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THE FILM CRITIC

a film by

Hernán Guerschuny

98 min., Argentina/Chile, 2013

In French and Spanish with English Subtitles

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<http://www.musicboxfilms.com/thefilmcritic>

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SYNOPSIS

A playful yet heartfelt take on the rom-com genre, *THE FILM CRITIC* follows Victor Tellez (Raphael Spregelburd), a world-weary Buenos Aires film critic who prefers to think in French and eschews romantic clichés...until he finds himself living one.

Riddled with ennui and the *maladie du cinema*, Tellez drifts from screening to screening in search of cinematic perfection, casting judgment on filmmakers and their works with scathing precision. When a chance meeting throws him into the offbeat path of gorgeous thrill-seeker Sofia (Dolores Fonzi), he starts to question his meticulous intellectual routine and realizes there's more to his story than he ever dreamed.

BIOGRAPHIES

HERNAN GUERSCHUNY, DIRECTOR

Born in Buenos Aires in 1973, Hernán Guerschuny studied filmmaking at the CIC and Social Communication at the UBA. He is one of the directors of Argentine film magazine *Haciendo Cine*. He created his own production company, HC, and has made several short films, including "The Date", which premiered at the AXN Film Festival. *The Film Critic (El Critico)*, his first feature, was an official section at BAFICI, AFI Washington, Raindance (London), San Pablo, and Gijon, among other festivals.

RAFAEL SPREGELBURD (TELLEZ)

Born in Buenos Aires in 1970, Rafael Spregelburd began studying theater as an actor, but soon turned to playwriting. His works have premiered at theatres across Argentina and Europe and earned numerous local and international awards, most notably the Tirso de Molina (Spain), the Casa de las Americas (Cuba), the National Playwriting Award (Argentina), and the Municipal (Buenos Aires).

He studied Combined Arts at the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters at the University of Buenos Aires and left in 1996 to devote himself to the theatre. He is also a translator of English and German, specializing in Harold Pinter, Steven Berkoff, Sarah Kane, Mark Ravenhill, Marius von Mayenburg, and Reto Finger.

Rafael also starred in and co-directed the telefilm "Floresta" (2007) and appeared in "The Man Next Door" (2009), "Days of Vinyl" (2012), "Water and Salt" (2009), and "The Round" (2008)—which earned him a Condor Award nomination.

DOLORES FONZI (SOFIA)

Born in Buenos Aires in 1978, Dolores Fonzi is an Argentine actress of stage and screen. She began her career as a model and television actress but soon took the film industry by storm, gaining recognition for *Burnt Money* (Marcelo Piñeyro, 1999); *Waiting for the Messiah* (Daniel Burman, 2000), *Private Lives* (Fito Paez, 2001) with Gael García Bernal, *Black Box* (Luis Ortega, 2001), *The Bottom of the Sea* (Damián Szifrón, 2003), *The Aura* (Fabian Bielinsky, 2005), *The Broken Woman* (Sebastian Faena, 2007), *Death Club* (James Merendino, 2008) and *In the Open* (Hernan Belon, 2011).

She is well known for roles in the TV miniseries "Catfight" and "Killer Women" and appeared in the Spanish-language adaptation of the John Ford play "'Tis Pity She's a Whore". Dolores began working behind the scenes as a producer on the miniseries "I'm Your Fan," which was adapted by Canana Films in Mexico in 2010. After taking a break from television, she returned in 2012 with roles in the series "Graduates" and the Spanish adaptation of the series "In Treatment".

INTERVIEW WITH HERNAN GUERSCHUNY

HOW DID YOU WRITE THE SCRIPT? DID YOU START WITH THE CHARACTER, HIS HABITS AND GESTURES, OR WITH THE PROBLEMS THAT HAPPEN WITH THE CONTRADICTION OF A CRITIC WHO HAS TO CROSS TO THE OTHER SIDE AND WRITE A SCRIPT?

Hernán Guerschuny: No, I think it's neither of those. The main thing was an image, a moment in everyday life that, for some reason, conveys in an instant: he lived a breakup, and as the girl cried and said she did not know how she would go on living, I thought of the best camera setting for that scene. That cynicism, this split, gave me the inspiration for the idea of how extreme this attitude would be in a character. In general, in film I think it's much more potent to start with an image, since the visual involves an emotional dimension, which is much more powerful than starting with a preconceived idea, by rational reflection.

HAD YOU CONSIDERED RAFAEL SPREGELBURD FOR TÉLLEZ OR DOLORES FONZI FOR SOFIA? HOW DID YOU CHOOSE THE ACTORS?

HG: As usual in a national film debut, the process of making THE FILM CRITIC took many years, more than I would have liked. Whereupon, the decisions I took in that time of seeking funding were changing as the script matured. The truth is I did not quite find the ones who should be Téllez or Sofia, possibly because all the dreaming of the characters, anchoring them in specific humanities, always meant a loss. But of course it was a prejudice.

