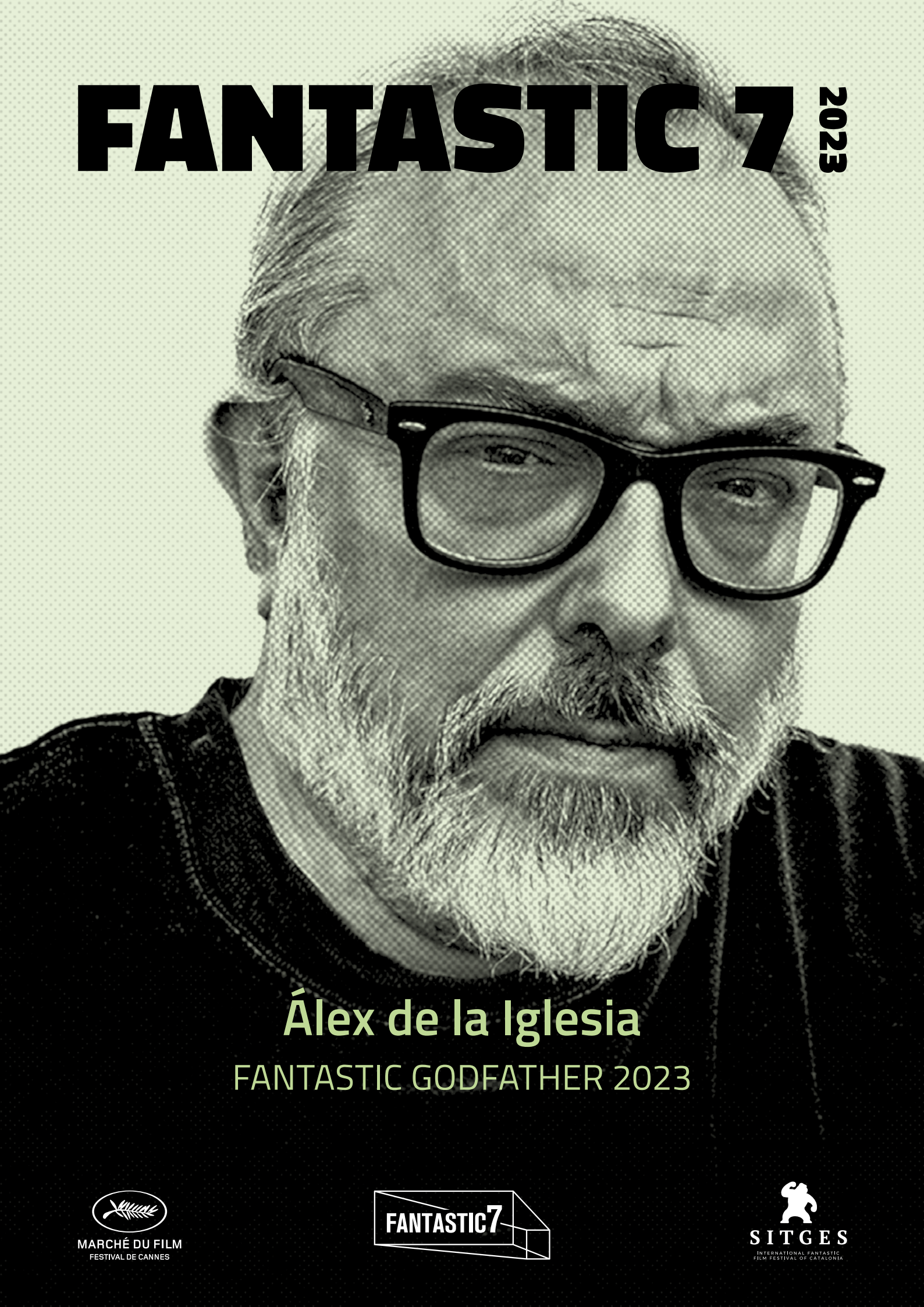


FANTASTIC 7 2023



Álex de la Iglesia
FANTASTIC GODFATHER 2023



SUMMARY



© Juan Naharro Gimenez



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FANTASTIC GODFATHER 2023**

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MARCHÉ DU FILM
FESTIVAL DE CANNES



SITGES
INTERNATIONAL FANTASTIC
FILM FESTIVAL OF CATALONIA

The background is a dark, textured green with abstract, painterly strokes. Two large, white, stylized arrows point horizontally from left to right, one positioned above the title and one below it.

CHALLENGES OF THE GENRE CINEMA



Guillaume Esmiol

Executive Director of Marché du Film - Festival de Cannes

Five years ago, the Marché du Film, in close collaboration with the Sitges Film Festival, launched Fantastic 7 to promote and support genre films. Today, Fantastic 7 continues to be an essential showcase for filmmakers and talents who are shaping the future of fantastic film production.



