

Official Selection

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Toronto International
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SSIFF

ZABALTEGI-TABAKALERA
FESTIVAL DE SAN SEBASTIÁN
2018

A FILM BY
FEDERICO VEIROJ

BELMONTE

GONZALO DELGADO OLIVIA MOLINARO EIJO JEANNETTE SAUKSTELISKIS TOMÁS WAHRMANN

A portrait of fatherhood in crisis, and the strength of a child.

75 minutes / DCP 1:1'66 / COLOR / 5.1

SYNOPSIS

Belmonte, 43, is divorced and lost when not with his ten-year-old daughter Celeste. His identity is anchored in a successful career as a painter – presently exploring a tortured world of naked men.

While Celeste enjoys spending time with her father, she fears that even short visits away from her pregnant mother would risk losing her love. Belmonte longs for the closeness only a family can provide, but plays at being the loner.

Belmonte entrusts Celeste with the hanging of his show at the National Museum, while he stares out at the trees. There, among the branches he sees a stranger we have seen before either staring or making faces. Who is he and what is he trying to say?

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Inspiration

My great interest in working with Gonzalo Delgado was my primary inspiration in making the film. I very much like his edgy and ironic sense of humor. Belmonte's character needed that. Also inspiring was the city of Montevideo itself, with its beautiful settings such as the National Museum, the Solis Theatre, the Seaside and even an old fashioned fur shop. I love those places and have long wanted to capture them on film. So, I wanted to position Belmonte's emotions in relation to those places, sometimes to show melancholy, sometimes his internal conflict or just the inherent beauty of the locations. Lastly, in making this film, I wanted to portray how one's own personal fantasies and day by day pursuits can, in peculiar ways, coexist with the responsibilities of family life.

Writing

I don't have a standard methodology for writing. All the scripts I've written had very different processes. But one thing I always do is begin by writing in sketches - separated sequences that share a particular character. For BELMONTE, I strung together many sequences I had written in the past, and I applied them to Gonzalo Delgado's physique and soul. Then I added a number of other sequences based on the shape of Belmonte's emotional life. I should admit my own personal daily life fantasies worked their way into the process, as well. I added many things during rehearsals, when I took stock of how rich the interactions between players had become. It was the most open plan script I've ever shot - very lively during the shoot and wide open to change and invention.

Directing

I am particularly interested in showing several layers of personality of each character in my films. BELMONTE fits that mold perfectly. I asked myself how a pessimistic and obscure personality deals with ostensibly luminous issues like fatherhood; how such a personality handles his career as an artist knowing that he needs external recognition if he is to continue working, and how he manages to live in a social environment where his emotions should be under control and the politically correct answers are the only ones people want to hear. I wanted to explore not the familiar rebel condition of a man, but that of an honest man who must deal with his own conflicts and doesn't want to hide them. Belmonte refuses to separate his thoughts and dreams from the way he lives.

Casting

Gonzalo Delgado is a wonderful painter, he has film experience as production designer and also as director and writer; he is one of the most talented artists I've ever known. He also was incredible playing in a film he directed. Had he declined my proposal, I wouldn't have been able to make this movie. My inspiration depended 100% on casting Gonzalo. As soon as he agreed, I cast the other actors with him in mind. That said, when I met Olivia Molinaro Eijo, who plays Celeste, I could see instantly that her real life person matched that of her character. Her natural deep look, her innocence, and her curiosity were perfect for the role. I maintain it is vitally important to work always with very clever children. When I give direction, it is essential that they grasp what are often layered and emotionally complex situations in order to render their best performance.

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Belmonte, the character

Belmonte is jealous of his daughter's new family life, and he cannot shake his discomfort., The film portrays him living with his fantasies, his art, his ego, while all the time trying not to be left behind by the new family - to which he will never belong. The film follows Belmonte's point of view and focus on the things he is attracted to, and how his sensitivity informs his art. In a way, I would like to think the film shows how creativity mixes with domestic life, and how both things couldn't be separated because neither would make sense without the other.



