict's occurrence. And the son, Guto, who is in adolescence, a time of discoveries and a search for freedom, is the pole of the conflict, manifesting anxiety and anger, as noted in the flashbacks, and representing the duality of conflict and love with the mother.

4.3 The World of "Tormenta" and Our Own

The world of "Tormenta" is set in a house that metaphorically transforms into a boat during a storm. This symbolism represents the conflict between mother and son, since the metamorphosis begins with the heated discussion and ends when they both calm down. To achieve this filming, according to AlmapBBDO (2024), water explosions and stormy winds were used as special effects, aligned with the camera's swaying motion, which simulated the rocking of the boat in the middle of the storm.

Figure 4 - The symbiosis of conflict

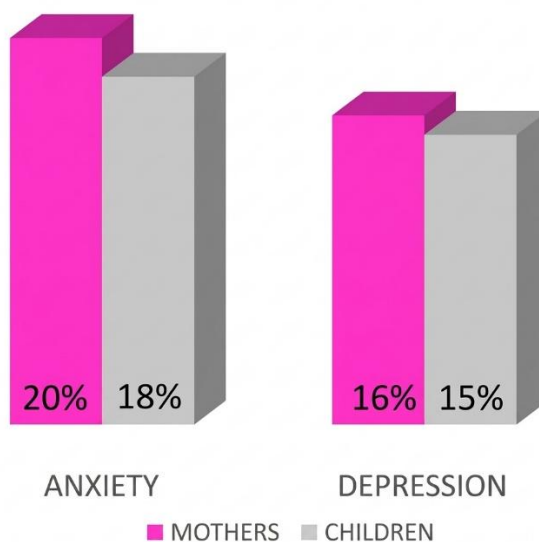


Source: Adapted from OBoticário, 2024b.

However, in addition to the financial cost for the production of "Tormenta," there were also carbon emissions during filming, which resulted in the compensation of seven thousand kilograms of CO₂ and 42 trees planted by the production company "My Mama Entertainment" in partnership with "Eccaplan." And in the participants' adherence to the "Zero Waste" movement, thus carrying out environmentally sound management of the solid waste produced. This action demonstrates the company "O Boticário's" concern for the environment and its commitment to sustainability in a world immersed in the consequences of global warming (ALMAPBBDO, 2024).

The campaign also presents the challenges faced in adolescence by showcasing the duality of conflict and love, highlighting the existence of bad moments that often pass with the support of mothers. However, this phase does not only affect children, because just like them, parents also face anxiety and depression.

Figure 5 - Anxiety and Depression in mothers and children



Source: Adapted from Harvard apud OBoticário, 2024a.

Data presented by Harvard studies in 2022 indicates that mothers feel as anxious and depressed as their children, something that reflects on the construction and consolidation of the relationship in a phase considered challenging and frightening, as both need to redefine their roles in each other's lives (HARVARD apud OBOTICÁRIO, 2024a).

Anxiety and depression bring concerns for the health and routine of Brazilians, since their activities are harmed and can lead to more serious health situations. Regarding anxiety, according to Covitel (2023, p. 57), 26% of the population was diagnosed with this disorder, with the majority in the age group of 18 to 24 years. Depression, on the other hand, was present in about 16.3 million people, with the largest portion in the age group of 30 to 59 years - 10.2 million (IBGE, 2019).

In addition to the swaying cameras and the message about anxiety and depression during adolescence, there is also the presence of Baroque art in the world of "Tormenta," mainly in the contrast of light and shadow, which uses a focused light on the characters amid the dark corridors (OHME, 2010, p. 786; SANTOS; FONSECA, 2020, p. 48; WÖLFFLIN, 1964).

Figure 6 - Light and shadow



Source: Adapted from OBoticário, 2024b.