Mònica Garcia Massagué

Foundation General Manager,
Sitges – International Fantastic Film Festival of Catalonia

The Holistic Genre

If there's one thing that has set the fantastic genre industry apart from others throughout its history, it is its resilience. While other genres and filmographies have seen their moments of glory (and oblivion), the fantastic genre has resisted and come out even stronger from such complex onslaughts including audiences' changing habits; the film exhibition crisis; new narratives, etc.

And how did it manage it? Well, we humbly point to three directions: 1. With the mixing of genres, expanding horror or science fiction, for example, to more open terrains such as comedy, action or thrillers; 2. Thanks to the pairing in both form and substance with narratives that are recognizable in related industries like video games or comic books; and 3. Adding elements of integration and diversity, which allow for all audiences to recognize and identify with it. So, we are witnessing the holistic genre, which transcends far beyond its components to offer viewers a unique and innovative experience. This would also be the common denominator of the seven projects that Fantastic 7 is honored to present at its 2023 edition. We invite you to discover them.



Bernardo Bergeret

Executive Director Ventana Sur/INCAA

F7 is the starting point each year for seven powerful projects that will surely be part of the future audiovisual content that will go around the world. Get ready to meet the new voices and talents of the fantastic community. That's all...and that's a lot.

A portrait of Álex de la Iglesia, a man with a grey beard and glasses, wearing a dark suit jacket over a dark shirt. He is standing against a light grey background. The text "Álex de la Iglesia" is overlaid in large white letters.

Álex de la Iglesia

FANTASTIC GODFATHER 2023

"The Fantastic Genre is the most cinematic filmmaking"

There are fantastic genre masters and there are genre lovers, and then there's Álex de la Iglesia, who perspires, consumes and dreams of film, of fantastic genre film, of course. As a Renaissance man, he has cultivated comics and writing, and film he's done the same in the areas of screenwriting, directing and, recently, production. His filmography includes seminal entries in the history of genre films such as *The Day of the Beast*, *The Last Circus*, *Common Wealth* and *Mutant Action*. Now at the age of fifty-six, de la Iglesia is one of the most authoritative creators in the film industry and the best godfather for Fantastic 7. This is something evidenced by his reflections during an excellent masterclass, given at last year's edition of the Sitges - International Fantastic Film Festival of Catalonia.



Red carpet of *Venus* during the 55th edition of the Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival of Catalonia. The photo shows Jaime Balagueró and Ester Expósito (center), filmmaker and protagonist, as well as Àlex de la Iglesia and Carolina Bang (producers of *Pokeepsie Films*).

The Enjoyment of the Fantastic Genre

I genuinely enjoy genre not because fantastic films are lowbrow, but because they don't pretend to be intelligent, because they aim to make you enjoy yourself as a viewer. And then, in fact, it turns out that the most intelligent films are found within the fantastic genre. From my point of view, the fantastic genre is the one that best expresses feelings and that leaves the most room for creation. I go to the movies to have a good time. Movies brings me out of my problems, I don't want movies to be my problem.

In other film genres it's easy to slip into boredom or a false pretension, whereas in the fantastic genre, even bad movies are cool. And I love that director who has only managed to make one decent film, because I know why he did it. I understand every shot,

I understand the problems he's had, the failings, the shortcomings. I understand all of it. And despite it all, he's still delivered the fucking vampire. He's delivered the fucking zombie. He's had the balls to deliver that zombie who is his brother-in-law with shitty make-up. And the thing is that in the fantastic genre it's very common to work with more passion than money. But if on top of that someone with no money and a huge amount of passion achieves a perfect product, then the only thing left for you to do is to kneel down and tell him I love you, you're the fucking man.

The Spectacle of Film

Film starts from a lie; it starts from a spectacle that has a lot to do with the spectacle of a fairground attraction. In fact, film was born at a fair, sharing the billing with the bearded woman, the boy with seven



heads, the cow with four arms, and there was the film spectacle. And in that absurd place, full of mud and smelling of feces, they show a train coming towards you and you think it's going to kill you. And that's film. And from that point on, we are lucky that someone also tells us how man can go to the moon or fight against animals from space, or against some fish-shaped men, thanks to Méliès, who establishes both the fantastic genre and film. And the fact is that film starts off being fantastic.

Film itself in its very language has an intention to entertain and to capture viewers' attention in such a way that you can be in several places at the same time. In that regard, film enhances life because it gives you very different points of view. And that's your responsibility as a director, to offer viewers a richer life than the one they are living.

