

Tambellini Filmes & Gloria Films present

A FILM BY SANDRA KOGUT

CAMPO GRANDE





Tambellini Filmes & Gloria Films present

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OFFICIAL SELECTION 2015

Contemporary World Cinema

CAMPO GRANDE

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SYNOPSIS

Eight-year-old Ygor and six-year-old Rayane are left by their mother on Regina's doorstep in the upscale Rio de Janeiro neighborhood of Ipanema.

The sudden and unexpected arrival of these lower class kids in Regina's world and the search for their mother in a city rendered almost unrecognizable by massive modernization will change their lives forever.



INTERVIEW WITH SANDRA KOGUT

Could you tell us about the context of the film and its relationship to contemporary Brazil?

Campo Grande takes place at a very unique moment of Brazilian history: during the last years the entire country has become one big construction site. In the wake of the recent economic boom, cities all over Brazil are undertaking major renovation and building projects: new roads, subway systems, housing developments and shopping centers are popping up everywhere. But this is all being done in a rather chaotic, explosive and hasty fashion that often feels like a desperate civilizing effort doomed to fail.

In its contemporary chaos, Brazil sometimes makes one think of China. If you go to a street with some little houses and then return one month later, for example, the houses are gone, replaced by a new con-

dominium under construction. Streets are flooded with cars and traffic jams are a fixture. But for a social class that never owned automobiles and always dreamed about them, traffic jams are a symbol of progress. The very idea of citizenship is being confused with the one of consumerism. To be a citizen is now synonymous with the right to buy. This is the context in which the film was written and made.

We shot on location in a Rio de Janeiro completely transformed by ongoing construction: streets become hard to recognize, there is scaffolding everywhere, and the dominant impression is one of disorienting temporary transition. This very chaos – one of the principle subjects of the film and the story's universe – was also what made possible the particular way we worked. We never blocked streets for our shoot, often filming without permits, mingling

with the city, as in a documentary film. This was also true for the most dramatic scenes. Sometimes we had a few extras mixed in with the crowd, but – on purpose – neither the actors nor the crew knew who they were. Sometimes reality seemed so exaggerated that passers-by looked like extras to us.

Once, for example, we installed a “fake” bus stop on a very busy street, to shoot a scene. While I was preparing the actors on the side, city buses started stopping there with people getting out, and other people started waiting there for buses to arrive. The bus stop from our set was incorporated by the city in a matter of minutes, because everything in Rio is functioning just this sort of makeshift manner. I can well imagine that some people were irritated when the bus stop disappeared the next day.

It would never have been possible to shoot such a film without this chaos and culture of informality. And the film also engages this as an issue on numerous levels; it's a very Brazilian story.

Can you develop this a little more?

Traditionally Brazilian home are marked by a dynamic between employers and domestic employees that involves a mixture of intimacy and social tension. There is a common phenomenon called “adoption Brazilian style” which refers to the situation where another person is effectively raising someone else's child. Borders are always porous in the intimacy of the house and at the same time the structure of the employee's life is always precarious, fragile. From one day to the next the family structure might collapse, and the children often circulate between homes and families, or simply find themselves homeless. There is an unspoken void between employers and employees in the domestic world, hidden behind the affective relationships. A silent fear of a potential threat.

When two young kids show up at her door in upscale Ipanema, Regina has no idea who they are, but she knows they come from another part of town, another world.



So can we say this is a realistic film?

The context is realistic, but the film's world is subjective, internal. It does take place in a very concrete reality, but this landscape is also a mental one. It expresses the emotional universe of the characters, the impasse that each of them is facing.

The construction sites do exist, the film is all shot on locations, but the chaos represents more than the moment faced by the country – it expresses the character's inner world.

Furthermore, this chaos goes beyond issues of class, gender and race, even if these things are at play here, of course. It's not a sociological film; it's about the unpredictability of life that transcends these categories. Ygor is nine years old, Regina is fifty; the child is poor, Regina is wealthy – but in emotional terms they are peers. Both are going through one of those moments in which your life changes so abruptly that it has not yet become something else, but is no longer what it was. No longer not yet; and still, I believe that following the moment we see in the film, everything will only get better for each of them.

Is Campo Grande a real place?

In the Western part of Rio de Janeiro there is a neighborhood with this name where we did shoot some scenes of the movie. Someone who lives in Ipanema – the wealthiest part of the city – would not go there: not only because it is more than eighty kilometers away, but because it represents the bourgeoisie's worst nightmares – a place controlled by militias, a dangerous territory.

