

I. Pursuit of Artistic Blossom

Black Swan is a fascinating story of a young ballerina's emotional plight in the competitive world of professional ballet and the price she pays for her pursuit of artistic blossom. Directed by Darren Aronofsky starring Natalie Portman, Mila Kunis, Winon Ryder and Vincet Cassel, movie is about ballet otherwise it is a psychological thriller and has veneer of adolescence and psychosis. The film brilliantly captures the brutal physical and emotional demands that ballerinas face in their short-lived career span. When Nina (Natalie Portman), gets lead role as a Swan Queen, she knows this is her shot to prove herself which leads to constant practice and unhealthy routines and schedules that wreak havoc on her life. This gives us a glimpse at how grueling the life of a competitive dancer can be. *Black Swan* captures not only the real world the ballerina lives in but also the other side of the world the ballerina has within her mind, its spectator would experience a fantastic world where one ballerina lives in two different worlds at the same time.

As a psycho-drama this movie takes us to psychological insight with theatrical melodrama, myth with personal story. Moreover movie explores the intricacies of obsession and the damages it may wreak upon the human psyche through central character played by Natalie Portman as Nina. Not only that, this movie compels us to think as well, why does Nina plunge into increasing experience of psychosis and fail to assimilate and control the unleashed forces within her psyche which end up destroying her sanity. Root cause of her fracturing personality where her descent into madness is a frightening portrayal of psychosis that resonates realism for her.

Although *Black Swan* is fiction, it nevertheless explores hidden realities of competitive art and performance. There are numerous examples of artists who have embraced darker alter egos to take their art to “another level” and here in this movie

we can have this affinity through one of the character Nina. When Beth is hit by a car and admitted to a hospital soon after she has been replaced by Nina as new lead of the company. Nina was guilt stricken knowing this, as she take it, she is in some way responsible for her condition. To console her and assure her either way it was not her fault. Thomas tells her everything Beth does come from within. From some dark impulse. I guess that's what makes her so thrilling to watch. I'm almost sure she did it on purpose, so dangerous. Even perfect at times. But also so damn destructive. Was it right after we saw her?" (00:42:02)

The film begins with a prestigious ballet company in New York City preparing for a production of Swan Lake. The director of the company, Thomas Leroy (Vincent Cassel), is determined to cast a new ballerina in the dual roles of White Swan and Black Swan in his avant-garde production of Swan Lake, embody conflicting personalities. The coveted role that every ballerina is eying for since old heroin is indisposed. And he has his eyes on determined dancer Nina, beautiful but delicate and vulnerable nevertheless potential ballerina, ironical flaw she has as a dancer is only her obsession with the technicality of dance to be perfect, which some what constrains her from bringing sensuality on the podium needed for Black Swan role that is what Thomas has in his mind.

Nina is undoubtedly the most technical dancer in the company, yet she lacks the reckless abandon needed to tap into the darker role. The only reservation Leroy has considering her. The director is torn over whether to give her a chance as he is not convinced that she can let herself go enough to give into the uninhibited side of herself that she has kept so well guarded. So a newcomer named Lily (Mila Kunis) also competes for the part as she is equally talented and beautiful and has this ability to bring sensual gracefulness to the floor, letting oneself loose while dancing. But

once Leroy gets to see a little flash of Nina's 'Black Swan', side during a kiss in his office when she bit his unwanted lips inside her mouth and runs away. This is enough for him to take the gamble that Nina is the perfect candidate for prestigious role. As he thinks she is capable of manifesting her hitherto unexplored side as well.

A new "visionary" interpretation of Swan Lake in which both the lead role of the White Swan and her evil-sister counterpart, the Black Swan, will be danced by the same girl. The tragic saga of Swan Lake is about Virginal girl, pure and sweet trapped in the body of a swan. She desires freedom that only true love can break the spell. Her wishes nearly granted in the form of prince. But before he can declare his love, the lustful twin, Black Swan tricks and seduces him. Devastated white swan leaps off a cliff, killing herself. And in death she finds freedom.

Film critics Niko Tavernise in his film review of movie *Black Swan* writes:

"Black Swan's alter-ego rivalries and divided –ego visions connect intimately to the good –bad, white-black, active-passive Odette- Odile heroines of Swan Lake. First Nina is told she does not have it in her to be both the White Swan and the Black. Eventually, however, it's disconcerting how much of the contrasting heroines she does contain."

Nina's journey from as a White Swan to Black Swan is heart wrenching.. Before surrendering to her Black Swan version, she is pretty much seen in white colored attire but as the transformation starts to twine her, she literally begins to wear black. As the Black Swan grows in power, Nina starts hallucinating physical mutation on her body. She undergoes various psychotic episodes walking and stumbling on precariously built and evolved hostile circumstances as different agents of continuum of fracturing or disintegration of her personality.

Nina's stress level started to get better of her composure, though she is one of the best dancers company has, under the pressure to perform dual role of Swan Queen with conviction and to live with the expectation and continue the legacy of Beth. It is told that she always gave sublime performance. Likewise self cultivated erroneous fear about Lily trying to strike her out of her role. Stress can precipitate personality disintegration leading to psychotic episode.

She has to deal with harassing director, always nagging about exploiting her Black Swan side to execute better performance. Confronted by him Nina faces the harsh truth that, in spite of her perfect technique, she will not achieve greatness unless her dance conveys more passion. So Nina experiments with living her life with more passion, believing this will translate to her dance. Her altered life style creates tension in her relationship with her mother and she is pushed further down a dark psychological path to the role and thanks to her clingy mother, the aging ballerina she replaced (Winona Ryder), and a brash, black-clad newcomer (Mila Kunis) with her eyes on the prize.

The Black Swan is the artistically brilliant yet spiritually destructive force, the charismatic and dictatorial director Thomas wants to see born in Nina. He obviously knows about the Black Swan's devastating powers, but he does not care and never did: he is after the ultimate performance. His exhortation to release sensuous and seductive side of Black Swan inside her to give captivating performance of Swan Queen also act as a fuel to accelerate her deteriorating psychology.

Similarly, Nina's antagonist - her Black Swan - is the exotically unpredictable Lily. Movie critic Ted Cascio, writes "Lily destabilizes Nina's perceptions of many things, and threatens to take many things from her including her most central fixation dance. Seemingly in an instant, Nina's world collapses. But Lily does not serve solely

destructive purposes; she also represents a potent, albeit utterly unanticipated and unwanted, force for change in Nina. These two facets of the relationship between Lily and Nina echo the bipolar opportunities that metaphorical black swans represent; always destructive, but often eventually constructive.” How we address her relation with Nina, but we can draw link her with one of the agents for Nina’s fracturing personality.