The Role of Festivals

I come to Sitges because it's necessary, because I need to come here, because my food is here, as if I were a vampire. At this festival we all want to enjoy what we've done with our friends and that doesn't happen at other festivals. There are other festivals where I don't have a good time because people don't come to enjoy themselves. They come to impose their genius on you or to explain their brilliant topic to you, and that's a mistake. If the rest of us don't have fun, why do you do it? Who do you want to impress or what is it you want to do? It's something that bothers me deeply. How is it possible for someone to want to explain something that's so important to them and forget about the entertainment?

It seems to me that this is what film is all about. Film is emotion; it's about moving you with something. I don't understand people who only want to impress.

Repeating the Formula for Success

I really love the industry and I really love being successful. And I'm convinced that if we were to make a sequel to *The Day of the Beast*, as bad as it might be, we would make a lot of money. But you have to have respect for the *The Day of the Beast* brand because it's a great movie that many people I love very much were involved in and I think it's something that shouldn't be touched. Its time already passed.

We also thought about doing a *Mutant Action* prequel, but it's something I rule out every time. It would be like denying myself. In other words, I think that if we move forward, we move forward.

On Elevated Horror

I can't stand it. I can't stand the label, but do I love elevated horror. I think we're living in a golden age of horror movies similar to the great era of Universal, which gave birth to the world of Frankenstein, the werewolf, the mummy and all those films that changed or laid the foundations of horror movies. But today we don't have the power to make the kind of films that were made back then, when there was nothing else and everything was focused on that. However, right now we have the filmmaking of Ari Aster or the filmmaking of Panos Cosmatos. And it is a very good filmmaking, but it's not elevated or it's not as elevated as others.

Let me clarify: we can't say that Carpenter is banal. He's a filmmaker with a very specific way of working, that addresses a very specific audience and has a very specific style. And *The Thing* is as good as *Alien*, I think. And I don't feel it's fair to say that *Alien* is more exquisite or deserves more respect. These are absurd industry factoids.





Elevated filmmaking is, shall we say, a pejorative concept if we use it to discredit all other horror movies. We all agree that a lot of very good films are branded with that label. In that regard, I think that *Midsommar* isn't normal. Ari Aster's filmmaking isn't normal because it's very powerful, very hallucinatory. *Hereditary* is one of the most terrifying films I've ever seen in my life. I saw it with my daughter, and we were terrified watching it because it suddenly works with a new kind of horror, a different way of presenting horror and playing with people, but it's not more elevated than others. That assessment seems to me to be a belittlement of genre.

The Hardest Part of the Producer's Role

I don't usually interfere as a producer because it's very hard to know what the director has in his/her head at any given moment. With Jaume Balagueró, for example, when he did the first edit, he showed it to me and that was enough. The film is extraordinary. As simple as that. It's true that I commented on certain things to him as a viewer: what you see and how you could improve it in case he wanted to improve it. And yes, he told me he would think about it and in the final result, I was able to see that there were things he listened to me on and others that he didn't. But the truth is that the film he has made is unsurpassable. It's perfect.



FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL
DE CINE EN GUADALAJARA 38





7

FANTASTIC PROJECTS



SITGES

56TH INTERNATIONAL FANTASTIC
FILM FESTIVAL OF CATALONIA



SITGES - INTERNATIONAL FANTASTIC FILM FESTIVAL OF CATALONIA

About SITGES

SITGES – International Fantastic Film Festival of Catalonia is the number one fantasy film festival in the world and is considered the film event with the greatest international impact for the fantastic genre industry. With a solid experience, the Sitges Festival is a stimulating universe of encounters, exhibitions, presentations and screenings of fantasy films from all over the world.

The Festival closed its 54th edition using a hybrid format, combining on-site and virtual formulas, while showing a selection of the very best contemporary fantastic films. The Festival combined the best genre films with a close look at films that have marked the history of fantasy, through a variety of tributes. Once again, the films directed by women had a prominent presence -a clear trend in recent years- and the role of national productions was also predominant.

Our last edition was a real test of resistance and resilience. The physical format included meetings, presentations, Q&A, etc., as it has always been, although complying with current restriction. There was not a big difference in that aspect to ensure the value of attending a festival. International

participation was both physical and online, live or recorded depending on the type of guest and the event itself.

About our choice: *La ermita*

Make a note of this name: Carlota Pereda. This director caused a huge commotion in the genre industry for daring to debut with the first slasher directed by a woman in Spain and which, at the same time, exposed sensitive issues including bullying, diversity and the ethics (and aesthetics) of revenge. *Piggy* has gone way beyond borders, demonstrating that its director is a true genre lover, willing to challenge viewers with terrifying stories not only because of what they represent but also because of what underlies them. This is also the case with her second feature film, *La ermita*, which now explores a mother-child relationship tinged with ghosts and deception. In the words of the filmmaker herself: "Yes, *La ermita* is a horror story, but, above all, it's the story of how hard it is to be mother and daughter and how, sometimes, we don't understand each other until we're adults, as in every ghost story, until it's too late. Or maybe it's not."

