

MARTA
AURA

A FILM BY
RUBÉN ROJO AURA

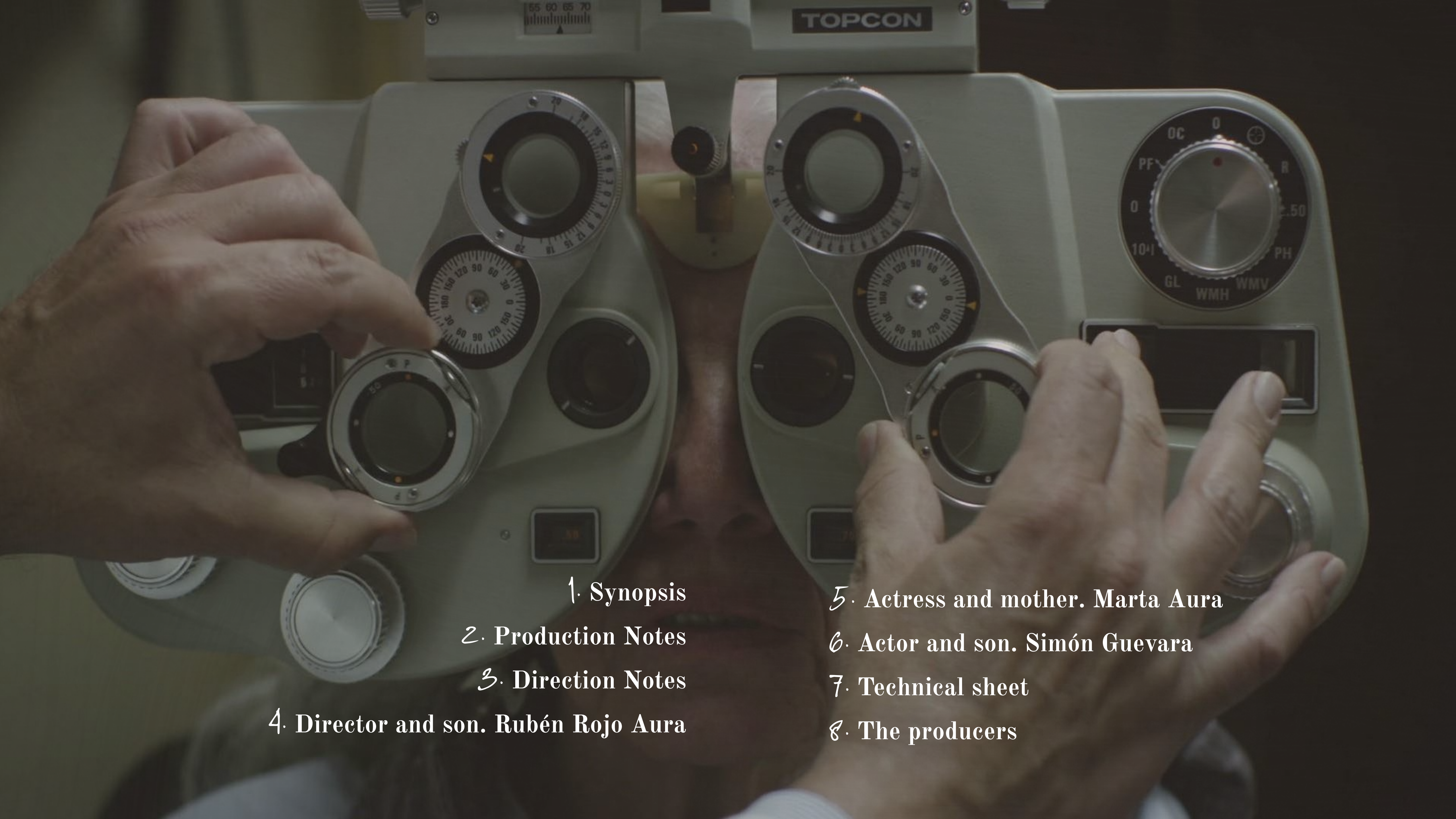
SIMÓN
GUEVARA

Courage



MAGO PRODUCTION





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long synopsis

Alma (Marta Aura) is a 76-year-old actress. She suffers from an eye disease that is slowly leaving her blind. Because of this, she is afraid she may lose her place in the one thing that brings meaning to her life and is her own source of income, the prestigious Mexico Theatre Company where she is about to premiere *Mother Courage and Her Children* by Bertolt Brecht. Alejandro (Simón Guevara), her 54-year-old son, in an attempt to recover from alcoholism, returns to his mother's home after having spent several years living in Madrid, without contact with her other world.

