



DE JUEVES A DOMINGO
THURSDAY TILL SUNDAY

A FILM BY DOMINGA SOTOMAYOR



TIGER AWARDS COMPETITION
IFFR 2012



SYNOPSIS

It all begins on a Thursday when two children go on a holiday trip with their parents to the north of Chile. It all ends on a Sunday. Lucía (10) and Manuel (7) travel for the long weekend with their parents, Ana and Fernando. The couple has decided to break up but has previously promised their children to go to the north, so they decide to travel anyway. The journey slowly turns into a final goodbye. It's a long route. The landscape's loneliness and the car's confinement begin to surface the troubles of the couple. The children just want to get to the beach; Fernando, to a piece of land his father has left him; and Ana, to a nonexistent place where things are fine again. THURSDAY TILL SUNDAY is Lucía's distant and fragmented outlook on this last family trip.

A close-up, slightly out-of-focus photograph of a young girl's face. She has dark hair and is looking towards the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a blurred outdoor setting, possibly a thatched roof or a natural structure, with green foliage visible in the distance.

DIRECTOR
DOMINGA SOTOMAYOR

Dominga was born in Santiago de Chile in 1985. In 2007 finishes her filmmaking studies and creates production company CINESTACION. She has directed the short-films CESSNA [2005], NOVIEMBRE [November – 2007], DEBAJO [Below – 2007], LA MONTAÑA [The Mountain – 2008] and VIDEOJUEGO [Videogame – 2009] which have taken part and received awards in several international film festivals.

Her first feature film, DE JUEVES A DOMINGO [Thursday till sunday] premiered in the Tiger Competition at the Rotterdam International Film Festival 2012. The film was supported by Cannes Cinéfondation Résidence, Hubert Bals Fund, Dutch Film Fonds, Fondo de Fomento Audiovisual, CORFO, Ibermedia, Buenos Aires Lab, AustraLab and TyPA.

Her second feature film project, TARDE PARA MORIR JOVEN [Late to die young] is currently being developed in the Jerusalem International Film Lab and Binger FilmLab programmes.

A photograph showing the interior of a car. Three people are visible from behind, looking out the front and side windows. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting dusk or dawn. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

ABOUT THE FILM BY DOMINGA SOTOMAYOR

DE JUEVES A DOMINGO comes out of memories of family trips, of many hours of travelling, the weariness and the children's games; all those things that are only thought and occur under confinement.

I am motivated by the relationship between film and memory, with a certain refusal to forget that in De jueves a domingo has to do with capturing childhood. I think that the children have natural fears that they eventually learn to forget, and a straight-forward take on things. It has to do with an unconditional take on love and a certain form of resigned sadness.

In the film, there is something contained under the inertia, a crisis that is revealed by fragments. I wanted to work on a *mise-en-scène* that's conflictive by itself, closely related to the parcial vision of the children and the car. I wanted to detach the story from the burden of its subject -the separation of the parents- focusing on the routine and the singularity of this weekend.



INTERVIEW

HOW WAS THE DEVELOPING PROCESS OF THURSDAY TILL SUNDAY? WAS THIS AN ORIGINAL IDEA?

Some years ago, I found some photographs from a family trip; in one of them, two children travelled over the top of the car, taking grip against the wind, and I thought the situation was both amazing and dangerous. The children were my cousin and myself, my parents drove inside. I felt interested in the idea of these two separate trips within the same trip. The polarity of the children in one dimension and the parents inside, closed in. I began to write the screenplay with this image as a starting point.

This is a project that stems out of memories of childhood trips, the hours of confinement across the roads of Chile. Given the geography, the long thin shape of the country, we would always go either south or north, and the trip always became a long route, regardless where we were to go to arrive. The screenplay grows out of that sum of real and fictitious memories, and above all, from the feeling of being a kid and be always left out of frame, watching incomplete images, as one does from the backseat of a car. I feel that a lot of what's in the film was already present in the screenplay. I wrote thinking in the shots, in the sound, carefully describing random moments, what is between the significant moments, scenes that don't seem to add or sum up in what could be a last family trip. Afterwards, that version of the screenplay was completed in the 2010 Cinéfondation Résidence, from where I left with a final draft. I then went back to Chile and we began production.