SITGES IFFC



SITGES

56TH INTERNATIONAL FANTASTIC
FILM FESTIVAL OF CATALONIA

5TH - 15TH OCTOBER 2023

sitgesfilmfestival.com

JUST
SPAINED
NEW SPANISH BLOODY CINEMA

FEATURING
THE CHAPEL
LA ERMITA

DIRECTED BY
CARLOTA PEREDA



SITGES
INTERNATIONAL FANTASTIC
FILM FESTIVAL OF CATALUNYA



GOBIERNO
DE ESPAÑA

MINISTERIO
DE CULTURA
Y DEPORTE



THE CHAPEL

A fantastic fable that navigates between past and present, the real world and the paranormal, through the eyes of Emma, a young girl who wishes to keep communicating with her mother, even if that means contacting the other side.



Emma wants to learn how to communicate with the spirit of a little girl who has spent centuries trapped inside a chapel and so she tries to convince Carol, a skeptical and fake medium, to help her. Contacting the spirit will help her to remain close to her sick mother once she dies. What Carol doesn't suspect is that Emma really does have "the gift" and, if she keeps on trying to use it without her help, she will be putting her young life at risk.

ORIGINAL TITLE: **La ermita**
TITLE IN ENGLISH: **The Chapel**

DIRECTOR: **Carlota Pereda**
CAST: **Maia Zaitegi, Belén Rueda, Josean Bengoetxea, Loreto Mauleón, Jon Olivares, Elena Irureta and Nagore Aranburu**
GENRE: **Supernatural drama**
NATIONALITY: **Spain**
LANGUAGE: **Spanish**
PRODUCERS: **Laura Fernández Brites, Carlos Fernández, Iñaki Gómez y Pablo Echart**

STATUS: **Post-Production**

BUDGET: **5'6 M€**



B.I.G
BIFAN INDUSTRY
GATHERING



BUCHEON INTERNATIONAL FANTASTIC FILM FESTIVAL

About BIFAN

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of Bucheon city this year on July 1st, BIFAN, Asia's biggest fantastic film festival, calls every year the master filmmakers, new rising talents, and genre fans from all around the world to Korea. BIFAN presents the greatest genre films each year, and also provides innovative programs and events containing its unique identity. In addition, B.I.G and Goedam Campus support and discover new genre projects and talents. Beyond Reality introduces the XR and VR to expand the scope and future of genre films.

About our choice: *The Fin*

The Fin is a second-feature work from Syeyoung Park, the director of the award-winning film *The Fifth Thoracic Vertebra*, which was recognized by many international film festivals. The project depicts a future South Korea devastated by natural disasters and pollution, where the Omega tribe, a group of half-human and half-fish mutants, are treated as slaves by humans. Through the film, the director reflects on current social issues such as hatred, division, migration, and poverty. BIFAN has also increased its post-production support to a Fantastic 7 Selection, collaborating with SBA, to provide practical help for the completion of the selected project. It is our hope that *The Fin* will be recognized by the film industry for its great potential.

부천국제판타스틱영화제
BUCHEON INTERNATIONAL
FANTASTIC FILM FESTIVAL

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Celebrating
50th Anniversary
Of Bucheon City
2023.7.1

27th Bucheon
International
Fantastic Film Festival
2023.6.29-7.9



STAY STRANGE
In BUCHEON

THE FIN

Set in a future dystopian Korea, *The Fin* follows three characters and their unexpected encounters with each other ultimately escalate to a piercing shriek.



A dying merman asks a friend to give his remains to his daughter, hiding amongst the humans. Tasked with this dangerous journey, the merman secretly heads to the land of humans. He is chased by a new civil servant recruit fueled by curiosity and hatred.

ORIGINAL TITLE: 지느러미
TITLE IN ENGLISH: **The Fin**

DIRECTOR: **Syeyoung Park**
CAST: **Yeji Yeon, Goh-woo, Pureum kim**
GENRE: **Sci-Fi, Independent, Disaster**
NATIONALITY: **Republic of Korea**
LANGUAGE: **Korean**
PRODUCER: **Heejung Oh**

STATUS: **Post-production**

BUDGET: **107,034USD**



45TH CAIRO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

15TH - 24TH NOVEMBER 2023



CAIRO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

About CIFF

Cairo International Film Festival is one of the oldest and most regular festivals in the Arab world and Africa, and is unique in that it is the only festival in the Arab and African region registered under Category A at the International Federation of Producers in Paris (FIAPF). The festival has a great interest in showcasing Genre films in its various sections and has a special section CIFF midnight screening designated to program Genre films specially SCI FI, horror and thrillers.

