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de la Critique de Cinéma
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Festival du cinéma latino-américain



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BIARRITZ 2021
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A FILM ABOUT COUPLES

By Natalia Cabral & Oriol Estrada

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UNA PELÍCULA SOBRE PAREJAS

SYNOPSIS

Natalia and Oriol are a couple of filmmakers in their thirties who have a little daughter called Lia. One day, they receive an offer to direct a documentary and they decide to make a film about couples in love. Natalia and Oriol interview many couples, always wanting to know how they get along and what their most typical problems are. But as filming progresses, wounds of their own relationship begin to open up, fights and doubts seem to be endless. But finishing the film will be their opportunity to reformulate their love for each other and their love for cinema.

«A Film About Couples is a true cinematic gem. Every moment releases a joyful and meditated reflection on the condition of filmmaking in today's society.» – Mattia. Madmass Magazine.

«A Film About Couples is an intimate and funny film, beautiful and ingenious.» – Olivia Leboyer. Toute la culture.

«It's a fiction film about the shooting of a documentary and, at the same time, a documentary about the shooting of a fiction film. With a lot of humor and lucidity, the film demystifies the work of the cinema profession and reveals the realities and difficulties that exist today when filming in Dominican Republic.» – Nicolas Azalbert. Head of programming, Festival Biarritz Amérique Latine.

«“Una Pelicula Sobre Parejas” is a breath of fresh air. An alternative way to not take oneself seriously and, at the same time, an opportunity to reflect. A lovely lesson from Natalia Cabral and Oriol Estrada» – Veronica Ranocchi. I Cinemaniaci Blog.

This introspective look at the lives of a couple of directors testifies the fascinating creative power of cinema to organize the world in the form of a story in order to question its uniqueness at every moment. – Cédric Lépine. Mediapart.

At the heart of this funny film lies a little story within the story. It's all in knowing how to tell it, and this nice pair of filmmakers hit the bull's eye, bringing more than a smile to the audience. – Sarah Mataloni. Close Up Magazine.



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Spectators of our films often ask us what it's like to co-direct as a couple. It's a question whose answer changes according to the day. Sometimes we can share crazy anecdotes about our struggles of egos or about our bittersweet quests to achieve the films we set out to make. Other times we argue and wonder if it's worth continuing. But like most couples, we move on, trying to show the best side of our relationship and our persona. One day, we realized that it was very important for the both of us to share the creative challenge of trying to make cinema with another person who is dissimilar from you because of differences of sex, culture and personality and the vital challenge it can be if you are also in love with this person. We wanted to reflect on these concerns through a new project and we knew there was only one way to make it possible: through metafiction and

comedy. We also knew that we had to create alter egos of ourselves and represent them, in order to make the experience even more credible and intimate. That's how we came up with the idea of creating a fiction film inspired by our real lives, where the plot of the story, the process of making a documentary, would be a creative process open to improvisation.

We embarked on the adventure of co-directing and acting. We wrote a treatment and looked for a small film crew. We casted sentimental couples from real life to play the characters in the documentary within the film. The shooting was a confusing but exciting adventure. The line between fiction and reality was sometimes very blurry, but we let ourselves be carried away by the spontaneity of the real-life couples, without losing sight of the personality of our alter egos and the central story.

The result of the shooting was an experience that challenged us as director-actors, reminding us of the beauty of filming without haste, as children playing a game. The experience of acting gave us the opportunity to not take ourselves so seriously and to explore the work of cinema in front of the camera in the same way as when we are behind it, searching for the same irony and contradiction that we look for in the characters we have filmed in our previous films. This constant formal search was very stimulating. It questions what's fiction and what's reality, when sometimes reality seems more fictional and vice versa. We really like to cross the line between reality and fiction as a working method because the creative possibilities in editing and sound are much wider and the experience on set is more vivid, we are more alert when we don't quite know what is going to happen.

That is how "A Film About Couples" came out to be a metafiction and autofiction cinema experience. A film that desires to make people laugh and reflect about how ridiculous and tender we call all be when we share our lives with someone else and at the same time, try to maintain our own individuality; an incisive, humorous and moving experience about the contradictory behavior of a couple trying to understand love and cinema.





Natalia Cabral and Oriol Estrada during the shooting of **Miriam Lies**. Dominican Republic, 2017

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Natalia Cabral (Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic) and Oriol Estrada (Capellades, Catalonia, Spain) are award-winning filmmakers whose work live on the borderlines of fiction and nonfiction. Graduates of the prestigious EICTV Cuban Film School, Natalia and Oriol found Faula Films in 2012 in order to provide a creative platform for the development and co-production of independent filmmaking in the Caribbean.

Their debut documentary feature film “You and Me” premiered at Visions du Réel and won several awards at festivals like Cartagena, Trinidad & Tobago, Havana, Márgenes, Cine Las Américas and Santo Domingo, among others. Their second documentary film “Site of Sites”, supported by DOCTV Latinoamérica, premiered at IDFA International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, was part of the Neighboring Scenes Showcase of the Film Society of Lincoln Center, was official selection at Biarritz, Cartagena and Lima, and was listed as one of the 25 best Latin American films of 2017 by Cinema Tropical.

“Miriam Lies” premiered in the official competition of the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, where it obtained a special mention from the jury. Later, it was awarded with the Golden Colon for Best Film at the Huelva Ibero-American Film Festival, the ALMA Award for Best Spanish Film Script at the Gijón International Film Festival, Best Director at the Punta del Este Festival, the SFCC Award from the French Critics at Cinélatino Toulouse, among others.

“A Film About Couples” is their latest work. The film premiered internationally in official competition at the Rome Film Fest and won the best film award from the Syndicat Français de la Critique de Cinéma, and a special mention from the jury at the Biarritz Latin American film festival.

TECHNICAL INFO

Original Title: Una Película Sobre Parejas

International Title: A Film About Couples

Dominican Republic

Language: Spanish, Catalan

Length: 89 min.

Format: 4:3 / DCP / 5.1 / Color / 2021

[Webpage](#)

[Trailer](#)

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