The theatre company has to reduce its cast due to a cut in funding. Alma, feeling threatened, decides to delay her treatment appointments, as she is in direct competition with another actress for the same role. Marta Aura, the actress who plays Alma, reflects in real life with her two best friends and discusses the therapeutic nature of playing a character that closely resembles herself. In fiction, the play has its first night and that cathartic moment helps Alma discover that it is time to get closer to her son, even if it may be too late.

A fiction film closer to a reality documentary, where the actors play themselves, and face their own past; and a director who is both the son and brother of the main characters. An incredibly human, sensitive drama, told from an intimate perspective.



short synopsis

Alma (Marta Aura) is a 76-year-old actress who is slowly going blind and fears losing her place in the theatre company where she works. Alejandro (Simón Guevara), her 54-year-old son, in an attempt to recover from alcoholism, returns home to her after spending several years in Madrid. The crisis experienced by each character will lead them to recognise themselves as mother and son. A work of fiction based on the director's family. A sensitive drama in which the acting challenge lies in the characters interpreting themselves.



production notes

When Rubén came to us with this very sensitive story, we knew that we had to make it happen. Having the opportunity to work with Ruben's talent, a filmmaker in constant exploration of narrative forms, together with his mother's extensive experience as an actress, the renowned actress Marta Aura (Alma), meant the opportunity to integrate ourselves into the family's own experience and bring this story, that so many will identify with, to more people.

A story performed by its own protagonists

The idea was to seek the complicity between an actress mother, an actor brother and Rubén, son, brother and director, to push the limits of fiction and make the shooting experience as realistic, complex and enriching as possible. *Courage* emerges as a subtle and experimental mixture of complicities, the expression of unresolved situations in real life that go beyond the camera under the understanding that comes from many years of coexistence. For us, it has also felt like working "at home". This hybrid proposed by Rubén in which the most real feelings must be interpreted in a fictional way and by the same actors who experienced it personally, was a magical experiment of the kind that only occur once in a lifetime.

A cultural mix between two connected countries

Courage is also a story that mixes cultural elements from one side of the Atlantic to the other. Portraying homecoming was another challenge we had to face. When a migrant returns, things are never as they were when they left. There is a distancing, an emotional shock that forces the returned to re-evaluate and update their surroundings. These are side effects that cause irritability, sadness and nostalgia.

The cinematographic portrait of a septuagenarian woman

Another aspect of *Courage* that caught our attention was Rubén defending his decision to portray the life of a 76-year-old woman. On the one hand, we were surprised by his choosing this woman and her story as the protagonists of the plot. It is difficult to find women of this age in cinema who are at the centre of the plot. On the other hand, Alma's strength and her passion for her work, facing the daily adversities of life, endow her with complex characteristics to consider in female characters of that age. Alma is free and shies away from stereotypes.



direction notes

I like film that comes from the gut, stories that show the complexity and fragility of the human condition, themes that transform the audience's perception, even when only small conflicts are portrayed. I like those stories because I usually find in them the reflection of my own existence.

That is *Courage*, a project that, being so personal, I think is also honest; a film that uses simplicity to get closer to its audience. *Courage* is us, our doubts and daily struggles, our hesitations and fears, our defects and weaknesses, of that part of ourselves that we sometimes try to cover up with a smile but can be found within us.

Courage is a work of fiction, but I like to say that it is a project of cinematographic family catharsis: the main characters are based on my mother and my brother and they play themselves. The script, despite being fictional, is inspired by these real people, by their own truths. In moments that happened in the past but whose effects still run through their veins.

Once the crisis had passed and both of them were rediscovering each other, it was the right time to shoot this movie. A moment close enough to reality to generate a certain dramatic tension and far enough removed to be reinterpreted in an Aristotelian structure.

