

CERRO CORÁ

a film by Francisco Márquez



PROJECT INFORMATION

TITLE	GENRE	DURATION	RATIO
Cerro Corá	hybrid	100'	2:35.1
SOUND	LANGUAGE	FILMING LOCATIONS	
5.1	spanish / guaraní	Paraguay / Argentina	
BUDGET	PROJECT STATUS	FILMING DATE	
USD 500.000	in search of financing	2023	

SYNOPSIS

Between 1864 and 1870, the armies of Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil allied against Paraguay in the Great War, exterminating more than half of its population. The winning countries imposed a liberalist model, destroying the egalitarian socioeconomic model and the political system that this country kept independent of the great powers.

The Paraguayan people resisted until the final moment: a procession of children, crippled soldiers, and elders formed the last reserve of the popular army that accompanied the persecuted President Solano López. During its journey, this precarious militia would relocate the Paraguayan capital city: Curuguaty was the fourth –and last– capital of Paraguay before the battle of Cerro Corá.

After being defeated, the country where everyone used to have its own piece of land to work and cultivate, became one of the most inequitable countries in the world regarding land distribution.

Almost 150 years later, Curuguaty was again the setting of tragic events. The pressure and influence of a soybean businessman came through and the police ambushed a group of peasants that was occupying state land to fight

for rural reform. The brutal eviction that resulted in the death of 11 peasants and 6 police officers, also led to the parliamentary coup that ousted the popular President Fernando Lugo.

In this town of 55,000 residents, a small Argentine filming crew settles down to prepare the shooting of the last months of the Paraguayan resistance during the war: the heroic march of an exhausted people through forests, jungles, and marshes.

In their research to find their characters among the settlers, they document the life of the people of Curuguaty: the peasants fighting for the land, their daily life, students and teachers debating in the classrooms of the National University, the children at school, the nights at the karaoke bar.

While documenting this process, the fiction interpreted by the people slowly unfolds merging with reality into one universe. A group of peasants working occupied lands is warned about an imminent eviction. As they continue their work and organize the resistance, they seek the solidarity of their fellow citizens by making the situation public.

The police repression proceeds violently and forces the peasants to flee, disappearing through a cloud of tear gas and into the jungle. Overcoming the adversities of the ground and the bloody attacks of the Argentinian and Brazilian armies, they finally reach Cerro Corá with their last ounce of strength. In that prehistoric-looking setting, they meet with the Paraguayan soldiers of the 19th century. They enjoy the time together around a bonfire and under that light, they merge in an ecstatic last dance that takes them, as if it was a portal, to the present time where they continue their dance with the filming crew and the people of Curuguaty in a traditional festivity.

It is a film about a people that still carries the war in their bodies and souls.

It is a film about the promise of a world that is just and waits to be redeemed.

It is a film about the people, that in the meantime, also awaits.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The War against Paraguay (1864-1870) was one of the major tragedies in the continent. The armies of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay massacred more than half of the Paraguayan population, including children with beards painted with soot who could hardly hold the weight of the guns.

That war meant for Paraguay the destruction of its emerging national industry, its extended system of public education and the equitable distribution of land. 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.

I don't think war is a thing of the past. Currently Paraguay is one of the most unequal in the world in the distribution of its lands and the peasants fight

heroically for agrarian reform. Also, I am sure, in those lands lives the spectral presence of the exterminated people who ask to be redeemed.

I believe in ghosts and I think that in the infinite and desolate mountain ranges towards Cerro Corá, souls walk in search of eternal peace or eternal despair. His salvation does not depend on a God who judges the actions of earthly life, I believe that a secret rendezvous exists between previous generations and ours.

We will call upon them with the peasants, men, and women that are fighting until this day for the land in the town of Curuguaty. They will have the power to summon the ghosts of the war. Our challenge will be to capture them on film. Not to imprison them inside the replay of a spectacle, but to project them and ourselves together into the beyond.

[MOODBOARD] DOCUMENTARY APPROACH



The following images are not esthetical reference for the film, but they are intended to give an account of the community and the environment where they live in.

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-length 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

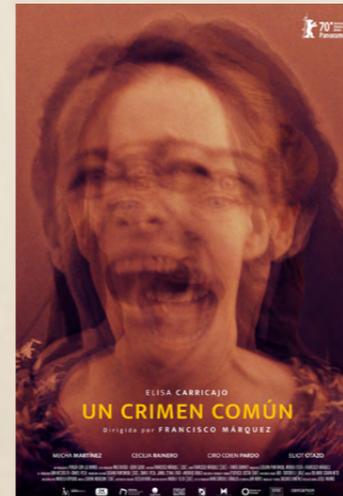


LINK
<https://vimeo.com/165803747>
PASS
santiruiz

2016 | 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



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

2020 | Fiction | '96
Dir: Francisco Márquez / Argentina, Brasil, Suiza

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

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