About our choice: *The Shelter*

Talal Selhami a confirmed talented director, awarded in many international festivals, proved through his unique vision and approach to cinema that creating a genre film inside the Arab world is possible. From *Mirages* to *Achoura*, his contribution to cinema has been appreciated throughout the world. With his third feature film project *The Shelter* (*Le refuge*) Talal takes us into another dimension of never investigated horror to explore the multi-layered pains of losing a family in disturbing and terrifying ways behind closed doors. By selecting the *Refuge*, we want to encourage and push the Filmmakers of the region to shake off perceived notions of what Arab cinema should be and take a giant leap into the future.

CIFF



وزارة الثقافة
MINISTRY OF CULTURE

www.ciff.org.eg



45TH CAIRO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

15TH - 24TH NOVEMBER 2023

Looking forward to see you in our 45th edition
Cairo International Film Festival
November 15th to November 24th 2023

CIFF 44TH EDITION HIGHLIGHTS



THE SHELTER

Paris. A Syrian refugee and war survivor, has to take care of an old invalid French man at the end of his life, but being close to death again awakens ghosts from the past...



Leila, in her forties from Aleppo, was a famous pianist, now she is a refugee in Paris. She has to take care of Georges, an old man, invalid and mute. Georges has not long to live.

At night, Georges suffers, his screams are unbearable. Leila cannot sleep. A presence appears in the shadows and makes love to her, it is confusing. It is her husband, dead during the war. Leila turns on the light, she sees Georges, paralyzed, his eyes filled with incomprehension. Later, it is Leila's dead son who speaks, in George's mouth. At first frightened, Leila enters a strange and unhealthy game; A game that makes her happy...

ORIGINAL TITLE: **Le Refuge**
TITLE IN ENGLISH: **The Shelter**

DIRECTOR: **Talal SELHAMI**
CAST: **TBC**
GENRE: **Psychological Horror**
NATIONALITY: **France-Morocco**
LANGUAGE: **Arabic/French**
PRODUCERS: **Lamia Chraïbi**

STATUS: **Script Development, early financing**

BUDGET: **1.3M€**

FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL DE CINE EN GUADALAJARA 38



GUADALAJARA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

About FICG

38 years ago, Guillermo del Toro together with a group of prominent filmmakers from his hometown, created the Guadalajara international Film Festival with the intention of being a window for Mexican cinema to the world. Undeniably from the hand of GDT, the vocation for genre cinema in the festival is undeniable. Its different industry programs as well as its programming, ponder the genre, giving it a leading role. Two years ago, we created a specialized program within the Pitch GDL, Iberoamérica Fantástica, dedicated particularly to the genre, managing to combine some of the most daring films in development and with some of the most important creators of the genre in Ibero-America.

About our choice: *Corpus*

Corpus is a project that represents the possibility of exploring an issue that is not only current but necessary for Latino cinematography and without fear of being mistaken, for global cinema. Also doing it so through a story that deals with the issue in a non-frontal way and through the genre that in a country like Mexico, seems to have gone beyond the screen to co-live with the actual reality, a country in which 11 women are murdered every day, many of them at the hands of their partners. *Corpus* portrays the toxic masculinity that has permeated the society in which we live and that today we are trying to reverse. Pablo Delgado's project has a renowned team whose trajectory guarantees a successful realization for the film.

FICG



Festival Internacional
de Cine en Guadalajara
Film Festival • México ®



FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL
DE CINE EN GUADALAJARA 38

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ig FICG

🌿 FICG | 38

CORPUS

Something is happening in the dungeons of an old seminary in the middle of the woods. A dark and ancient force has risen from the depths to reclaim its freedom



Mexico, 1928. The government is at war with the Cristeros. A red moon is rising. Laughter and whispers can be heard at the top of the pines. Two boys fall in love in the worst place in the world. A rebellious young man is abandoned by his mother. A Priest and his students have wandered aimlessly for days. All roads intersect in the same place: San Miguel Arcángel. A forgotten seminary in the middle of the forest. Rumors of Federals in the area spread fear... However -someone knows that the true threat lies within San Miguel, deep in its dungeons. Something that will soon find its way out.

ORIGINAL TITLE: **Corpus**
TITLE IN ENGLISH: **Corpus**

DIRECTOR: **Pablo Delgado**
CAST: **Carlos Bardem, Harold Torres, Armando Espitia, Adrián Rossi, Kanerit (Karen García), Matías del Castillo, Raúl Briones**
GENRE: **Horror**
NATIONALITY: **Mexico**
LANGUAGE: **Spanish**
PRODUCERS: **Eva Ruiz de Chávez and Mariana Rodríguez**

STATUS: **Development**

BUDGET: **2.5 M USD**

SXSW. FILM & TV FESTIVAL ↙ 2023



SXSW FILM & TV FESTIVAL

About SXSW Film & TV Festival

The SXSW Film & TV Festival celebrates raw innovation and emerging talent from both behind and in front of the camera. Featuring provocative dramas, documentaries, comedies, genre standouts, and more, the festival has become known for the high caliber and diversity of films presented, as well as its smart, enthusiastic audiences. On the genre front, SXSW has hosted the world premieres of *Evil Dead Rise*, *A Quiet Place*, *Us*, *Deadstream*, *X*, and *Everything Everywhere All At Once*.