I believe that the development process of the film was constructive, I attended workshops and co-production meetings in order to get the finance to shoot. When the moment came to shoot the film, I felt that the meaning and the emotion that I wanted to drive the film to were very clear in my head, and that was key, taking into account the complexity of a shooting almost fully done inside a car, travelling with the whole crew and with children in every scene.





THE CINEMATOGRAPHY OF THE FILM IS VERY TIGHT. HOW WAS THE WORK YOU DID WITH CINEMATOGRAPHER BÁRBARA ÁLVAREZ FOR THE FILM?

Bárbara was the first person to be on board among the crew. When I had a first draft of the screenplay, I took a trip to Montevideo to meet her, and she was willing to get involved. We kept in touch for a while until she travelled to Chile for the shooting. I valued the fact that she is foreign and this would mean a fresh pair of eyes for these landscapes, with both deeper innocence and distance. Since the beginning of the work, I feel she had the same film as I had in my mind, the whole process was very fluid and rewarding. At the same time, I was surprised by her simplicity and her talent when working, the film was always a top priority, and the way I wanted to shoot the film made sense to her; we agreed that the chosen colour tones offered an indistinct time quality or a timeless veil for the whole film; we didn't want to use much lighting inside the car; the frames would not be able to contain all that they should and we would see everything from inside the car; we would shoot the nights as real dark nights. We shot the film in s16mm, a decision that enabled for certain freedom (less lighting, long shots), and carried interesting constrains as well, we were to shoot a definite amount of material and we had to be precise.

We realised that describing the shots within the car was not an easy task to do, individually or case by case, so we defined a quite simple shot terminology to define them and have the rest of the crew understand each shot without losing time or hurting the dynamics of the shooting. The camera positions were not many, I wanted to constantly come back to the same frames in order to feel the transformation withing them, the disintegration, and be able to observe the car as another character facing the consequences of the trip.