ˆ Nina lives her life carefully orchestrated by her controlling and emotionally abusive mother and more or less convince her that she gave up her career for parenthood. She has clearly disowned an important part of her emotional experience, undoubtedly because her false and brittle mother could not tolerate its expression. But about halfway through the film, Nina refuses to be her puppet and defies her boundaries. Overt friction between Nina and her mother only becomes apparent when Nina begins to separate. The mother's dismay is captured by the lines, "What happened to my sweet girl?" to which, Nina vehemently replies: "She's gone!!!" (00:59:06) Breaking away from the mother's tight bonds allows Nina to soar and master the Black Swan role.

She suffers hallucination, bizarre delusion, disintegration of process of thinking, symptoms of schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is actually a psychosis, a type of mental illness in which a person cannot tell what is real from what is imagined. At times, people with psychotic disorders lose touch with reality. The world may seem like a maze of confusing thoughts, images, and sounds. The behavior of people with schizophrenia may be very strange and even shocking. A sudden change in personality and behavior, which occurs when people lose touch with reality, is called a psychotic episode. For example once Nina makes lesbian love with Lily who completely denies it saying their supposed sexual encounter is merely her erotic

fantasy, nothing but a figment of her imagination. That implies she is losing contact with the reality in a way showing this transformation going wrong. Similarly Nina believing her mother's painting speaking to her, rashes on her shoulder changing in to feather and her developing webbed feet and bird like legs are sign of her psychological disorder. To her fantasies becomes so real, a vivid part of reality, they look so rational, cogent, mostly they seems so real to her but irony is that she is losing touch with the reality. She falls short to understand what is real from what is not.

Nina's experiences a break with reality, the hallmark feature of psychotic illness. She fails to differential between what is real and what is not real. She exhibits paranoid delusions. For instance she thinks that Lily is malevolently trying to replace her as new lead. Additionally, it is clear that in the nightclub scene Nina uses the drug ecstasy, it is unclear whether the drug or her underlying mental illness causes her to hear her name being called. We see, Nina scratches skin on her shoulders throughout the course of the film and ultimately break her skin, revealing black feathers. These events demonstrate her misperceptions that the feathers were present (visual hallucinations) and were itching her skin (tactile hallucinations). Also, Nina sees scales form on her skin and her neck elongate like that of a swan. These depictions of psychotic symptoms are cleverly employed in Nina's literal and figurative transformation into the "Black Swan."

Film critics Alison writes, "Julia Kristeva's essay on abjection, Powers of Horror, seems to contain the perfect explanation for Nina's visceral unraveling. Kristeva describes the abject as that which "disturbs identity, system, order ... what does not respect borders, positions, rules ... the in-between, the ambiguous, the composite." The abject is the point that the object ("... that of being opposed to I") is transformed and "meaning collapses." It's an indeterminacy made horrific as the

distinction between the self and the object (the Black Swan) disintegrates and is lost forever. She explains further, “Abjection preserves what existed in the archaism of pre-objectal relationship, in the immemorial violence with which a body becomes separated from another body in order to be.” For Kristeva, it’s seeing a corpse that epitomizes this breakdown, and for Nina it’s flesh and bone – the simultaneous fear and yearning (purging, biting, breaking, picking, scratching, fucking) to be free from the confines of her anxious self (selves). Suddenly the compression and manipulation of Nina’s diaphragm (and her breathiness throughout the film) takes on a whole new meaning under Kristeva’s discourse:

“The body’s inside ... shows up in order to compensate for the collapse of the border between inside and outside. It is as if the skin, a fragile container, no longer guarantee[s] the integrity of one’s ‘own and clean self’ but, scraped or transparent, invisible or taut, gave way before the dejection of its contents.”(4)

As a ballerina, Nina’s body isn’t her own to begin with — she exists to be the seamless connection between the music and the dance. In the throes of her Black Swan she’s at her most fragile — even though it’s her most powerful professional moment (she’s only seen as a true artist when she’s a monster) — as the abject devours Nina within “the threatening world of animals or animalism, which [in primitive cultures] were imagined as representatives of sex and murder.” As the Swan transformation takes hold of Nina, she murders the self with suicidal determination at the peak of her perfection.

Carlin Flora writes in her film review about movie *Black Swan*:

“Though the film’s fantastical elements set it apart from a documentary-style expose of the dance world, it does convince viewers

that the only reasonable outcome of that career path are mental illness of one form or another: The competition is relentless, the glory is short-lived, the regiment is literally disfiguring to one's body.

Technical mastery is required, and yet, when in character, the dancer is expected to somehow forget the grueling years of training and appear spontaneous and free”.

One recent study found that high-level ballet training is associated with "late onset of menarche, menstrual disorders, lower weight and height development, and abnormal feeding disorders." And as for eating disorders, another study found that it's not just the pressure to be thin per se that makes ballerinas susceptible, it's the interaction between that pressure and their personalities, which tend toward perfectionism and neuroticism--hallmarks of anorexia.”

In movie we can see Nina’s physical build up, she is considerably thin, waif. She has this feminine grace but not adult kind female body. Her torso from front is almost flat like the body of a kid. Yet she is quite fussy about kind of food she intakes. It was once when it is conform that she is doing swan queen. She gave her mother a call informing her about latest build up i.e. she is the chosen one for the role. To celebrate her happiness Erica, Nina’s mother, makes a cake for them and gives big chunk of a cake to her which Nina denies taking eat, just to please her Nina tastes the cake using her finger as she considers it unhealthy containing calories and she needs to be fit and think.

From the psychological point of view, Nina suffers from eating disorder as well, anorexia nervosa. Anorexia nervosa is characterized by a refusal to maintain a body weight above the minimal normal weight for one’s age and height; an intense fear of becoming obese that does not diminish with weight loss; body image

distortion. Individuals with bizarre and puzzling disorders literally engage in self starvation. Those with anorexia nervosa weigh themselves repeatedly and eat only small quantities of certain low calories foods. A very frightening characteristic of anorexia nervosa is that most people with this disorder, even when clearly emaciated, continue to insist they are overweight. Others will acknowledge that they are thin but claim that some parts of their bodies are fat.

The Movie Psychoanalyst Heather Hardison, Ph.D. writes: Nina's drive and commitment to dance not only lead to psychosis but other psychopathology is present as well. Nina appears anorexic and obsessive about her routines and technique. She most likely suffers from obsessive compulsive personality disorder and it is clear that she is a perfectionist as evidenced by her insistence on practicing routines well past a healthy limit and even through serious injuries. Even in her final moments she is consumed with perfection. Her last words to her director were "I was perfect." Also there is an unnatural attachment to childhood objects. Her room is comprised of dolls, stuffed animals and a music box with a dancing ballerina. When she speaks it is with a soft and childlike voice especially when interacting with her mother. To say she is sheltered and naive is a huge understatement. Her development is so stunted that it is scarier at times than her psychotic breakdown.

