

**A Portuguese Short Film based on a real
experience for a worldwide audience.**

ASTRAL ECHOES

written by

Catarina De Cèzanne





ASTRAL ECHOES

(DEFINITION)

When you drop a pebble in a pond, concentric circles ripple outward from the point of impact. Each circle corresponds to the circle closer to the center. All existence, including your being and your psyche, is like that. This ripple effect as it applies to people's understanding, it is called "astral echoes".

ASTRAL PLANE

(DEFINITION)

Astral Plane, the astral realm or the astral world is a different plane of existence postulated by classic, medieval, oriental, esoteric philosophies and mystery religions.

Astral Projection is a term used to describe an intentional out-of-body experience that assumes the existence of a subtle body called "astral body", through which consciousness can function separately from the physical body and travel throughout the astral plane, usually while dreaming or meditating.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

STAGE: SHORT SCREENPLAY

GENRE: SCI-FI, HORROR

RUNNING TIME: 10 MINUTES

WRITER: CATARINA DE CÈZANNE

COUNTRY: PORTUGAL

LANGUAGE: PORTUGUESE AND ENGLISH

MUSIC: SOFT ELECTRONIC, DARK WAVE.

MAIN ACTRESS: 1

SECONDARY: 1

SPECIAL EXTRAS: 2

VOICE ONLY: 2

EXTRAS: CITIZENS ON THE STREET

ESTIMATED SHOOTING DATES: 2

PREPARATION DAYS: 3

PRACTICAL EFFECTS: YES

LOCATIONS: 1 HOUSE + 1 EXTERIOR

ESTIMATED BUDGET: APPROX 18.000€

ESTIMATED SHOOTING DATES: 3

PREPARATION DAYS: 4

PRACTICAL EFFECTS: YES

EDITING DAYS: 7

ACTIVE PROMOTION, DESIGN POSTERS, ETC: 10 DAYS

LOCATIONS: 1 HOUSE + 1 EXTERIOR

PITCH

ASTRAL PLANE

A 10 minutes short film about a young woman who tries to do an astral projection to find her lost friend. Inspired by a true experience.

STORYLINE

A young female music composer with a hearing impairment in her right ear travels to a parallel dimension through astral projection in search of her best friend, but brings something with her...

LONG SYNOPSIS

Alexandra (Xana) is a young unemployed music composer with one deaf ear, who does not see a professional future for herself anymore in Portugal and seeks refuge in metaphysical experiences such as Astral Projection through the guidance of a secret society that sends messages via mail and internet videos that appear and disappear from the web.

She receives a diary and a CD from this society with steps to follow and experiences, she recognizes his friend Mario's handwriting whom she's been trying to call unsuccessfully. So she follows the steps but decides to change the meditation song on the CD. One night, while dreaming, she sees her own body detached from herself, in the bed and also her grandmother who seems sick and followed by a strange shadow that looks right at her. When Xana wakes up, she hears the news about her grandmother's sudden death and the shadow appears again, but this time, not in a dream - in the real world.

REFERENCES

Enter The Void (2009) meets Astral (2018)

MARKET

MARKETING STRATEGY

With my previous experience as a festival programmer for the Boston SciFi Film Festival and freelance Strategists, I am planning the marketing strategy to be local and creatively adjust to each city and country. I will use the same technique as The Blair Witch Project strategy, starting with word of mouth and printing posters to promote a disappearance and an esoteric cult as real, to enhance the Mystery in the short.

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Astral Plane is a 14A rating short film for both indie festivals interested in author cinema and genre festivals around the world, for Sci-Fi and Horror audiences and a wide range of generations.

It is a film for the fans of:

Doctor Who; Insidious; Awake; If I Stay; Waking Life and TV series such as The O.A, Black Mirror and Stranger Things.

As we are now in the following post-pandemic years, statistics say that there was a decrease in popular RELIGIONS such as Christianity and an increase in SPIRITUALITY and alternative topics. Census shows that in 2021, Christianity dropped by 5.5 million in England. However, more than 80% of the world population report being spiritual or believers in something bigger than themselves.

It is a good fit to premiere in Q1, at the beginning of the year when Sci-Fi festivals start in the USA which opens the doors to both American and European markets. The Portuguese language in the Sci-Fi genre gives its uniqueness in the Market outside of Portugal. Secret Societies, Women-in-Horror, Women-in-SciFi and Folk Horror are some of the trending keywords to expand the film through social media.