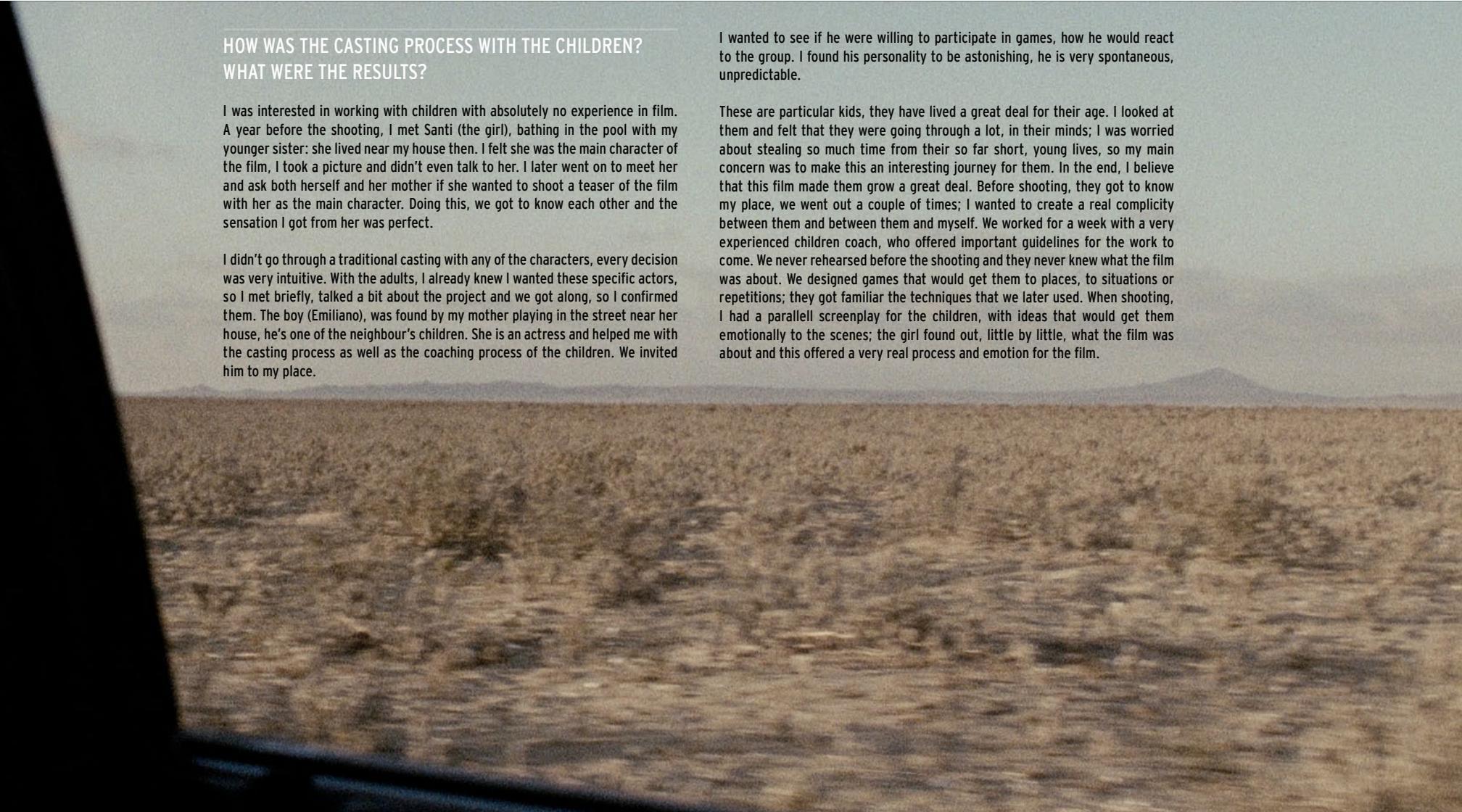
HOW WAS THE CASTING PROCESS WITH THE CHILDREN? WHAT WERE THE RESULTS?