If we see movie regarding its locations and other stuffs in relation with thematic values, Nina lives with her mother, the warren like environment with its dark halls and various close doors, suggests repression, hidden secrets, sealed off emotions. Her bedroom still little girl pink and full of stuffed animals speak to her arrested development, her wardrobe of white, creams, pink and other pale shades emphasizes her passive unassuming personality. Even the ballet room gives us an idea of where the film is based, with lots of dancer practicing together in dark the walls and floor is

black. This color represents the darkness of Nina's state of mind throughout the movie and the fact she always be left in the dark.

II. Agents of fracturing personality: a Psychoanalytical reading based on Schizophrenia on the movie *Black Swan*

Black Swan, as a psycho-drama, displays the poignant sight of personality disintegration contingent on (effectively) environment factors of central character Nina Sayers, a ballerina, whose psychological equilibrium is threatened and pushed up to the level of psychosis. Environmental factors for psychotic episodes as a frame of reference from any abnormal psychological book suggest that “certain environmental factors, such as a viral infection, poor social interactions, or highly stressful situations, may trigger schizophrenia in people who have inherited a tendency to develop the disorder. Schizophrenia more often surfaces when the body is undergoing hormonal and physical changes, such as those that occur during the teen and young adult years”.

Nina’s stress level swells under the pressure to perform, dual role of Swan Lake. A new “visionary” interpretation of Swan Lake in which both the lead role of the White Swan and her evil-sister counterpart, the Black Swan, will be danced by the same girl. As she hears from her choreographer every now and then that she is perfect for the role of the White Swan but lacks the passion needs to dance the Black Swan with real conviction. Her endeavor, though she worked her heart out, hardly seems to appeal Thomas. Stress can trigger a psychotic episode in people, who are already vulnerable. She lives in sterile and asexual atmosphere with her mother and mom gives the impression that she is reluctant to render personal space to her daughter. And the way she is brought up, treated and addressed by her mother though movie does not offer every staircase of her bringing, she looks vulnerable.

Her journey from White Swan to Black Swan, as a figure of speech and her descent into madness who has unleashed forces within her psyche which she is not able to assimilate or control, and which end up destroying her sanity are contingent on

the stressful ambience created by deeds and behaviors of her trainer Thomas, her mother Erica, 'frenemy' Lily and evolving situations around her.

Before surrendering to her submerged dark sides, Black Swan traits, which will liberate her to dance the part of Black Swan, Nina is seen always dressed in white and predispose to tears, sexual prudishness; hint of sexually repressed. But when she begins to find a sense of liberation and embrace her dormant sexuality she literally begins to wear black.

The story focuses on the adolescent and psychosis of a young ballerina, Nina Sayers, suffering from mental condition known as schizophrenia. Without treatment this disorder can be a real bad, resulting in hallucination, paranoid delusion and disorganized thinking and speech. And Nina suffers and experiences almost all the details of schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is brought on by the extreme pressure Nina is under. To pull off the role of Black Swan her personality shifts to one that's more sensuous, unpredictable and violent.

She is vying for starring role in a production of Swan Lake, as we know. In the movie we really do not know her exact age as it is not revealed, but her conflicts are clearly those of a young adolescent. Her transform from a sweet mama's girl into a young adult comes through very bumpy and life changing ride. She is torn apart by intense conflicts between ideals of innocence and demure and sexual and aggressive passions. Her conflict is reified in the form of the twin swan princesses, the innocent White Swan, Odette, and her seductive, aggressive twin Black Swan, Odile.

As psychologist David Sue writes "Because of constitutional limitations or neuro-psychological defects, some individuals are incapable of orderly and effective adjustments. Their attack upon life problems is chaotic, impulsive and inadequate. To secure some degree of inner harmony, they resort to radical protective or escape

expedients, including delusions, hallucinations, regression, psychological invalidism, loss of memory, and other abnormal reactions”.

In movie *Black Swan* Nina fails to manage different encounters heading her way in her life. Though reckoned as lead dancer in the new Swan Lake session, her chances are still at stake. New upheaval in her life certainly headlong of another potential ballerina Lily, threatens to take many things from her including her central fixation dance or role, which she desperately wants. Likewise new revelation of Thomas traits, he who barges into Nina’s prosaic psychical and physical world disturbing her one dimensional life, asks her to unleash her sensual side and overcome her inhibitions and coyness regarding her sexuality.

The sign and symptoms of schizophrenia is result of excessive pressure Nina is under, both from her mother and her dance director and herself as well as another ballerina Lily. She desires to be perfect and this unattainable desire is slowly eating away the walls of her psyche. It also does not help that she’s struggling with her confused sexual feelings from advances of her boos to the strong attraction to her chief rival Lily.

Her relationship with her over protective mother is quite intriguing, is also one of the reason behind her deteriorating mental condition took it to the level of psychosis. Their relationship looked as if it is fortress for Nina, ironically it’s not.

Ellen Weber Libby, Ph.D. in her view regarding *Black Swan* writes “The mother/daughter relationship could be described as fused or symbiotic; the mother's personality could be described as narcissistic or borderline; and the daughter's personality could be described as self-mutilating, depressed, or arrested psychological development. Regardless, the parent/child relationship dramatized in *Black Swan* illustrates the potential damage inflicted on both child and parent by the most

destructive forces of favoritism that can be experienced in some parent/child relationships - a child robbed of psychological maturity and sentenced to a life of self-destructive expression in the interest of maintaining favorite child status.”(3)

With her mother surrounding she did not grow as a sound being. She treats her as a kid and even addresses using epithet likely for kids. Nina has clearly disowned an important part of her emotional experience, undoubtedly because her mother, Erica, couldn't tolerate its expression. Nina's interests and experience have been so narrow and her relationships with people so few, her self-esteem and self-confidence are very low. She does not have any good friend, even inside ballet institution where she has been training for really long time. Nina appears to be locked in childhood in symbiosis with her adoring single mother. Erica lives on the borderline of sanity as long as she is soothed and gratified by her daughter, she remains calm. Dr. Ellen Libby writes 'Black Swan': Analyzing the Mother-Daughter Relationship

“Nina’s story is that of a child identified by a powerful parent to live out that parent's unrealized dream. The parent's ambition, cloaked in what is in the child's best interest, seduces the child into a gratifying relationship with the parent, one in which the child is indulged as the favorite. Ultimately, this relationship limits the child's emotional growth and personal development.” (2)

She further writes;

“Erica has devoted her life to ensuring her daughter's success as a ballerina by protecting Nina from making the mistakes she did. Having lived a life are fully orchestrated by her mother, Nina's experiences hindered her psychological growth. Interestingly, it is this sheltered life that has precluded Nina’s ability to dance with passion.”(5)

Murray Bowen, psychiatrist, who studies cause of schizophrenia from the perspective of family relationship especially mother-daughter relationships: family system and how family dynamics can help us understanding how well or how poorly an individual person is functioning. One of the concepts Bowen developed is called “differentiation” which basically means the level of freedom family members have to distinguish themselves both intellectually and emotionally from each other. For example to know the difference between what you believe and why you believe vs. what your parents believe. In the black swan one of the most interesting relationships dynamics portrayed is the one between Nina and her mother Erica.

