

#DESERT



A film by Christoph Behl

Lautaro Delgado

Victoria Almeida

William Prociuk

With the special appearance of: Lucas Lagré





THE DESERT

Year: 2013

Origin: Argentina

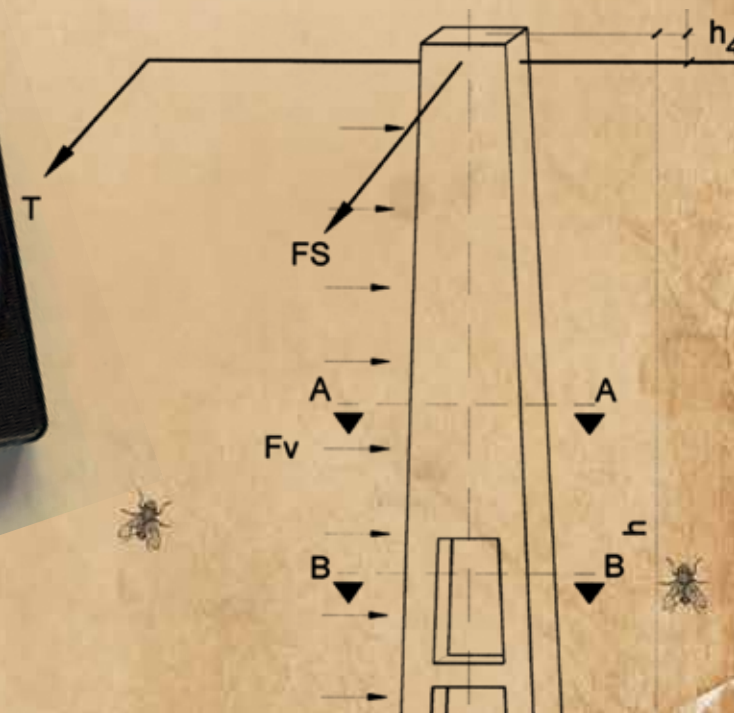
Running time: 98 minutes

Format: HD

Produced by: Subterránea Films

SYNOPSIS

Axel, Jonathan and Ana live together in a house that seems like a bunker in a post-catastrophic world. Outside is a threatening landscape, seen only as a background from the terrace of their house. Once they were a perfect love triangle, with strong bonds of friendship, but today nothing is left of it. Ana is with Jonathan and Axel is alone, bit by bit tattooing his body with flies, completely covering it with flies. Their old relationship cannot be recovered, the wounds run too deep. To escape from this hell, Ana has invented "the therapy room," a small room where they record their confessions on a video camera. Each one of them speaks to an imagined other and records it, though really Jonathan just sits alone in the room in silence to please Ana. Axel, on the other hand, only goes there to open a secret box that contains the tapes recorded by Ana. But everything changes when Axel and Jonathan go out on an expedition in search of provisions and return to the house with a zombie that they call Pythagoras. The creature, with an expressionless face, stares out at nothing, at a fixed point in space, like a lobotomized patient. Pythagoras' presence disturbs the others who begin to imagine an invisible presence in the room, exactly at the point where his gaze seems fixed. Perhaps that is why –or maybe it is because they need a cathartic element– they begin to beat him often, while he feels nothing of the torture, and the vicious circle of catharsis and guilt closes in more and more. Meanwhile Axel moves dangerously close to Ana, pushed on by Jonathan, as Ana gives into Axel's desire in a desperate attempt to stop the free fall of their house.





