



# A YARD OF JACKALS

*PATIO DE CHACALES*

A film by Diego Figueroa





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*PATIO DE CHACALES*

DRAMA, THRILLER, HUMAN RIGHTS | SPANISH | CHILE | 108'

*Written by* Diego Figueroa.

*Script Doctor* Gonzalo Maza.

*Directed by* Diego Figueroa.

*Production Company* Infractor Films.

*Producer* Alejandro Ugarte.

*DOP* Martín Hurtado Marín.

*Edition* Diego Figueroa.

*Music* Diego de la Fuente Curaqueo.

*Cast* Nestor Cantillana, Blanca Lewin, Grimanesa Jiménez,

Consuelo Holzapfel, María Jesús Marccone, Juan Cano.

*Featuring Voices* Pablo Schwarz, Rodrigo Pérez.





## SYNOPSIS

*In the winter of 1978, under Chile's military regime in Santiago, Raúl Peralta, a lonely architectural model maker, lives a quiet life with only his ailing mother and a pet canary for company. His routine is upended by the arrival of new neighbors whose sinister activities seem to hide dark secrets. Desperately clinging to the last remnants of his sanity, Raúl's life increasingly intertwines with Guillermo, a mysterious man in dark glasses. As reality unravels, the echoes of Raúl's past collide with the horrors of his present in a psychological thriller that leaves behind deep, indelible scars.*





*NESTOR CANTILLANA - Raúl*





*BLANCA LEWIN - Laura*





*DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY AND FILMOGRAPHY*

**DIEGO FIGUEROA**

Diego Figueroa (1991), a young Director and Screenwriter, is about to premiere his highly anticipated debut feature, “A Yard of Jackals,” following a successful work-in-progress journey through prestigious international festivals such as SANFIC19, IAFFM, and MAFIZ. His acclaimed short film “Los Vecinos” has been selected at over 30 festivals worldwide and surpassed one million online views.

*A YARD OF JACKALS* (Feature film, 2024)

*LOS VECINOS* (Short film, 2015)

*SUEGRO, SU CENA ESTÁ LISTA* (Short film, 2013)





