

PASTO & BDCINE

Instituto Nacional de Cine (INCAA) & Universidad del Cine (FUC),  
Los Salvajes Cine & Movie City  
FiGa Films

PRESENT

a film by JUAN SCHNITMAN

# EL INCENDIO

## THE FIRE

PILAR GAMBOA

JUAN BARBERINI



 **65<sup>a</sup>** Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
**Panorama**

PASTO BD CINE present

'THE FIRE' - EL INCENDIO supported by INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE ARTES AUDIOVISUALES UNIVERSIDAD DEL CINE LOS SALVAJES CINE MOVIE CITY with PILAR GAMBOA JUAN BARBERINI First Assistant Director  
MARTIN MAUREGUI Line Producer MARTIN FELDMAN Stylist CAROLINA SOSA LOYOLA Production Design JULIETA DOLINSKY Sound SANTIAGO FUMAGALLI & FEDERICO ESQUERRO Editor ANDRES  
PEPE ESTRADA Director of photography and camera SOLEDAD RODRIGUEZ Executive Producers BARBARA FRANCISCO FERNANDO BROM Produced by FERNANDO BROM BARBARA FRANCISCO DIEGO DUBCOVSKY  
Written by AGUSTINA LIENDO Directed by JUAN SCHNITMAN

PASTO

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ARGENTINA / 2015 / 95 MIN / SPANISH / COLOR / HD / 5.1 / 1.85

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## **EL INCENDIO**

### SHORT SYNOPSIS

On the way to closing the contract on their first home, Lucía and Marcelo withdraw a hundred thousand dollars in cash from their bank. The seller can't make it to the signing and it gets postponed to the next day. Frustrated, they head back to their old place and put the money away. The next 24 hours will unveil the true nature of their love, the crisis they are in, and the violence within themselves.

### LONG SYNOPSIS

Lucía and Marcelo are thirty years old. They carry around a hundred thousand dollars in cash on the way to pay for their first home. But the seller can't make it to the signing and postpones to the next day. Distressed and frustrated, they head back to their old rented apartment and hide the money for safekeeping. They try to pretend that it is a day like any other. But it's actually quite the opposite. Lucía sneaks out to her workplace in the kitchen of a restaurant, witnesses a fight between workmates and winds up in the hospital. Once back home, she gets into a brief, tense argument with Marcelo, who is suddenly summoned to the school where he teaches. The parents of a student have accused him of grabbing their son by the neck in an altercation. After dropping by his family home and talking with his brother, a calmer Marcelo returns to the apartment only to find the money out on the table and Lucía crying, suggesting they break up. Sad and upset, they decide to attend a friend's dinner party but cannot bring themselves to go together. Arriving separately, the situation comes to a boil, first in front of their friends and then with only the two of them in a back room in a mixture of sex and violence. Later, back home, Lucía starts packing in order to leave and Marcelo smashes the furniture. As they fight over the money, the bills are spread all around them. Marcelo threatens a meddling neighbor with a gun. Their energy spent, they pick up the money from the floor and Marcelo breaks down. The next day, hurt and sleepless, they go and finally buy their new home.

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## INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR JUAN SCHNITMAN

### **How did you find this particular story, and what was the process of turning it into your film?**

First there were two elements: the initial image of them in bed, seen from above, not knowing what the day holds for them, and the temporal structure, the idea that we only witness a single day in the life of this couple. From there, I started having meetings with director friends in which we outlined all pivot points, largely based on personal experiences. Then I started working with Agustina Liendo, the screenwriter of the film, for about a year. In that process, we discovered the personalities of Lucia and Marcelo and, again, many elements of our own lives slipped into the script. Finally, during the rehearsals with Pilar and Juan, we went back to work on the dialogues, seeking a particular voice for each character.

In short, it really was a team effort in which everyone was very generous and gave much of themselves.

### **Although *El Incendio* minutely observes the lives of a couple in crisis, the society they live in seems to be equally wrecked with tension and aggression lying just under the surface. Is this an intentional description of Argentina today?**

Absolutely. I think we live in a society that is on the verge of collapse, but we are not aware of its fragility and continue to add tension, believing that it will never break. In the film we see some cracks through which this violence seeps out. Anyway, unfortunately, I do not think this is an exclusively Argentinian situation but rather something that happens on a global level.