Looking from his standpoint, Erica was ballerina but lives in obscurity as a ballerina and now Nina is ballerina. It’s difficult to know if Nina choose this career or if it was simply the path of her mother put her on and expected her to continue. Erica relates to Nina as a child. She is still in the role of authority while Nina does her best to please her and make her proud. And we see in movie Erica spends her free time painting the portrait of Nina. From Bowen stance their relationship a “symbiotic of fused” relationship which means neither has enough psychological space from each other to be their own person. When, Nina for the role of Swan Lake tries to explore more adult areas of her life, most notably, her sexuality areas of her life that cannot include or involve her mother. Confrontation grows between them creating stress in their relationship.

Bowen’s family systems theory states that when a family system is under stress, that one or more family member may begin to have physical or emotional symptoms of illness. As the story unfolds we see Nina injuring herself, hallucinating and quite literally developing another identity, the black swan persona, so she can have place to escape from being her mother’s sweet girl.

Stress and emotionally taxing pursuit of perfection and self exploration which paves the way for psychotic break down specifically schizophrenia in Nina's life and career. This mental disorder makes it difficult for one to differentiate between reality and fantasy, and is characterized by wide range of symptoms. Few of them that could be seen in movie through protagonist suffering are hallucination, delusions etc...

All in all, Nina experience 22 different hallucinations. These happens at different times, and goes from her seeing an individual who looks much like herself or we can say a black-clad version of herself across the subway platform, to seeing herself making homosexual interaction with her colleague, Lily and even seeing and experience herself morph into a swan for her role as the black swan. We can notice Nina's reflection everywhere. She sees herself reflected in mirrors as she dances or when she's reading the word "whore" on the washroom mirror of the dance studio or when she sees her face in the subway car windows. It happens during the sex scene when Lily face becomes Nina's own face at one point though it was Nina's hallucination.



Fig.1. Nina seeing an individual who looks much likes herself

The main delusion that is identified is paranoid delusion toward Lily, where Nina feels that she is trying to steal her role. This is bizarre delusion; however Lily

did not give Nina any reason to suspect her, but rather tried to be friend and at time, looked up to and commended her.

Other areas of disturbance that she experiences include speech, Nina seems to have poverty of speech content as she does not talk and communicate much except with those who are significant in her life, i.e. her mother, her director and at times Lily.

Her psychological/mental break down could be also the result dialectics between two parts of the self, the good little girl who always pleases her mother and perhaps her sexual awakening, the independent and adult part, what her director needs in her for the role of Black Swan. Her mother clipping her fingernails is symbolically clipping her wings to make her meek and controllable making her remain perfect sweet little girl. The white swan, pure good girl and black swan, seductive, strong, independent woman represent both parts of herself in conflict, battling it out. When Nina struggle to live up to the casting director's perfect Ballerina or her mother's perfect daughter, she basically starts to fall apart. Thomas her director wants her to embrace her sexuality, to seduce the audience, on the other hand her mother wants her to remain childlike and innocent. They are like double-edged sword in her life. When Nina fails to fulfill both these roles simultaneously, she starts to break down. We see that her body betrays her in literal ways, with bleeding toes and scratch marks that suggests self mutilation.

Nina experiences her first major psychotic episode after drinking and drugging during a night out with Lily. During this time, Nina sees herself having a sexual interaction with Lily and before passing out, sees her own face in place of Lily's as she is smothered with pillow. The episode comes to an end with Nina waking next

morning alone in her room. She later realizes that she was never with Lily every thing was nothing but her figment of her imagination.

The second major psychotic episodes she experiences the day before the premier of Swan Lake. While rehearsing her part she sees her self in the mirror, her reflection in the mirror imitating not her.



Fig. 2. Nina reflection in the mirror imitating not her.

She runs to see Thomas and to her surprise Thomas and Lily is making love and suddenly Thomas face transform into a character in the play. Then she rushes to the hospital to see Beth, whom Nina replaces, there too she sees Beth stabbing her face. Finally she manages to come home but she finds herself witnessing, to her wonder, her mother's painting in motion and screaming at her. Then she sees a bloody Beth appears in her home, Nina becomes highly orientated, and has a struggle with her mother who is naturally concerned. She locks herself in the room, there what she sees is, her skin erupting on her back and pulls out what looks like a feather. Her knees then buckled signifying her metamorphosis into a swan. After waking up she goes to Ballet Company. There she finds her toes becoming webbed and sprouts black feathers as wings, signifying the completion of her metamorphosis into black swan.

She later sees Lily in the wash room, whose face often alternates with her own, strangling her, and she eventually stabs with a broken piece of mirror to the death and hides Lily's dead body in a closet. Her eyes become scarlet and bloodshed, signifies her now evil and dark nature. She succeeds to give overwhelming performance and Lily arrives to congratulate her on her performance and there was not hidden dead body in the closet, there she realizes she actually stabbed herself.

Movie Psychoanalyst Heather, Hardison, Ph.D. regarding Nina's mental condition thinks that lack of social support could also contribute to her breakdown. She appears to have no life outside of dancing and no friends at all. In fact, most of the dancers in the company ostracize Nina due to her peculiar behavior. She still lives with her overbearing and over-involved mother. There is an unnatural attachment to childhood objects. Her room is comprised of dolls, stuffed animals and a music box with a dancing ballerina. When she speaks it is with a soft and childlike voice especially when interacting with her mother. To say she is sheltered and naive is a huge understatement. Her development is so stunted that it is scarier at times than her psychotic breakdown.

As we see in movie fantasies become a vivid part of reality of Nina's life. Her fantasies look so rational, cogent, mostly they seems so real to her but actually she is losing touch with reality. She fails to recognize what is real from what is imagined. The engrossing nature of art, how a role turn in to obsession, consequently fantasies of violence, sex, and foreign objects inhabiting body becomes par for the course. She sees a black-clad version of herself across the subway platform and again in the maze of hallways at Lincoln Center. Even the pink stuffed animals that adorn the bedroom she shares with her neurotic mother seem to come alive and mock her. She conjures up an array of fantasies and delusions, including a lesbian love with Lily. Nina starts

hallucinating physical mutations on her body. Towards the climax, at the opening night of the new session returning to her dressing room, Nina finds Lily waiting for her in the Black Swan costume. A fight ensues, with Nina grabbing a shard of a broken mirror and stabbing Lily to death. After hiding the body, she returns to the stage, dances the part of the Black Swan (even sprouting black feathers in the process), and receives a standing ovation for her performance. Back in the dressing room, Lily enters to congratulate Nina. This is when Nina realizes that she has stabbed herself.