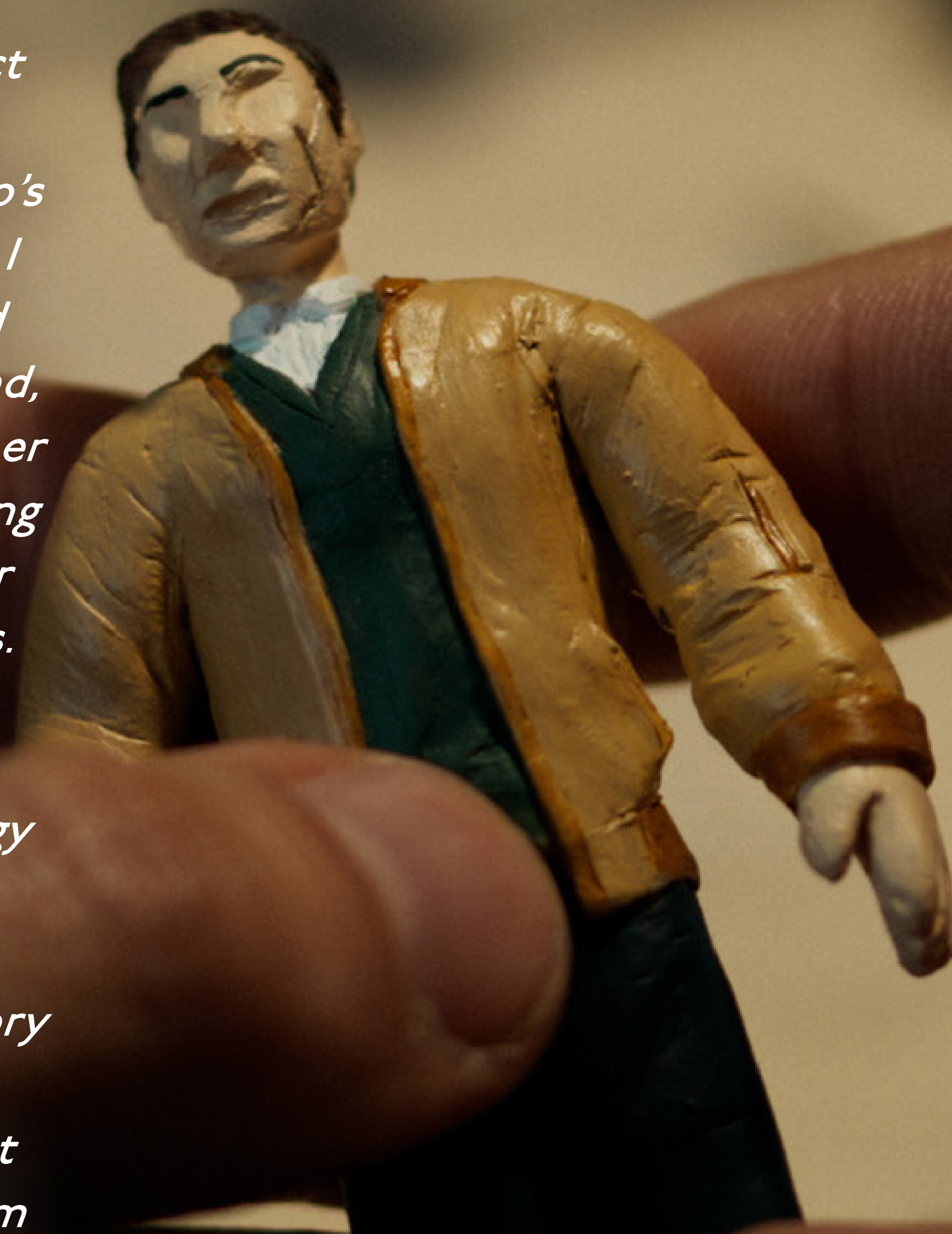


## DIRECTOR'S INTENTION

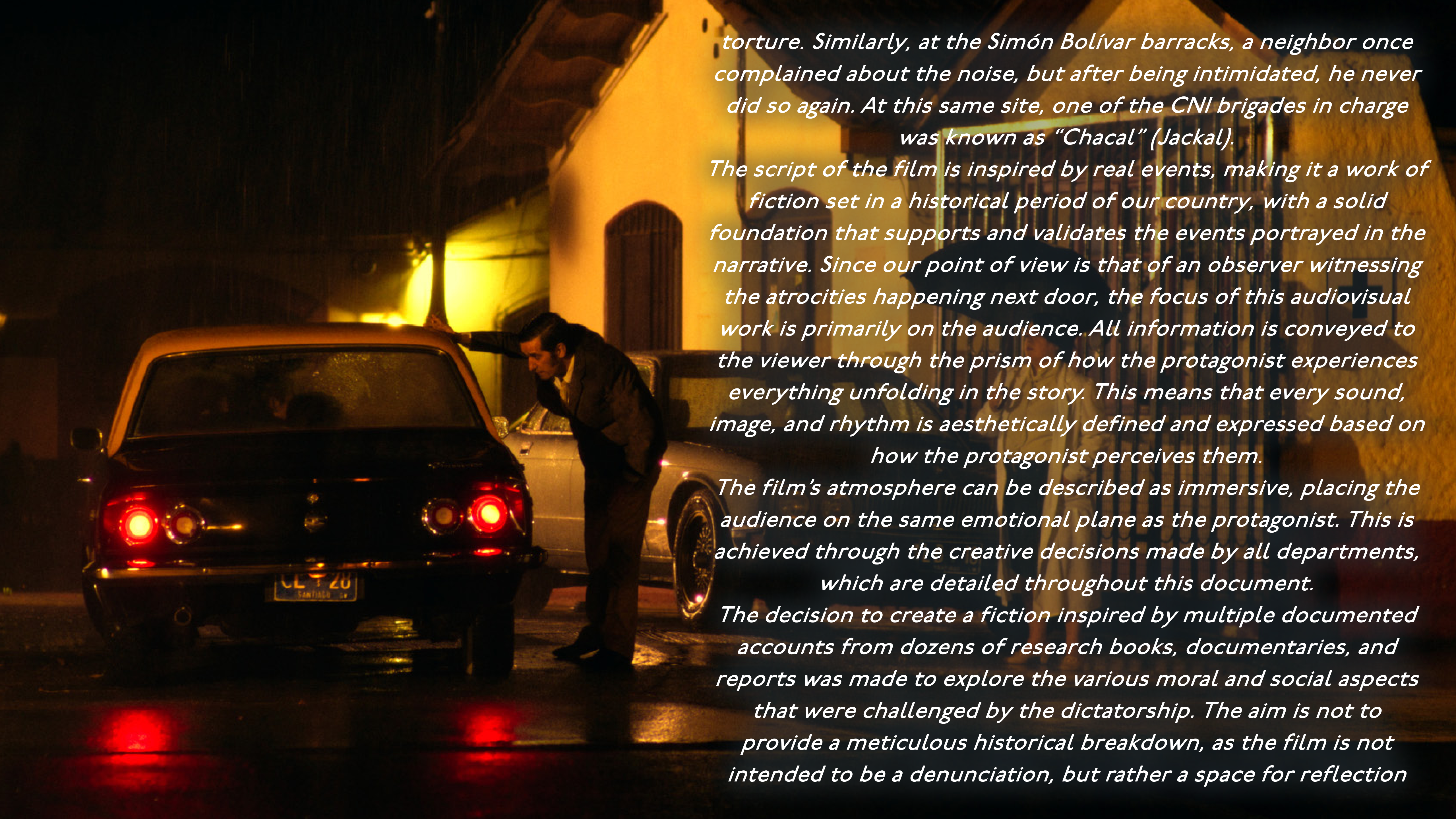
*The genesis of Patio de Chacales, my debut feature film, dates back to 2014 when I was working on my thesis project for the Film and Television program at the University of Chile. During an in-depth investigation into the dictatorship's repressive forces and their relationship with civil society, I came across a series of studies on private homes that had been used as clandestine centers for detention, torture, and, in some cases, extermination. This led me to conduct further research into some of these well-known locations, gathering information from those still overseen by organizations for relatives of the disappeared or other human rights groups.*

*I also connected with investigative authors like Javier Rebolledo, whose research into the civilian aspect of the dictatorship and its connections resulted in his book trilogy *Los Cuervos*.*

*It was through the collection of testimonies that I began shaping the perspective from which I wanted to tell the story of one of these centers: through the eyes of a neighbor. Someone who never directly saw what was happening, but heard everything through the thin wall separating him from his neighbors. This is based on real events. For instance, the infamous center known as "La Venda Sexy" got its nickname because loud music was played to mask the sounds of*





A man in a dark suit is leaning against the rear of a dark-colored car at night. The car's taillights are illuminated, casting a red glow on the wet pavement. In the background, a white building with arched windows is visible, and a person holding a blue umbrella stands near the entrance. The scene is dimly lit, with the primary light sources being the car's taillights and the ambient light from the building.

