



OKNA PRODUÇÕES and TRANSPARENTE FILMA present

NALU ON THE BORDER

(MULHER DO PAI)

BRAZIL | 2016 | FICTION | 94'

After receiving four awards in Rio Int'l Film Festival and São Paulo Int'l Film Festival, Nalu on the Border has its international premiere at Generation 14 Plus of the 67th Berlinale.

NALU^{ON} THE BORDER

SYNOPSIS

Nalu, 16, and her father, Ruben, 39, live in a small country town near the Brazilian border with Uruguay. When he realizes she is becoming a woman, an ambiguous closeness begins to develop between them. That intimacy gives way to jealousy when Rosario, an Uruguayan woman, enters their lives.





DIRECTOR CRISTIANE OLIVEIRA

Born in Porto Alegre, Cristiane Oliveira started her career as a filmmaker with the shorts "Messalina" (2004) and "Guests" (2008). "Messalina" was selected to over 20 festivals across the world and has won 13 awards. Her first feature, "Nalu on the boarder" (Mulher do Pai, 2016, Brazil-Uruguay) won the VFF Talent Highlight at the Berlinale's Talent Project Market and was selected to the Produire au Sud workshop (at Festival des 3 Continents, Nantes, France). The feature's premiere was in Rio Int'l Film Festival, receiving the Best Director, Cinematography and Supporting Actress awards, and also won the Abraccine award at São Paulo Int'l Film Festival. Its international premiere is at the Generation section of the 67th Berlinale, to which she also attends as a Berlinale Talent. Cristiane has worked as an assistant director on various projects, as a writer in features such as "Nine Chronicles for a Screaming Heart" (by Gustavo Galvão, mention of the FIPRESCI Jury at the Uruguay International Film Festival 2013), and as a producer, as in the feature "Still Orangutans" (by Gustavo Spolidoro, Best Feature Film Award in Milan Film Festival).

A young woman with dark hair is riding a silver bicycle towards the camera on a wide, dusty dirt road. She is wearing a light blue denim jacket over a dark green t-shirt and light-colored shorts. The background shows a rural landscape with green trees and bushes on the left, and a dark car driving away on the road to the right. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

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NALU ON THE BORDER is your first feature film and it was made with a co-production between Brazil and Uruguay. Why Uruguay?

I was born and raised in Porto Alegre, the capital of the most southern State of Brazil, Rio Grande do Sul. It is a city geographically privileged because it's near the coast, the highlands and the border (with Uruguay and with Argentina). So people from Porto Alegre have the habit of leaving town on the weekends and during vacation. Throughout the roads of Rio Grande do Sul, one can frequently see lonely houses in endless fields. I was always curious about the lives of the people who were in those houses.

When I started writing the film treatment of NALU ON THE BORDER, this background of isolation inspired me because it would reinforce the tension between the characters. Then I chose the Uruguayan border region, which has a very special and fluid characteristic – sometimes the limits between the countries are not that rigid, so the cultural exchange is permanent. Besides being the film location, the border is a symbolic space.

In a film about touching, the skin also presents itself as a border between the inner world and an outer world, a limit that is also imposed between people. NALU ON THE BORDER is about real borders, but also about the ones we build to ourselves.

NALU ON THE BORDER seems to be a very personal film that takes place in a very specific countryside culture, even though you grew up in the capital city. How did the story come up and how its environment personally touches you?

The culture of Rio Grande do Sul was shaped by the cattle ranching culture, which doesn't have much

place for women. Also, there is a certain pride in being a warrior, maybe as a result of recent history of 100 years in war. Consequently, we have a patriarchal culture, which is usually sexist and that is not restricted to the rural environment. It is a sexism that makes women feel like they are incapable or lacking in autonomy.

As we can see in the film, the female protagonist only imagined herself leaving her father's house for another man. The story came up from the will to explore father-and-daughter relationship, which I rediscovered at 17, when I reconciled with my own father. This personal estrangement set the right mood for the story.

The characters took shape when, during the research of my first short-film *Messalina* (2004), I came to know the real lives of people who became blind and that, with time, would forget the image of things. We all tend to forget it too, but people who are not blind may use photographs, videos or just see people and places again. The definite loss of the visual memory is very distressing.

Then I had this thought: if this blind man had someone by his side to describe the world to him all the time, would that loss be decreased? And what if this person was his daughter? The relationship of a blind person with the one who describes the world to them is of extreme trust, just like the relationship a daughter would like to have with her father. This is the germ of Ruben and Nalu's story.

Why was the city of Torquato Severo chosen as the film location and how was it like to produce the film in such an isolated place?