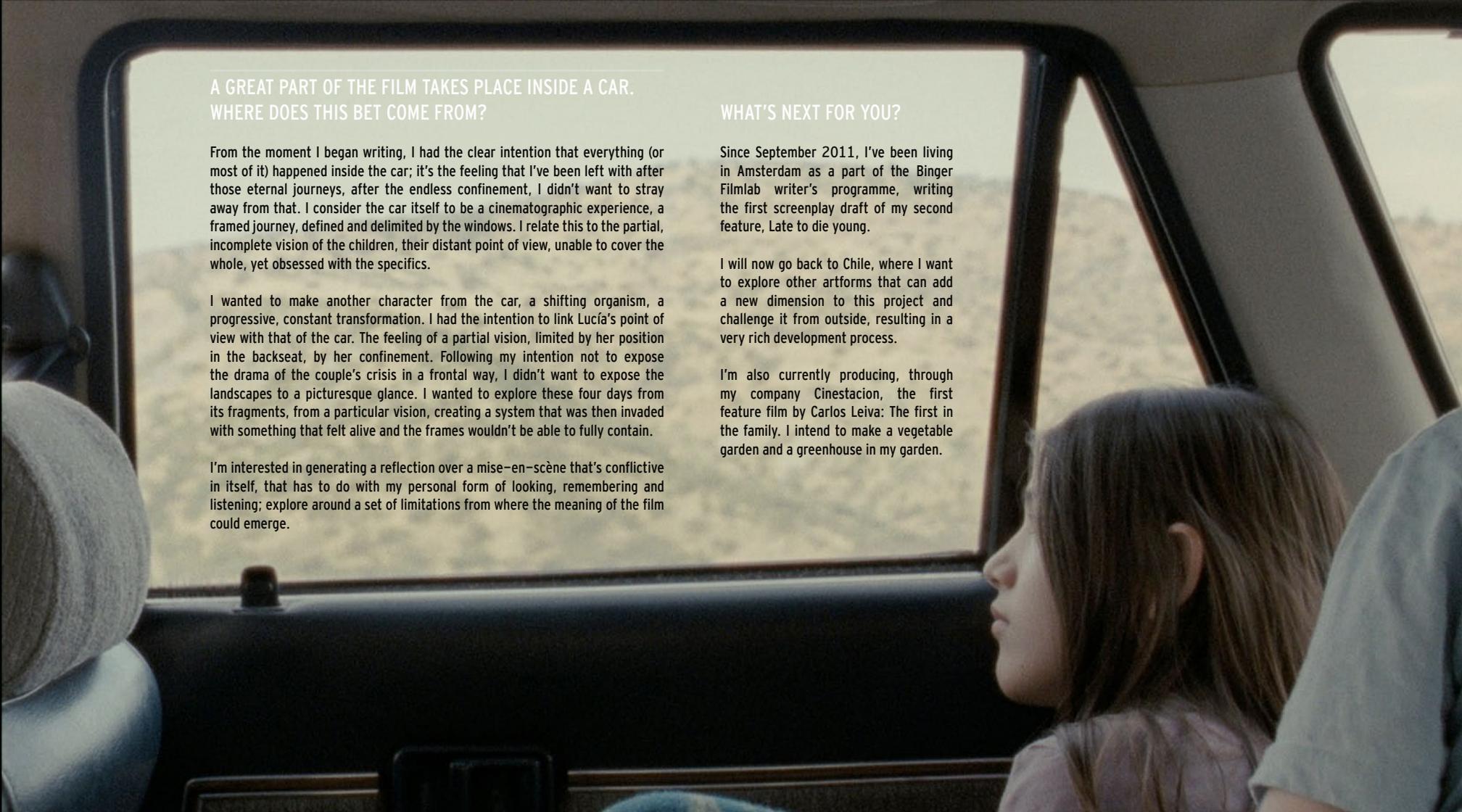
I was interested in working with children with absolutely no experience in film. A year before the shooting, I met Santi (the girl), bathing in the pool with my younger sister: she lived near my house then. I felt she was the main character of the film, I took a picture and didn't even talk to her. I later went on to meet her and ask both herself and her mother if she wanted to shoot a teaser of the film with her as the main character. Doing this, we got to know each other and the sensation I got from her was perfect.

I didn't go through a traditional casting with any of the characters, every decision was very intuitive. With the adults, I already knew I wanted these specific actors, so I met briefly, talked a bit about the project and we got along, so I confirmed them. The boy (Emiliano), was found by my mother playing in the street near her house, he's one of the neighbour's children. She is an actress and helped me with the casting process as well as the coaching process of the children. We invited him to my place.

I wanted to see if he were willing to participate in games, how he would react to the group. I found his personality to be astonishing, he is very spontaneous, unpredictable.

These are particular kids, they have lived a great deal for their age. I looked at them and felt that they were going through a lot, in their minds; I was worried about stealing so much time from their so far short, young lives, so my main concern was to make this an interesting journey for them. In the end, I believe that this film made them grow a great deal. Before shooting, they got to know my place, we went out a couple of times; I wanted to create a real complicity between them and between them and myself. We worked for a week with a very experienced children coach, who offered important guidelines for the work to come. We never rehearsed before the shooting and they never knew what the film was about. We designed games that would get them to places, to situations or repetitions; they got familiar the techniques that we later used. When shooting, I had a parallel screenplay for the children, with ideas that would get them emotionally to the scenes; the girl found out, little by little, what the film was about and this offered a very real process and emotion for the film.



A photograph of the interior of a car, viewed from the passenger side. A young girl with long brown hair is sitting in the back seat, looking out the window towards the right. The car's interior, including the headrests and window frames, is visible. The background outside the window is a bright, hazy landscape.