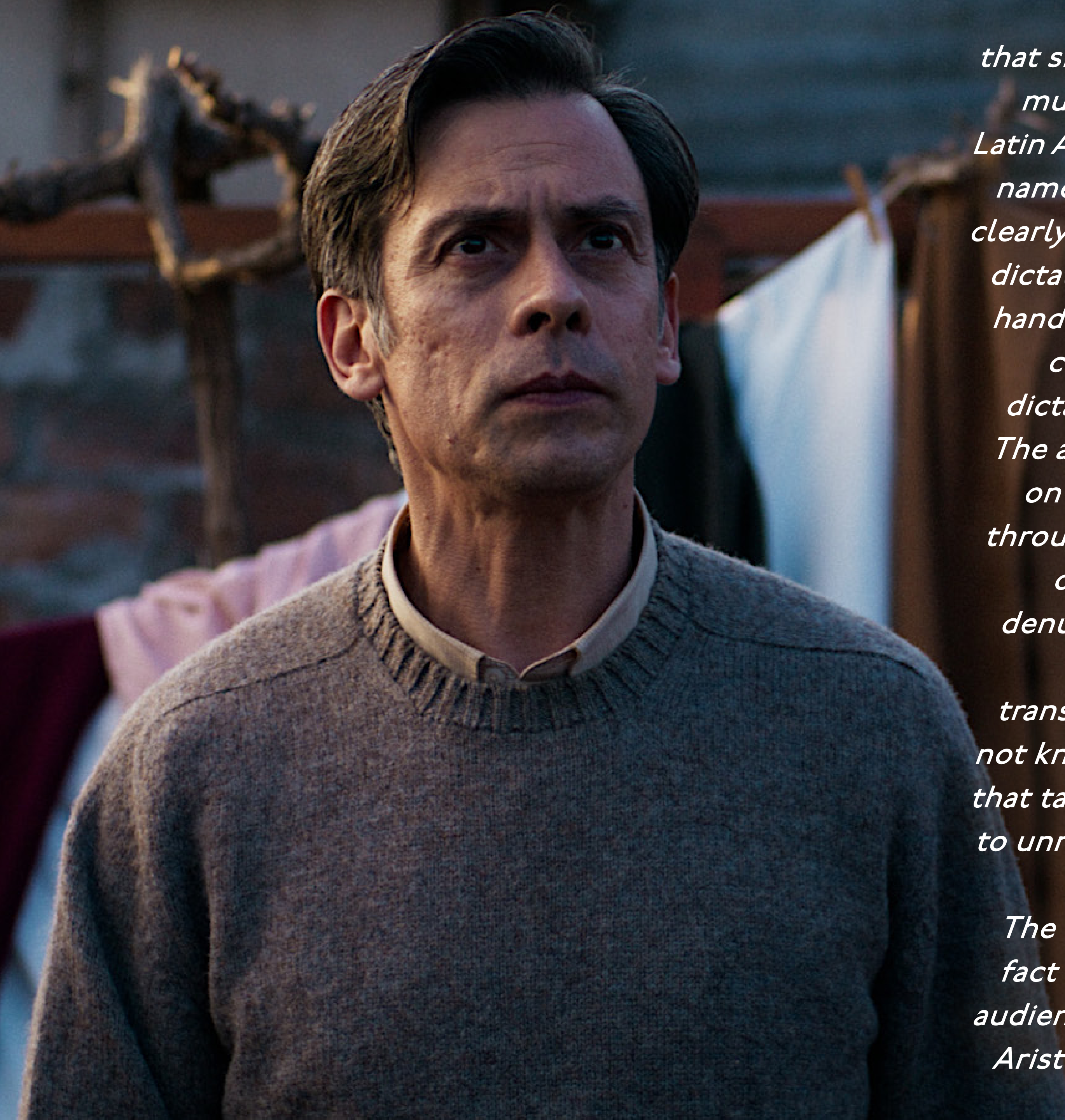
*torture. Similarly, at the Simón Bolívar barracks, a neighbor once complained about the noise, but after being intimidated, he never did so again. At this same site, one of the CNI brigades in charge was known as “Chacal” (Jackal).*

*The script of the film is inspired by real events, making it a work of fiction set in a historical period of our country, with a solid foundation that supports and validates the events portrayed in the narrative. Since our point of view is that of an observer witnessing the atrocities happening next door, the focus of this audiovisual work is primarily on the audience. All information is conveyed to the viewer through the prism of how the protagonist experiences everything unfolding in the story. This means that every sound, image, and rhythm is aesthetically defined and expressed based on how the protagonist perceives them.*

*The film’s atmosphere can be described as immersive, placing the audience on the same emotional plane as the protagonist. This is achieved through the creative decisions made by all departments, which are detailed throughout this document.*

