



**Based on Clarice Lispector's novel
"An Apprenticeship or The Book of Delights"**

a film by Marcela Lordy

Brazil, Argentina | Portuguese with English subtitles | 99 minutes | 1:85:1

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Synopsis

Lóri (Simone Spoladore), a free-spirited teacher living on the beach in Rio de Janeiro, leads a sexually independent life, filled with eroticism and devoid of commitment. However, meeting Ulisses (Javier Drolas), a headstrong yet sympathetic philosophy professor, sparks a change in Lóri, inspiring her to break through her emotional barriers and explore something lasting.

Festivals and Awards

BAFICI 2021 (Argentina) - American Competition

*Best performance for Simone Spoladore and a Feature Film Special Mention

São Paulo International Film Festival 2020 (Brazil) - Official Competition

* One of the most three viewed and well-voted films by the public

Vitória Film Festival 2020 (Brazil) - Official Competition

*Awarded Best Screenplay, Best Performance for Simone Spoladore, and received an Honorable Mention for Photography (Mauro Pinheiro Júnior, ABC).

FIM - International Festival of Women in Cinema 2020 (Brazil) - Closing Film

Director's Statement

THE BOOK OF DELIGHTS is an intimate investigation journey, which faces anguish and pain in a trajectory that is only possible through the encounter, exchange and learning between Lóri and Ulisses; a journey of acceptance of love, in which the two face their own loneliness.

Telling stories of all things ordinary and non-extraordinary, proposing, however, an extraordinary look at everyday life - this is one of the main features of the great Brazilian writer Clarice Lispector (1920-1977) from which we've freely adapted this work. Being able to translate in a lucid way this very specific aspect of her literature into film, finding powerful visual solutions, has been the great challenge of the script - a subtle dramatic construction of an introspective and sensitive female character.

The film is an emotional erotic novel from the point of view of a contemporary woman in search of real affective connections. I was living alone for the first time when I came across Lóri and her maturity challenges. Recently separated from a ten-year marriage, as I was reading the book I felt that there was something sacred in it about the love that needed to be redeemed.

After a year of waiting, Lóri learns to live through the humanization of desires, where love is not a mere satisfaction of instincts, but something far beyond a purely animal relationship. This is what caught my attention and made me adapt the 1969 book for today, when we experience superfluous, liquid* loves and no one else has the patience for the time of others anymore - as well as the possibility of a stable affective relationship, which deconstructs the myth of romantic love in which the obligation to make the other person happy leaves the spouse and goes to the individual and his/her choices.

Lóri feels a deep "pain" that comes from the anxiety and the desire to identify herself as an independent woman in a patriarchal society. She is a protagonist-woman who fulfills her destiny through self-affirmation and self-realization - something rare, not only in the literature of that time, but also today, more than 50 years after the publication of the book. I have always shared that same desire, and when making the film I saw a female author being born in an equally masculine environment, which is that of cinema. Like Lóri, I went through many trials, as a woman, as a director and in a way as a character in this story.

From a silent listening to the discovery of her own voice, Lóri takes off her masks and learns to put herself through the hard journey of self-knowledge. She needs to discover herself fully in order to finally recognize the pleasure of being with others. She needs to leave the position of object to become the subject of her own pleasure. And while Ulisses tries to understand her true drives, advising and pointing out Lóri's

involuntary isolation, she learns to take her steps towards the others by herself, discovering her right to come and go - on equal terms, in a healthy and equitable exchange of affections with her students, her family, with herself and, finally, with Ulisses.

In this inside-out Homer's Odyssey, where he waits for his "wife" who makes a great journey inside herself, Ulisses wants her and waits for her, patiently, until she and her soul are ready as well. The approximations and distancing that take place between the two make her learning process proceed with advancement and retrogression - as in life; a story of humanization through the development of consciousness. Where death as a passage is necessary for a new beginning. For a conscious and individual human relationship.

Bringing to the public the need to accept our own loneliness, understanding and respecting the individuality of others in order to live in communion has been my great motivation. In this world overtaken by increasingly incomprehensible dystopias, talking about love has become a radically necessary act.

This kind of audiovisual fable about the loneliness of the female position is born in order to instigate us all to cultivate a certain feminine feature that, in this raw world, we repress and even forget. For this, the film has the immense courage to affirm love as a place that is - and, more than ever, can still be - one of the few really shared experiences in this life. Even if, for Lóri, loving may mean losing herself.

