

A film by Pablo Briones

And the Moving Picture Boys


BARACA

 **69th** Internationale
Filmfestspiele
Berlin
Generation

**With Leonel Aguilera
and Antuán Alemán**

C-Side Productions
The Moving Picture Boys
& Playlab Films

Producer Benjamin Poumey, Co-Producers Estephania
Bonnett Alonso, Jace Freeman, Sean Clarck, Director
of photography Jace Freeman, Sound Sean Clark, Editor
Damián Plandólt, Sound Designer Riccardo Studer, Original
Music By Pablo Garmón

 C-SIDE

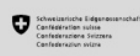
 THE
MOVING
PICTURE
BOYS

 PLAY
LAB

 CINEFORUM

SWISS FILMS

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ENGELBERTS
POUR LES ARTS
ET LA CULTURE

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Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA

BARACOA

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**World Premiere : Berlinale 2019 - Generation, Glashütte Original
Documentary Award nominee**

**Selections : CPH:DOX, Festival de cine de Málaga, Sheffield Doc Fest,
Locarno Panorama Suisse**

Awards : Biznaga de Plata, Málaga, - Youth Jury Award, Sheffield

Tagline

In a quiet Cuban village, Leonel, an introspective boy, contemplates change as his older friend Antuán moves to the city.



Synopsis

When hot summer comes to their tiny village in the Cuban countryside, Leonel and Antuán intimately explore their universe far from adults. With a considerable difference in age, their unique friendship is torn between games and fights, conversations about everyday life, existentialist questions, simple pleasures and boredom.

As his older friend is drawn to the busy life of the city, Leonel is forced to examine his life and place in the world.

While the Cuban society is going through a transitional period, the two friends also come to a crossroads.



Where it all began?

By Pablo Briones

In 2016 I attended a workshop in Cuba ran by the late Abbas Kiarostami. I directed the short Film PEZCAL starring two incredibly and endearing young boys I met in Pueblo Textil, a small town close to the film academy: Leonel and Antuán.

Their personalities, physical appearance, relationship and easiness in front of the camera made them a fun and irreverent couple: a real cinema duo.

What struck me above all is that they have a special friendship. Antuán is 13 years old, but instead of passing his time with other teenagers he spends his days with Leonel, who is only 9.

They also both are only sons, and the two of them live with no male figure at home.

They represent more than a friend for each other. Often left to their own devices, the two boys have built a world of their own.

Their friendship is a very pure kind of love, which can be confusing when you are reaching that point of transition between childhood and adolescence and you're supposed to define who you really are...

BARACOA deepens its immersion in the world of Leonel and Antuán over a whole summer. The film draws its material from this summer period, always conducive to new experiences and transformations. In a bitter-sweet fashion, BARACOA puts to test the friendship between the two boys and confronts their dreams and desires with a wider reality, within a Cuban society in mutation.

BARACOA allowed me to document this particular moment in their life: growing up, time going by, and people and things simply changing.

THE BAND

An out of the ordinary collaboration



Pablo Briones and Jace Freeman (one half of The Moving Picture Boys) met at a workshop while shooting in Cuba with Abbas Kiarostami; Jace working as a cameraman on PEZCAL. That was how they discovered the perks of working together, along with Leonel and Antuán. At the end of the workshop, PEZCAL was unanimously chosen “Best Film of the Workshop” and showed that Pablo belonged to this rare species of filmmakers, capable of bearing a just, tender and lucid gaze on childhood, without contempt or condescension. The short film made its way to festivals such as Locarno, La Havana and Oberhausen, and obviously, all parties involved felt the need to continue this beautiful companionship with the young Cubans Leonel and Antuán, this time for a feature film.

Thus, C-Side Productions, The Moving Picture Boys and Playlab Films pooled again their resources and skills for BARACOA.

A collaboration out of the ordinary was born. A collaboration that not only emulates a rock band ("Pablo Briones & The Moving Picture Boys"), but also works as such.

With Pablo leading the project in a comprehensive way, Jace and his associate Sean Clark brilliantly operated the image and sound of the film while being collectively involved in the filmmaking process.

The result is a product with a very special value added; extraordinary natural performances documented with exceptional touch and beauty.

If the adventure is bold, it is also how the best cinematographic experiments are sometimes created.



PABLO BRIONES

“The Lead Singer” words

Director’s Artistic Proposal

Why a fictionalized reality?