### ***El Incendio* plays with its audience - for example in the MacGuffin-like narrative role of the money - one expects certain things to happen, but really it sets in motion a different course of events. What do you aim for in your relationship with your intended audience?**

The film has a number of elements that are more typical of a police story than the history of a couple: money, violence, a weapon, sex. We built in these elements as triggers of tension in order to generate an active viewer who has to keep in mind at least two separate things at the same time in every scene and who could, just like the characters, never feel entirely comfortable.

**How did you work with your protagonists to their intense, almost self-lacerating performances?**

This was one of the biggest challenges of the film, especially coming from a documentary background, as I do. I knew even before we started that this would be the breaking point that would determine the success or failure of the film. The first step was to plan the position of the camera in each shot of a sequence that would allow the actors to develop the scenes from beginning to end, perhaps more similar to the way they are used to work in the theater. On the other hand, in rehearsals, we worked over the dialogues and situations together with the actors until they felt a hundred percent sure with the scene and what it was supposed to convey. Accordingly, there are many details of the characters that were completely shaped by Pilar and Juan. Once we started shooting, I also tried to be very open to modifying the shots in order to respect the organic quality of their movements. At the end of the day, I think the biggest credit goes to the actors. My role was to create an ample, challenging but also contentious space in which they could develop their work.

**Did your experience as a documentary filmmaker influenced the way in which you approached Lucía and Marcelo's story? Conversely, what was different in the way you approached a fiction script?**

I think what remains constant is a deep respect for the notion of the director as a kind of referee, trying to observe the characters with intensity and a clear point of view, but without judgment.

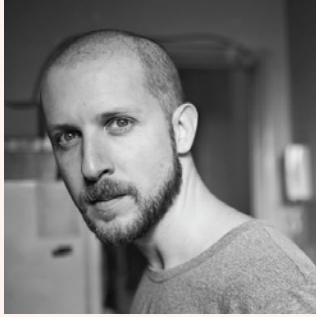
But there are also substantial changes from one process to the other. For observational documentaries I write a page in an afternoon and spend a lot of time filming many hours until I find the moments that I think may be part of the film, and then I spend even more time looking over the material while editing. In fiction, this is inverted: the project development is slow, almost artisanal, while the shooting is fast and precise and, in this case, the editing is more like a reconstruction of the script.

Having gone through both experiences, I have to say I say I was extremely happy filming *El Incendio*, perhaps too happy.

**What are your next projects? Anything in the works already?**

Together with Agustina Liendo and Martín Mauregui, I am writing what I hope is my new movie, *Capitán*. The director Alejandro Fadel also worked on the story with us. It is a film that narrates a week in the life of the captain of a major Argentinian football team, the week in which his lover dies and his team is to play the defining game to avoid relegation to the second division. It is, in some strange way, a version of *Dracula* in the world of professional football.

Also, I am writing a play that could be a continuation of *El Incendio* and will shoot a short film soon.



#### ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

**Juan Schnitman** was born in the city of Buenos Aires in 1980.

He spent his childhood in the country and returned to the city in the 90's, where he studied Film Direction at the Universidad del Cine (FUC). Once graduated, he co-wrote and co-directed *El Amor* (primera parte) with Santiago Mitre, Alejandro Fadel and Martín Mauregui in 2005. The film premiered at the Venice Film Festival's Settimana Internazionale della Critica. In 2007 Juan made *Grande Para la Ciudad*, a documentary about the Uruguayan Brit-pop band Astrobaby. In 2009 he shot *Pretemporada*, a documentary about soccer. *El Incendio* is his fiction, solo debut.