Opening scene in movie we see ballerina dancing white swan, a different choreography than regular one as ballerina tells her mother but dance happens to be a mere dream, dream of ambitious ballerina Nina, aspires to realize her dream of becoming lead dancer one day. She has her luck. She is picked for Swan Lake dance as a lead by a prestigious ballet company in New York City, dance institution where she trains as well. Talented ballerina eventually sees her pursuit and goal becoming materialized after years of perseverance and hardship. Dream becoming true. But not so fast and easy. Complications are not beyond her life as well.

Her greatest strength to be technically perfect in every detail of dance ironically turns out to be her weakness. It's doubtful she can embody the dark deception and commanding sensuality of the Black Swan because upcoming act of Swan Lake's dual role of white and black swan has to be performed by same girl. She is wonderful for white swan role with her flawless technicality but for black swan she finds herself struggling as her technique is constraining her to find the substance of black swan. Under the pressure of performing dual role with conviction, we see Nina attending to her bruised and bleeding feet and hear loud, crunching noises as she tries to manipulate them or to dance upon them. But the physical punishment is secondary

to the psychological demands of pursuing technical perfection and artistic expression. Under the strain of her new role, she begins to hallucinate and experience paranoid fears, the symptoms of psychological disorder.

Black Swan is a modern retelling of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's classic ballet, Swan Lake. In the movie, the ballet director, Thomas Leroy describes to his dancers the basic plot of the ballet:

“We all know the story. Virginal girl, pure and sweet, trapped in the body of a swan. She desires freedom, but only true love can break the spell. Her wish is nearly granted in the form of a prince. But, before he can declare his love, the lustful twin, the Black Swan, tricks and seduces him. Devastated, the White Swan leaps off a cliff, killing herself and, in death, finds freedom.”(7)

New session with the new-version and the new face all he wants so he has few deserving ballerina for the role in his mind, at last Nina, a shy and fragile young woman but potential and competent ballerina is chosen to play the role of the Swan Queen and as the role demands she has to embody both the pure White Swan and the evil Black Swan. She struggles to exploit Black Swan characteristic. Therefore her quest for perfection as a ballet dancer leads her to experience, in her everyday life, the transformation experienced by the White Swan in the ballet's story. The events of Nina's daily life then mirror the story of the character she takes on as a ballet dancer, ultimately leading to confusion and, as the line between reality and fiction blurs, to apparent insanity, development of psychotic episode in her and she suffers.

The director's use of mirrors and reflections in numerous scenes are a constant reminder of Nina's altered perception of reality. Mirrors in the movie are often misleading and Nina's reflections seem to have a “life of their own”. As Nina

becomes haunted by the Black Swan, this alternate persona takes a life of its own and acts outside of Nina's conscious control.

Trauma-based mind control –also known as Monarch Programming - is the process in which an individual is subjected to intense trauma and dehumanization in order to cause a mental dissociation. This causes a fragmentation of the slave's personality and enables the handler to create an alternate persona that can be programmed at will.

A promotional poster for *Black Swan*. Nina is shown with a crack through her face, representing the fracturing of her personality, an important concept and symbol of mind control.

Nina lives in a small New York apartment with her mother, Erica, about whom we can say is overbearing. Many allusions to trauma-based mind control can be found in Nina's living environment and her mother's controlling behavior.

In Nina's bedroom we can notice the butterflies on the wall, next to the window is a big white rabbit, on the desk toy of pirouette to make her sleep, which her mother plays for her, a symbol of mind control.

Nina's mother, a retired ballet dancer who failed to become a star, acts more as a mind-control handler than a mother. She obviously has boundary issues and keeps tight control over all aspects of Nina's life Symbols relating to mind control in Nina's house probably reflect this sad reality, including her pink, childlike bedroom.

Every night, Erica Sayers winds up the music box next Nina in order to make the little ballerina dance. This is quite symbolic of Nina's mind-controlled state.

Erica Sayers, Nina's mother, forcibly undressing her adult daughter. This unsettling scene depicts to Nina's total submission to her mother and also hints to the unhealthy sexual "familiarity" between the two. Other people in Nina's life,

apparently preying on her weakness and “victim energy”, take advantage of her sexually.

An old pervert makes obscene gestures to Nina while riding the train. This disturbing scene tells a lot about Nina’s relation to sexuality. Sexual predators sometimes have the sick ability to sniff out and prey on sex-abuse victims.

Nina’s mother has, therefore, subjected her daughter to trauma-based mind control in order to make her a submissive woman who would realize her mother’s failed dreams. This has trained Nina to disassociate to make her existence bearable, which in turn makes Nina the perfect subject for the creation of a dark alter persona: the Black Swan.

Getting back to the storyline, Thomas, the ballet director, is looking for a new ballet star play the role of the Swan Queen. Nina’s meticulous dancing is perfect to play the role of the White Swan, but she must also be able to play the Black Swan, a role that requires the dancer to be twisted, sexual and dangerous. Nina’s frigid style is not suitable for the Black Swan, but Thomas chooses her as the Swan Queen anyway. He knows she has it in her, and he will bring it out.

At one point, Thomas tells Nina: “Perfection is not just about control. It is also about letting go. Surprise yourself so you can surprise the audience. Transcendence. Very few have it in them.”

Watching Nina dance, he later says: “I knew the White Swan wouldn’t be a problem. The real work would be your metamorphosis into her evil twin.”

In order to obtain perfection Nina must master both good and evil – light and darkness Thomas’ job is to create in Nina a new, aggressive and sexual alter-ego. He therefore becomes Nina’s new mind-control handler. Whereas her mother

“programmed” her daughter to be a submissive ballet dancer who never questions her mother/handler, Thomas requires her to embrace the exact opposite.

After her meeting with Thomas, Nina, dressed in white, crosses the path of another Nina, dressed in black. This symbolically represents the coming of Nina’s new, dark alter-ego.

In order to become a Black Swan, Nina must be able to be somewhat comfortable with sex, and even enjoy it. So Thomas gives Nina homework: to “touch herself”. Ready to do everything to become a better dancer, Nina tries to masturbate but her mother causes a blockage. Sexual pleasure becomes therefore a form of emancipation from her mother’s control and her initiation to the “big league”.

As the Black Swan grows in power, Nina starts hallucinating physical mutations on her body. The only other person that can see these mutations are Nina’s mother, who, as a handler, has the “key” to her psyche. She is aware of Nina’s gradual transformation and tries to repress it, knowing it will cause the loss of her “little girl”.