Marcela Lordy, March 2021

Director Biography - Marcela Lordy

Marcela Lordy is a director, screenwriter and producer. Graduated in cinema from FAAP, she studied direction of actors at EICTV in Cuba and was an assistant to important filmmakers such as Walter Salles, Hector Babenco and Carlos Nader. Between cinema, television and visual arts, her films **Lulu's Dream** (Sonhos de Lulu, 2009), **The Impassive Muse** (A Musa Impassível, 2010), **SP For Rent** (Aluga-se, 2012) and **Listening to the River** (Ouvir o Rio: uma escultura sonora de Cildo Meireles, 2012) were programmed and awarded at many festivals and museums around the world. Her last short film **Be What You Are** (Ser O Que Se É, 2018) became a digital phenomenon with 5 million views in one month. For television, she directed episodes of the children's and youth series **Julie and the Phantoms** (Julie e os Fantasmas), winner of the APCA 2011 and nominated for the International Emmy Awards 2012, and **Passionais** aired on Globosat.

In 2012, she founded the independent cultural production company Cinematográfica Marcela and started to co-produce her own films. As a jury member and part of the

selection committee for several festivals and project funding programs, she coordinated AIC's documentary course from 2014 to 2017. Co-writer of her short and feature films, this year she premieres **THE BOOK OF DELIGHTS**. She's currently developing the series **Made in China**, with Mar Films and **Aline**, her 2nd fiction feature with Klaxon and Sudaca Films from Peru.

Technical Details

Director: Marcela Lordy

Stars: Simone Spoladore and Javier Drolas

Cast: Felipe Rocha, Gabriel Stauffer, Martha Nowill, Theo Almeida, Leandra Leal, Julia Leal Youssef, Ana Carbatti

Producers: Deborah Osborn, Marcela Lordy, Felipe Briso, Gilberto Topczewski

Co-producers: Hernán Musaluppi, Natacha Cervi, Marcello Ludwig Maia

Associate Producers: Camila Nunes, Simone Spoladore

Writers: Josefina Trotta, Marcela Lordy

Director of Photography: Mauro Pinheiro Jr, ABC

Editor: Rosario Suárez, SAE

Sound Design & Original Music: Edson Secco

Sound Director: Federico Billordo

Set Designer: Iolanda Teixeira

Costume Designer: Valéria Stefani

Makeup Artist: Rose Verçosa

Line Producers: Marcello Ludwig Maia, Deborah Osborn, Camila Nunes and Rocío Scenna

1st Assistant Director: Renata Braz

Production Manager: Manuela Duque

Casting Producer: Marcela Altberg and Gustavo Chantada

Acting Coach: Tomás Rezende

Intertitles 16mm: Registro de Arte + Studio Letícia Ramos

Opening Credits: Lobo

VFX Director: Mariano Santilli

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

THE BOOK OF DELIGHTS is an international co-production between Brazil and Argentina. The film is the first fiction feature film from bigBonsai, which already has an extensive experience in the production of documentaries, content for brands and TV shows, and Cinematográfica Marcela, a production company created by the filmmaker to co-produce her own films. Rizoma Films is one of the most important Argentine production companies today, being responsible for films with strong international repercussions such as Gustavo Taretto's Sidewalls (Medianeras) and Pablo Stoll and Juan Pablo Rebella's Whisky. Rio de Janeiro's co-producer República Pureza is known as one of the most important production companies of auteur cinema in Brazil. The film is also co-produced by Canal Brasil TV Channel.

bigBonsai works at the intersection between culture, entertainment and brand communication. Its musical documentaries are celebrated by specialized critics at the same time that they are a public success. Dominginhos and Taking Jacanga were not only screened at the most important documentary festivals in the world such as IDFA, DOK Leipzig, SXSW, It's All True, but they are also celebrated on TV and on major streaming platforms, such as Netflix Brazil and Prime Video abroad.

The production company has 3 documentary series broadcasting nowadays: My Life is a Circus (8x60'), shot in 8 countries, for HBO Latin America; Forever Words (6x30'), for TV Channel Canal Curta!; and All or Nothing: Brazil National Football Team (5x45'), the first Amazon Originals ever to be shot in Brazil and globally launched in January 2020.

Its first fiction feature, 'The Book of Delights' consolidated bigBonsai as one of the most three viewed and well-voted films by the public at the 44th Sao Paulo International Film Festival and won the main prizes for screenplay, cinematography and interpretation at Vitória Festival.

Today the production company develops a portfolio of projects under the creative mentoring of British filmmaker and Oscar winner Kevin Macdonald, in addition to being responsible for other projects of the director in Brazil, such as Life in a Day 2020, a production by Ridley Scott. bigBonsai also develops a portfolio of refined curation projects, connected with three strategic pillars of action: music, sports and progressive causes.