Finally, and after a long editing process, I found the right way to tell this story. Although it was an analogy of reality in "pure fiction", there are nods at the viewer so what happens within these two characters / people can be analysed. I am interested in staying within "the truth", our truth, at least. And I think that was the main challenge in this movie. It was not just transferring the script to images, but explaining much more than what the script said. Because what really interested me was talking about life, about looking back and not understanding how you ended up where you are, wounds so deep that all your energy is spent on not wanting to see them, because it would be too painful. Can film make you think not only by watching it but also by making it? What do we understand in my family with the process of this film? I think that in the next phase of screenings and once we have an audience, we will be able to understand that with more certainty. Each time, a little more.

A close-up portrait of a man with dark hair and a beard, looking directly at the camera. The background is a solid, dark grey color. The text 'director and son' is written in a white, cursive font across the upper part of his face.

director and son

RUBÉN ROJO AURA

He was born in Mexico City in 1984. Member of a family of Latin American actors, he studied cinema in Mexico and at the EICTV of Cuba. He is co-founder of the magazine “Los Suicidas” (FONCA-10 Grant) and co-producer of the documentary “Ella (s)” (David Baute / ESP-URU-MEX) that won the Silver Biznaga at the Malaga Film Festival and the Malvinas Award in Trieste. He has directed the fiction short films “El camino” (2006) and “Carretera del Norte” (IMCINE, 2007), a project awarded the “Diosa de Plata” for best Mexican short film; the documentary “The Nightingale of the Night. Chavela Vargas sings to Lorca ” (2015), a feature film that received the co-production support of IBERMEDIA and premiered within the framework of the FICG; and Courage, his fiction debut feature with which he has taken an important step forward in film laboratories, workshops and international co-production forums, including Guadalajara, Berlin, Malaga and Cannes.

A close-up portrait of an elderly woman with short, wavy white hair. She is looking slightly to the left of the camera with a neutral expression. She is wearing a dark blue top and a light-colored, patterned scarf. The background is softly blurred, showing a white wall and a colorful abstract painting in a frame.

actress and mother

MARTA AURA

She was born in Mexico City in 1942 and studied at the School of Theatre Arts at Mexico's Fine Arts Institute. Since then, she has built a prestigious career of just over 60 uninterrupted years on stages and screens around the world, working with directors from Mexico and Latin America and receiving more than twenty awards as an actress, including two nominations for the Ariel Award and obtaining the Silver Goddess for the film "Written on the Body of the Night" (Jaime Humberto Hermosillo, 2001). She is currently a fullmember at the National Theatre Company of Mexico.

A man with dark hair and a beard is sitting at a desk in a dimly lit room. He is wearing a dark sweater and looking down with a thoughtful expression. On the desk in front of him are a lit cigarette, a glass ashtray, and some papers. The background is filled with framed pictures and a lamp, creating a warm, intimate atmosphere.

actor and son

SIMÓN GUEVARA

He was born in Mexico City in 1964. An actor since he was a child, he has participated in more than 30 plays, for which he has received several awards from different associations of Mexican theatre critics, and his extensive filmography included his work in the films: “Coronation” (Sergio Olhovich, 1976), “Derrumbe” (Eduardo Carrasco Zanini, 1989), “Rojoamanecer” (Jorge Fons, 1989), “Nocturno a Rosario” (Matilde Landeta, 1992), “Últimallamada” (Carlos García Agraz, 1996) and more recently, “Influencia” by Pablo Aura.

technical sheet

Coraje (Courage)

Fiction. Drama

DIRECTION: Rubén Rojo Aura.

SCREENPLAY: Rubén Rojo Aura & César Tejeda.

PRODUCTION: Rubén Rojo Aura, Raúl Berninches, Peter Keydel, Camila Ibarra, Marco Antonio Salgado, Javier Meza Hernández, Ilanna Guillén, Adrián Bazán Zamudio & Samantha Guillén.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCTION: Samantha Guillén, Adrián Bazán Zamudio, Peter Keydel, Raúl Berninches, Marco Antonio Salgado & Rubén Rojo Aura.