But the Campo Grande in the movie is more than that. Literally meaning “large or wide field” it is a place for all sorts of possibilities, good and bad. An open territory, the unknown. For Ygor, Ipanema is his Campo Grande.



Tell us about your work with the actors...

The children had never acted before; only some of the adults were professional actors and not very famous ones, since they don't do television. We prepared for months prior to the shoot and the commitment of the actors was intense and absolute – something I am convinced only actors somewhat outside the system can afford. All the actors were on the set every day, regardless of whether they had scenes to shoot. They were there to help the others, to preserve the relationships between the characters during each other's scenes. It was ten times more scary to Rayane (the five-year old girl) for example if she knew Regina was in the house, even if she was not participating in her scene. The same thing was true for the adults. The character's world was stronger than anything else.

The children only saw the apartment where much of the film takes place on the first day of the shoot, but Regina, her daughter and the maid lived there together before the shooting began. It was a way for them to create an intimacy with the space and their

characters that was not expressed through words, but rather through actions, smells, perception. The maid cooked, cleaned and answered the phone, Regina was often locked in her bedroom, the daughter was almost never home – they created a living dynamic inside the house. At times they fought. We also rehearsed there too.

None of the actors read the script, and they were never given a shooting plan, not even a daily one. All this served to create the necessary empty space for emotions to develop, to allow them to come from the inside. All the preparatory work was focused on the relationships between the characters, and their emotional states.

It was also forbidden on the set to take pictures, use social media, review scenes on the monitor or to make any comments in front of the actors. The crew was never an audience and the number of people on the set was kept to a minimum. We did all we could to reduce the circus that a shooting often is in order to create a protected and intimate working space, in which the measure was always the actors.

SANDRA KOGUT

Born in Rio de Janeiro, Sandra Kogut has lived and worked in Brazil, France and the USA first as an artist creating performance pieces and installations and then turning to documentary and fiction films. In the early 1990s she directed the «Parabolic People» project shot in Rio de Janeiro, Tokyo, Dakar, New York, Paris and Moscow.

Her work, which blurs the border between documentary and fiction, has been featured at the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum (New York), the Harvard Film Archive and the Forum des Images (Paris). Kogut's films have won many awards at venues such as the Oberhausen Film Festival, the Leipzig Documentary Film Festival, Vue sur les Docs (Marseille), the Center for Art and Media Technology (ZKM/Karlsruhe), and the Hungarian Film Week (Budapest).

Kogut's first feature "Mutum" premiered at the Cannes Film Festival (Director's Fortnight) and went on to numerous festivals including Toronto, Berlin, Rotterdam and others, receiving more than twenty awards worldwide.

FILMOGRAPHY

2015 CAMPO GRANDE

2011 DIARY OF A CRISIS
(USA/Brazil, documentary 52 min)

2007 MUTUM
(Brasil/France, feature 90 min)

2003 PASSAGERS D'ORSAY [Passengers of Orsay]
(France, documentary 52 min)

2001 UN PASSEPORT HONGROIS [A Hungarian Passport]
(France/Brazil/Hungary/Belgium, documentary 72 min)

1997 ADIU MONDE OU L'HISTOIRE DE PIERRE ET CLAIRE
(France, 27min)

1995 LÁ ET CÁ [Here and there]
(Brazil, short 28min)



CAST

Regina Carla Ribas
Ygor Ygor Manoel
Rayane Rayane do Amaral
Lila Julia Bernat
Wanda Mary de Paula
Leonardo Márcio Vito

CREW

Director Sandra Kogut
Screenwriter Sandra Kogut
Co-screenwriter Felipe Sholl
with the collaboration of Monica Almeida
Producer Flávio Ramos Tambellini (Tambellini Filmes)
Co-producer Laurent Lavolé (Gloria Films)
Cinematography Ivo Lopes
Production Design Marcos Pedroso
Costume Design Thais de Campos & Diogo Costa
Sound Valéria Ferro
Editing Sergio Mekler
Sound Editing Tomás Alem & Ricardo Cutz
Sound Mixing Stéphane Thiébaud
Executive Producer Flávio Ramos Tambellini
Associate Producer Alexandre Coutinho
Post-Production Coordinator Juca Díaz
Brazilian Distributor Imovision
International Sales Films Distribution