Another Baroque element is theatricality, as the characters use eloquent gestures (due to the conflict), with a lot of expressiveness on their faces (Santos; Fonseca, 2020, p. 49). This characteristic, supported by the music and sounds, guides the viewer's emotion, clearly expressing the mother's and son's feelings throughout the plot, classifying it as a melodrama. The elements of melodrama are evident in the campaign's structure and aesthetic: a) The duality (conflict/love, or good/evil) creates the moral contrast typical of melodrama, where the characters move from intense emotional clashes to a moment of resolution and embrace; b) The theatricality and eloquent gestures, aligned with the contrast of light and shadow (Baroque aesthetic), heighten the emotions, representing the exaggeration and vivid expressiveness typical of the genre; c) The song "When the Party's Over" by Billie Eilish functions as a crucial emotional layer, with its soft and melancholic melody underscoring the feelings of sadness, anxiety, and depression felt by the mother and son, thus ensuring the emotional engagement required for a melodramatic narrative.

Additionally, similarities are noted with Caravaggio's work "The Supper at Emmaus" (1601), where the arms seem to jump out of the painting, reinforcing the visual rhetoric and dramatic gesture used in 'Tormenta'."

Figure 7 - Expressiveness and Eloquent Gestures



Source: Adapted from O Boticário, 2024b.

Figure 8 - The Supper at Emmaus



Source: Caravaggio (1601).

Finally, considering the music, the characters' expressions, and the conflict, a Dionysian appeal is noted (LINDSTROM, 2008, p. 32; NIETZSCHE, 1967), as "Tormenta" is focused on emotion and mood. This is present from the beginning to the end of the campaign, with the intention of attracting the viewer to the center of the emotional experience, leading them to actively reflect on current or future situations.

5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

O Boticário's "Tormenta" campaign transcends conventional advertising narratives; it establishes itself as an "identity myth" within what Holt (2004, p. 11) defines as Cultural

Branding. According to the author, brands that achieve iconic status are those capable of addressing acute cultural tensions in society. In this case, the tension explored is the communication gap between mothers and their teenage sons, considered a symbolic battlefield even greater than digital isolation.

When analyzing the construction of the protagonist Guto, we observe the materialization of the identity crisis described by Erikson (1968). For the author, adolescence is a period of “psychosocial moratorium” (ERIKSON, 1968, p. 160), during which the young person tests limits and distances themselves from parental figures to forge their own “self.” The campaign illustrates this analytically through the constant use of smartphones and headphones, symbols of technological barriers identified by Winnicott (1971, p. 13), which can be interpreted as a failure in the “transitional space” or the “potential space” between the individual and the environment.

The film’s aesthetic, characterized by the use of shadows and high-contrast lighting, directly evokes the complexity of the Baroque. As Santos and Fonseca (2020, p. 48) state in their analysis of the aesthetics of light: “Shadows are not merely the absence of light, but the representation of the hidden, the internal conflict that precedes revelation.” In the commercial, the visual “storm” (tormenta) reflects the characters’ emotional state. This duality between chaos (conflict) and order (the final embrace) corroborates Maffesoli’s (1996, p. 112) perspective on human nature: “The tragedy of everyday life is not the absence of hope, but the acceptance that life is composed of light and shadow, of constant confrontations that, far from destroying the bond, are precisely what give it solidity and depth.”

The strategic use of Billie Eilish’s soundtrack and the melodramatic tone are fundamental to what Lindstrom (2009, p. 38) classifies as “sensory branding,” where the brand seeks to create a deep emotional bond through the senses. Music activates brain regions linked to affective memory, while melodrama, as discussed by Brooks (1995, p. 15), uses emotional excess to make the invisible visible—in this case, the maternal love that persists despite the perceived hostility of adolescence.

Xavier's (2015) analysis of the "object of desire" and "transformation" gains new depth when combined with the concept of "fragile bonds." In a landscape of liquid relationships, as described by Bauman (2003, p. 25), "love is often a battlefield, where security and freedom vie for space." By positioning the fragrance as the element that breaks the "storm," O Boticário acts as a symbolic mediator that restores the solidity of the bond.

Therefore, the campaign's effectiveness does not lie in offering a magical solution, but in validating the pain of the process. The narrative recognizes maternal "sacrifice" not as a romanticized heroic burden, but as an exercise in resilience in the face of the other's phase of self-discovery. It is this "cultural truth" that makes the brand's discourse consistent and analytically superior to purely commercial campaigns.

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