Torquato Severo is like many other places in Brazil

that economically decayed with the end of the passenger trains in the 50's. International interests imposed on our country investments in highways. So this rail network, which was one of the biggest in the planet by the beginning of the 20th century, was reduced to a few railroads for cargo transportation. One of them goes to São Sebastião Village, in Torquato Severo (a district from Don Pedrito county), which once had hotels and even a movie theater. Today, it is reduced to a village with approximately 200 inhabitants, generally employed by the cattle ranches. They don't have a single drugstore. The dirt road on such a clayish soil makes transportation during rainy seasons almost impossible. So the distance that would normally take one hour to the nearest town, would then take two or three hours. The condition of isolation, in a place with a live-stock culture, was what interested me for the film. In order to produce the film there, we had to have the crew lodged in some of the inhabitants' houses and even get a road fixed. It was a massive production effort to build an infrastructure that was only made possible thanks to the generous reception by the locals.

Around 40 people from the village ended up working in the film somehow. Some mature women amongst them were having their first paid job. I immersed myself in the local culture and allowed it to influence even the film screenplay.

What was the creative process like with technicians and actors?

Three years before the shooting, I had already chosen the photographer Heloisa Passos ("*I Travel*

Because I Have to, I Come Back Because I Love You") to conceive the project with me. We went to the film location twice during the development stage, to imbue ourselves in that universe. The second time there we went with Gonzalo Delgado ("*Whisky*"), who would be the art director, but, because of personal commitments, he only worked on the conception of the film before shooting, passing on the baton to Adriana Borba – who integrated into the village and created a set decoration that really got the best of the local elements.

The sound to me is a narrative strength and I wanted it to involve the spectator in this special environment. So we called Raúl Locatelli ("*Silent Light*" and "*The Untamed*"), who worked with me in the conception of the film and created an incredible sound library.

As for Maria Galant (the main actress) she was the first actor to be casted, after some auditions with other girls. In a process of preparation that lasted one year, I made her appropriate the character little by little because it was her first time working on a feature film. Based on her, I started searching for the other actors, who finally formed an aesthetically harmonic group: Marat Descartes ("*Hard Labor*") and Verónica Perrotta ("*Whisky*" and "*Acné*") are experienced actors from the film industry who were very generous in the central trio, helping Maria advance.

Everything was only made possible by the support of creative producers Aletéia Selonk, Graziella Ferst and Gina O'Donell, along with producers – who are also film directors – Gustavo Galvão and Diego Fernandez. We had a collaborative creation process from beginning to end.





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LONG SYNOPSIS

In a small town near the border of Brazil and Uruguay, the relationship between a father and a daughter is going through changes. Nalu, the daughter, is a 16-year-old teenager who is becoming a woman. Ruben, the father, is a 39-year-old man that became blind when still young. They need to learn how to live with each other as father and daughter after the passing away of Olga – Ruben's mother, a strong and overprotective woman, who raised them almost as siblings. Olga's absence causes them to develop more intimacy in their daily routine, which is lived in a modest little house isolated in the countryside. While mourning, Nalu spends her time between a new love, the discover of her sexuality, confidences with her best friend Elisa and the heavy responsibilities with her father. The conflicts and the ambiguous feelings that come from their forced relationship change in perspective when Rosario, an attractive 36-year-old Uruguayan woman who is Nalu's art teacher and friend, starts to be present in their lives. Worried about Ruben's strictness toward Nalu and aware of the interest in art he once had, Rosario offers him pottery classes, which he accepts to take. Rosario's presence inflicts affection and jealousy into this atypical family.

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CAST

Nalu	Maria Galant
Ruben	Marat Descartes
Rosario	Verónica Perrotta
Vera	Áurea Baptista
Olga	Amélia Bittencourt
Antonio	Jorge Esmoris
Elisa	Fabiana Amorim
Carmen	Liane Venturella
Juan	Diego Trinidad
Fabio	Renan Goulart

CREW

Executive Producers:	Graziella Ferst, Gina O'Donnell, Gabriel Richieri
Associate Producer:	Gustavo Galvão
Cinematographer:	Heloisa Passos, ABC
Art Direction:	Adriana Borba
Art Consultant:	Gonzalo Delgado Galiana
Sond Recordist:	Raúl Locatelli
Editing:	Tula Anagnostopoulos
Co-writer and Script Supervisor:	Michele Frantz
Supervising sound editor:	Miriam Biderman, ABC
Sound Editor:	Ricardo Reis
Sound Mixer:	Paulo Gama
Original Soundtrack:	Arthur de Faria
Brazil Distribution:	Vitrine Filmes

PRODUCERS

Aletéia Selonk

Cristiane Oliveira

Diego Fernández

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