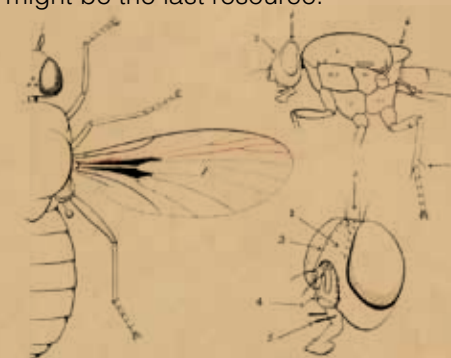
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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In Jean Paul Sartre's "No exit", three characters find themselves in hell and discovering, little by little, that "hell is other people", or rather than this, that hell consists in the lack of acknowledgement of others, such as the play suggests by the absence of mirrors. Because of a lack of immediate and essentially emotional answer, the characters end up back in hell, where the identity of each of them experiences a destructive process. In *The dessert*, Ana, Axel and Jonathan are also going through this process of decomposition. They are not stereotypes, carriers of a single wish; they are complex, ambiguous characters, who constantly disappoint us. It's precisely this ambiguity which creates that intimate hell, where the bodies intersect but never collide, as if they feared the encounter with each other. That bunker-house is settled within a time that's separated from the human syntagma. I had particular interest in creating this suspended and breached time with a slow motion camera, with a frustrated encounter between Axel and Ana, with tied down characters, spinning over themselves. Ana, Axel and Jonathan have crossed the barrier of suffering and, during the course of the film, they suffer in their own bodies the real impossibility of finding themselves. Violence arises from that impossibility.

However, that desert in which the characters roam like zombies in a continuous present, has not always been this way. A bit of the history of this triangle is revived in the film by means of the tapes that the characters record. It is Axel who makes the past return to the story, and with it, the idea of love. The flashbacks, these virtual fragments of the past, acquire in the film all the power of the present, and update the drama of something that never happened. There is something about that real virtuality of the past, about what was never said and, nevertheless, comes to light, that keeps undermining the ground of the present and turning it into a battlefield.

The movie pictures that final phase, that final death rattle of a complex relationship. Many times I have wondered whether these characters were not choosing to stay, somehow, agonizing, crashing like flies against an imaginary glass. As a director, I was interested from the start in the idea of three bodies confined in a limited space. To what extent the enemy is outside, and in which way the limits of the prohibited create the bodies of desire. During the process of the movie I discovered that, in a post-apocalyptic world, love might be the last resource.





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DIRECTOR'S BIO-FILMOGRAPHY

Christoph Behl



Christoph Behl was born in 1974 in Germany. In 2003, he graduated as Film Director at the Universidad del cine in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and completed his studies at the University Pompeu Fabra of Barcelona. His credits as director include "Public / Private", (Special Mention of the Jury at the Berlinale 2003), "Someone on the terrace", (Special Mention of the Jury to best Latin American young Director at Mar del Plata Film Festival 2005) and "Fortresses", a documentary co directed with Tomás Lipgot, which was praised by the local press.

Since 2007 he has produced creative documentaries from young directors: "Puppen", "Essay of a nation" and "The ways of wine" (FIPRESCI award at Mar del Plata Film Festival 2010.- San Sebastián and Berlinale 2011), while he directed several tv programs and documentaries for local television stations and European channels.

He recently directed "The Desert", his first feature film.

COMPANY PROFILE

subterránea

Subterránea Films was created in 2002 as an independent production company specialized in art house and documentary films. Until the day, Subterránea produced and co-produced more than 10 feature films, TV documentaries and several other audiovisual projects, with the support from public funds, television channels and private sponsors.

Since 2007, the company has attached young directors in different projects: "Puppen", "Essay of a nation" and "The ways of wine" (FIPRESCI award at the Mar del Plata Film Festival 2010 - San Sebastián Film Festival and Berlinale 2011) and the recently finished "The Desert", directed by Christoph Behl.

Subterránea Films has its offices in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

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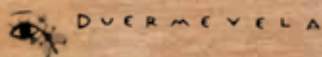
William Prociuk

With the special appearance of: Lucas Lagré

Direction: Christoph Behl / Executive Production: Tomás Lipgot /
Associated Production: Duermevela / Script: Christoph Behl, in collaboration with
Florencia Incarbone - Constanza Moncada - Nadia Méndez - Tatiana Barrero /
Production Manager: Nadia Martínez / Cinematography: Gustavo Biazzi /
Direction Assistant: Agustín Vidal
Production Design: Daniel Gimelberg / Costume Design: Paola Andrea Delgado
Make up and FX: Franca Gallo / Editing: Fernando Vega /
Post-Production Management: Esteban Perroud /
Sound Production and Post-production: Hernán Gerard - Fernando Vega /
Animation and Visual effects: Matías Kaplun

CONTACT DETAILS

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