GOAL

Astral Plane will be made to promote the Feature Film that focuses on a love story between two souls separated by parallel dimensions. It was written to connect with everyone who feels disconnected from their own reality, either regarding love relationships, family, or social or economic situations. It was specially written for women's empowerment and the community with deaf impairment. It also exists to establish hybrid genres such as quantic-conscious dramas, spiritual and metaphysical themes and surrealism to cross a bridge between the indie and commercial genres such as horror and Sci-Fi.

At a more personal level, Astral Plane is my vision of the world which I wish to share with others.

STATEMENT

1/2

PERSONAL NOTE

I remember having a dream about my grandmother, 3 days before she passed away. Unlike other countries in Europe, Portugal's pensions are not enough to pay for retirement homes, so most elders die alone.

Therefore, the last time I saw her was in that very dream, which became our farewell. I can still remember everything in detail, including the smell of that dream.

Some years ago, when I was 18 years old, I decided to follow my friend Mário in some spirituality sessions, where we learned how to do astral projection, among other techniques. Since we lived far away from each other, we decided to practice from a distance. The goal was to think of a place and plan to meet each other in our dreams. After several months and failed attempts, I managed to astral project and was able to see Mario in his own home, and later in the supermarket.

When I told him about this, he was shocked and told me that all those details had really happened. While I was sleeping, we had at the supermarket indeed. It was like spying on someone whilst in a dream, in real time.

I decided to add both real experiences in a short film, with a bit of Horror at the end. I also added a part of myself in the protagonist Xana, who doesn't feel identified with the country she lives in and can't find a future or direction in her life, just as many pre-adults and teenagers feel these days about trying to be an artist in Portugal.

STATEMENT

2/2

This short screenplay is inspired by a real astral projection experience but more than an esoteric experience that went wrong it is essentially about a concern that affects us all. - This is a message of hope, screaming that our soul travels between worlds, therefore, death does not mean the end.

Like most people, the death of a family member marked me when I was young. I had intense dreams of this person visiting me, three days before her tragic death and today I still believe she was truly there, talking with me from a coma. Not saying "farewell", but "see you later".

Elements of Sci-Fi horror should embellish two types of fear: The real fear of losing a person we love and accepting loneliness. Also, it translates the fear of this dark creature as a metaphor for the fear of the unknown that we face as immigrants travelling abroad because our country cannot offer us a future.

As a director, I wanted to explore spiritual and metaphysical topics with more realism and a unique cinematographic style while introducing the feeling of emptiness and misplacedness that I feel in my home country Portugal. I take this approach in a simple phone conversation which it's supposed to introduce the bad side of Portugal that nobody talks about.

A good Linklater moment of crude reality that contrasts the SciFi/fantasy elements within the story.

I would contrast reality and parallel dimensions within the image. The reality with natural light and the observational style of cinematography, while the parallel dimension is the extreme opposite with strong colours and fake lighting. However, as we move forward within the narrative, this difference between the two worlds becomes almost unclear. This should mirror the emotions of the character who loses track of her own reality after she loses her best friend and then her grandmother.

Astral Plane is also a window for Spiritual Cinema made in Portugal. It is my small contribution that responds to the lack of spirituality that we live in nowadays. Nevertheless, as a director, I do not believe in the current trends of women-in-horror, women-in-scifi or women-cinema. I believe in women making all genres and types of cinema.

Catarina De Cèzanne
Janeiro, 2023

CHARACTERS LIST

Main Cast:

Alexandra (Xana)

Secondary:

Cult Man

Voice Only:

Carla

Father

Featured Extras:

Delivery Man

Grandmother

Extras:

Citizens

Stand-in for practical effects:

The Creature / Bestfriend Mário

TECHNICALS

Technical notes:

Light:

Parallel dimension: Euphoria with strong contrasts and shots

Reality: Soft warm light and blue contrast suggest nostalgia.

Colours:

Warm sunset light in reality with the contrast of blue nostalgia.

Purple, red and green in astral projection.

Dark blue and grey tones after the grandmother's death.

Angles and camera movements:

Zoom shots, Steadycam and Shoulder mount camera while in Astral Projection. Similar to "Tideland". Top shots and dutch angles like "Enter The Void". Mostly static Motionless shots when in reality.

