

CAMERA OBSCURA

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60 DOGMA 95 ZINEMIRA FESTIVAL DE SAN SEBASTIAN



JACQUELINE DUARTE - VICTOR CLAVIJO - LEYRE BERROCAL - JOSEAN BENGOTXEA - PELLO MADARIAGA

SONIDO MARTÍN GURIDI DIRECTOR ARTÍSTICO MARIO SUANCES MÚSICA PABLO CERVANTES MONTAJE JUAN ORTUOSTE
DIRECTOR DE FOTOGRAFÍA FRANK AMANN GUIÓN RUTH REHMET Y MARU SOLORES COPRODUCTORES ÁLVARO ALONSO Y PHILIPP DETTMER
PRODUCCIÓN POR CARLOS JUÁREZ Y RAQUEL PEREA DIRECTORA MARU SOLORES
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BASQUE FILMS

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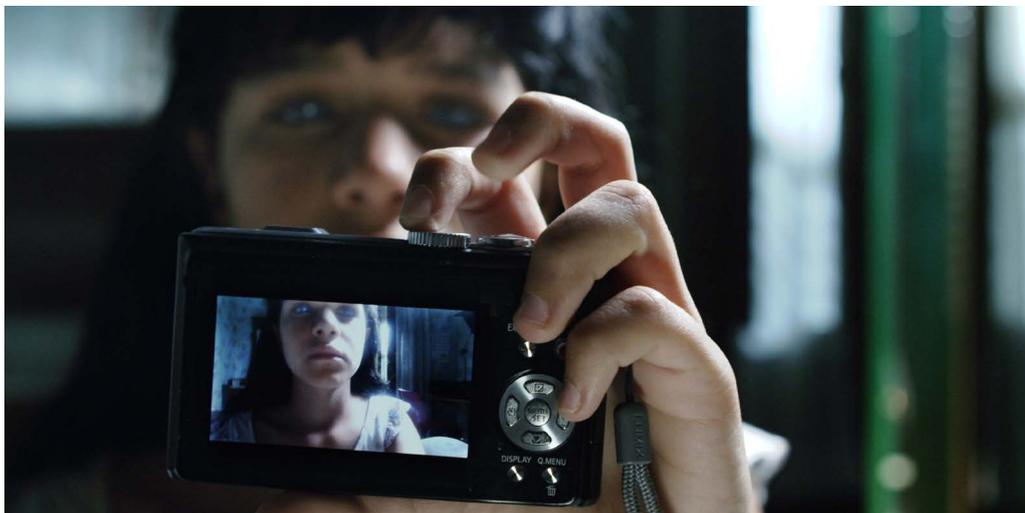
Camera Obscura (La Película)

SYNOPSIS

Ane, 13 years old, has lost her sight. While her parents are busy trying to operate on her time and again, she enters puberty and starts questioning: 'What is it to be fit?' 'Will anyone fancy me?'

As they holiday in the family house in a coastal village, Antonio, her father's cousin, bursts in like a gust of spring breeze. He is an enigmatic photographer who has been around half the world. For Ane, it is the summer of first love... and her first period.

With Antonio, she discovers photography. Camera in hand, like a detective and to the chagrin of her mother, she captures their daily life, until she comes upon what no one wants to see or acknowledge ... Rather than see herself as a victim, Ane fights to forge her own path, as an adolescent and a blind.



PRODUCTION CREDITS

Director: Maru Solores
Screenwriters: Ruth Rehmet & Maru Solores
Executive Producers: Carlos Juárez & Raquel Perea
Co-producers: Álvaro Alonso & Philipp Dettmer
Associated Producer: Elena Gozalo (ETB)
Director of Photography: Frank Amann
Art Director: Mario Suances
Editor: Juan Ortuoste
Sound design: Martín Guridi
Music: Pablo Cervantes

Cast: ANE Jacqueline Duarte
ANTONIO Víctor Clavijo
LUISA Leyre Berrocal
KOLDO Josean Bengoetxea
IMANOL Pello Madariaga

Production Company: Basque Films
Co-production: Letra M producciones
Deutsche Exotic Filmproduktion GmbH

With the participation of ETB Euskal Telebista (Basque Television) and the collaboration of Ministerio de Cultura ICAA (Spain) , GOBIERNO VASCO Dpto. Cultura, MEDIA EUROPE, ONCE, REAL PATRONATO SOBRE DISCAPACIDAD, CESYA.



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Beginning with the screen in black is like beginning with the blank page. Ane, the protagonist of this movie, has turned blind and she is losing the memories of her images.

I have selected this character and its blindness in an attempt to learn to see differently. To be able to imagine what is actually seen when you cannot see it. To begin to see anew when you have lost your vision. I have selected this story to see for myself what happens when others try to see for us, what happens when we grow up and try to break the barriers that protect us but also limit us, wanting to see and experience the world first-hand, in our own manner, walking our own path.