Nina hallucinates all kinds of strange mutations on her body. They represent the gradual coming out of the Black Swan in her.

Thomas presents the new Swan Queen, Nina. In order for Nina to become the new Swan Queen, however, someone must step down. Beth MacIntyre: The Ageing Star who was Pushed Aside

Beth MacIntyre at Nina’s crowning ceremony. She has just learned she is no longer the Swan Queen. She is obviously not happy.

Beth MacIntyre is the previous star of the ballet company. However, she is growing old and “losing her edge”. As a veteran, Beth already went through the “Black Swan process”, and, as some people might say, she “sold her soul to the devil”. Although this deal gave her years of great performances, in the end, the

process completely destroyed her. She has become a bitter, conceited and hateful person who is incapable of existing without being the Black Swan.

Thomas, who was Beth's handler no longer needs the alter-ego he created in her. It is however impossible to "deprogram" her, so she completely loses her mind. The next day, the ballet company learns she got hit by a car.

Thomas says: "You know what, I'm also sure she did it on purpose. Everything Beth does come from within, from some dark impulse. I guess that's what makes her so thrilling to watch ... so dangerous ... even perfect at times. But also so damn destructive."

So the "spirit", the alter ego that consumed and destroyed Beth, was also the hidden force behind her great performances. Beth hosted this force and it completely destroyed her and now it can move on to Nina.

The Black Swan is the artistically brilliant yet spiritually destructive force Thomas wants to see born in Nina. He obviously knows about the Black Swan's devastating powers, but he doesn't care and never did: he is after the ultimate performance. Once Nina has been "used" up by the Swan, he will find another dancer to replace her. He is a representation of the entertainment industry, which manipulates artists into becoming Black Swans, ultimately trashing them when the Swan's effects have faded.

The "force" of the Black Swan is symbolically represented by black wings at different stages of the movie.

Shortly after being crowned "Swan Queen", Nina is fascinated by this creepy statue. Little does she know that it represents what she is about to become.

Black wings on the back of Lily while she is “giving pleasure” to Nina. The black wings represent the “force” that is communing with Nina. It is penetrating her, giving her orgasm, but also taking over her life.



Fig. 3. Black wings on the back of Lily.

Nina at the end of her “perfect” performance as the Black Swan. She is briefly shown with black wings, symbolizing that she has become “one” with the Black Swan.



Fig. 4. Nina is briefly shown with black wings.

Another symbolic poster. The Black Swan's phallic beak which is shown in the movie stands for "penetrating" Nina's psyche.

Mirrors are used throughout the movie to symbolically reflect the true state of Nina's psyche. Creepy mirror reflection that has a mind of its own. As her metamorphosis advances, Nina realizes that a totally separate entity is living within her. It is completely acting outside of her control. In mind-control symbolism, mirror reflections represent a slave's alter-persona that is programmed and manipulated by a handler.

Right before her big performance as the Black Swan, Nina fights against herself in her dressing room. During the fight between Nina and the Black Swan, a mirror breaks, representing the collapse of the psychological boundary separating both entities. By shattering the mirror, Nina becomes the Black Swan.

At the show's premiere, Nina gives a stellar performance. She successfully plays the sweet and timid White Swan, and, when the time came, she was overtaken by the "force" to become the twisted, yet thrilling, Black Swan. By marrying the white and the black, the good and the evil, the light and the dark, Nina has accomplished her objectives.

The process, however, consumed her. By allowing the Black Swan to completely possess her, Nina gave the performance of a lifetime, but she has become a different person. Thomas and the audiences are in love with Nina as the Black Swan – the same way the prince of the ballet falls in love with the White Swan's evil twin. But this is not the "real" Nina. The Black Swan is a destructive force she cannot live with: it is tormenting her on a physical and psychological level. Not able to go on, the only way Nina can free herself, is by killing herself. And this is what she does.

To become the Black Swan, she spills her unexplored side, accomplish artistic triumphant but the price she pays is violent insanity. She emulates the Swan Queen's plunging in the lake to her death. Happy with her outcome, Nina salutes her perfection as she passes away. Nina dying at the end of her performance. Her last words to Thomas: "I was perfect".

Even the film devices like screenplay, soundtracks, cinematography, camera focus and visual effects contribute to making the psychological thriller Black Swan. The play of light and shadows on the set and the use of moody melodies, music from the Swan Lake creates a brooding atmosphere. Andrew Dix has offered the following opinion regarding to the technique of cinematography:

Cameras have been mounted to nearly every imaginable form of transportation. Most cameras can also be handled, that is held in the hands of camera operators who moves from one position to another while filming the action. Personal stabilizing platforms came into being in the late 1970s through the invention of Garret Brown , which became known as Steadicam. The steadicam is a body harness and stabilization arm that connects to the camera, supporting the camera while isolating it from the operator's body movements. After the steadicam patent expired in the early 1990s, many other companies began manufacturing their concept of the personal camera stabilizer.

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Andrew Dix is of the opinion that cinematography is basically linked with the focus of the camera and its shifting. To reproduce the illusion of reality, it is necessary to shift the movement and focus of camera. Cinematography can not only depict a moving subject but can use a camera, which represents the audience's view point or

perspective, that moves during the course of filming. This movement plays a considerable role in the emotional language of film images and the audience's emotional reaction to the action. Technique range from the most basic movements panning (horizontal shift in viewpoint from a fixed position; like turning your head side to side) and tilting (vertical shift in viewpoint from a fixed position; like tipping your head back to look at the sky or down to look at the ground) to dollying (placing the camera on a moving platform to move it closer or farther than the subject), tracking (placing the camera on a moving platform to move it to the left or right), craning (moving the camera in a vertical positions; being able to lift it off the ground as well as swing it side to side from a fixed base position), and combination to the above. Cinematography includes the fundamental of producing motion picture, including the use of effective light, accurate focus, careful composition (or arrangement), and appropriate camera movement to tell stories.

Gevorg Sarkisian thinks that “it was amazing the how the camera operating work done on the movie Black Swan. The camera was following the characters and the dancers while maintaining same object size. It felt very smooth and organic. In some scenes it felt like the camera was almost attached to the characters and looked like that the camera was running 45 degree shutter in dance sequence. ”

The Black swan and White swan characters are exaggerated by color white and black. Range of camera angles and quick cuts creates anticipated and unexpected moments. The use of music and wild tracks are also used to the movie advantage as there is a lot of tension and suspense create. Visual and tactile hallucinations are shown through the use of captivating cinematography. For example, Nina scratches at the skin on her shoulders throughout the course of the film and ultimately breaks her skin, revealing black feathers. There are a lot of special effects used growing black

feathers on Nina's back which is symbolic to her growth and development of finding and turning in to dark character.

