

CERRO CORÁ

a film by Francisco Márquez



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PROJECT INFORMATION

TITLE	GENRE	DURATION	RATIO
Cerro Corá	drama / fantastic	100'	2:35.1
SOUND	LANGUAGE	FILMING LOCATIONS	
5.1	spanish / guaraní	Paraguay / Argentina	
BUDGET	PROJECT STATUS	FILMING DATE	
USD 500.000	development	2022	

SYNOPSIS

Marcelo (50) is a film director from Argentina that travels to Paraguay to shoot an epic film about the Triple Alliance War (1864-1870). Upon location, he looks for extras to act on the film among the local people. There, he meets some combative farmworkers, under the command of Zunilda (34), who decline his offer since they have to resist an imminent eviction from the lands they are occupying.

From that moment on, Marcelo becomes obsessed with them. He goes to the town's old karaoke bar to be among them and drink while listening to the rough singing of its customers. These people intrigue him. As he observes them he notices that under their clothes they're wearing the old nineteenth-century Paraguayan military uniform. When they leave the bar, he follows them down the streets of the town until they mysteriously vanish in the night. He goes on looking for them in complete bewilderment, until he finally finds them camping as part of the ancient army of Paraguay. The scene perplexes him and he tries to approach them but before he could even react someone hits him hard on the head. He wakes up later, in the cleaning supplies room of his hotel.

His focus on the fate of the film drops as his interest in the farmworkers increases. On his search to find them, completely neglecting the film, he gets to the land they are occupying. There, and without realizing how, he's suddenly involved in a dreamy and fierce confrontation with the police. The farmworkers that were suddenly lost behind a dense cloud of tear gas grenades reappear

mounted on horses and wearing the nineteenth-century military uniform. Marcelo manages to take a horse for himself and he rides him so surreally fast that he's transported in time along with the rest of the peasants.

The year 1870. Marcelo appears in a mate plantation where he's captured by Paraguayan soldiers –mostly crippled kids- that look suspiciously at him while he claims to come from the future. Zunilda shows up and intervenes with the soldiers to win their trust. Finally, Marcelo joins them on a journey to Cerro Corá, the land where the final battle will take place. During the journey there, the Argentinean Army violently ambushes them. Marcelo gets frightened by the possibility of a bloody turn of events and runs away, abandoning Zunilda and her battalion.

He wanders in the jungle and sleeps in inhospitable places trying to get as far as he can from the conflict. He stops to get some rest, but while he's laying he gets bitten by a strange spider and enters in a trance. In that state, he finds a horse and mounts it. He tries to gallop his way back to the future, but it's useless. Suddenly the horse talks to him tiredly. He tells him they're waiting for him at Cerro Corá.

Marcelo crosses the dense jungle drenched in corpses; he talks with his shadow in a cave; he travels in a delusional state until he gets to the place where Zunilda and the rest of the soldiers prepare for the final battle.

Marcelo decides to join them in battle despite the little strength he has left. In hand-to-hand combat,

an enemy sword wounds him. Unconscious and badly wounded, he rolls down the hill speeding so surreally that he's once again transported in time.

Back in the present time, Marcelo meets with the film crew that has decided to go back to Argentina after realizing that the project was frustrated. He doesn't try to hold them back. That night, he returns to the karaoke bar. He sings a song as harsh as those sung by its usual costumers and then sits at a table next to a group of farmworkers. They are watching a video on a cellphone that shows a silo exploding for being overloaded with soya beans and almost crushing a group of workers. Marcelo looks at them, then looks down at his hands. They've become leathery. He touches his face has completely change. It's someone else's. He can tell by touching it. He smiles. Zunilda arrives at the table and they all leave.

Marcelo walks next to Zunilda and the rest of the farmworkers, down the streets of the town until they all vanish and travel far beyond.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The War of the Triple Alliance certainly was one of the most significant events in Latin-American History. Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay joined their forces against Paraguay. This one was not just a war against the Paraguayan people, resulting in the extermination of half its population, but it was also a war against a socioeconomic model.

