

TERRATREME FILMES & LA BELLE AFFAIRE present



GIORNATE  
degli AUTORI

# WOLF

# & DOG

a film by

CLÁUDIA VAREJÃO

Born on an island ruled by religion and traditions, Ana embarks on a journey filled with new desires when she meets glowing Cloé and befriends the local queer community.

a film by

CLÁUDIA VAREJÃO

production

TERRATREME FILMES

co-production

LA BELLE AFFAIRE

with

ANA CABRAL, RUBEN PIMENTA,

CRISTIANA BRANQUINHO,

MARLENE CORDEIRO, JOÃO TAVARES,

NUNO FERREIRA, LUÍSA ALVES,

MARIA FURTADO, MÁRIO JORGE OLIVEIRA

World Premiere at  
79<sup>o</sup> LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA  
GIORNATE DEGLI AUTORI



# S Y N O P I S

Ana was born in São Miguel, an island in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean ruled by religion and traditions. Growing up as the middle child of a family of three with her mother and grandmother, Ana realized that girls and boys were given different tasks at home.

Through her friendship with Luis, her queer best friend who loves dresses as much as pants, Ana questions the world that is promised to her.

When her friend Cloé arrives from Canada, bringing with her the glowing days of youth, Ana embarks on a journey that will take her beyond the horizon. Filled with new desires, the light of *Wolf & Dog* will reveal to Ana the right sea for her to sail.

*Wolf & Dog* is the enchanting ode to the island's queer community. The twilight glow that crosses the immense Atlantic Ocean.







# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The first time I landed on São Miguel the sun was setting. The sky was overcast and the blue was so penetrating that all the vegetation was bathed in an indigo hue. The image of a blue island stayed with me and I was reminded of the poetry of Sá de Miranda: in the midst of daylight / you wander between the wolf and the dog (no meio do claro dia / andais entre lobo e cão). The poem describes that undefined twilight that evokes the aggressiveness of a wolf or the gentleness of a dog. This was how the islanders revealed themselves to me: a people who arose from opposing forces. Dichotomies are therefore part of this film: unity and isolation, certainty and doubt, light and darkness, dream and reality.

What drives me is the struggle for personal freedom, the fight against socioeconomic inequalities and the injustices faced by minorities, and these are issues, I believe, that concern us all. This is particularly so when we deal with more isolated contexts, such as islands, where ancestral traditions and beliefs are preserved, and prevent societies from opening up to change. But youth cares little for inheritance: it questions and breaks molds; it opens new paths. There is no bolder time or place. This is when the



veils are lifted and eyes receive everything, for the first time, without judging. These are bright days when love can achieve anything.

Nothing is banal when we have empathy for the universe we are portraying. It is emotions, distant and mysterious, that lead us to choose and highlight what we look at. To give voice is to summon a whole personal universe and identity without subjugating it to the morals of a time. It is an effort to highlight the beauty and uniqueness of each life. I embarked on this film with the desire to portray places that interest me: the legacies of societal and familial roles and the issues surrounding gender identity. And, because in speaking of these themes is also to speak of ruptures, this film sheds light on what happens to us when changes are not by choice but rather luck. Between staying and leaving there is room for all the tensions, doubts and desires. I would say this is, precisely, a film about between: between land and sea, night and day, feminine and masculine, real and dream. Between staying or leaving.

*Wolf & Dog* is the silhouette of my inner world, but it is also the fruit of my extensive research among the young people and inhabitants of São Miguel Island, coming from diverse backgrounds and whose stories contributed significantly to the film's narrative and form. Reality being the primary sphere of my cinematographic gaze, it is in this territory I inhabited throughout the filmmaking process: the actors were not professionals, the technical and artistic teams were composed of various local people, and involvement from the local community was the back-

bone of the work. In addition, given the social fragility we encountered during research and casting, we also helped create a social support project for the LGBTQI+ community in the archipelago, the (A)MAR - Açores Pela Diversidade (Azores for Diversity) project.

Fiction appears in *Wolf & Dog* as a space of freedom to create the self and the very idea of community, where each individual involved can be what they are not (yet) and the interactions within the group offer new possibilities. It is the cornerstone for the locus of change and the field to sow hidden dreams. I believe that the darkness in which many young people in the film have shaped their lives is also the very place that allowed them to seek the necessary light to discover their personalities. Or, as Paul B. Preciado (quoted in a scene in the film) tells us about the privilege of being fragile, *because revolution happens through weakness*.