Lenses: Fisheye lenses and 40mm when in a subjective camera.

Themes:

The presence of technology mixed with the spiritual world like Experimental Lain. Strong female character. Esoteric Cults.

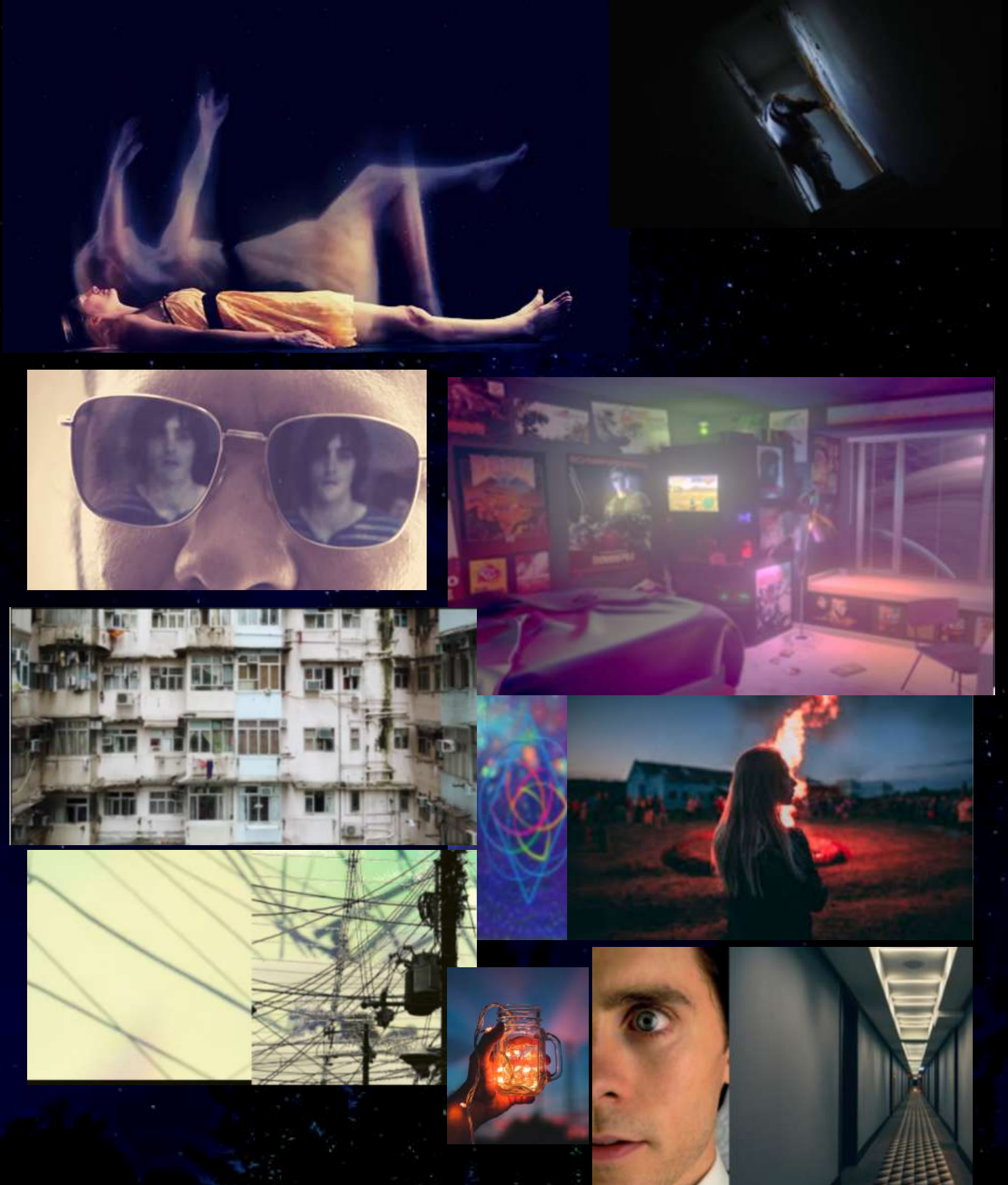
SFX:

Important that the technology and visual effects are not too obvious to the viewer. Let's try and make it more realistic as possible.

Audio: Audio 5.1 mix which attains sporadic but noticeable surround activity.