A GREAT PART OF THE FILM TAKES PLACE INSIDE A CAR. WHERE DOES THIS BET COME FROM?

From the moment I began writing, I had the clear intention that everything (or most of it) happened inside the car; it's the feeling that I've been left with after those eternal journeys, after the endless confinement, I didn't want to stray away from that. I consider the car itself to be a cinematographic experience, a framed journey, defined and delimited by the windows. I relate this to the partial, incomplete vision of the children, their distant point of view, unable to cover the whole, yet obsessed with the specifics.

I wanted to make another character from the car, a shifting organism, a progressive, constant transformation. I had the intention to link Lucía's point of view with that of the car. The feeling of a partial vision, limited by her position in the backseat, by her confinement. Following my intention not to expose the drama of the couple's crisis in a frontal way, I didn't want to expose the landscapes to a picturesque glance. I wanted to explore these four days from its fragments, from a particular vision, creating a system that was then invaded with something that felt alive and the frames wouldn't be able to fully contain.

I'm interested in generating a reflection over a *mise-en-scène* that's conflictive in itself, that has to do with my personal form of looking, remembering and listening; explore around a set of limitations from where the meaning of the film could emerge.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU?

Since September 2011, I've been living in Amsterdam as a part of the Binger Filmlab writer's programme, writing the first screenplay draft of my second feature, *Late to die young*.

I will now go back to Chile, where I want to explore other artforms that can add a new dimension to this project and challenge it from outside, resulting in a very rich development process.

I'm also currently producing, through my company Cinestacion, the first feature film by Carlos Leiva: *The first in the family*. I intend to make a vegetable garden and a greenhouse in my garden.



PRODUCTION COMPANIES

FORASTERO

FORASTERO LTDA was created in 2009 by Gregorio Gonzalez. Its first production was “La Nana” (The Maid), winner of the World Cinema Grand Jury Prize in Sundance and nominated for the Golden Globe Awards for Best Foreign Film in 2009. Forastero coproduced “Roman’s Circuit”, which premiered at the 2011 Toronto International Film Festival and won a Special Jury Prize at FICValdivia. “Thursday Till Sunday” is Forastero’s third feature film.

CINESTACION

CINESTACION is a production company based in Santiago de Chile created by a group of young filmmakers in 2007 with the goal to develop independent film projects. CINESTACION has produced eight shortfilms that have received various distinctions and awards in national and international film festivals. “Thursday till Sunday” by Dominga Sotomayor, is their first feature film.

CIRCE FILMS

Circe Films is an Amsterdam-based company producing feature films for the national and international market. Since 1996, the managing director, Stienette Bosklopper, has been establishing enduring relationships with unique and innovative filmmakers, like Nanouk Leopold, Radu Jude, Seyfi Teoman, Tsai Ming-liang, Sacha Polak, Esther Rots and recently Dominga Sotomayor.

TECHNICAL INFO

Year – 2012

Country – Chile / The Netherlands

Duration – 94 min

Screening Format – DCP / 35mm, Color, 1:1.85, Dolby SR

Shooting Format – s16mm, Color

Production Companies

FORASTERO – CINESTACION – CIRCE FILMS

Supported by

Cinéfondation Résidence, Hubert Bals Fund, Dutch Film Fonds,
Fondo de Fomento Audiovisual, CORFO, Ibermedia, AustraLab,
Buenos Aires Lab, TyPA.

CREDITS

Written & Directed by Dominga Sotomayor

Producer – Gregorio González, Benjamin Domenech

Co-producer – Stienette Bosklopper

With: Santi Ahumada, Emiliano Freifeld, Francisco Pérez-Bannen,
Paola Giannini, Jorge Becker, Axel Dupré.

Cinematography – Bárbara Álvarez

Production Design – Estefanía Larraín

Costume Design – Juana Díaz

Editing – Danielle Fillios, Catalina Marín

Sound Design – Roberto Espinoza

Music – Diego Fontecilla, Elisa Arteché



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