Cláudia Varejão







# ACTRESS NOTE

I have always found it fascinating that an island of 744 km<sup>2</sup> can be, for different people, at once a continent as well as the smallest of islets; how can the horizon, which for many is just scenery, for others be a daily reminder of how cramped life can be in a land where boundaries are a constant presence. Indeed, what weight does the horizon carry on an island? A very characteristic duality exists in our island culture, where the dream of leaving often shouts louder than the comfort of staying.

The entire *Wolf & Dog* process is much more than its final form: it gave platform to those who are sidelined and a voice to many who are silent, it restored confidence to many who'd been chastised for their differences, and it allowed freedom to breathe life into what had been hidden for so long. I think we're all a bit closer to what we'd always been on the inside, and it's beautiful to witness each of us blossoming in our own ways.

Having never been in front of a camera, discovering Ana was my first challenge: to find in myself what exists in her as well as what separates us. To discover her was to give her life. I'll carry with me forever everything that I learned and everyone who has been part of this family. The privilege to give part of myself to this project and see it become a film gives me immense satisfaction. I soaked it up as much as possible, I acquired a dream or two... maybe even a passion, and that is priceless.

Ana Cabral







# PSYCHOLOGIST'S NOT E

*But since I love you, my courageous equals, I hope you will lack courage in turn. I hope you will no longer have the strength to reiterate the norm, no longer have the energy to fabricate identity, to lose faith in what your identity documents say about you. And once you've lost all courage, weary with joy, I hope you will invent other and unknown uses of your body. Because I love you, I desire you to be weak and contemptible. Because fragility, and not courage, is what brings about revolution.*

“The courage to be yourself”, Paul B. Preciado -  
An apartment on Uranus

During the making of *Wolf & Dog* we were asked to work with a group of young non-actors, part of the film's cast. The director's great sensitivity became apparent from the very beginning, as she understood that the island context, coupled with the film's LGBT theme and this group's youth and natural ambition, might require therapeutic support.

We have no knowledge of this kind of concern for actors, but we do know of films that left deep scars on young people who couldn't deal with such a degree of emotional demand. And we know quite well how difficult it still is to “come out of the closet” in São Miguel, how important it is to find peers in a place where

the “LGBT community” doesn't exist, and how easy it is to build castles when the doors of cinema open for you.

In thirteen weekly sessions, prior to the shooting, we formed a support and personal development group, as a protective factor against possible experiences of discrimination related to sexual orientation and gender identity, before, during and/or after the making and showing of the film. We witnessed them gradually coming together, discovering the other, in true leaps of confidence; we witnessed self-discovery, support – a small community of meaning emerged.

Through our intervention, we believe to have acted in terms of promoting self-knowledge among these young people, preventing harmful situations and contributing to a better definition of their life goals. The group spontaneously joined in, opened up to the psychodramatic technique and to everything the film's shooting brought them. It was a privilege to observe, a unique opportunity to contribute to such a special outcome, which bore fruit in them, in us, in the whole crew, in the film, in São Miguel's society and, who knows, maybe overseas.

Gratitude and inspiration is what we take away from *Wolf & Dog!*

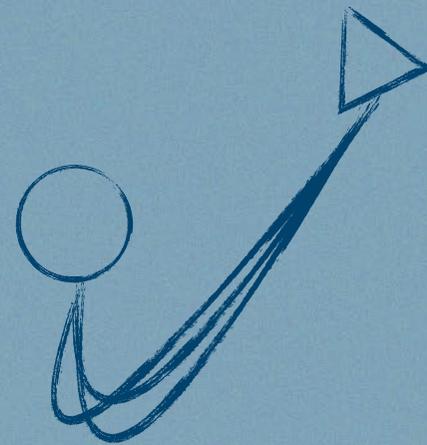
Joana Amen  
Ruben Santos

# DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY NOTE

What do a wolf and a dog have in common?  
The sea and the land?  
Light and darkness?  
Reality and fiction?

Is each one also the other?  
Let us accept it is so.

From there it will be easy to imagine a pendular movement that begins at one end and finishes at the other. In this route, the necessary transformations occur so that these objects, beings or phenomena can acquire a new shape.