Catarina De Cèzanne
Janeiro, 2023

MOODBOARD

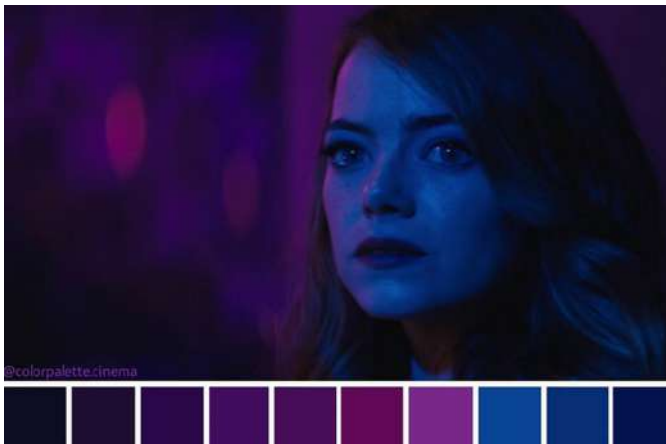


COLOUR

For Reality:



For dream:



ART DEPARTMENT

Different cinematography for both real-life and dream experiences that crosses and match in the end. A bedroom with enough space to dance, even though it will be full of this girl's personality. She is a music composer in that transition between teenage and adult life. She lives alone abroad and doesn't receive visits in a long time. The room is not organized in the same way that her inner world hasn't been either. Use of Stand-ins and natural effects with the support of software for details and textures. It is important to look real and indie.



SHADOWS on the street
(city view through the window)

The BEDROOM



The CREATURE



WARDROBE MOOD

Not too dark or too colourful. Not budhistic and no religions. Not “too normal”. Not hippie. Lot’s of thematic accessories and creative shapes. She could wear geometric shapes in an unusual way, in order to translate she opposes order and reality as it is.

Her clothes should tell us she is not a fanatic, but instead a cult and motivated person, with an independent and imaginative mind who does not follow trends.



SOUND

As a music composer, our main character is used to sound. We start with city noise, annoying electricity coming from the antennas and wires like it was a virus and we enter in her inner world with a comfortable sound that contrasts the noise of the outside world.

However, loneliness is translated in silence and it is also the moments of silence that are supposed to scare the audience and bring discomfort.

Xana plays dark waves and electronic music, similar to Mr. Kitty. We grow from soft to darker and vice versa according to the rhythm of the narrative.