In the movie we can see Nina is passive about the world around her. Her mother has kept her in a state of arrested development, her director relegate her to the background as he please, and even when she's given a chance to shine, she is unable to do so because of the psychological barrier she faces.

Looking dance director Thomas from another vantage point who tries to make Nina confront with her sexuality, or to make her get rid of her sexual inhibition. He feels all those barriers to perform sensuous Black Swan, for Nina, are brought down by sex. And dance is seduction. Nina is too formal a dancer to feel the passion of the character. He once kisses Nina in his office without her consent. It is a violent violation and Nina responds equally violently by biting his lip and drawing blood. And this sexual transgression leads to a massive change in her life. After that he goes beyond that asks Nina to go home and feel her body, though she tells him that she is not virgin. When she tries to her task given by director, she looks over to find her mother sleeping nearby and naturally unable to finish, she tries again in the bathtub but stopped by her own mind.

When Nina manages to abandon her mother and innocent girl, it happens finally when she goes out with Lily, get drunk, take some drug pills, fervently kisses stranger. The drug use also leads to her finally standing up to her mother and fantasizing about lesbian encounter with Lily. Next day she goes to ballet company to rehearsal, she's still struggling to reach her potential as a dancer. Light goes out in practice area and she heads to the main stage where she hallucinate Thomas and Lily thrusting into each other that she makes a complete psychotic break with reality that

leads her to confront Beth at the hospital, her mother's painting and to transform literally into a Swan before blacking out.

In the movie a prestigious ballet company in New York City prepares for a production of Swan Lake. A classic story depicting the virginal/whore dichotomy the men face choosing the lover, The director of the company, Thomas Leroy wants to cast a new girl in the dual roles of White Swan and Black Swan, and Nina has that element in her to do justice to the role, what Thomas thinks seeing her for several years, what it need to be a star, she apparently has it. A newcomer named Lily also competes for the part.

Nina lives with her mother, Erica, a former dancer herself. Wanting her daughter to exceed her own meager success in the world of dance, she constantly pushes her and acts in a controlling manner.

Observing Nina when she was dancing, Leroy believes that Nina is perfect for the role of the innocent White Swan, but he doubts over her ability to pull off the sensuality of the Black Swan. As she is obsessed with her internal drive to be "perfect" to the core of technicality, like a control freak despite the fact that lack of perfection what she needs to play the Black Swan. He even chides Nina for being too control while dancing. It can be seen thorough their dialogue. He says; In four years, every time you dance, I see you obsess, getting each and every move perfectly right, but I never see you lose yourself. Ever. All that discipline, for what? Nina; I just want to be perfect. Thomas; you what? Nina; I want to be perfect. Thomas; Perfection is not just about control. It's also about letting go. Surprise yourself, so you can surprise the audience.

For moment he even had option B in mind as Nina does not seem to go beyond her mediocrity to bring what it needs to perform Black Swan role. when Nina

bites his lip during a kiss, Leroy reconsiders and casts her as the lead. Lily is cast as her understudy.

Nina notices an unexplained rash on her shoulder, and strange hallucinations begin to haunt her. She has trouble letting go of her inhibitions on the stage, and her refusal to give into Thomas's sexual advances frustrate the director and make for an uncomfortable creative environment. To top things off, Nina comes to suspect that Lily wants the lead for herself and is plotting to stab her in the back.

Then Lily appears at Nina's door one night, inviting her out for a night on the town. They have a fine old time, both getting wasted and enjoying the attention of the male patrons. They return to Nina's house, something which upsets her mother greatly. But the drunk/stoned girls hardly care, and Nina locks her door and proceeds to have sex with Lily. The next morning, Nina wakes to find that she's late for rehearsals. When she arrives, she finds Lily dancing the part of the Swan Queen. Nina is less than pleased, and she asks Lily why she didn't wake her. Lily replies that she spent the night with a man she met in the club, so their supposed sex romp was nothing more than an erotic fantasy. Lily finds this amusing, while Nina is more than a little disturbed.

As opening night approaches, Nina continues to wrestle with a series of grisly hallucinations. She believes that her mother's paintings are speaking to her, and picking at the rash on her shoulder reveals black feathers. Overcome by these visions, Nina falls and accidentally knocks herself out.

Her mother finds her the next morning, calling the company to tell them that her daughter is too ill to perform. Nina will hear none of this, and she resorts to begins to prepare to take the stage. But things get off to a rocky start, as she's dropped by her partner during the first act.

Returning to her dressing room, she finds Lily waiting for her in the Black Swan costume. A fight ensues, with Nina grabbing a shard of a broken mirror and stabbing Lily to death. After hiding the body, she returns to the stage, dances the part of the Black Swan (even sprouting black feathers in the process), and receives a standing ovation for her performance.

Back in the dressing room, Lily enters to congratulate Nina. This is when Nina realizes that she has stabbed herself instead of her understudy. Taking the stage for the final act, she gives a masterful performance and winds up surrounded by a concerned cast and crew. As her life slips away from the fatal wound, Nina mutters, “I felt it. Perfect. I was perfect.”

In his comment on the movie “the psychology of Black Swan”: critics Manish Soni writes “This is the time to look at Carl Jung’s archetype of the shadow, which is clearly what the Black Swan is, and see how it relates to Nina’s psychological development. Jung was aware of the dark shadow which lurks within every human soul, For Nina, the more she loses herself in the Black Swan the more she is possessed by her Shadow, and the greater her mental instability becomes as the lines between reality and fantasy blur alarmingly.”

He further writes: to look at Erica from a Jungian perspective, as an overbearing mother archetype who would have Nina channel all of her creative and sexual energies to one sublimated goal – dance – at the expense of the totality of her personality. This type of overemphasis on one aspect of the mind has always been recognized as dangerous by psychological observers, and is technically called a mania. This mania, and the resulting splitting off of Nina’s psyche into dance, on one side, and everything else on the other, is what leads to the early hints of mental

instability that we see in the movie – seeing phantasmal images in the subway, including of herself as a separate person.

Currently most psychologist believes that “mental illness contains both genetic and environmental causes. Often what happens is that a person has a genetic predisposition to become mentally ill, and then environmental event triggers onset. Finally, not taking proper care of oneself can exacerbate the impact of the illness.” All of this seems to be true with Nina. Genetics (heredity): Schizophrenia tends to run in families, which means the likelihood to develop schizophrenia may be passed on from parents to their children.

As far as genetics goes, it seems that even Erica happens to suffer from some level of pathology. She is beyond the normal, unexpected amount of controlling her adult daughter, easily crossing into the real of smothering. She also seems to have a pathological habit of competing with her daughter.