Of course, after a few movements we can no longer tell which is the starting point and which is the finishing point. The route, the path, takes on greater importance.

Let us then focus on the route, the interval between extremities. After all, it is in these pendular movements, in this interval, that the elements spend most of their journey's time and space.

What is this interval, that we might call transformation and change?

As opposed to the monolithic and identifiable certainty of equidistant extremities, is it possible that each of these elements is one, on the interval's cross-fade gradient?

It is on these questions and in this space/time that Cláudia's cinema dwells. In the pendular movement where each element strips away its certainties and incorporates, in successive layers, other elements' vulnerabilities:

a wolf is a dog that is also a wolf;  
the sea turns into land and back into sea;  
the faint light is blown in the darkness and then comes back  
luminous;  
each character's imagined fiction becomes real in front of the  
camera...

Over the years, through her films, Cláudia has led her crews and the communities she works with in what I would call expeditions to chart human geographies. Especially in communities that lie on these interval routes.

The work we do, together, attempts to create new maps and draw new territories. These maps challenge us to dare and find new uses for them: not by searching for our way back home, but rather by seeking help in getting lost in the most wonderful forest or in the deepest blue sea.

The cartography of these "map films" is always changeable, since it is based on diversity and fluid vulnerabilities. Just like nature, that is always in constant mutation. It doesn't claim to be this or that.

It just is.

Rui Xavier



# PRODUCERS' NOTE

We've been working with Cláudia Varejão for a few years now, in films produced by TERRATREME and co-produced by LA BELLE AFFAIRE. Documentaries like *Amor Fati* or *Ama-San* have been able to reach different audiences in festivals, cinemas, broadcasters, etc.. In those films we found the grammar we can discover in *Lobo e Cão (Wolf & Dog)*. The way the characters, the identities, the bodies that inhabit the director's films relate to us via a camera that tries to engage with them in an honest and horizontal dialogue. A dialogue that invites us to share a little part of the lives of these characters.

This is Cláudia Varejão's first fiction feature film. But the same movement that gave us a very strong cinematic approach to real environments and situations in her previous films is also present here: we are in the realm of fiction, but we are thinking of real lives, real experiences in a real island: how can I be what and how I am? Is the sea a border or a connection to all the possibilities of myself? Cinema today is more than ever aware of its importance in discussing the world's possibilities. But Cláudia Varejão and we have always had this in mind. Decency and respect should not be a trending topic, but an everyday life posture.

