



# **ALAMAR**

**Directed by Pedro González-Rubio**

**“A lovely, soulful feature”**  
- Jay Weissberg, *Variety*



**Mexico / 2009 / Drama**  
**In Spanish and Italian with subtitles / 73 min.**

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## **SYNOPSIS**

Jorge and Roberta have been separated for several years. They simply come from opposite worlds: he likes an uncomplicated life in the jungle, while she prefers a more urban existence. He is Mexican and she is Italian, and she has decided to return to Rome with their five-year-old son, Natan. But before they leave, Jorge wishes to take young Natan on a trip, hoping to teach him about his Mayan origins in Mexico. At first the boy is physically and emotionally uncomfortable with the whole affair, and gets seasick on the boat taking them to their destination. But as father and son spend more time together, Natan begins a learning experience that will remain with him forever.

## **FESTIVALS AND AWARDS**

WINNER:

Tiger Award – **Rotterdam Int'l Film Festival**

Audience Award - **Morelia Int'l Film Festival**

Feature Film Competition Award – **Morelia Int'l Film Festival**

Jury Award – Iberoamerican Prize, **Miami Int'l Film Festival**

New Director Award - **San Francisco Int'l Film Festival**

Official Selection:

**Toronto Int'l Film Festival**

**Berlin Int'l Film Festival** – Opening Night Generation K-plus Section

**Minneapolis Int'l Film Festival**

**Sarasota Film Festival**

**Washington DC Int'l Film Festival**

## **DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY AND FILMOGRAPHY**

Pedro González-Rubio is a Mexican filmmaker born in Brussels. His initiation to visual arts came at the age of 16 while living in New Delhi. He studied media in Mexico before attending the London Film School. He worked as a cinematographer on the film BORN WITHOUT (2007) by Eva Norvind. His directorial debut, TORO NEGRO (2005, co-director), received several awards including the Horizontes Award for best Latin American film from the San Sebastian Film Festival. ALAMAR is his feature film debut, which nonetheless remains true to real life.

2005 TORO NEGRO. Documentary. (Co-director, Director of Photography, Producer)

2007 COMMON GROUND Documentary/The Making of Babel. (Co-director, DOP)

NACIDO SIN (int'l title: BORN WITHOUT. Additional Cinematography)

2009 ALAMAR (Director, Director of Photography, Editor, Co-producer)

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

Six years ago I moved to Playa del Carmen, probably driven by my childhood experience. Many things had changed, what once used to be a fishermen's village now was the epicenter to the fastest growing urbanization in Mexico. At this tourist oriented development area, I've witnessed the lack of environmental awareness, the destruction of an extensive coral reef to make a long dock for cruise ships, the destruction of hectares of mangrove along the coastline to build big chain hotels, polluting the sea with sewage water, hence affecting the whole ecosystem of the area and pushing many of its species to an ill-fated future.

Banco Chinchorro, the main location where the documentary takes place, was declared in 1996 a Natural Reserve of the Biosphere by UNESCO, and serious efforts are being made to make it a World Heritage Site. It is home to thousands of different species and the biggest coral reef extension in our country.

By photographing and developing a story based on the current relation between man and his habitat in Chinchorro, I intend to portray my love for this region and the admiration and respect I have towards the lives of its fishermen.

I didn't want to make a distant or intellectual approach in this film. What I wanted to achieve was a visual experience that could trigger emotions of empathy with the characters. During the time of research, I was working on a story based on a father and son relationship. Alamar was inspired by the simplicity of happiness.

The day to day activities at Chinchorro and the interaction with Matraca, the old fisherman, resulted in a perfect experience for Natan to learn about an ancestral interaction between man and nature. He is a child who moves between both worlds, the one of an austere life while spending time with his dad, and one in the urban society along with his mother. One reality is not better than the other, they are simply different and the child is able to be himself in both, free from any preconception or judgment. I tried to focus on the boy's point of view, to accomplish a pure feeling in every way. The main location embraced the characters naturally as if they belonged there, in a timeless sense to the environment. But the idea of impermanence is present in the characters' reality from the very first moments of the story until the last frame. The father's decision is to go back to his origins in order to teach his son the true values in life.

## **INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR (at the Morelia Film Festival)**

### ***Is this your first time at the Morelia International Film Festival?***

In 2005 I participated with a documentary that I co-directed with Carlos Armella entitled Toro Negro. This year I'm also participating as photography director in a documentary called Flores en el Desierto directed by José Álvarez.

### ***How did you become interested in the theme of the film?***

I wanted to explore the love between father and son at the same time as I explore the harmony between humans and nature. [I wanted] to tell a story that evokes the return to humanity's origin, and to get into the basic activities of life – with fishing being one of the most ancestral of human beings'. I decided to use Banco Chinchorro as the main location because of its minimalist sceneries. This simplicity allowed me to focus on the relationships among the characters.

### ***What was the biggest challenge you faced making the film?***

Doing everything with such a small budget and with a crew of two (Manuel, audio, and myself, camera). Nevertheless, this story could not have been filmed in any other way. The dynamic was very intimate - the camera should not even have been present in order to capture the pureness of the reality.

### ***What kind of films, in terms of genre and subject matter, would you like to keep making?***

A hybrid between documentary and fiction.

# **CREDITS**

## CREW

### **Director:**

Pedro González-Rubio

### **Screenwriter:**

Pedro González-Rubio

### **Producers:**

Jaime Romandía

Pedro González-Rubio

### **Production Companies:**

Mantarraya Producciones

Xcalakarma Films

### **Production Management:**

Øyvind Stiauren

### **Post-production Supervisor**

Joakim Ziegler

### **Editor:**

Pedro González-Rubio

### **Production Designer:**

Pedro González-Rubio

### **Editorial Department:**

Edna Beatriz Cruz Miranda

Alan Durán Alatorre

### **Camera and Electrical Department:**

David Torres Castilla

Alexis Zabe

### **Sound:**

Manuel Carranza

Emmanuel Romero

Rodolfo Romero

### **Music:**

Diego Bellinure

Uriel Esquenazi

## CAST

Jorge Machado

Roberta Palombini

Natan Machado Palombini

Néstor Marín "Matraca"