CAST: Marta Aura (Alma / Marta), Simón Guevara (Alejandro), Fernando Becerril (Elejalde), Esteban Soberanes (Pato), Pilar Padilla (Verónica), María Aura (Luisa).

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Gris Jordana, AEC.

ART DIRECTION: Rafael Ruiz Espejo.

COSTUME DESIGN: Carla Qua.

EDITING: Ariadna Ribas & Rubén Rojo Aura.

POSTPRODUCTION: Raúl Luna.

MUSIC: Rodrigo Castillo Filomarino.

SOUND: Antonino Isordia Llamazares (direct), Odin Acosta (sound design), Miguel Ángel Molina (mix).

IMAGE AND LABORATORY: RedRum Post.

PRODUCTION COMPANIES: Apapacho Films, Mago Production & Cinema226.

CO-PRODUCTION: CTT Exp & Rentals, Estudios Churubusco Azteca, Honey Bastards Films, Light Rent, Ítaca Films & BDC Producciones.

With the support from: Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía - Programa de Fomento al Cine Mexicano (FOCINE), EFICINE-Production 189: Cell Medicine, Grupo Medifarma, Pihesa Medica, Aspel& ICEC Departament de Cultura (Generalitat de Catalunya)

LANGUAGE: Spanish

FORMAT: Digital Colour, Spanish THX 5.1.

DURATION: 90 min
Mexico, Spain - 2022



film labs and markets

IN DEVELOPMENT



Script selection



IMCINE award
"best project"



