

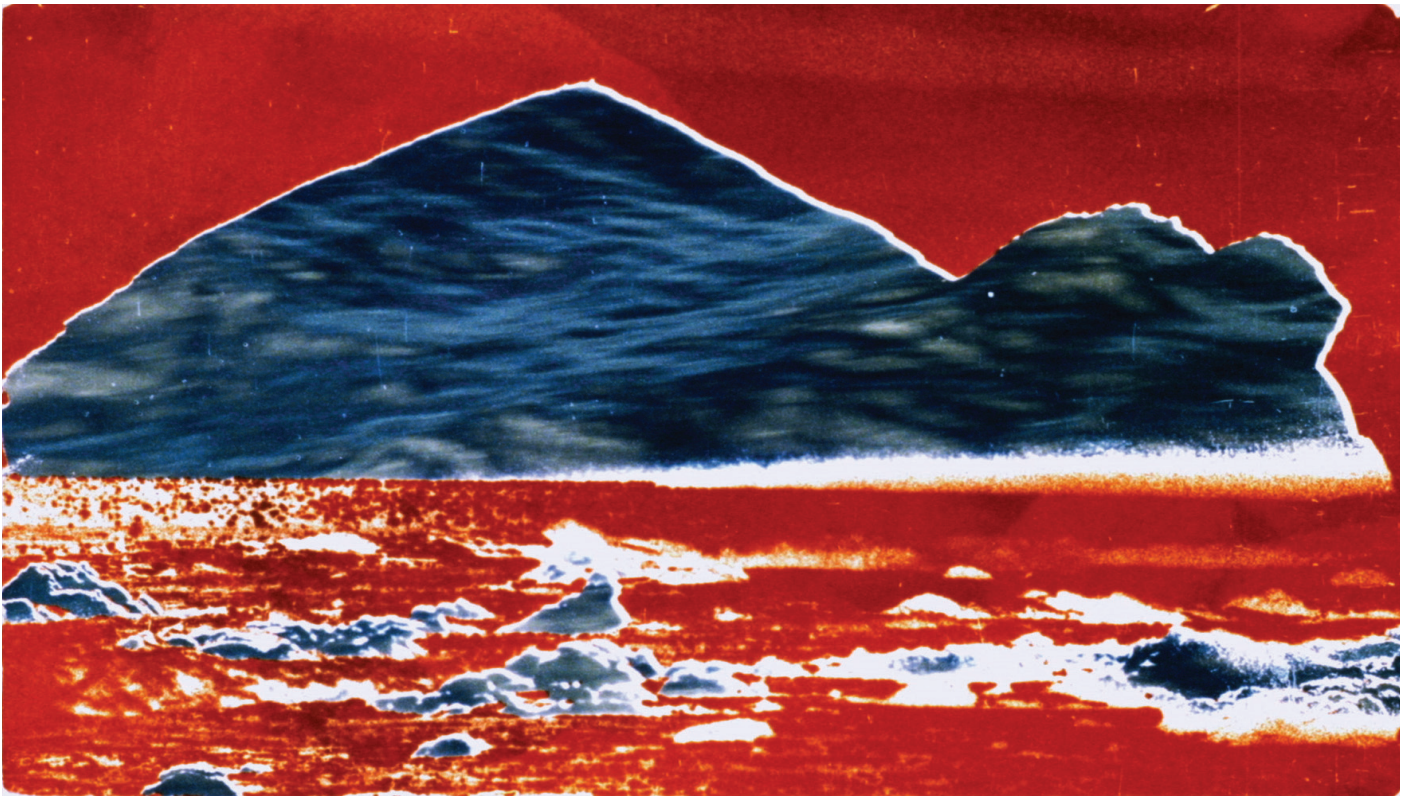
# VULCÃO: O QUE SONHA UM LAGO? VOLCANO: WHAT DOES A LAKE DREAM?

directed by Diana Vidrascu

## SYNOPSIS

Volcano draws its visual energy from the tectonic plates clashing under the Azores islands. From the depths of the boiling earth to the surface of the celluloid film, an experimental documentary erupts.

*Les volcans émergent des profondeurs de la terre en ébullition jusqu'à la surface du film, pour faire place à un langage cinématographique abstrait.*



## TECHNICAL INFOS

VULCÃO: O QUE SONHA UM LAGO? (2019) 21mins

Shooting format: Super 16mm, color & b/w

Sound: Dolby Surround Sound DCP

Screening format: DCP 1:1.85 DCI Flat

Dialogue language: Portuguese

Available subtitles: English, French

Director: Diana Vidrascu

Original screenplay: Diana Vidrascu, Johan Härnsten

Music: Mondkopf

Produced by: Diana Vidrascu, Jesse James, Sofia Carolina Botelho

Sound Designer: Romain Poirier

With: Catarina Dias Da Rosa, João Paulo Constância, Nuno Pereira, Alice Garcia De Melo.