Ane has just been through her eye-operation that hadn't worked out. She still can't see. In her inner "camera obscura" waves of images keep coming, reliving and transforming themselves. The ones she wants to keep are blurring by the day and there are the others that haunt her days though she would prefer to lose them. They are a vital part of her world. That is when she stumbles upon the camera. Or rather, the camera finds her. Ane meets her uncle Antonio, the photographer, who opens her doors to capturing images with a different tool. Images that she is able to grab and create through her camera, although she cannot see them. Perhaps some day she will; she is probably going to be operated again. But the others can see them, anyway. Snapshots as documents, as poetry, as weapons. Ane is aware of the power of images in our world. And she learns to use it to suit her.

Ane is on the verge of attaining puberty; she is growing, asks a whole lot of questions, but lacks the necessary visual information that invade and overwhelm us. Her uncle Antonio comes into the house and into her life like a gust of fresh breeze; someone who seems to see her differently; over time Ane feels irresistibly attracted towards him. The camera



that he lends her becomes her tool to perceive the world around her, to discover, to understand the widening cracks in her apparently stable family, and even that of Antonio himself. Ane has to come to grips with the marginalization from her peers that is brought about by her blindness, with the over-protection of her parents, who are so desperate on getting Ane back to "normal" as a solution to their problems than face the failure of their marriage. Ane and her blindness have even become their way of escaping from themselves and this makes Ane all the more rebellious, not wanting to be made the scapegoat. In her blindness, she only sees more clearly how much there is that people don't want to see and busy themselves in diverse ways to ensure they don't get to see it. She has to face the blindness of the adults and their blind world. In the end, she has to find the strength to walk alone.

The story is set in a summer resort on the Basque coast. It is holiday season. The atmosphere of the summer vacation works as a parenthesis to the routine family life, in addition to its own routines: the beach, the family, the friends. This summer brings to Ane memories of others, when they used to spend their summer in the family house and she could still see. But it is also a new phase in her life, entering adolescence, awakening emotions yet unknown to her, her blindness making her a stranger to the place and the people she once knew so well. It is also the time when she will meet new people who will profoundly affect her life and the way she sees it.

The sea, bringing her memories of her accident, is a recurring element, with huge waves that crash into Ane's imagination, exaggerated in her memories, and threatening to burst into her room and into her life, carrying everything out through the front door - the false stability that her family is trying to put up, the fading away of her childhood and its innocence... Ane fancies the sea, she fears it and at the same time is drawn to it, but her parents keep her away from the waters and from her fears. Only in the end does Ane manage to overcome it and let herself be washed by the waves.



The world of Ane, at the beginning of the movie, is closed and overprotected; the atmosphere is dense; in the old family house in Lekeitio surface memories, fears and anxieties never articulated. Antonio's unexpected arrival is like opening a window, letting air and light in. Ane, entering puberty, is awakening to life, and is attracted to this distant relative, likable and yet mysterious, having been away so long without any notice. Subtly and gradually, light seeps in through the cracks, the spaces open out, there is more colour and heat to the "real" pictures, if we can call them so.

We had begun with the black screen; Ane has to erase all the images of the world, and we, with her, the avalanche of images which we are subject to, to be able to find her own images. Out of the black, a thin ray of light breaks through. Let us sit back and let ourselves be carried away with Ane...

The leading actress and the work with the other actors

From the beginning it was clear that we wanted to work with a blind or visually impaired girl for the role of Ane.

From my experience of working with children in front of the camera at other times, I think that children do best when they play themselves and more than act, they just are. Therefore, and considering it very difficult to have an actress with professional background and qualifications at that age, I think working with a blind girl gives the film the authenticity it needs.

After several castings in Spain, we found Jacqueline Duarte through ONCE, the Spanish organisation for the blind. Far from thinking that this was an impediment while working, it was an enriching experience that contributed much to the film. She was best placed to know how a blind person moves, what obstacles she meets, how her day-to-day life is. This helped the team, which was also sensitive about it.

MARU SOLORES

Short biography

Born in 1968 in Donostia-San Sebastián, Spain. After working as a trainee in diverse fields of filmmaking, studied at the Film and Video School of Andoain, Spain. Later she worked as a production assistant at ETB (Basque TV channel) and participated at filmmaking workshops with Michel Gaztambide, José Luis Guerín and Paulino Viota among others.

After some works at experimental video, she moved to Berlin and studied film direction at the DFFB, Deutsche Film- und Fernsehakademie Berlin (German Academy for Films and TV, Berlin), where she directed various short films in 16 mm, 35 mm and documentaries. She graduated with the 35mm short film *Dortoka Uhartea* (Turtle Island), which gave her the opportunity to take part in festivals around the world.

Later she carried out different projects, in Bosnia and India, while at the same time working as a freelance video editor. After 10 years in Berlin she returned to the Basque Country where she has been working at directing, editing and as a teacher, and on her first feature film project *Camera Obscura* as co-screenwriter and director.