About our choice: *Dead Enders*

Fidel Ruiz-Healy & Tyler Walker's short film *Dead Enders* had its world premiere at the 2023 SXSW Film & TV Festival in the Midnight Shorts section, where it went on to win the highly coveted audience award. But long before it won the award, the fest knew Ruiz-Healy and Walker had crafted an incredibly fun genre blend that mixed together a creature feature with a coming-of-age comedy. We have no doubt that a feature film expanding on this world and these characters will be an absolute blast.

SXSW

SXSW
**FILM & TV
FESTIVAL**
↙

SEE YOU AT SXSW
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Creatives
from Around
the World

DEAD ENDERS

Dead Enders is a horror comedy about a listless slacker who must reconnect with her ex-best friend in order to stop a scourge of mind controlling bugs from taking over their small town



Maya is a young, burnout gas station attendant in the small town of Tanglewood, Texas. But her comfortable life of drawing comics with her best friend, Charlie, is upended after a fracking accident unleashes a species of mind-controlling parasites that turn people into shambling drones damned to perform menial tasks that terraform Tanglewood into a bug colony. Six months later: the town is under lockdown amidst the threat of the "Headsqueezers." When Maya learns that Charlie has gone missing, she turns to her former co-workers to piece together what happened. To get her best friend back, Maya will have to venture deep into the bug-infested outer city, come face to face with the horrors that lurk underneath the placid facade of Tanglewood and discover the dark price that Charlie's paid to get life back to the way it used to be. It's safe to say, she might be late to her next shift.

ORIGINAL TITLE: **Dead Enders**
TITLE IN ENGLISH: **Dead Enders**

DIRECTORS: **Fidel Ruiz-Healy and Tyler Walker**
CAST: **TBD**
GENRE: **Horror, Comedy, Coming of Age**
NATIONALITY: **USA**
LANGUAGE: **English**
PRODUCERS: **Fidel Ruiz-Healy, Tyler Walker**

STATUS: **Development**

BUDGET: **2,5M USD**



PÖFF27

BLACK NIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL
TALLINN 3 - 19 NOV 2023



TALLINN

About TALLINN

Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival or PÖFF, the biggest and only A-class film festival in the region, includes genre films at PÖFF's main competition programs and a special program Midnight Shivers, HÖFF, the Haapsalu Horror & Fantasy Film Festival, European Genre Forum, a training program for debut genre filmmakers in collaboration with Amsterdam Imagine and Fantastic Zagreb and all sections of Industry.

About our choice: *Restore Point*

The Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival is known for showcasing a diverse range of films, including genre projects. *Restore Point*, a Czech science fiction movie, was showcased in the Co-Production Market in 2017 and won the Screen International Best Pitch Award. Its unique concept and professional production make it a promising film with the potential to captivate diverse international audiences.

PÖFF



**INDUSTRY@TALLINN
& BALTIC EVENT**

13-17 NOV 2023

PÖFF27

**BLACK NIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL
TALLINN 3-19 NOV 2023**



Join film
professionals
and talents for
**Industry@Tallinn &
Baltic Event**
masterclasses
13-17 NOV

It's time for
The Wildest Film Festival
in Northern Europe

The 27th
**TALLINN
BLACK NIGHTS
FILM FESTIVAL**

3 - 19 NOV 2023

SUBMISSIONS OPEN UNTIL
24 AUG 2023

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RESTORE POINT

Have you backed-up today?



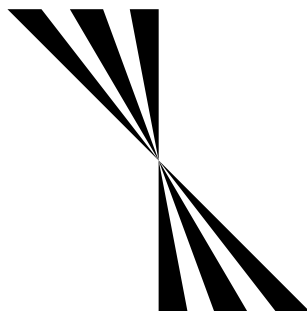
In the year 2041, all people have a constitutional right to experience one whole life. If someone dies an unnatural death, they are revived and can go on with their lives. All you need to do is to regularly create a restore point – a backup where your memory is saved to. In this society absolutely murder is nearly impossible. Young detective Em Trochinowska has to solve a murder-mystery where the only witness is one of the resurrected victims.

