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ärtico - arctic - arktisch

Synopsis

"Family versus Solitude": Simon and Jota are two young traveller scoundrels who hit the street every day to eke out a living. Each one wants what he lacks. Simon cannot stand being surrounded by his large family all the time. Jota wants to stop leading a lonely life and will do his best to have his own family.

The Characters:

My name is Simon. I am 20 years old. Some time ago I fucked up. I left my lifelong girlfriend pregnant. Now I have a 3-year-old son. I live at my parents' house and everything at the moment is a nightmare. I like to hang out with Jota, my best friend. Together we snatch some stuff, and that helps us get by.

My name is Jota. I am 20 years old. I live alone in a hut by the river. All I want is to have a child, a family to never be alone again. I am going to show Debi that I am capable of providing for everything she needs and giving her a good life.

My name is Debi and I am 18. My family has gone to Brazil and I am all on my own. They tell me to make the best of my life, to study and to be responsible. I try, but I am too young and I lose my mind at times.

My name is Lucía and I am 18. I live in a lousy guesthouse. My parents live in a village and they don't care about me. They have never understood me. I was in prison once for a few months, for a dodgy deal I made, and not even my mother came to see me.

My name is Alba and I am 19. When I got pregnant I was only a child. Now every day is the same for me. I feel as if I have thrown my life away. The only thing that gives me happiness is my son.

Some notes by the director and producer.

Artico closes the circle “family versus loneliness” as a stage in my life.

This is the big background of the film. A struggle inside me. Something I have felt for many years but I am not capable to solve. I can't find my “dream sweetheart” and meanwhile, I get older and more like a grumpy truck driver every day. On the other hand, it's something I see around me: if you have children, you will never have peace and privacy but you will have love for ever!

When I was a child and I was at school, the travellers living in a shanty quarter nearby used to jump the fence and steal our ball, our marbles or anything we were playing with. They left with our stuff, laughing, and we stood there, feeling stupid. But the funny thing was that I saw them almost like heroes! I felt envy of their boldness and their careless ways. I prefer to stick to the romantic side of this story and I used to picture them leading free lives, full of exploits, as if they were Robin Hoods, with nothing to lose... but not much to gain either, to be fair, looking at it from the distance now.

In “Artico” I intend to express what has been rolling inside my heart lately by portraying a few young 21st-century ruffians. I sometimes define it as “still life in *film noir*”.

When I was feeling exhausted finishing off (wrapping up) my previous film *Iceberg*, I thought I would never make any more, but then I went to the Rotterdam IFF (along with my assistant director, Manuel) and I realised that there were other ways of making films, so no matter what, I had to make a new one by any means, at great risk, somehow gutting my heart. Arctic was born there.

The actors are real life characters whose lives do not differ much from fiction. Most of them are the same ones who had debuted in my previous film, since *Arctic* is the continuation of *Iceberg*. We take back those characters three years later and see what has become of their lives.

This film pays tribute to the *quinqui* (“hoodlum”) cinema of the 80's, when juvenile delinquency began to grow in Spain, becoming a big social issue. It is a personal homage to those films by Carlos Saura, Eloy de la Iglesia or Juan Antonio de la Loma... And to my favourite backstreet character, the famous *Pirri*.

This film is also a personal gift to my roots and my hometown, Salamanca. Here you will see its sights, its characters and its most ancestral music. I meant to make it in the most beautiful and simplest possible way, searching inside me, trying to find myself.

Signed: Gabriel, Gabri, GA. Whatever!

Bio/filmography

Gabri Velázquez (Salamanca, Spain, 1968) is a self-taught filmmaker. He has been acknowledged since his beginnings in 1996, when he won the Luis Buñuel Film Award with his first short film. In that year he moved to Madrid, but his work has always been deeply rooted in his provincial homeland.

In 2002 he produced ***De Salamanca a aninguna parte (From Salamanca to Nowhere)***, directed by Chema de la Peña. The film appeared in the Official Selection at the Valladolid International Documentary Festival and was a finalist for the Goya Awards in 2002.