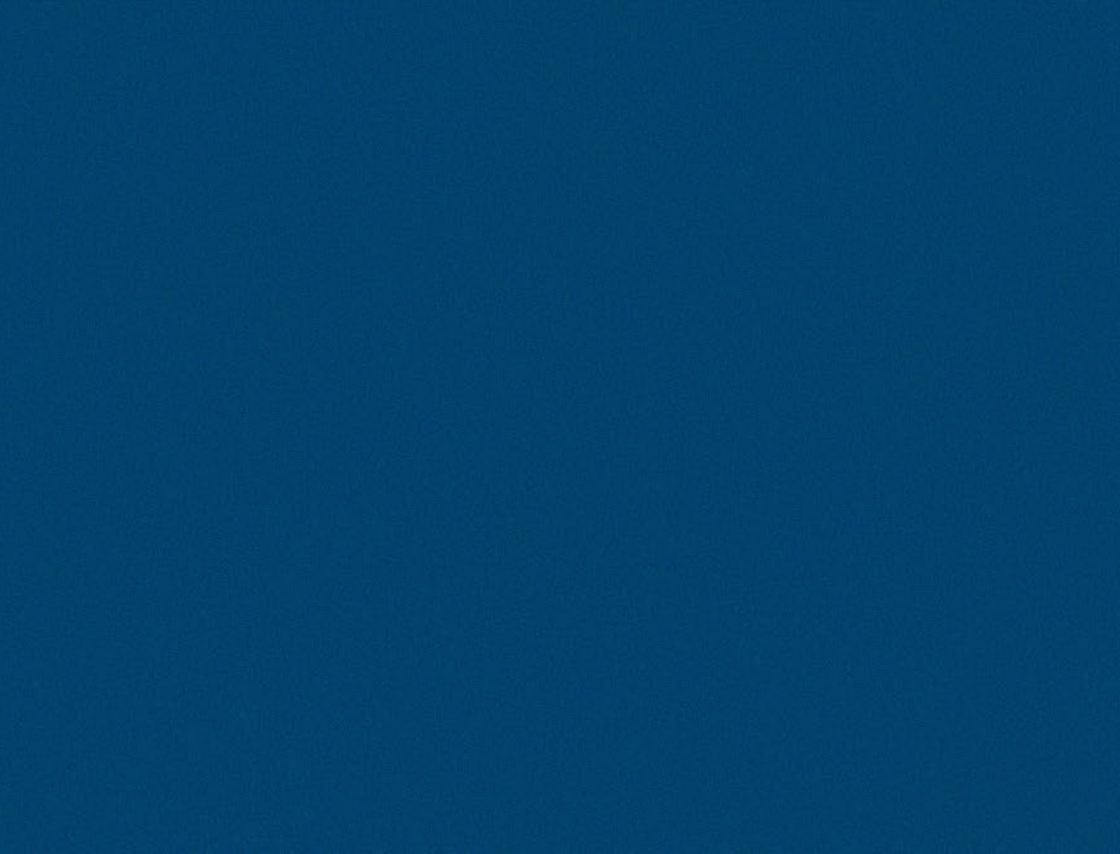
João Matos  
Jérôme Blesson

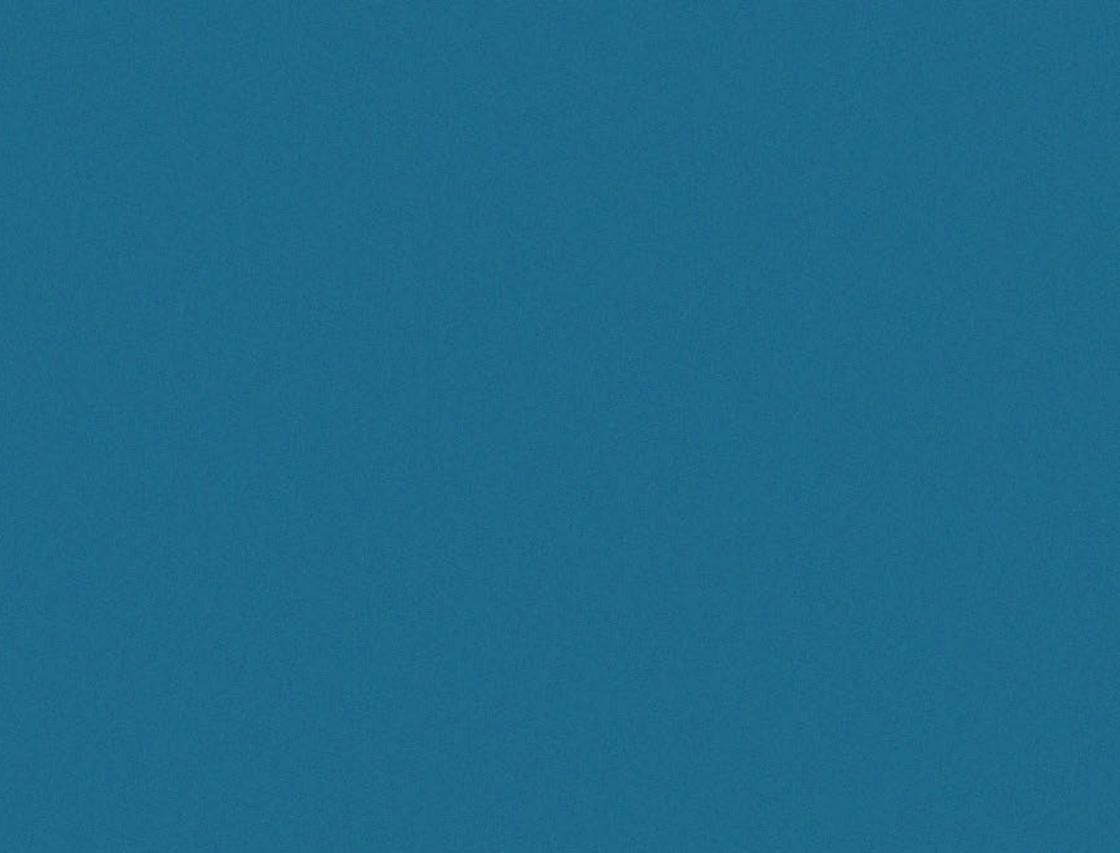












# DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Cláudia Varejão was born in Porto and studied at the Creativity and Artistic Creation Program of Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in partnership with the German Film und Fernsehakademie Berlin and the São Paulo International Film Academy. She also studied Photography a AR.CO in Lisbon. Cláudia is the author of the short film trilogy *Weekend*, *A Cold Day* and *Morning Light*. *Ama-san*, a portrait of Japanese divers, was her feature debut, receiving dozens of awards around the world, followed by *In The Darkness of the Theater I Take Off My Shoes* and *Amor Fati*. *Wolf & Dog*, her latest film scheduled to premiere in 2022. Cláudia's films have been selected by and awarded at the most prestigious film festivals, including Locarno, Rotterdam, Visions du Reel, Cinema du Reel, Karlovy Vary, Art of the Real - Lincoln Center, among many others. Alongside her work as a filmmaker, she develops a career as a photographer and has been invited to give classes and workshops at various Film and Art schools. Her work, whether in cinema or photography, documentary or fiction, lives in close proximity to her characters.

2002 *Wolf & Dog* – feature film, 111', HD

2019 *Amor Fati* – documentary, 100', HD

2016 *Ama-San* – documentary, 112', HD

2016 *In The Darkness Of The Theater I Take*

*Off My Shoes* – documentary, 104', HD

2012 *Morning Light* – short film, 18', 35mm

2010 *Cold Day* – short film, 27', HD

2007 *Weekend* – short film, 8', 16mm



# TERRATREME FILMES

TERRATREME is a film production company that, by making use of new production models, offers its projects greater autonomy throughout the creative process. By combining research, creativity and education in cinema, TERRATREME has produced some of the most important films of Portuguese cinema in recent years. Films such as *The Nothing Factory*, by Pedro Pinho, *Ama-San*, by Cláudia Varejão, *Milla*, by Valérie Massadian, *Djon África*, by Filipa Reis and João Miller Guerra, *Tempo Comum*, by Susana Nobre, that were presented in the most important festivals, such as Cannes, Berlin, Locarno, Rotterdam, Toronto, New York, among others. In recent years, TERRATREME has developed co-productions with countries like France, Switzerland, Germany, Brazil, Argentina, Chile or Japan.