Shortly before filming, I went to see Rafael Spregelburd in the live production APATRIDA (STATELESS), in which he plays two characters: an artist and an art critic. I left convinced that it should be him. Not many actors can say certain intellectual texts as part of their usual way of speaking.

And Dolores...I crossed paths with her at a festival, and upon seeing her said, "But what was I thinking? She is Sofia." It was so obvious to me. She's an enigmatic actress, intelligent, fresh, with a great sense of the absurd, and extremely beautiful. All that I needed for this character.

TÉLLEZ IS DIVORCED, LOOKING FOR AN APARTMENT AND SHORT ON MONEY... IS HE REALLY IN CONTROL OF HIS SITUATION? DOESN'T IT SEEM THAT AT ONE POINT HE GETS CARRIED AWAY WITH WHAT HAPPENS TO HIM AND SEEKS TO PROVOKE IT?

HG: It's a possible interpretation, and I like it a lot. Téllez is a man with a scale of rigid, judgmental values who leads a life that has been in an apparently stable situation for many years. But soon we find out he is a man in crisis. And the interesting thing about the crisis is that it sets a survival instinct in motion. So this

guy, who spent the last twenty years sitting (in an armchair watching movies or in a chair in a café with his colleagues, or at his desk writing), must take action. The excuse is this girl in the movie (bad), but she could very well be the product of his imagination, something created by his unconscious that drives him out of that very rigid structure that traps him.

ONE OF THE CONCLUSIONS THAT I TOOK FROM THE FILM IS THAT THE CRITIC CALLS FOR A MORE INNOCENT VIEW OF FILM, A LOOK THAT'S NOT SO INTELLECTUAL, BUT MORE PASSIONATE. WHAT IS YOUR OPINION, OR WHAT'S THE INTENTION OF YOUR STORY?

HG: I think that watching films is by definition an emotional experience. All that we relate to today professionally in cinema, we begin with children laughing, crying and suffering in a room. After the analytical moment first arrives, that of course throws in interesting elements like being able to find relationships between a film and other works, even between films and life. But I think that primary, sensitive experience with cinema opens a unique world that reason doesn't understand.

TECHNICAL INFO

Year: 2013

Countries of Production: Argentina-Chile

Running time: 98 minutes

Format- DCP, Dolby SR Color - B&N

Production Companies HC FILMS – LAGARTO CINE – STORYBOARD MEDIA

With help from the Instituto de Cine y Artes Audiovisuales Programa Ibermedia

CAST

Rafael Spregelburd	Tellez
Dolores Fonzi	Sofia
Ignacio Rogers	Arce
Blanca Lewin	Pinni
Telma Crisanti	Agatha
Ana Katz	Roxana

CREDITS

Director/Screenwriter	Hernán Guerschuny
Producers	Pablo Udenio, Hernán Guerschuny, Hugo Castro-Fau, Carolina Álvarez
Co-producers	Carlos Nuñez, Gabriela Sandoval
Cinematography	Marcelo Lavintman
Editor	Agustin Rolandelli
Art Director	María Eugenia Sueiro
Costumes	Roberta Pesci
Sound	Emiliano Biaiñ, Jérica Suárez
Music	Juan Blas Caballero
Executive Producer	Pablo Udenio

About HC Films

HC Films is the production company associated with *Filmmaking*, a renowned magazine published in Argentina for the past 19 years. HC has organized major international seminars with figures such as Emir Kusturica, Alex de la Iglesia, Mika Kaurismaki, and Oliver Stone, as well as curating festival sections at the European Film Market in Berlin, Bafici, Mar del Plata, and Ventana Sur film market.

As a production company, HC Films makes commercials, documentaries and television of quality. Currently in development are feature films *Recreo* and *Abzurdah*, an adaptation of the bestseller by Cielo Latini, and the animated series *Petit, The Monster*, based on the book by award-winning author Isol. *THE FILM CRITIC* is the company's first feature film.

About Music Box Films

Founded in 2007, Music Box Films is a leading distributor of international, American independent, and documentary content in North America along with the best in international TV series and mini-series.

Releases in 2014 included Roger Michell's *LE WEEK-END*, written by Hanif Kureishi and starring Jim Broadbent; the Emmy Award-winning French language series "The Returned"; Pawel Pawlikowski's 2015 Academy Award®-winning film *IDA*; and the Sundance Audience Award-winning documentary *THE GREEN PRINCE*.

Recent titles include Edet Belzberg's award-winning documentary *WATCHERS OF THE SKY*, Dominik Graf's *BELOVED SISTERS*, Germany's official submission to the Academy Awards®, and Shlomi and Ronit Elkabetz's *GETT: THE TRIAL OF VIVIANE AMSALEM*, Israel's official submission to the Academy Awards®.

Music Box Films is independently owned and operated by the Southport Music Box Corporation, which also owns and operates The Music Box Theatre, Chicago's premiere venue for independent and foreign films.