In 2005 he wrote, directed and produced - along with Chema de la Peña - his first film, ***Sud Express***. He competed at the Official Selection of the San Sebastian International Festival, and received the Signis Award and the Solidarity Award from the Cinema Writers' Circle. It was one of the most internationally renowned Spanish films in 2005.

Amateurs (2008), was again featured at the San Sebastian Festival, in the Official Zabaltegi/New Directors Selection, to a huge success, both amongst the audience and the critics. He received the award for Best Film and Best Director at the La Palma International Film Festival. After premiering in Paris, it was shown on a great tour worldwide.

Iceberg (2011) won the Special Jury Mention at the Gijón International Film Festival in the 2011, setting off for some of the most prestigious international festivals in the world, such as Rotterdam (Holland), Mexico DF, Cartagena de Indias (Colombia), Rabat (Morocco), Durban (South Africa), etc. It also got the First Prize and the Young Jury Award at the Cinespagnol Festival in Nantes (France). Again, it appeared at the San Sebastian Festival and the Seminci in Valladolid (Spain).

La Raya (The Borderline), "The Way Home" (2012) was a chapter of a collective work by 5 Spanish and Portuguese directors, filmed for the Castile and Leon Regional Government, which was written, directed and produced in collaboration with Chema de la Peña, as a cultural, cross-border film, integrated in the European Union's NETWORKS II program.

Arctic (2014) is the film that closes Gabri Velázquez's trilogy on the axis "*Family versus Solitude*". Its world premiere will take place at the Berlinale 2014, within the Generation Section.

Besides, Velázquez is now filming ***Análisis de sangre azul (Blue Blood Test)***, his next film (this time with Blanca Torres), which will be ready by 2015: through the bones of an English aristocrat who went missing in the Aragon Pyrenees in 1930, they will make a physical and spiritual x-ray of an entire region.

Filmography

2015 "Análisis de sangre azul" (Blue blood test)

Shooting.

2014 "ärctic"

Berlinale 2014. Generation.

2011 "Iceberg"

Special Mention of the Jury. Gijon IFF

First Prize. Cinespagnol Nantes

Young Jury Prize. Cinespagnol Nantes

Spectrum Rotterdam IFF

Official Selection. Cartagena IFF, FICUNAM-MEXICO DF, Rabat, Cairo, etc.

2008 "Amateurs"

Official Competition. Zabaltegui. San Sebastian IFF

Official Selection. Bogota, China, Morocco, etc.

Best Film, best director and best actress. La Palma IFF

2005 "Sud Express"

Official Competition. San Sebastian IFF (SIGNIS Prize)

Solidarity Prize. Círculo de escritores cinematográficos.

Official Selection. Toronto, Rio, Havana, Miami, London...

Spectrum. Rotterdam

2002 "Charrosis" (short film)

2001 "Soldaditos de latón" ("*Tinplate soldiers*") (sf)

2000 "London Calling" (sf)

1998 "Parabellum" (sf)

1996 "En Madison siempre es lunes" ("*In Madison it's always Monday*") (sf)

Spain 2014

78 Min. · DCP, 1:1.85 · Color. 5.1

Direction **Gabri Velázquez**

Script **Carlos Unamuno, Gabri Velázquez,**

Manuel García, Blanca Torres

Director of photography **David Azcano**

Editing **Blanca Torres**

Music **Eusebio Mayalde, Pablo Crespo**

Sound Design **Sergio Testón,**

Alejandro López, Miguel Huete

Direct sound **Martínez de San Mateo**

Production Design **Arantxa Echevarria**

Production First **Cristina Martín**

Costumes **Juanjo Rodríguez, Gabri Velázquez**

Casting **Juanjo Rodríguez, Gabri Velázquez,**

Manuel García

Art Director **David Rollán**

First Assistant **Manuel García**

Executive producer **Gabri Velázquez**

Cast

Víctor García (Jota)

Juanlu Sevillano (Simón)

Débora Borges (Debi)

Lucía Martínez (Lucía)

Alba Nieto (Alba)