ORIGINAL TITLE: **Bod Obnovy**
TITLE IN ENGLISH: **Restore Point**

DIRECTOR: **Robert Hloz**
CAST: **Andrea Mohylová, Matěj Hádek, Václav Neužil, Milan Ondřík, Karel Dobrý, Agáta Kryštůfková, Katarzyna Zawadzka, Jan Vlasák, Iveta Dušková, Richard Stanke, Adam Vacula, Jan Jankovský, Lech Dyblik**
GENRE: **Science fiction**
NATIONALITY: **Czech Republic**
LANGUAGE: **Czech**
PRODUCER: **Jan Kallista**

STATUS: **Postproduction**

BUDGET: **1.8M€**



Whānau
Mārama
New Zealand
International
Film Festival



WHĀNAU MĀRAMA NEW ZEALAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

About Whānau Mārama

Whānau Mārama: New Zealand International Film Festival (NZIFF) is presented in 16 towns and cities throughout New Zealand to enhance the appreciation of, and engagement with, global art and culture through access to a diverse range of high-quality film.

NZIFF's history spans 54 years and NZIFF 2023 will showcase more than 100 feature films, including films in the Incredibly Strange collection, a selection of genre films curated by Ant Timpson.

Whānau Mārama: New Zealand International Film Festival is operated by the New Zealand Film Festival Trust, with major funding from the New Zealand Film Commission, and Manatū Taonga Ministry of Culture and Heritage.

Whānau Mārama: New Zealand International Film Festival is operated by the New Zealand Film Festival Trust, with major funding from the New Zealand Film Commission, and, in 2021 and 2022, Manatū Taonga Ministry of Culture and Heritage.

About Our Choice: *The Televangelist*

In 2022 NZIFF presented the world premiere of Tom Levesque's debut feature film, *Shut Eye*. The film met with strong critical and audience acclaim. We believe Tom Levesque is a talent to watch and we are proud to present his project *The Televangelist* at Fantastic 7.

NZIFF Incredibly Strange Programmer Ant Timpson: "Tom Levesque's *The Televangelist* rose through the ranks of script haus The Blacklist and caught my attention awhile back. After seeing what Levesque did with little resources for his debut feature *Shut Eye*, it was exciting to think what he could do with a script like *The Televangelist* – a wild black-comedic thriller with grounded contemporary foundations."

Whānau
Mārama
New Zealand
International
Film Festival
2023

19 July
— 10 September
2023

32 Cinemas
in 16 Towns
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Proudly presenting
The Televangelist at Fantastic 7 2023



THE TELEVANGELIST

When a Televangelist is convinced a rival is behind his dwindling social media enterprise - Hendrick Powell sets out on a journey of obsession, theatrics and blackmail to reclaim his online followers whatever the cost



After faking an assassination attempt to boost his shrinking online audience, internet Televangelist Hendrick Powell believes a rival cyber preacher is behind his continued decline. As Hendrick plots an event to make headlines and bring himself into the spotlight, his marriage starts to crumble as his wife, Patty, has a sexual reawakening after becoming fixated on a fitness influencer. Becoming entangled in an ugly crime, Hendrick's paranoia and obsessions spiral into hysteria-like proportions as he delivers a sermon that goes global for the wrong reasons. As the truth about his fraudulent spectacle is revealed, Hendrick discovers that his suspicions of sabotage may be justified, but the question remains: who is responsible?

ORIGINAL TITLE: **The Televangelist**
TITLE IN ENGLISH: **The Televangelist**

DIRECTOR: **Tom Levesque**
CAST: **TBC**
GENRE: **Psychological thriller, black comedy**
NATIONALITY: **New Zealand**
LANGUAGE: **English**
PRODUCERS: **Kevin DeWalt, Matt Noonan**

STATUS: **In development / Script**

BUDGET: **5M \$CAD**



WomanInFan Paves the Way for Female Fantastic Genre Film Creators

The program received an award from the platform A Greener Festival, which highlights its transformative capacity from a social perspective

WomanInFan has been developing its activities in the genre industry for three years now, with the aim of promoting the past, present and future work of female creators within fantastic genre. No one is surprised that this genre has been identified as a male-dominated arena, especially if we are referring to directing or high-responsibility tasks in projects. This is how one of the great female masters, the late Debra Hill, described it in terms of her involvement in production and screenwriting roles, when she recalled that: "When I started out in 1974, everyone called me "sweetheart". I was expected to be the hair and makeup girl, or the script girl. I looked around and there were no women, so I had to carve out a niche for myself."

Almost five decades later, women filmmakers have many more opportunities, but the famous glass ceiling is still present for many of them when it comes to dealing with big budgets or with genres that are (apparently) distant from the female sensibility. This error is rooted in cultural and social perceptions, which women themselves maintain due to the lack of a solid tradition of benchmarks. Until they try it. This was affirmed by Mary Harron, the godmother of *Fantastic 7* in 2021, who

applauded the freedom of the horror genre where it was "licit to kill the leading hero without consequences". An opinion shared by another pioneer, the director Mary Lambert who, with her genre debut, *Pet Sematary* in 1989, became the first female director credited with a film featuring the living dead and a rising star in fantastic genre. This experience opened her eyes to the infinite possibilities offered by horror: "One of the many reasons why I like directing scary movies is because you can make up all the rules you want. Your role is to create a world with its own rules, which can ignore all the established ones. Of course, the only thing you are obligated to do is to be faithful to the rules you've designed. In *Pet Sematary* this is perfectly easy to see because it manages to create a universe with rules that are different from ours, but that don't change. So, when people die and begin to come back from beyond, you believe it."