# LA BELLE AFFAIRE

After several experiences in production and distribution, Jérôme Blesson founded in 2015 the production company LA BELLE AFFAIRE, based in Montpellier and Paris. Sensitive to committed works and to the accompaniment of first cinematographic gestures, in France as elsewhere, LA BELLE AFFAIRE has produced to date more than a dozen short films, and three feature films in international co-production, all selected to prestigious festivals such as Cannes, Rotterdam, Visions du Réel, Clermont-Ferrand, Cinemed, or Cinéma du Réel.

# MPM

# PREMIUM

MPM Premium is a film sales company co-founded in 2018 by Marie-Pierre Macia and Claire Gadéa, Producers at MPM Film, and Jean-Charles Mille, founder of shorts sales agency Premium Films. With its international team present at major markets and festivals, MPM Premium holds a true expertise in acquiring, marketing and selling globally films from all around the world.



# WOLF & DOG

Fiction / 111' / DCP / 4:3 / Portuguese  
PORTUGAL / FRANCE / 2022

written and directed by **CLÁUDIA VAREJÃO**

script collaboration **LEDA CARTUM**

1st assistant director **EMÍDIO MIGUEL**

script supervisor **ANDRÉ GODINHO**

director of photography **RUI XAVIER**

1st camera assistant **AFONSO MARMELO**

gaffer **RODRIGO DRAY**

sound **OLIVIER BLANC**

art director **NÁDIA HENRIQUES**

set decorator **MARIA RIBEIRO**

production manager **CELESTE ALVES**

unit production manager **MIGUEL PERDIGÃO**

editing **JOÃO BRAZ BFE**

sound editing **HUGO LEITÃO**

mix **BRUNO TARRIÈRE**

colorist **JULIA MINGO**

design **ILHAS STUDIO**

producer **JOÃO MATOS**

co-producer **JÉRÔME BLESSON**

production **TERRATREME FILMES**

**& LA BELLE AFFAIRE PRODUCTIONS**

sales **MPM PREMIUM**

# C O N T A C T S

## DISTRIBUTION

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