CINEAND award



rec Festival Internacional de
Cinema de Tarragona

LOS CABOS
GOES TO CANNES



MARCHÉ DU FILM
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

MICA

MERCADO INDUSTRIA
CINE Y AUDIOVISUAL | 2018



Especial mention ARGOS

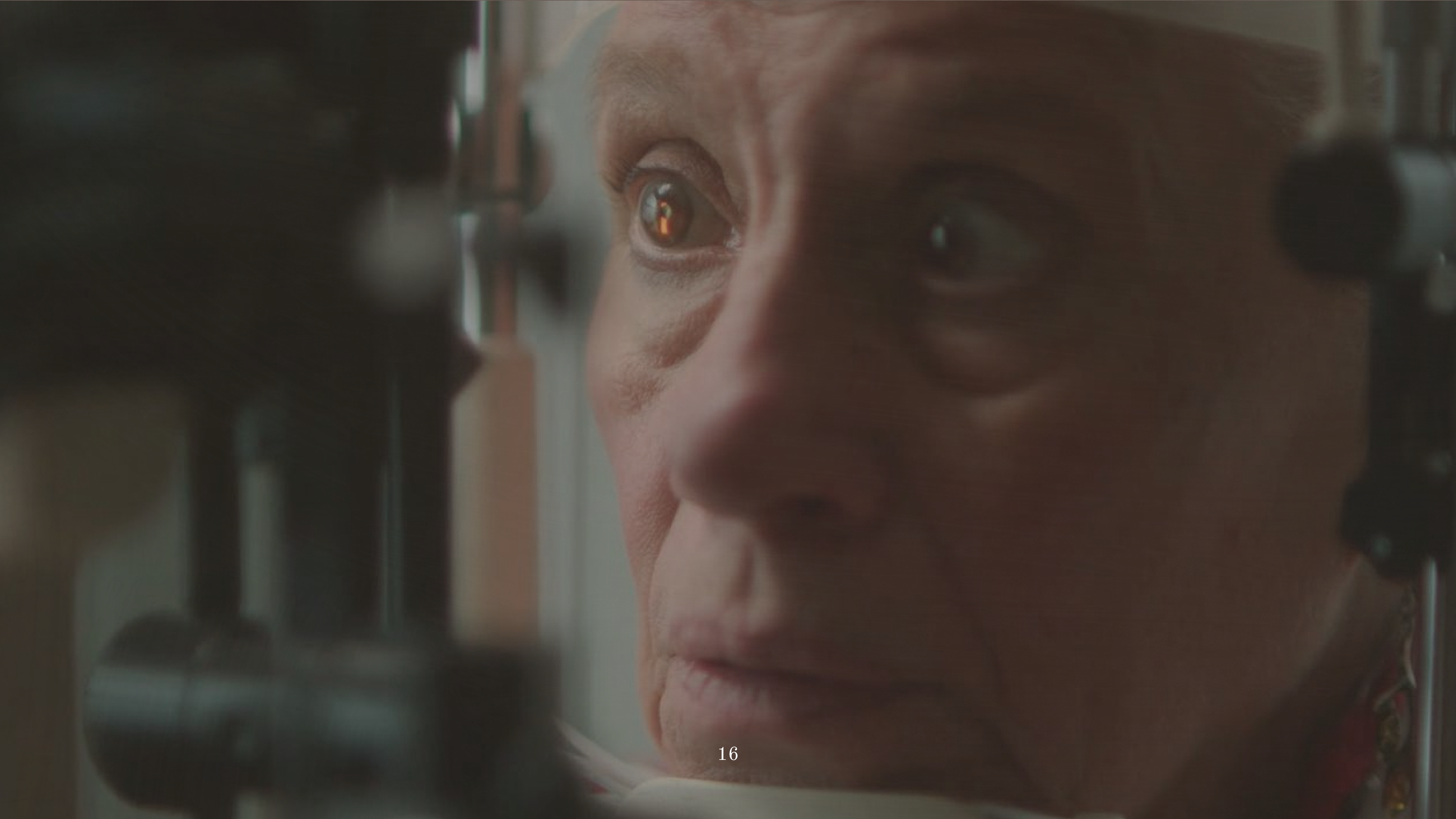


INDUSTRIA
FICG

Churubusco Award,
OA Sound Award,
Marketing Movie Runner Award



MECA S
INTERNATIONAL MARKET DEDICATED
TO ALMOST-FINISHED FILMS



the producers

APAPACHO FILMS - MÉXICO

Apapacho Films is a film production company based in Mexico City that has the support of a team with a long history and many award-winning audio-visual projects. They seek to create a more efficient platform for the co-production of fiction films, documentaries and animation between Europe and Mexico. Their objective is to develop projects with love and dedication, quality films that have a social meaning, or whose subject matter and production are of great interest to the public and critics. Their first project is the co-production of the documentary “The Nightingale and the Night. Chavela Vargas sings to Lorca”, supported by IBERMEDIA, premiered at the Guadalajara International Film Festival and present in over fifty international festivals.

MAGO PRODUCTION - ESPAÑA

Magoproduction is a Barcelona-based audio-visual production company that also has a base in Germany, France and Japan. Founded in 2002, with more than fifteen years of experience in the audio-visual sector and a long list of international productions and partners, the company focuses on the production of animation, documentaries and fiction at an international level and has received support from television networks such as Spanish

Television, Canal + France, Rai Italia, Colombian Signal, Peru TV, Discovery Asia, etc. In addition, they have been selected for funding from MEDIA Europe, Ibermedia, ICAA Spain and ICEC Catalunya. Their recent projects are the feature films “The Nightingale and the Night. Chavela Vargas sings to Lorca”, “Come to the sewers” and “The Light of Aisha”, currently under development. They have also produced the animated series “Tin & Tan”, “Flying Squirrels” and “Doctor W”. They are currently developing two animated series and a new fiction feature film.

CINEMA 226 - MÉXICO

Created in 2013 by Samantha Guillén and Adrián Bazán, Cinema226 is a coalition of companies that develops, produces and distributes current content for film and TV, with a sensitive balance between the commercial, the alternative and the author-centred for the dynamic audio-visual market of today, as shown by their most recent titles: Malacopa / Armando Casas-18, Feral / Andrés Kaiser-18, El año de la Plaga / Martín Ferrera-18 (ESP-MEX-BEL), El baile de la Gacela / Iván Porrás-18 (CRI-MEX), La venganza de Jairo / Simón Hernández-19 (COL-MEX), Courage / Rubén Rojo Aura-22 (MEX-ESP), Lecciones para Canallas / Gustavo Moheno / 22 and Regreso al Mar de mis Muertos / Esteban García (MEX-COL) / post.

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