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CANNES

CARMEN & LOLA

A film by Arantxa Echevarría

Zaira Romero * Rosy Rodríguez

Moreno Borja * Rafaela León * Carolina Yuste

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Directed by Arantxa Echevarría

CARMEN Y LOLA / DRAMA / Production: Spain / Language: Spanish / 2018 / 103 min

LOTIDO



Synopsis

Carmen lives in a gypsy community in the suburbs of Madrid. Music can be heard in every corner. Like every other woman she has ever met, she is destined to live a life that is repeated generation after generation: getting married and raising as many children as possible. But one day she meets Lola, an uncommon gypsy girl who dreams about going to university, draws bird graffiti and likes girls. Carmen quickly develops a complicity with Lola and discovers a world that, inevitably, leads them to be rejected by their families.

Filmography

CARMEN Y LOLA

Feature film, 2018

EL ÚLTIMO BUS

Short film, 2017

EL SOLISTA DE LA ORQUESTA

Short documentary, 2016

YO PRESIDENTA

Short film, 2015

Preselected for the 30th edition of the Goya Awards

DE NOCHE Y DE PRONTO

Short film, 2013

Nominated for Best Fiction Short at the 28th edition of the Goya Awards

Malaga Film Festival

Palm Springs Festival

Cleveland International Film Festival

CUESTIÓN DE PELOTAS

Documentary, 2012

PANCHITO

Short film, 2010

Director's Notes

VISUAL CONCEPTS

As director I feel it is important to revitalise classical forms with modern attitudes. It seemed natural to follow the trail of the Dardenne brothers in seeking to portray reality without manipulating it, as in "Rosetta" and "El hijo", as well as the narrative courage of Jacques Audiard's "Dheepan". I wanted to remain equidistant, so that we would never be able to condemn any of the characters. Precisely for that reason, I wanted to adopt a respectful and modest attitude when presenting gypsy culture. That distance is not just seen through the camera but also in the narrative: being able to find social intensity in a character's gestures and portraying the misery of the experience of exclusion through objects. Seeing the world through people's details and viewing individuals through the objects that fill their world.

Seeing and not seeing, like art in the blink of an eye. I wanted our camera to see without judging, whilst at the same time having those images put us in the predicament of having to take a side: there is no way to remain neutral. Because when the love story started to take shape, I picked a side. Lola sees the world through her love for Carmen. And that is not a normal perspective, since it is tinted by all the intentionality and artifice of her feelings. The world seems to stop, blur and lose focus to concentrate just on Carmen, on an outstretched hand, an earring in the shape of a bird glimpsed through unkempt hair, dirty shoes covered in dust.

THE IDEA

In 2009, a news report from Granada caught my attention. It was about the first female gypsy couple to get married in Spain. Same-sex marriage had been legal since 2005, but it had taken them 4 years to decide to take that step. Naturally, the women had asked the newspaper to use made-up names -Rosario and Sara- and not to show their faces. Some lives are like

boxing bouts. Rosario and Sara were forced to climb into the ring of prejudice and taboos. They had been rejected by their neighbours, families and the entire gypsy community. But in spite of it, they still decided to get married and be presented in the media, perhaps not showing their faces, but at least lending their voices to a helpless collective.

"Being a woman is still difficult. Being a gypsy woman, adds the burden of an entire culture with centuries of patriarchy and sexism. Being a woman, gypsy and lesbian, means not existing."

Gypsy women "haven't been in a closet, but a vault." Women who openly manifest their sexuality and wish to live as lesbians are forced to go far away from the gypsy world, because they feel that they are attacking the legacy of culture and family, their own mothers who raised them to be both perfect wives and mothers. Many have left school very young, have no education, will never be able to find work outside of THEIR environment because, as a general rule, white people don't hire gypsy women. How are they not going to hide their sexual condition?

Being a woman, I think I have a different view of the world, of observing reality and even telling stories. I am a director and a woman, perhaps not in that order, and that marks me. I have felt a moral obligation to give a voice to those who don't have their own. Cinema has become my loudspeaker for certain causes which I believe must be represented.

"I hate being a woman. I hate it with all my heart. If I wasn't a woman, I could have a life. If I wasn't a woman, I could travel, be an entrepreneur, have experiences, meet many people from different places. If I wasn't a woman, I could be like anyone else. I don't have dreams. Gypsy women have nothing at all, not even dreams".

Noemi, a gypsy girl, during a talk about women's rights in a High School in Madrid.

Cast

ZAIRA ROMERO – Lola
ROSY RODRIGUEZ – Carmen
MORENO BORJA – Paco
RAFAELA LEÓN – Flor
CAROLINA YUSTE – Paqui

Crew

DIRECTOR AND WRITER:
Arantxa Echevarría
PRODUCERS: Pilar Sánchez Díaz,
Arantxa Echevarría
D.O.P.: Pilar Sánchez Díaz
ART DIRECTOR: Soledad Seseña
COSTUME DESIGN: Teresa Mora
FILM EDITING: Renato Sanjuán
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Eduardo Santana
MUSIC: Nina Aranda
MAKEUP: Gloria Pinar and Soledad Padilla
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: Jorge Calatayud
SOUND: Fabio Huet
SOUND MIXER: Dani Peña

Production

PRODUCED BY: Tvtec Servicios
Audiovisuales
IN ASSOCIATION WITH: Orange Spain –
Madrid Regional Government –
Spanish Film and Audio-visual Arts Institute



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