This 2023, WomanInFan begins a journey towards the promotion of female storytelling, so that women filmmakers may dare to create new monsters, fears and nightmares that will populate movie screens and spur the imagination of future generations.

**CATALAN FILMS
AT FANTASTIC 7**

THE CHAPEL
Carlota Pereda



Catalan Institute for
Cultural
Companies



WOMANINFAN, FANT.LATINA

Lucía Nieto

The origins of the WomanInFan program were shaped around the promotion and recognition of creative female filmmakers within the fantastic genre industry. For this 2023 edition, we are focusing on establishing the foundations of female narrative, a unique storytelling that differentiates stories and interests from a woman's point of view. For decades, the history of the fantastic genre has been populated by monsters, nightmares and traditions created by male filmmakers. We have learned to shudder in a movie theater with stories told from the male point of view, while the intervention of women has been residual or barely acknowledged.

This is why the WomanInFan initiative has been travelling around markets and festivals for three years now, recalling the role of past, present and future female filmmakers. And not only for their unique cinematic vision but also for their indispensable work as transmitters of legends, traditions and stories, which are relevant to their particular filmographies. This is the seed of WomanInFan Fant.Latina, an initiative in collaboration with Blood Window, which brings together genre projects led by women and which at the past Ventana Sur market, granted an award to Lucía Nieto Salazar, who aspires to make her debut with her first feature film *Los Visitantes* (*The Visitors*).





Genre, A Vanishing Point

Ever since I was a child, I lived more in my imagination than in reality. I looked for that escape to other worlds in cinema and literature. I liked to play that life was a dream (and I still do to this day). So I was always fascinated by the dreamlike, magical realism, fantasy. It is a way I have of living life; imagining that there are other places, other characters, hidden in reality itself. I play at believing that they exist, at imagining where they come from, where they are going. It is the engine I have to live: to believe that there is an intangible magic that surrounds me and that generates a constant fascination for the world around me.

Influences Between Film and Literature

My main influences in the realm of film are Roman Polanski, David Lynch and Stanley Kubrick. In literature: Mario Levrero, Mariana Enriquez, Felisberto Hernandez, Horacio Quiroga, Ray Bradbury, Edgar Allan Poe, among others.

The Creative Impulse

What usually happens to me is that, from an experience, an idea is triggered, and I quickly develop a story. For example, a few weeks ago I was in the

kitchen, and I looked outside and for a few seconds I saw myself in the garden watching me, as if there was another me. I quickly wrote *The Other*, a short film in the development stage. That's why I love to inhabit different environments, to meet new people, original characters; because it is in reality where I find the triggers.

Women in the Fantastic Industry

I think the difficulties that women have when it comes to evolving professionally in different positions within the film industry are not alien to the rest of society. If we take a closer look, most successful directors are men. The discrimination that we suffer as women usually occurs in power relationships. In this regard, I have never experienced (at least in the film industry up to now, although I have in others) any degrading situation, possibly due to the circumstances of my environment: I live in a small place, Maldonado. Uruguay is a little country where all of us who are involved in this field know each other. Also, and fortunately, in recent years certain social policies have been put into practice that favor greater equity with regard to national public funds. Likewise, in international market and film festival sections, a greater inclusion of women and minorities is being achieved. But, on an industry scale, I do believe that there is still a glass ceiling, and particularly in genre filmmaking.

Debuting in Feature Film

Los Visitantes (*The Visitors*) is my debut feature film. A psychological thriller that follows the life of Helena, a young woman in her thirties, who moves to a sprawling estate on the outskirts of the city with her boyfriend. But the couple breaks up and Helena is left alone. This causes her to experience an enormous depression, because she suffers from an emotional imbalance that, at times, distorts her perception of reality. She feels threatened by the world that surrounds her, but especially by the male gender, which she finds to be very hostile. A visitor, a friend of the owner's, is expected to arrive. A man arrives at the residence, but then, a few days later, another one shows up. Helena will have to discover who the impostor is and what his dark intentions are.

The film inhabits a strained, dark atmosphere, with surreal and hallucinatory moments. Suspense runs throughout the story: Who is the impostor? Who is the real enemy? This is the question that harasses Helena regarding her lovers and that immerses her in unrelenting doubt: Does he love me, or does he want to hurt me?



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