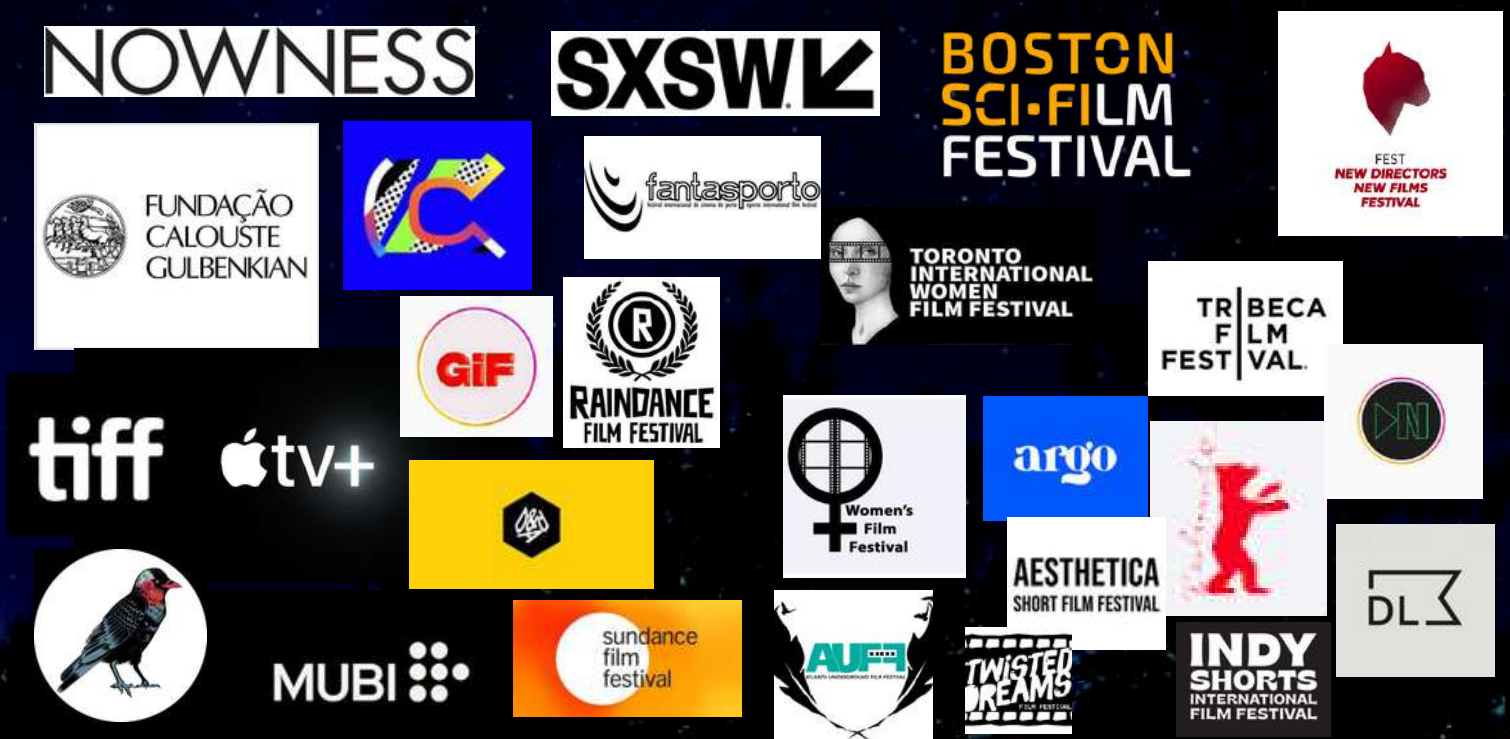
OUTREACH

The strengths of this short film that will work as an advantage in **national and international film festivals** are the following:

- **First-Time director**
- **Female director/writer** (for festivals dedicated to women filmmakers and other minorities)
- **Independent and low-budget** film festivals
- **Portuguese language film festivals** (including Latin festivals in the USA)
- Niche and **experimental** film festivals.
- Festivals of genres such as **horror, science fiction and spiritual** cinema.
- A female character with **earring impairment**.
- Festivals and events that address topics of spirituality, superstition and dreams.

However, we will not let the film "die" after the festival run, or fall into oblivion. We are planning a **marketing strategy** that involves expanding this film through social media and building a website that explores these topics.

Our focus also goes through digital libraries and streaming platforms, where more people consume independent cinema, such as Director's Library, MUBI and Girls in Film. Recent films like the famous "AfterSun" had prominent promotion on MUBI.



WRITER/DIRECTOR



I AM ADDICTED TO STORIES. BOREDOM IS DANGEROUS, IT MAKES ME TAKE REFUGE IN STORIES THAT HELP US TO FEEL THE WORLD BETTER. THEY'RE ALSO POISONOUSLY CONTAGIOUS, INFECTING US FOR GENERATIONS, EVEN WHEN WE SLEEP THEY PASS ALONG FROM EACH MIND INTO OUR REALITY...

Catarina César (or Catarina De Cezanne) hails from a small village called Moita, in Portugal. She is a screenwriter with a screenplay catalogue of more than 20 different stories of all genres and formats.

She's known for her work in production, and as a Script supervisor in the Spanish TV series "Serramoura", reality shows like A Place In the Sun, the recent Michael King Documentary and several commercials for known brands such as Prada, Volvo, and American Express, and Film Festivals such as The Midnight Soul Film Festival in Sweden and the Boston SciFi Film Festival in MA, USA.

Now, she works full-time at the production service company Southwest Productions and divides her work between Portugal, Spain, and the UK. Catarina has a Master's Degree in Film & TV executive Production and Management and has dedicated most of her life to writing.

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SOCIAL MEDIA

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TALENT

- Talent for the male role below (signed LOI).

No need to add traveling in the budget as his role can be performed overseas and sent digitally.

Julian Seager is an English award winning actor who signed an LOI to be a secondary character in this project.