*The decision to create a fiction inspired by multiple documented accounts from dozens of research books, documentaries, and reports was made to explore the various moral and social aspects that were challenged by the dictatorship. The aim is not to provide a meticulous historical breakdown, as the film is not intended to be a denunciation, but rather a space for reflection*





*that showcases the moral decay left in the wake of a dictatorship, much like the slimy trail of a snail. This can be seen in other Latin American dictatorships as well, which is why in this story the name “Pinochet” is never mentioned, nor are any elements that clearly pinpoint the origin or location of the events. By keeping the dictator anonymous but sketching his silhouette as a controlling hand over society, along with constant military control over the civilian population, the story could take place under any dictatorship that operated in Latin America in the last century. The audience is given the opportunity to connect with the story on an emotional level, as the film seeks to relate to viewers through its audiovisual stimuli, rather than through a recognition of something that might be considered documentary or denunciatory. For this reason, the film falls within the genre of psychological thriller, as it follows the psychological transformation of the character, blending the initial mystery of not knowing what is happening in the house next door with a style that takes on surreal tones as the protagonist’s mental state begins to unravel. Since we experience the narrative through his eyes, the story takes on a unique, subjective perspective.*

*The decision to present the film as a thriller is grounded in the fact that this genre is widely recognized and easily accepted by audiences, sparking interest by inserting a final hope through what Aristotle defines as a real danger within the story. The choice to*



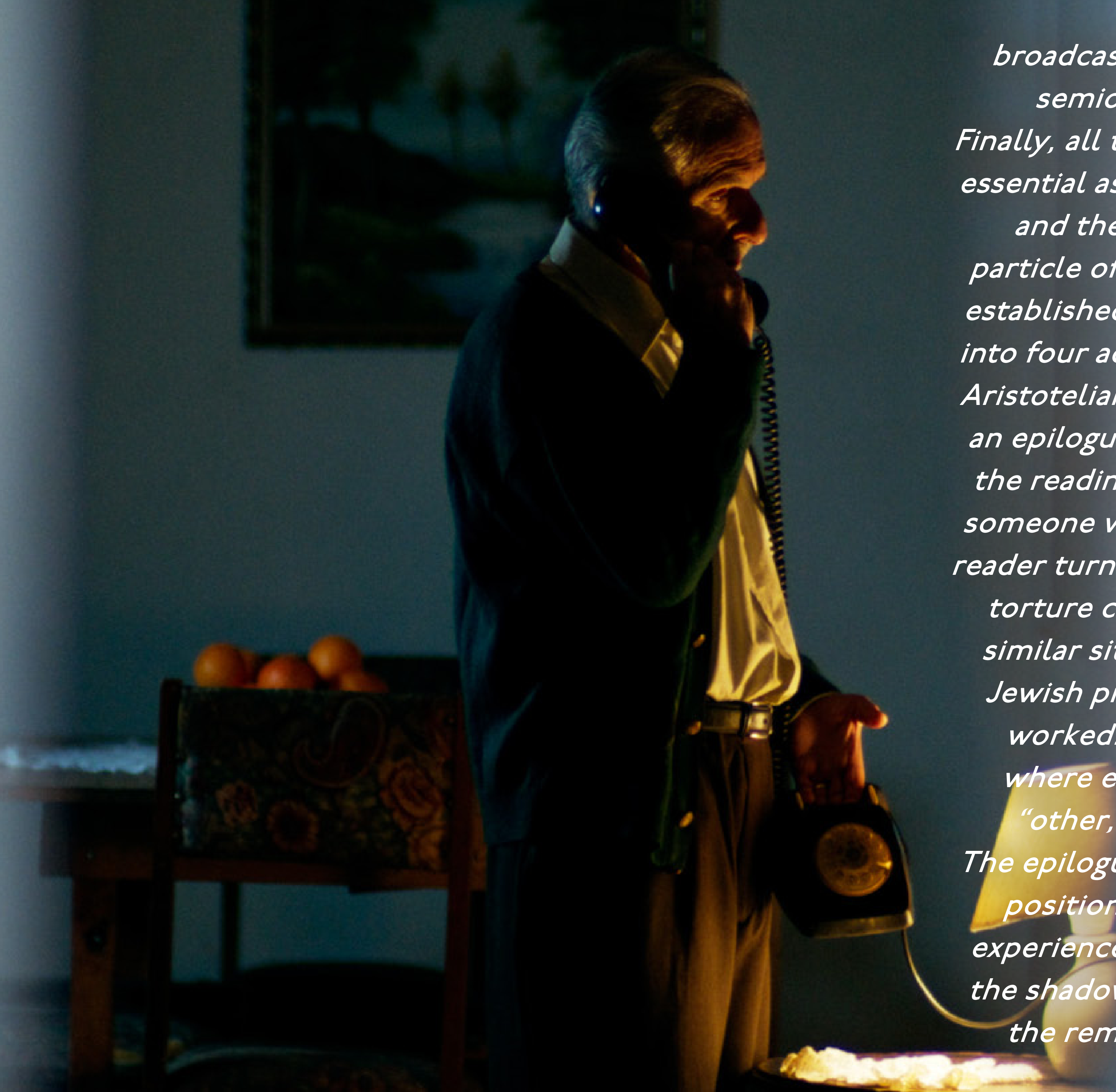
*keep the audience under the shadow of danger imposed by this somewhat anonymous dictatorship is connected to the thriller genre, which some authors like Raphaël Baroni in his book Narrative Tension describe as the “paradox of suspense.” This paradox suggests that the fictional immersion experienced by the audience is sustained and enriched by their detailed understanding of the events, thereby intensifying the emotional escalation of the story—not focusing on the outcome, but rather on the narrative journey itself.*