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#### ABOUT THE ACTRESS

**Pilar Gamboa** is an actress and a writer. She founded one of the most successful theatre companies in Buenos Aires (*El silencio*). Joined by Romina Paula, Esteban Lamothe and Esteban Bigliardi, she staged *Algo de Ruido Hace*, *El Tiempo Todo Entero* and *Fauna*, awarded in Argentina and Europe. In TV, she participated in *Para Vestir Santos*, *Tiempos Compulsivos* and *Farsantes*, a primetime TV Series. In cinema she was part of *Música en Espera* by Hernán Goldfrid, *Todos Mienten* by Matías Piñeiro, *Vaquero* by Juan Minujin, and *Lo Que Mas Quiero* by Delfina Castagnino. Currently she is filming *La Flor* by Mariano Llinás.

#### ABOUT THE ACTOR

**Juan Barberini** is an actor with a long career in Argentina's independent theatre. He participated in plays such as *Áspero* by Santiago Governori, *Mi Joven Corazón Idiota* by Anja Hilling, and Paul Auster's *The Music of Chance*, adapted by Gabriela Izcovich. In cinema he has acted in *El Estudiante* by Santiago Mitre, *Cerro Bayo* by Victoria Galardi, and *La Fiesta de Casamiento* by Gastón Margolin & Martín Morgenfeld, with Julieta Zylberberg.

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PHOTO OF BEHIND THE SCENES

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## ABOUT THE PRODUCERS

**PASTO** is a film production company founded by Bárbara Francisco in 2010 in Buenos Aires. Their first coproduction was *El Estudiante* by Santiago Mitre. The film has been awarded with more than 20 international prizes and participated in more than 30 festivals around the world such as Locarno FF, New York FF, Bafici. They also produced and distributed *Germania* by Maximiliano Schonfeld. The film won awards at BAFICI, Prague, Hamburg, among others. In 2013 Delfina Montecchia joined the company after studying in Paris, and working for the Cannes Film Festival. Currently they are producing Schonfeld's second film, *The Black Frost*. The project has been awarded with the ARTE Prize at BAL and was selected for the Jerusalem Film Lab, and won of Raymundo Gleyzer award. *El Incendio* (The Fire), the first feature film by Juan Schnitman, is the first coproduction between PASTO and BD CINE. Currently they are working in their next coproduction, *El Rey del Once* by Daniel Burman.

**BDCINE**, founded by Diego Dubcovsky and Daniel Burman in 1997, is one of the most active production companies of Argentina's "new cinema." With over 20 productions such as *Esperando al mesías*, *El Abrazo Partido*, *Derecho de Familia*, *El Nido Vacío*, *Dos Hermanos*, *La Suerte en tus Manos*, *El Misterio de la Felicidad*, all directed by Daniel Burman; *Garage Olimpo* by Marco Bechis, *Diarios de Motocicleta* by Walter Salles, *Nadar Solo* by Ezequiel Acuña, *Un Año sin Amor*, *Encarnación*, *Por tu Culpa*, *Aire Libre* by Anahí Berneri, *Mientras tanto* by Diego Lerman, and *Música en Espera & Tesis Sobre un Homicidio* by Hernán Goldfrid. Most of these films have been presented and have won prizes at Cannes, Berlin, Venice, San Sebastián and Toronto among others.

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#### **CAST**

Pilar Gamboa / Juan Barberini / Luciano Suardi / Marcelo D' Andrea / Andrea Garrote / Laura Paredes / Cecilia Rainero / Valeria Correa / Edgardo Castro / Martín Tchira / Julián Krakov / Mariano Sayavedra / Fabio Ronzano / Lalo Rotaveria / Luis Biasotto.

#### **CREW**

**Directed by** Juan Schnitman

**Written by** Agustina Liendo

**Produced by** Bárbara Francisco / Fernando Brom / Diego Dubcovsky

**Executive Producers:** Bárbara Francisco / Fernando Brom

**Director of Photography:** Soledad Rodriguez

**Sound:** Santiago Fumagalli / Federico Esquerro

**Editor:** Andrés P. Estrada

**Production Design:** Julieta Dolinsky

**Stylist:** Carolina Sosa Loyola

**First Assistant Director:** Martín Mauregui

**Line Producer:** Martín Feldman

**Producer Coordinator:** Delfina Montecchia

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## **CONTACT**

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