Paraguay was developing a national industry administrated by the State with its people's interest in mind. The government was distributing productive lands to those capable of working it, and it was monopolizing foreign trade and preserving an international policy autonomous from the dictates of the great powers. With great difficulties and not lacking contradictions, the country was shading light to a path of national and independent development, gaining the sympathy of broad popular sectors in the region that would

desert their armies in refusal to battle against their brothers. Without doubt, the War of the Triple Alliance had the objective of ending any perspective of an autonomous project in any corner of the region. In the words of the Argentine President that fought there: *In the war with Paraguay, not only the Republic of Argentina has triumphed, but also did the great principles of free trade.*

Just as in his Communist Manifest, Marx evokes the spirits of the exterminated commoners of the Paris Commune, in South America still wander the spirits of the Paraguayan peasants and workers that fought until their final breath. If forging emancipated Latin-American identities demands -as we believe it does- we bare them in mind, then the question would be how can we invoke them.

Pursuing this question –as the protagonist of the film does– will inexorably take us closer to the farmworkers that are fighting for the land in the present day. Our challenge will be to get them on film. Not to imprison them into a spectacular reproduction but to project ourselves together far beyond.



AESTHETIC PROPOSAL

The protagonist's perspective and state of mind will dictate the form of the film.

A changing form that starts with the project of shooting an implausible epic film that becomes a lysergic and revolutionary adventure in the Paraguayan jungle.

We will work on an expressive aesthetic that –after Marcelo's time travel– will become more and more peculiar through the stressing of certain elements.

IMAGE

The first part of the film will have desaturated colors that will bring out the historical decay of the places but there will also be a strong and precise color point. The lightning will be designed to suggest an enigmatic place lost in time, and the possibility of another kind of world.

Once Marcelo's journey to Cerro Corá begins, the film will acquire full poetic freedom. On one hand, the "reality" will force itself through the explicit and violent images of the war and the bodies of the soldiers; and on the other, artificial lightning will be stressed to create a kind of dreamy image. We're interested in building a mythical universe.



SOUND

The sound will evoke both times in parallel through the linguistic diversity, the sound contamination (i.e. sounds from the past echoing in the present), and the music in the bar mixing computer bases with folklore songs.

The sounds will be perceived from Marcelo's perspective (internal auricularization).

LOCATIONS

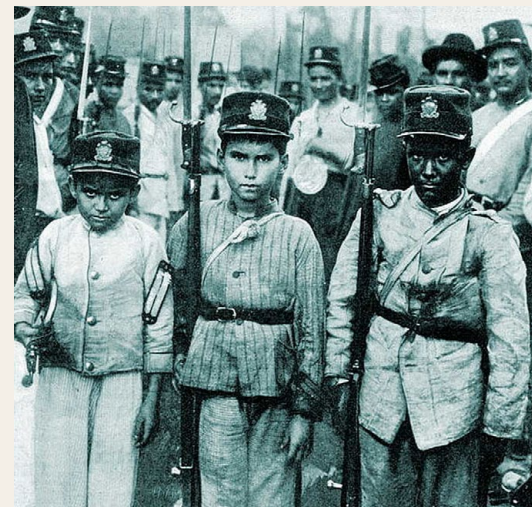
The locations will be treated like transitional mental landscapes. We are not interested in shooting the jungle, for instance, from a geographical point of view, but rather as the reflection of a subjectivity. In that sense, the trip to Cerro Corá will be a journey towards an abstract place where the presence of the mountain rocks will prevail over the vegetation.

In short, we will venture into an immersive aesthetic that will transport us, physically, to the subjectivity in translation of our protagonist.

[MOODBOARD] VISUAL APPROACH



[MOODBOARD] DOCUMENTARY APPROACH



CAST

It will be a mixed cast, with professional and non-professional actors and actresses. Marcelo Subiotto will play the role of Marcelo. Besides his unquestionable technique, he has three essential traits to play the lead character. He has surprising versatility and physical dexterity given his body structure; he's proven a vital approach to the protagonist's dilemmas; his ability to work the nuances between humor and drama.

For the roles of Zunilda and those making part of the farmworkers' universe, we will select them out of a casting call among the social peasant organizations from Paraguay. We believe their life experience, the marks on their bodies, their physical and mental consciousness are crucial to interpreting these roles.



DIRECTOR'S BYO

Francisco Márquez (Buenos Aires, 1981).

He studied at ENERC where he currently works as a teacher.

His first documentary feature, *Después de Sarmiento* (After Sarmiento, 2015), was selected in the official competition of the 27th Rencontres of Toulouse, 14th EDOC among other international festivals.