Julian splits his time between the USA and UK. He appears in Netflix Hit Show Vikings Valhalla as Jarl Gorm, Fisherman's Friends and has recently had a lead role in the political horror movie Election Night. He has had roles on TV shows such as Bafta Award Winning Poldark, Miracle Workers, Cursed, Galavant and is a season regular for last 10 years on Doc Martin. He also appears in movies such as Death Race 4, Scareycrows, Viking Legacy, Survivorz and a plethora of Independent Films. The horror short Baghead where Julian plays the Gatekeeper has won a respectful amount of awards (50 at last count) including Best Supporting Actor for Julian at the British Horror Film Festival in 2019 and entitled Baghead to be submitted to the Academy for potential Oscar consideration.

His deep and versatile voice has lead him to work in Narration. His is featured in games such as Fable. He also narrates audio books and is in numerous radio plays.

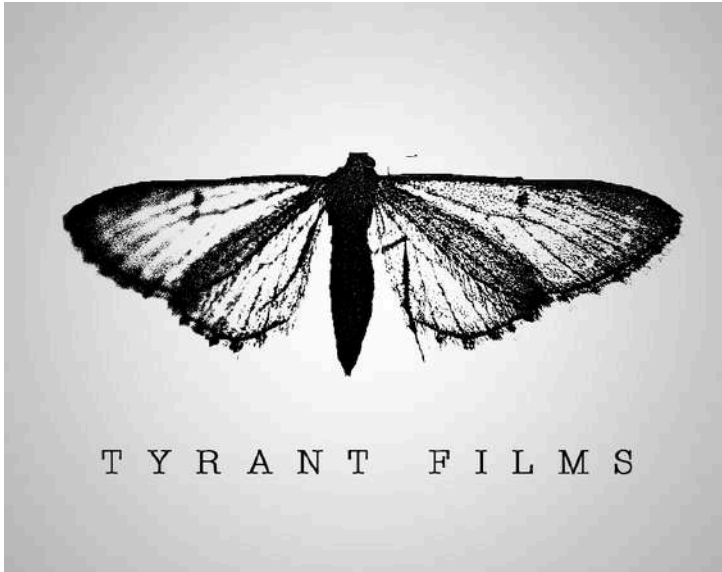


SUGGESTED CREW

The following are professionals who expressed interest in this project if shot in Portugal or overseas. They have worked with the director in other short films.

TYRANT FILMS

PRODUCTION & POST-PRODUCTION



Theo Hogben is the founder of Tyrant Films (Norway and Sweden) and the company is committed to this project for all post-production aspects, from special Effects to Video Editing, music composing and DCP making.

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IMDB: [HTTPS://WWW.IMDB.COM/NAME/NM4373305/](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm4373305/)

SOUTHWEST PRODUCTIONS

PRODUCTION SERVICE COMPANY



Produtor
[IMDB](#)

STAFFAN TRANAEUS



Staffan is the Executive Producer and founder of Southwest Productions LDA. He's also a Freelance photographer doing fashion and advertising photography mostly but also interior decoration, travel, music/album covers and documentary photography.

Staffan Tranaeus is known for Maya Nilo (Laura) (2022) and A Outra (2009).

SOUTHWEST PRODUCTIONS



It all started rather modestly back in 1993, when we were asked by friends to help out on music video shoots. Over the years we've worked on countless commercials, music videos as well as being involved in the production of TV series, documentaries, short and feature films and stills shoots. We can, therefore, say with some confidence that we have the experience, the knowledge and the network required to deliver a smooth-running production for the most demanding directors. That's our commitment!

"Check, double-check and then check again" – that's the mantra that our team members are taught to always bear in mind. Our production teams and technical crews are multi-lingual, experienced and close-knit. Our approach is positive and calm but efficient; we leave no stone unturned to achieve excellence. And we do it with a smile because we love what we do. With offices in Rio de Janeiro we also provide our services across the south Atlantic, in Brazil, and, for specific locations, we also venture into Spain.

Welcome to Southwest Productions for all your filming in Portugal... and beyond!

"IT ALL STARTS WITH A VISION."

KREATORI FILMS

PRODUCTION & SOCIAL MEDIA



Fabiano Cafure is a director, writer, DoP, editor and producer with a master's in Psychology from Washington College. In 2009 he founded an artistic institute and also an audiovisual production company called "Kreatori Films". Moreover, in 2014, he found a film festival open to submissions every year for films spoken in Portuguese or international films related to the Portuguese language and culture, called "O CUBO".

