

Julio Castedo

(writer and scriptwriter)

Madrid, April 1st 1964. Writer and scriptwriter. Bachelor in Medicine with speciality in neuroradiology. To date, he has published a cinematic essay “Las cien mejores películas del siglo XX” (The 100 best films of the 20th century), a short story book “La máscara de mi piel” (The mask of my skin) and a collection of short theatre plays “Terencio”. He has also written the monograph “Buen uso del lenguaje en los textos científicos y los informes clínicos” (Good language use in scientific texts and case reports). Efecto Violeta has published his two novels: “Apología de Venus” (Apology of Venus) and “El jugador de ajedrez” (The chess player). His is one of the most distinguishable voices in Spanish narrative; going against the current, ignoring market pressures, using long sentences and rich vocabulary. His stories create a lyrical atmosphere that reveals both his scepticism and his hopeful vision of humankind.

Luis Oliveros

(Director)

Worked as director’s assistant in over 30 films, TV series and advertising, under famous directors such as Fernando Colomo, Vicente Aranda and Antonio Mercero.

His debut feature was “Pata negra” (Black leg), an adventure comedy starring Gabino Diego. He has also directed several episodes of series such as “Manolito Gafotas” and “Las aventuras del capitán Alatriste” (The adventures of Captain Alatriste), as well as the TV movies “El secuestro de Anabel Segura” (The abduction of Anabel Segura) and “El Ángel de Budapest” (The angel of Budapest), winner of the Ondas award to the best miniseries in 2012.

Director’s notes

Black or white. In the chess game that is life, we usually get to play with black.

“El jugador de ajedrez” (The chess player) tells the horror of a confrontation that gave rise to one of the most dramatic and terrible events in the history of humanity. The film’s characters are just pieces in the huge chess board that Europe became during World War II. Together with our protagonist, a humble black pawn, we will discover the individual, even personal dimension of war.

Just like the lowly peasant played by Anthony Quinn in “The 25th hour”, the innocent child in “Empire of the Sun”, and the marvellous professor in “This land is mine”, our protagonist, Diego Padilla, a good man who rejects extremism and violence, as well as a brilliant chess player, will be forced to seek a reservoir of inner strength in order to survive

the misery and barbarity of a conflict he hardly understands. Like bishops, rooks and pawns, the film's characters will become entangled in an age that catches them by surprise and will mark their lives forever.

“El jugador de ajedrez” (The chess player) is a realistic film, with a simple and sober visual style, but with a deep and moving message. Reflected in its characters, the audience will recognise the faces of cruelty, violence, selfishness, avarice and corruption, but also those of love, friendship, sacrifice and solidarity, thus depicting the duality of the human condition.

But above all, this is a love story.