Filmography as screenwriter and director

Perversos polimorfos, experimental video, 5', Donostia, 1991

Nu, experimental short film, Super-8 and 16 mm, B/W, 8', Berlin 1995. International Experimental Movies Week of Madrid 1996, Cinema Jove of Valencia 1996, International Film Festival of the Mediterranean, Elche 1996, Video Festival of Navarra 1996.

OrientTango, experimental short fiction film, 16 mm, color, duration 6 min., produced by: DFFB, Berlin 1997. International Experimental Movies Week of Madrid, 1998.

Lass uns spielen (Let's play), short film, 16 mm, color, 15', produced by: DFFB, Berlin 1999. International Film Festival of Huesca, 1999, L'alternativa of Barcelona, 1999, International Film Festival of the Mediterranean, Elche 2000.

Die Frau, die eine Erbschaft machte (The woman who received an inheritance), documentary, Betacam SP format, 18 min, produced by: DFFB, Berlin 2000.

Querido Gustavo, lieber Helmut, documentary, video, 50 min., produced by: DFFB, Berlin 2000.

Dortoka Uhartea (Turtle Island), short fiction film, 35 mm, 17 min, produced by: DFFB and Sebastopoleko Titiriteroak S. L. (Carlos Juárez), Euskadi-Alemania, 2002 (co-screenwriter: Ruth Rehmet)

Participated in many film festivals.

Nominations and prizes:

It was selected for the International Catalogue of the program for the promotion of Basque short films "Kimuak". Was nominated for the Prize First Steps 2002, in the short film category for new directors in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Distinction "Prädikat besonders wertvoll" for its aesthetic, by the film Institute Filmbewertungsstelle Wiesbaden, Germany.

International Short Film Festival, Winterthur 2002 (Switzerland): Prize for the Most Promising Directing Talent. Max Ophüls Festival 2003 (Saarbrücken, Germany): Best Short Film. International Festival of Film Schools 2002 (Munich, Germany): Special Mention. Festival of Basque Film and Video of Lekeitio 2002 (Bizkaia): Best Short Film and Special Prize of the Jury. Tabor u Taboru Film Festival 2003 (Croatia): Best short Film, under theme "conflict". Students' International Film Festival 2003 (Santiago of Chile): Special Prize of the Jury. Latin American Film Festival, San Francisco Bay Area 2003 (USA): Prize of the Jury, Student category.

Passage to dawn documentary on blind adolescents in India and Spain, video, 30 min. Co-directed with Rica Roy, Produced by: Thompson Foundation, India-EU 2005.

Sabur, a trip to Gorazde / Sabur, Gorazdera bidaia bat, documentary, video, 35', co-directed with Irene Cormenzana and Sos Balkanes. Produced by: Sos Balkanes, with the collaboration of Arteleku, 2005/06. Participation in the Film and Human Rights Festival in San Sebastian, 2006.

Camera Obscura, fiction feature film (co-screenwriter: Ruth Rehmet). Produced by: Basque Films, Bilbao, Spain, 2011.

BASQUE FILMS

Basque Films is a production company created in 2002 by a group of professionals with wide experience in the industry, and has always supported quality and new talents.

Feature Films

- 2012. **Camera Obscura**. Maru Solores. Next Release.
- 2012. **Poseso**. Samuel Orti (Sam). Filming.
- 2012. **El gancho**. Sandra Higueta. Post-producing.
- 2010. **Valeria Descalza**. Ernesto del Río. Coordination and Post-production.
- 2009. **Siempre hay tiempo**. Ana Rosa Diego.
- 2008. **Déjate caer**. Jesús Ponce.
- 2008. **Hoy no se fia mañana si**. Francisco Avizanda. Coordination and Post-production.
- 2007. **2 Rivalés casi iguales**. Miguel Angel C. Buttini.
- 2003. **Ouija**. Juan Pedro Ortega. Coordination and Post-production.
- 2000. **Lokarri**. Jean-Pierre Grasset.

In the field of short films it is worth highlighting “**Tras un largo silencio**” and “**Camaradas**”. On the other hand, among tv documentaries, we will point out “**Carta a mi madre**” and “**El largo viaje**”.

We have produced more than thirty short films, obtaining over 350 prizes in national and international film festivals as Montpellier Film Festival (France), Málaga (Spain), Locarno (Switzerland), Zinebi (Spain), Winterthur (Switzerland), Mas Ophüs (Germany), Tabor u Taboru Film Festival (Croatia), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Pescara (Italy), Valdivia (Chile). We have also been nominated for several prizes among it's worth to point out the following two nominations: Méliès d'or Ravenna Nightmare Film Festival (Italy) and **Hollywood Oscars in 2005 for “7:35 de la mañana”**, having done direction and coordination tasks.



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