La larga noche de Francisco Sanctis (The long night of Francisco Sanctis, 2016), his first fiction feature, participated in the 69th Festival de Cannes

(Un certain regard), 64th San Sebastian Festival (Horizontes Latinos) and was awarded as Best International film in 18th BAFICI.

His last work, *Un crimen común* (A Common Crime, 2020), will be released at the 70th Berlinale, in the Panorama section.

He is a partner of the producer Pensar con las Manos and a member of the Colectivo de Cineastas, an organization of directors, producers and technicians who fight for public policies for Argentine cinema.



PRODUCER'S COMPANY BYO

Pensar con las Manos is constituted by three directors/producers: Luciana Piantanida, Andrea Testa and Francisco Márquez.

We produce films that seek to tackle the relationship between the issues they approach and the cinematographic language. For us, cinema is a tool for intervention and transformation.

We trust in creative processes as spaces of movement and reflection where images and sounds merge sensibly in the historical, political, and social contexts that we are in.

Each film is presented to us as a collective challenge because we are committed to contributing to a diverse and decolonizing cinematography.

FILMS

2020 *A common crime* – Fiction. '96

Dir: Francisco Márquez. 70° Berlinale. Panorama; BFI London; 35° Mar del Plata Film Festival.

2019 *Mother-Child* - - Documentary. '67

Dir: Andrea Testa. IDFA Special Mention; HOT DOCS Best Mid-lenght film.

2019 *Athens* - Fiction '86. Dir: César González

2016 *The Long Night of Francisco Sanctis* - Fiction.

'78. Dir: Andrea Testa y Francisco Márquez.

69° Cannes Festival Un Certain Regard;

64° San Sebastian Festival Horizontes Latinos;

18° BAFICI Best film.

2016 *Pibe Chorro* - Documentary. '90

Dir: Andrea Testa

SANFIC Visiones del mundo

2015 *After Sarmiento* - Documentary. '76.

Dir: Francisco Márquez.

14° EDOC; 27° Rencontres De Toulouse Competition.

2015 *The absent* Ficción. '84

Dir: Luciana Piantanida.

10° SANFIC Internacional Competetition.

Coming soon

2021 *The oblivion*. In search of financing. Fiction.

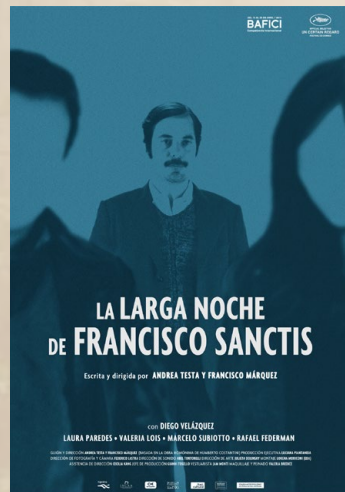
Dir: Luciana Piantanida

2022 *Cerro Corá*. Development. Fiction.

Dir: Francisco Márquez

DIRECTOR'S PREVIOUS FILMS

THE LONG NIGHT OF FRANCISCO SANCTIS (2016)

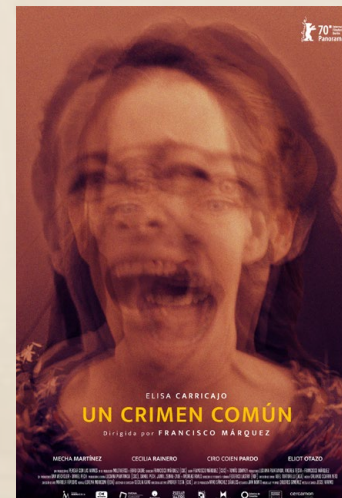


LINK
<https://vimeo.com/165803747>
PASS
santiruiz

Fiction. '78
Dir: Francisco Márquez – Andrea Testa / Argentina

69° Cannes Festival Un Certain Regard;
64° San Sebastian Festival Horizontes Latinos;
18° BAFICI Best film.

A COMMON CRIME (2020)



TRAILER
<https://vimeo.com/386553254>

Fiction. '96
Dir: Francisco Márquez / Argentina, Brasil, Suiza

70° Berlinale. Panorama
BFI London
35° Mar del Plata film Festival.

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