Because I am more interested in composing within the complexity of reality and thus by trying to organize it into an emotional narration rather than documenting a reality that, in any way, will be altered and disturbed once a camera is introduced in someone’s intimacy. Or by showing an imagined and simplified reality that will be even more impoverished by an artificial setting that belongs solely to my imagination, in addition to the budget and technical (im)possibilities.

Because through staging, natural actors will innocently devote to solely “performing” without the pressure of having to carry out a mimesis performance and without the fear of feeling exposed to the vulnerability of their own reality, as opposed to a Documentary tradition. When one is collectively committed to obtain a positive result, natural actors feel at ease at the idea that all bad or ugly aspects will be left outside -- thanks to the professionals working in the production -- and thus carrying out their performance effortlessly.



BARACOA

Because I am interested in having real characters speaking with authentic jargon, dressing and acting in their most natural way. I am interested in the richness and complexity of reality, more than in a simplified archetype version of reality. Because natural actors who are immersed in their own reality have more to give than professional actors placed in foreign realities.

Because the ambiguity of what is shown (Is it improvisation or acting? Reality or fiction? A fictional or documentary scene?) allows credibility to be equally placed throughout the whole narration and increases the audience's capacity of "believing" and empathizing with what is being shown.

Because I could not have thought of a better way of making a film about Cuba other than by trying to come as close as possible to Cuba's authentic people and by "playing" while making a film.



Camera in hand and natural light save time as opposed to a small technical shot, thus preserving the natural actor's energy so they

can solely devote to doing their work more enthusiastically, with the conviction that they are only “enjoying the time” in front of a camera. By being practically in their own reality (without having to wait for technical support or answering to the director`s remarks about the character`s psychology) they perform the task in a natural way, they simply “are” and “do” therefore achieving authenticity and naturalism.

I am interested in getting authentic reactions throughout the shootings, reactions that cannot be scripted and are hard to reproduce. This is something I have learnt from Abbas. It is not about asking the actor to reproduce something, but rather trying to produce something similar by using a different means.

As per the production, I am in the game of engaging with the audience. Beginning with the instauration of a regime in which what you see and happens is a documented reality. Then, subtly move towards a fictionalized narration in which the same “real” characters that were introduced in the initial documentary become protagonists of a bigger emotional story. Characters we can identify with and see ourselves either as part of the past or the uncertain future that awaits them.



PABLO BRIONES

“The Lead Singer”

Bio-filmography

BIOGRAPHY Born in 1983 in Tucumán, Argentina, Pablo Briones is a film director, film editor and cinematographer based in Geneva, Switzerland. During his early film studies at Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, he collaborates as a film curator for Cineclub La Quimera & Agencia Córdoba Cultura. Within his Master's degree in Film Direction at ECAL/HEAD, he directs *A BEIRA DE LISBOA* (Silver Mikeldi Award at ZINEBI'55, Bilbao) and *A BARCA*, a diptych of essay short films screened in Visions du Réel, Jihlava IDFF, FIDBA, Arkipel IDEFF and IndieLisboa among others. In 2016 he attends the workshop Filming in Cuba with Abbas Kiarostami, where he directs *PEZCAL* (Best Workshop Film) screened in Locarno FF, La Habana FF and Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen among many others. *BARACOA* is his first feature film.

FILMOGRAPHY

À BEIRA DE LISBOA, 8 min, 2013 (Silver Mikeldi Award ZINEBI'55, IndieLisboa'13, FIDBA 2013). *A BARCA*, 21 min, 2015 (Visions du Réel 2015, Jihlava IDFF 2015, Arkipel IDEFF 2015). *PEZCAL*, 11 min, 2016 (Locarno 2016, La Habana 2016, Oberhausen 2017).



“The Band's words”

The Moving Pictures Boys

We are narrative nonfiction directors working in the documentary tradition of direct cinema. We operate without “directing” in the traditional sense, letting life unfold before us, anticipating the direction of the story. We were excited to team up with Pablo, and apply an outside imposed “direction” to this style. After working together in a workshop taught by Abbas Kiarostami, we found out that we were all interested in making a minimalist, doc-style narrative with a child protagonist that mixes fictional and documentary elements. Pablo developed a script that served as a guideline for pre-production, but on the ground it was our intention to let the narrative unfold as it may.