BIOGRAPHIES

Director - Federico Veiroj

Uruguayan & Spanish film director, writer and producer, born in 1976. He co-produced, wrote and directed three feature films before BELMONTE. His first feature, ACNE, premiered at the 2008 Directors Fortnight at Cannes. The film won several awards and was released in many countries. His second film, A USEFUL LIFE premiered at the 2010 Toronto Film Festival, received many awards worldwide and was released in many countries. THE APOSTATE was his third feature and first experience shooting in Spain. It was a European (Spanish/French) production and had its 2015 premiere at the Toronto Film Festival and in Official Competition at the San Sebastian International Film Festival, where it received the Jury’s Special Mention and FIPRESCI award.

Retrospectives of his work have been shown at the 2015 Viennale Film Festival, the Harvard Film Archive in 2016; and the Swedish Film Institute in 2017.

Veiroj is presently in post-production of the feature THUS SPOKE THE MONEYBROKER, produced by Oriental Films -Uruguay, Rizoma Films –Argentina and Pandora Films - Germany.

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Gonzalo Delgado plays BELMONTE

This is his debut performance in a major film. He lives and works in Montevideo as a film Production Designer (WHISKY, THE DOGPOUND, ACNE, THE APOSTATE and more). As an accomplished painter, Delgado created all of Belmonte's paintings for the film. He also co-directed with Verónica Perrotta the 2016 feature film LAS TONINAS VAN AL ESTE.

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Olivia Molinaro Eijo plays CELESTE

BELMONTE is her first major film role. Coming from a family of artists, she grew up making short films, animation, and writing her own blog.

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Director of Photography - Analía Pollio

Studied cinematography at: EICTV , San Antonio de los baños, Cuba, S.I.C.A, Buenos Aires, Argentina and Escac Barcelona Spain Since 2008 she works as DOP in feature films, TV & advertising. As DOP: Sergio De Leon’s upcoming “ La intención del colibrí,” Joaquín Peñagaricano & Pablo Abdala’s upcoming “Mateina,” and was co-DOP with Arauco

Hernández Holz on “Belmonte.” Her earlier credits include: Diego Arsuaga’s 2014 “El ingeniero” and the 2012 TV documentary series produced by Taxi Films “En transito.” She was second unit DOP on Fernando Meirelles’s 2007 feature “Blindness.”

Director of Photography . Arauco Hernández Holz

After majoring in Media Studies; he spent a semester at the Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Occidente (ITESO) in Guadalajara, Mexico, and he also studied in the Visual Arts Center in that city. He also attended Cinematography workshops at the Film School in San Antonio de los Baños, Cuba.

In 2002, he directed the short film "Perro Perdido" that won the "Innovation Award" in Clermont-Ferrand. "Perro Perdido" also won the Casa de América prize for "Best New Director" at the Huesca International Film Festival, in Spain.

Since then, he has worked as DOP in over a dozen feature films: Adrian Biniez's "Gigante," Pablo Stoll's "Hiroshima," and Manuel Nieto's "El Lugar del Hijo," among others. "Belmonte" is his third collaboration with Federico Veiroj following "A Useful Life" and "The Apostate,"

He has twice been named "Best Cinematography on a Uruguayan film" by the Uruguay Critic's Association; was been nominated to the Condor Awards "Best Cinematography in a Latin American film" by Argentina's Critics' Association for his work in "Giant;" and won the "Coral Prize Best Cinematography" for his work on "El Lugar del Hijo" at the Havana International Film Festival..

He has also directed the short films, "Manwoman", "Fitness by Michael", the documentary "Rumor" and the feature film "Los Enemigos del Dolor" premiered in competition at Locarno International Film Festival.