© Mariana Lopes

## BIOGRAPHY

Diana Vidrascu is a filmmaker and artist based in Paris, France. In her films, photography and installations, Vidrascu examines analogue film techniques, thereby questioning the cinematic medium's codes and conventions. She debuted as a director with the short films *What Time Is Made Of* and *Gylfaginning* (2017), both of them shown at international festivals. Her previous *Silence of the Sirens* (2019) premiered at IFFR Rotterdam and was presented as a film installation in the Berlinale Forum Expanded.

*Diana Vidrascu est une réalisatrice et artiste basée à Paris, en France. Dans ses films, ses photographies et ses installations, Vidrascu examine les spécificités du film analogique, remettant ainsi en cause les codes et les conventions de la pratique cinématographique. Elle a fait ses débuts en tant que réalisatrice avec les courts métrages What Time Is Made Of et Gylfaginning (2017), tous deux montrés dans des festivals internationaux. Son avant dernier film, Le Silence des sirènes (2019), a été sélectionné à l'IFFR Rotterdam et a été présenté comme une installation de film dans le Berlinale Forum Expanded.*

## FILMOGRAPHY

*What Time is Made Of* (2017) – 10 mins – BFI London Film Festival Experimenta, Côté Court Film Festival Pantin, Camera Obscura San Francisco, CineAutopsia Festival De Cine Experimental De Bogotá Colombia, Skopje International Short Film Festival, Alternative Film Video Festival Beograd, BIEFF Bucharest International Experimental Film Festival Romania, Process Film Festival Riga Latvia, Walk&Talk Azores Arts Festival São Miguel Portugal

*Gylfaginning, The Deluding of King Gylfi* (2017) – 18 mins – Festival des Cinémas Différents et Expérimentaux de Paris, The Northern Wave Film Festival Iceland, Avantura Film Festival Vis Croatia

*Silence of the Sirens* (2019) – 34 mins – Berlinale Forum Expanded, Rotterdam IFFR Tiger Short Film Competition, Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen

*Volcano: What Does a Lake Dream?* (2019) – 21 mins – Locarno Film Festival, Pardi di domani: Concorso internazionale



## STATEMENT

The Azores archipelago is composed of nine volcanic islands situated on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, at the junction of three slowly diverging continental plates. *Volcano: What Does a Lake Dream?* draws its visual energy from this complex tectonic area. Volcanism proves to be central on a thematic as well as a formal level: what starts out as a quiet documentary about the islands and their inhabitants progressively turns into an eruptive cinematographic experiment where the film itself ultimately risks destruction.

The four Azorean voices in the film include an islander's personal narrative of forced migration following the 1980 earthquake in São Jorge, a museum curator describing the birth of the volcanic island Sabrina in 1811, a geologist's reflection on memory and geological time, and an eyewitness account of the eruption of Capelinhos in 1957-1958. Together, they convey a complex image of the specifically Azorean experience of time, in which human history is regularly disrupted by seismic forces.

The film uses infrared photography, which makes the lush foliage of the islands appear in magenta. Capturing radiation invisible to the human eye, Kodak Aerochrome was originally designed for military purposes, as it allowed the detection of enemies hiding in the vegetation. In *Volcano*, it instead reflects an infra-terrestrial dimension of reality, revealing the magmatic origin of the islands. Shot with a slow, computer-controlled camera movement, the infrared photography of Sete Cidades seems to unveil a prehistoric past, or perhaps predict a distant future, both uncannily devoid of human presence.

Alongside the apocalyptic magenta, the film also operates with a red lens filter on the 16mm camera, which transforms the ocean into boiling lava. These sequences have an accelerating function within the narrative timeframe, foreboding a cataclysmic event. And indeed, a celluloid eruption does take place. Following the geological structure of the "spreading center" occurring at the boundary between tectonic plates, the images disquietingly begin to shiver and dissolve, opening up volcanic rifts within the film frame itself. Using the matte technique and an Oxberry optical printer for these special effects, Diana Vidraşcu lets lava-like flows of images burst out through the cracks in the film. The different timelines collide and overlap, finally yielding only pulsating white light.

The ethereal last sequence of the film, shot at sunset above the crater lake Lagoa do Fogo in São Miguel, captures the emergence of a Brocken spectre – an optical phenomenon occurring when the shadow of the observer, surrounded by a halo of backscattered light, is cast upon a cloud opposite the sun. What does a lake dream, above the dormant volcano? When asked, the Lake of Fire significantly chooses to withdraw into the mist, and instead of answering offers its own projection, fleetingly showing us the ghostlike image of ourselves.

Johan Härnsten