Using the observational documentary method, we captured scenes naturally letting the “actors” dictate their dialogue, blocking and movement. Jean Renoir’s words were our guiding light, “It is the cameraman’s duty to make it possible for us to see the spectacle,

rather than the duty of the spectacle to take place for the benefit of the camera.” However, we had Pablo acting like a little devil on the shoulders of our non-actor talent making them say and do things that spurred on and heightened their natural behaviour. Working together with Pablo, we had an idea of the scenes we wanted to capture, but as it unfolded quickly and in a foreign language we relied mostly on our documentary instincts to “see the spectacle”. The resulting film is a work that feels more like a documentation of a film or a film observed; one with cinematic qualities but with the heart of a documentary.



THE MOVING PICTURES BOYS

“The Band and Coproducers”

Bio-filmography

Jace Freeman and Sean Clark are award-winning directors creating narrative nonfiction documentaries in the American South. Utilizing a direct cinema approach, the duo has independently created several films including *The Ballad of Shovels and Rope* (2014) which won Best Feature Documentary at the 2014 Port Townsend Film Festival and Best Tennessee Feature at the 2014 Nashville Film Festival. Previously, The Moving Picture Boys created *Nashville Docujournal*, an innovative web series of cinematic journalism. Selected works from the series screened in the Smithsonian exhibit “The Way We Worked” as well as included in the duo’s feature *Nashville 2012* (2013) which won the 2013 Nashville Film Festival award for Best Feature in Tennessee. They are currently finishing the forthcoming *Saint Cloud Hill* (2019), a new cinéma vérité feature shot exclusively in a narrative observational style.

Nashville 2012 (2013)

The Ballad of Shovels and Rope (2014)

Baracoa (co-directed with Pablo Briones) (2019)

Saint Cloud Hill (2019)



C-SIDE PRODUCTIONS

The Producer

C-Side Productions was founded by the end of the 20th century in Geneva, Switzerland, by independent artists emerging from the "alternative" scene. The company has been active in producing documentaries, short films, new media and audio-visual installations. These productions were screened and won awards at festivals and museums worldwide (Berlinale, Locarno, São Paulo, Sheffield, Nyon, CPH:DOX etc.), released in theaters and broadcasted in Switzerland and Europe. Our editorial line favours author's driven creative documentaries, with an inclination towards Essay forms and bold experiments.

Recent productions :

HOTEL JUGOSLAVIJA Feature documentary by Nicolas Wagnières.
Berlinale - Panorama 2018, Mostra Internacional de Cinema 2017 New Directors Competition, São Paulo, Thessaloniki Documentary Festival 2018 - International Competition, Taiwan International Documentary Festival 2018 - International Competition, Beldocs 2018, Subversive Films Festival 2018 - **Wild Dreamer Award**, Film Fest Gent 2018 - Global Cinema

PEZCAL Short by Pablo Briones.

Locarno 2016, Festival Internacional del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano 2016, Filmar en America Latina 2016, Internationale Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen 2017.

HISTOIRES MATERNELLES Short Documentary by Anouk Degen.
États Généraux du Documentaire 2015 - Expériences du Regard, Filmar en America Latina 2015, 51èmes Journées de Soleure - Panorama Short, Contemporary Swiss Cinema Panorama 2016, Filmes de Homen - Compétition Prix Jean-Loup Passek, Docfeed 2017, Festival de Films Féministes de Montréal 2017, Cheap Cuts Short Documentary Festival 2017, Berlin Indie Doc Fest 2017, etc.



PLAYLAB FILMS

The Co-Producer

PLAYLAB FILMS: creativity in movement by unstoppable creators

We are a production company that aims at nurturing imagination through cinema. We believe that playing is the driving force of great ideas and a key element in all creative processes. We boost an innovative and alternative production model based on the importance of playing to experiment with creativity and dynamism to discover new horizons.

We are a bridge to be used by those who are talented, so they can create and show their work under a different perspective: integrating knowledge, production, financing and distribution into a sustainable and swift cinema model.

PLAYLAB
FILMS

TECHNICAL INFO

DURATION: 90 minutes

LANGUAGE: Spanish

SUBTITLES AVAILABLE: French / English / German

SHOOTING FORMAT: 2K

SCREENING FORMAT: DCP 2K / HD File

SOUND: 5.1 / 2.0

Producer: Benjamin Poumey

Co-Producers: Jace Freeman, Sean Clark, Estephania Bonnett
Alonso

Director of photography: Jace Freeman

Sound: Sean Clark

Editor: Damián Plandolit

Sound Designer: Riccardo Studer

Original Music: Pablo Garmón

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