Daniel Yafalian, Sound Designer

Yafalian works in different areas of sound for audiovisual productions, as well as composing music for films. As sound director he has worked in "25 Watts", "Whisky", "Gigante", "A Useful Life", "Hiroshima", "El casamiento", "El hombre nuevo", "El círculo", "Tanta agua" or "Avant", among others. His work has been recognized with several awards, such as Best Soundtrack Coral Award for "A Useful Life" at the Havana Film Festival, Best Music Tatú Award at the Jornada Internacional de Cinema de Bahia and Best Sound Award from ACCU (the Uruguayan Film Critics Association) for his work in "3", "The Apostate" and "Hiroshima". He published the music albums "Naturaleza Muerta" in 2012 and "Paraísos Artificiales" in 2015.

PRODUCTION COMPANIES

CINEKDOQUE FILMS is a production company based in Uruguay created by Federico Veiroj. Its' goal is to produce fiction and documentary films of Uruguayan and foreign authors. Cinekdoque films has produced all of Federico Veiroj's shorts and features.

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NADADOR CINE is a new production house based in Montevideo lead by Juan José López and Pedro Barcia. They have been developing fiction projects for film and TV. Among them, "The Weak" directed by Matías Ganz and "All Behind Momo," an award-winning TV series directed by Pablo Stoll and Adrian Biniez.

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FERDYDURKE FILMS is a young Andalusian Company focused on authoral and quality film production. Since 2011, it has produced feature films widely awarded around the world, such as "The Wound," "The Apostate" and "To die." They have also made short films such as "Room," "Good Morning," "Resistance" or "La vuelta vuelta," as well as video clips for Spanish bands like Vetusta Morla or Javier Corcobado.

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CORAZÓN FILMS is a Mexican company dedicated to the distribution and production of films in Mexico and Latin America. The company was created in 2008 with Mexican capital from independent distribution companies. Corazón Films also supports independent producers as a distribution outlet. Currently, the company distributes an average of 30 titles per year, of all genres and sizes. The team consists of people who, in most cases, have worked in the film industry and are passionate about it; people with a common directive: to support commercial and alternative cinema for all types of audiences.

Director & Scenewriter	Federico Veiroj
Production Company	Cinekdoque and Nadador Cine (Uruguay)
Co- production companies	Corazón Films (Mexico) and Ferdydurke Films (Spain)
Producers	Federico Veiroj, Juan José López
Co- Producers	Sandro Halphen - Eckerhard Von Damm – Fernando Franco - Charles Barthe
Executive Producers	Federico Veiroj - Juan José López - Sandro Halphen - Pedro Barcia - Eckerhard Von Damm - Carla Farrell – Elisa Salinas
Production Designer	Production Designer: Nicole Davrieux - Alejandro Castiglioni
Cinematography	Analía Pollio - Arauco Hernández Holz
Editor	Manuel Rilla - Fernando Franco
Music	Leo Masliah – Gervasio Tarragona & Javier Bezzato - Rafael Bonavita - Diane Denoir & Eduardo Mateo - Pedro Dalton & Buenos Muchachos - Carlos Gardel & Alfredo Lepera - Orquesta Juvenil del Sodre
Sound	Daniel Yafalián
Cast	
Javier Belmonte	Gonzalo Delgado
Celeste Belmonte	Olivia Molinaro Eijo
Belmonte Senior	Tomás Wahmann
Celeste's Mother	Jeannette Sauktesliskis
Belmonte's Mother	María Noel Gutiérrez
Friend of Father	Ramiro Pallares
Friend	Alejandro Castiglioni
Guitar Player	Pedro Dalton
Belmonte's Brother	Marcelo Fernández
Museum Director	Enrique Aguerre
Mónica	Giselle Motta
Rodolfo	Rodolfo Vidal
Diseñadora	Gabriela Pelenur
Juanse	Toe Gillman
Sr. Conde	Martín Reyes
Sra. Conde	Cecilia Jeske



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