His passion goes from Film and Cinematography to helping young and aspiring artists pursue their dreams. He is also very knowledgeable in digital design such as making posters, flyers and digital content for new media, and social media platforms, as well as in digital marketing and modern strategies.

SOCIAL MEDIA

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PRODUCTION CREW



ANTONY FREW



PRODUCTION MANAGER (HE/HIM)

Antony Frew (AKA Tony Frew) is our Location and Production Manager. He is a jack of all trades in the film industry. Tony started his career by feeding the Roman army and the barbarians in the catering crew of the film *Gladiator* (2000) and since then, he has jumped into Film and TV production with fierce determination and an ongoing contagious cheerful attitude.

He is known for working in Guy Ritchie's "Snatch", "Mister Mayfair", "Miss Willoughby", "That Good Night", "The Other Half" and "Lost in Fuseta".



IRENE REIS LEITE



PROD. COORDINATOR (SHE/HER)

Irene is our production coordinator. She was born in the city of Porto, in the north of Portugal. She lived her whole life going to the cinema. Irene graduated in Public Relations concentrating in audiovisual; She worked in a non-profit organisation that helps families to have a decent home and a future to be whatever they choose.

Her journey began when she met a group of people in Porto dedicated to art. From then on it has been a whirlwind of experiences and new people with the same goal - to tell stories!

ART DEPARTMENT



REBECCA PILKINGTON



ART DIRECTOR (SHE/HER)

Rebecca is a Set Decorator and Art Director working in film and TV productions in the UK and Europe. She has also worked on many commercials and music videos.

Known for: Eternals, A Cure for Wellness and Kingsman: The Golden Circle.



ILKA SELMECZY



PROPS MASTER (SHE/HER)

Ilka is a prop master, designer and model maker. She is passionate about every aspect of this field. She likes to participate in the entire process, from design to realization. She collaborated in numerous Hollywood productions such as Dune, Shadow and Bone, The Continental and Poor Things. After working in the Hungarian film industry, she is now active in Spain and Portugal.

MAKE UP & HAIR



ANASTASIA TAYLOR

MAKEUP & HAIR (SHE/HER)

Anastasia Taylor is a hair & makeup artist from Saint Petersburg. She moved to Portugal and has been living in the country for more than 7 years. She has fifteen years of experience working in musicals, theatre and film.

Anastasia used to work on famous musicals such as Vampires Ball, Phantom of the Opera, Charly Chaplin, and Pola Negre.

VFX & SFX

LÁSZLÓ ADAM



VFX & SFX ARTIST (HE/HIM)

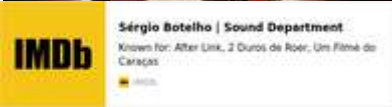
Laszlo is a compositing artist, VFX and matchmove artist from Hungary. He is currently he is working at a TV company called RTL Klub as a Creative Content Editor.

Working on projects, such as X Factor.

In his freetime, he is doing short films and writing his first feature film's script.

His plan is to move to L.A. and dig deep into film industry. Laszlo is known from award nominee SciFi short film [The Peacemakers \(2021\)](#) and [After Link \(2024\)](#).

SOUND



SÉRGIO BOTELHO



SOUND DIRECTOR (HE/HIM)

Sérgio Botelho is an audiovisual professional with more than 10 years of experience in TV, films, series (fiction and documentary) and advertising.

Performs the functions: sound director, post-production technician and audio operator. He is currently a Master's degree student in Production and sound technologies at Lusófona University in Lisbon.

Sérgio is known for *Um Filme do Caraças* and *2 duros de roer*.



ÓSCAR SOBRADO



SOUND DESIGNER (HE/HIM)

Sound Technician specialized in post-production by IES Audiovisual of Vigo (Spain), Óscar has participated as Sound Designer in different international productions such as TV shows and movies. He is a specialist in Immersive Sound, graduated from THE Image Campus in Buenos Aires (Argentina), and has participated in different immersive and virtual reality projects Through *Mesturasóns Produccións* and trying to connect sound creation with reality (virtual or not). Óscar articulates different types of work with which he tries to respond to the different needs of the projects in which he collaborates. He is known for *O Sabor das Margaridas*, the animation *Smoke and Suds*, the horror webseries *Terror na batea* and short films *Malla* and *Mariposa Nocturna*.

CONTACT

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