*To place the audience in a setting that is recognizable as the late 1970s, but with details that make it feel distinct, it’s essential to create a semiology unique to the fictional world where the story unfolds. As a result, every aspect related to life in this world will be crafted specifically for the film—from mass-control-oriented advertising, to a somewhat timeless style with strong 70s influences, and even original songs playing through fictional radio stations. This approach aims to generate, for both national and international audiences, a new environment that avoids clichés and allows viewers to continuously discover a world that feels familiar yet new. It’s a place that could seem just around the corner, with the scent of empanadas and red wine in the air.*

*Additionally, this approach grants us full control over every aspect of the film, ensuring complete command of its tone. We dictate what is shown in newspapers, magazine covers, and TV news*







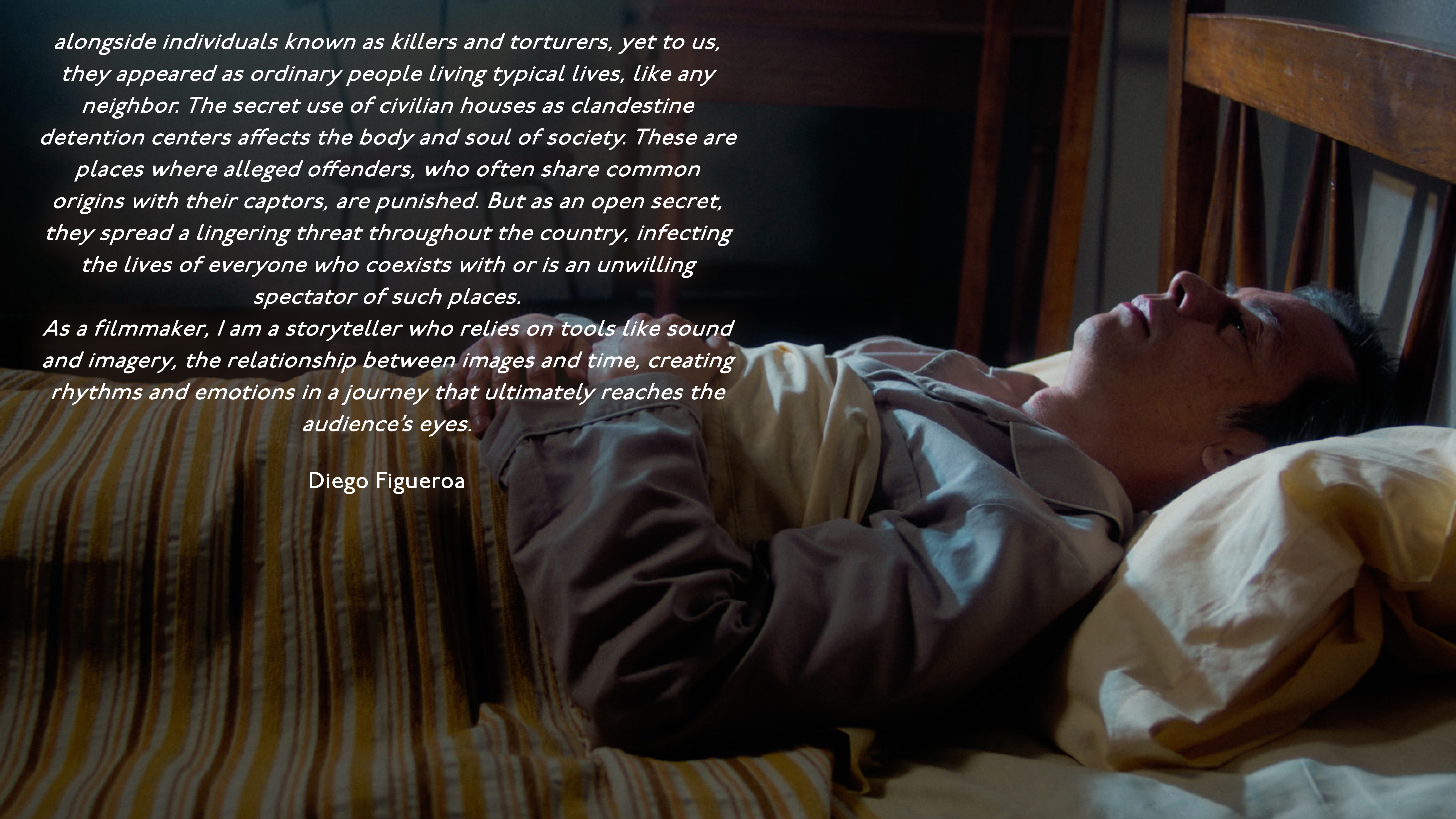
*broadcasts, all while maintaining a consistent narrative and a semiology that belongs entirely to our fictional world. Finally, all the elements that make up a cinematic work are just as essential as when a painter chooses the canvas, the type of paint, and the brush to use for their creation. In this case, every particle of the film is designed to follow the creative guidelines established from the story's perspective. The narrative is divided into four acts: the first three form the main story with a classical Aristotelian structure, but an additional act—the fourth—acts as an epilogue. This epilogue reveals that the entire story has been the reading of a book by a man who recounts the experience of someone who lived next to this torture center. Furthermore, the reader turns out to have been part of the organization that ran the torture center. This places us in a world of representations. A similar situation would be if a Nazi were reading the diary of a Jewish prisoner from a concentration camp where he himself worked. The creative viewpoint is taken to a narrative level where even the characters are placed in the position of the "other," which is the same request made of the audience. The epilogue, set in the year 2000, is a final reflection on my own position as someone who grew up in the 1990s. It's a shared experience for generations across Latin America who grew up in the shadow of a dictatorship—a reality where impunity covered the remnants of a past dictatorship. It was common to live*



*alongside individuals known as killers and torturers, yet to us, they appeared as ordinary people living typical lives, like any neighbor. The secret use of civilian houses as clandestine detention centers affects the body and soul of society. These are places where alleged offenders, who often share common origins with their captors, are punished. But as an open secret, they spread a lingering threat throughout the country, infecting the lives of everyone who coexists with or is an unwilling spectator of such places.*

*As a filmmaker, I am a storyteller who relies on tools like sound and imagery, the relationship between images and time, creating rhythms and emotions in a journey that ultimately reaches the audience's eyes.*

Diego Figueroa











6 Rue Desargues,  
75011, Paris, France  
+33 9 54 37 21 98

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