

Document Citation

Title	Tales of ordinary madness
Author(s)	Mel Novikoff
Source	<i>San Francisco International Film Festival</i>
Date	1983 Apr 22
Type	program note
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Tales of ordinary madness, Ferreri, Marco, 1982

08402-9

7:30 pm Friday, April 22 (Cast.)

Italy



Tales of Ordinary Madness

1982. Color 1.66 format. 107 min.
In English

Producer: Jacqueline Ferreri/*Director:* Marco Ferreri/
Screenwriters: Marco Ferreri, Sergio Amidei,
Anthony Foutz/*Cinematographer:* Tonino delli Colli/
Music: Phillippe Sarde/*Principal Cast:* Ben Gazzara,
Ornella Muti, Susan Tyrrell, Tanya Lopert/*Print*
Source: Fred Baker Films

Marco Ferreri's biting dark humor finds its near-perfect expression in the shocking and sardonic writings of Los Angeles poet/writer Charles Bukowski and his world of the downtrodden and depraved denizens of Los Angeles. The original title of Bukowski's novel is *Erections, Ejaculations, Exhibitions and General Tales of Ordinary Madness*, about which *The New York Times Book Review* said: "Not since Orwell has the condition of being down and out been so well recorded in the first person." In the film, Ben Gazzara is Charles Serking, a hard-charging, hard-drinking, L.A.-based poet, modeled after Bukowski, whose life is an odyssey through the underbelly of the American Dream. Amid encounters with a succession of colorful, desperate characters, he meets Cass (Ornella Muti), "the most beautiful girl in town," a sensual, self-destructive prostitute with whom he falls in love. Her love inspires him to take up his writing again but when his talent is "discovered" and he goes to New York, the separation leads to tragic consequences. It's not the story itself but Ferreri's compassionate and humorous view of the dregs of society, that makes *Tales of Ordinary Madness* such a riveting experience. Ben Gazzara's drunken poet is among his strongest portrayals, and Ornella Muti, the Italian beauty first seen here in Ferreri's *The Last Woman*, confirms her promise as an actress of rare beauty and sensitivity.

—Mel Novikoff

SF Film Fest '83