Ted Cascio, Ph.D. in Hollywood thinks that “Lily does not serve solely destructive purposes; she also represents a potent, albeit utterly unanticipated and unwanted, force for change in Nina. These two facets of the relationship between Lily and Nina echo the bipolar opportunities that metaphorical black swans represent; always destructive, but often eventually constructive.” The free and easy aspects Lily, her sensuality whether it is her real characteristics or exploiting it in the dance, something that is uncultivated side of Nina.

Nina is suffering from schizophrenia, a condition defines as “a mental disorder characterized by a disintegration of the process of thinking and of emotional responsiveness. It most commonly manifests as auditory hallucinations, paranoid or bizarre delusions, or disorganized speech and thinking.”

Nina is under constant pressure, both from herself, her ballet director, and her overbearing mother. Suffering from malnutrition to keep her figure, as well as constant psychological abuse, she plunges over the falls of her psyche.

The scratches on her shoulder come from Nina clawing at herself, something that she's done before according to her mother "You are scratching again.". This is yet another indication of a psychological disorder. As her condition worsens, she imagines feathers sprouting from the wounds, thus fulfilling her desire to completely embody the role of the Swan Queen.

And, of course, paranoia abounds for poor Nina. While Lily does want the role of the Swan Queen, she's not out to get Nina like the ballerina thinks. The same goes for Nina's mom. Recognizing her daughter's scratch marks and increasingly manic behavior, she tries to keep her at home to save her, not to thwart her career ambitions. Nina ends up happily paying the ultimate price for her art.

Film critics Antonin Artaud writes "The twisted relationship that Nina shares with the ballet company's artistic director, Thomas, plays upon a kind of Electra complex. The dancer with an absent father and a psychosexual attachment to the strong, male figure in her life has her innermost fears and sexual stuntedness thrust on display. Nina is panicked and bewildered in the face of exposure, while her secret desires are slowly torn out of her. Everything she has worked so hard to conceal (the stability in her life is completely artificial and encapsulated) becomes threatened by a self-dissolving force that gnaws and swells deep within — fed by Thomas' professional/sexual cruelty and taunting. This is a role that Lily assumes control of after an imagined lesbian tryst, which only serves to deepen Nina's displacement and sublimation."

Her desire to be perfect causes her to mirror the Swan Queen of the ballet. She sheds her innocence to become the Black Swan, and then she emulates the Swan Queen's plunging in the lake to her death.

Erroneous fear, predilection for achieving artistic perfection, her personal traits, her upbringing, relations with people around her, dialectical functioning of her inter-personal psychology and social psychology around her, made her predisposed to the psychotic break down and though she accomplished her wish to perform the Swan Lake with conviction materialized but for that she paid the price.

In the film *Black Swan* the central character Nina is on the quest for perfection, the pursuit of artistic blossom. In being perfect does not do so with artistic grace that is needed for to perform the Black Swan, she realizes this. In order to succeed truly she must let go her inhibition and feel what is real. Only when she does this she impresses her dance director, other dancers and eventually could impress the audience who comes to see her performing. When Nina let go her inhibition, she paid the ultimate price for what she wanted, even though she feels the true beauty in her dance but by the time it was already late. She was damaged.

Danyelle little comments about the film, she writes "*Black Swan* was not only a dreary, yet solemn film about perfection; it was a lesson of what happen when we strive for perfection instead of showing soul. It can be used as a cautionary tale that those who seek perfection all the time are weak because making mistakes and admitting them take someone who is strong and sure of oneself."

The film comments plenty on the artist and how performance can impact an artist life, how artist must take on certain traits to enhance her performance and how that act might impact her life when she is not on stage. Looking at Nina's character whose identity seems to be wrapped up in the expectation of those around her, cope or

does not cope with the pressure of womanhood and what is required of particular role. We can see in the movie *Black Swan* as trait comes with great sacrifice to her role as the White Swan. The two conflicting identities can not exist perfectly or in case of her. As a part of dance also White Swan requires a dance with the technical perfection; a chaste ingénue. While Black Swan calls for a dancer who can be wild, imprecise, and predatory.

If we analyse movie in brief, we see female protagonist, a ballerina, with creative ambition that she pursue obsessively to the point of purism, self denial. A career change, after being considered as a new lead, accompanied by high degree of pressure to perform well. A demand, inherent in the performance, that leads to an irresolvable inner conflict for the protagonist. And then we protagonist road to the destruction because of an over protective mother hindering her growth, unhealthy conflation of desire and sexual repression, noble and inspiring but degraded and vicious director who looks for ultimate performance, monster lurking at the margins, nursing resentment and jealousy towards the protagonists, esp. Lily understudy of Nina, or Beth old prima ballerina whom Nina replaces, mother who once as a ballerina was always lived in obscurity.

III. Metamorphosis into Black Swan

Darren Aronofsky's movie *Black Swan* is about transformation of a ballerina that she undergoes, into a whole different being. Irony is she experiences the transformation but fails to unscramble them. She did not understand what was happening, and it frightens her.

Movie beautifully presents, though heart wriggling, through a character how unhealthy obsession, poor social interactions, and highly stressful situations could put our sanity at stake.

Black Swan as a psychological thriller offers a dark and complex look at mental illness, blurring the line between real and unreal with all the aesthetic trapping of the classical world remixed into dark psychological landscape. It is a film about collision of personalities, aggressive, unreserved that deal in raw human emotional currency, like purity, desire and control.

In the movie, emergence of Nina into the 'Black Swan', a metaphysical change- by getting in touch with her 'dark side'- in order to become better performer, torments her on both physical and psychological level. To become the Black Swan, she spills her unexplored side, accomplish artistic triumphant but the price she pays is violent insanity. Her metamorphosis is so complete, that Nina eventually develops webbed feet, bird-like legs and sprouts feathers and wings to actually become the Black Swan though it was hallucination but she experienced and realized it.

When she falls of the edge of the stage to her death in the grand finale, emulating Swan Queen's plunging in the lake to her death; this signifies the death of her former self, White Swan, and her rebirth into the darkness of night as Black Swan, metaphorically.

The unhealthy obsession shown in the movie *Black Swan* and that haunts the characters, initially take the root and emerge in their minds there after proceeding to manifest themselves visually, in a bodily deformation.

Nina's experiences a break with reality, the hallmark feature of psychotic illness. She fails to differentiate between what is real and what is not real. She suffers hallucination, bizarre delusion, disintegration of process of thinking, symptoms of schizophrenia.

Her journey from White Swan to Black Swan are contingent on the stressful ambience created by deeds and behaviors of her trainer Thomas, her mother Erica, 'frenemy' Lily and evolving situations around her. Her transform from a sweet mama's girl into a young adult comes through very bumpy and life changing ride. She is torn apart by intense conflicts between ideals of innocence and demure and sexual and aggressive passions. She is trapped in her own dream of becoming the Swan Queen.

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