

azuloscurocasinegro

a film by daniel s nchez ar valo

synopsis

DarkBlueAlmostBlack is a state of mind, an uncertain future, a colour: a colour that we don't always recognize and which varies depending on the light, the medium and the mood.

After his father suffers a stroke, Jorge is forced to take over his job. He has spent the last few years working hard, caring for his father and finishing college, but now he wants to strike out on his own. Through his brother Antonio, he meets Paula, a woman with whom he develops an unusual relationship. Through her, Jorge learns to stop feeling responsible for everything and finally confront his own wishes, ignoring what the world expects of him.

Everything should change for Jorge as a result... but it may not.

director´s notes

Yes, I confess, I was one of those who majored in Business Administration; one of those who wanted to become a broker, like Gordon Gekko (incredibly performed by Michael Douglas in *Wall Street*). It took me five years to graduate; to realize that what really interested me was not the main character's job but the job of those who had deceived me for so long. Oliver Stone, you have no idea how much damage you caused me. You and so many like you. Now, after spending 10 years writing TV scripts, a Master's Degree in Film Studies from Columbia University (New York) and a dozen short films as director, I'm challenged by my first full-length feature film. Finally! My chance to lure some scatterbrained youngster... and the only thing I can think of is: wouldn't I be much better off working at bank?

The art of abnegation.

I'm constantly haunted by the same idea: to finish. There is an uncontrollable fear about not finishing, about not completing *the task*, about not ending, about leaving things half-done. Directing a film is a long-distance run and once they say "go", there's no stopping until you reach the finish line. If you don't make it, all the effort will be useless – good for nothing. That's why if you don't feel that you can make it and finish in a decent state, it's best not to start; among other reasons, because an important budget and the work of lots of people are at stake.

This is why my greatest obsession before even thinking about directing a full-length film was not the fear of not being ready but *feeling* ready.

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I needed to feel that I'd be able to undertake those long months of hard work without giving in, without succumbing to pressure, and do a good job. I am terribly privileged because I know how difficult it is to receive an offer to direct your first film. I also know that when the time comes, one is never in a position to reject the offer, whatever it may be. This, often, makes us want to rush and we end up surrendering to the longing of doing anything but doing it now.

José Antonio Félez, my producer, made me an offer before I even had a script or a storyline – we just shared the wish to work together. I've had the great fortune of setting up my own schedule, the chance of doing things right, my way, at my own pace. I took my time, took the road I wanted and walked slowly but surely, step by step; until I felt the moment had arrived: I was ready. Although I quickly realized that, in reality, one can never be sure of making it to the end and much less in a decent state; it's more a matter of faith and, specially, of knowing that you have people standing by you who will help you reach your goal.

While directing my first film, the support received artistically and technically-speaking, has been essential. Having there those who believed in me from the start and with whom I've established a close connection. I felt at home at the "set". For me, directing is a very traumatic and stressful process. It's very hard for me to get drawn away from my computer and the solitude of being a writer. My objective was never to end up directing. I just wanted to write for others (for the good ones, preferably) yet, slowly I became aware of the fact that nobody would be able to capture my stories I as imagined them, as I saw them - for better or worse. Directing appeared to be a natural extension always tightly anchored to the writing process. Until very recently (in spite of having directed over a dozen shorts), I didn't start thinking of myself as a "director."

My usual Director of Photography, Juan Carlos Gómez, told me shortly before we started preparing the film: "Dani, filmmaking is the art of abnegation. You will be giving things up every day." And I can assure you that he was absolutely right. My obsession and duty as director was to try not to let those things I was leaving behind influence the final result. Somehow, self-renunciation ended up being a source of inspiration, a creative tool to improve the original proposal.

The art of abnegation and the difficult learning process it entails, is not only something that happened to me, but also what the film harbors deep inside. "DarkBlueAlmostBlack" is a story about people who fight against their destiny, against what is supposedly "written in the stars". Characters trapped on the other side of a glass panel, a glass so fine that is barely noticeable, nearly invisible but impossible to ignore. A glass panel that separates them from their dreams, something they run into constantly and that they forget about daily, as easily as a small sweet water fish forgets it's in a tank. The characters are people unable to discern between what they want and what they need; people who have a hard time giving things up - who want everything - yet who, little by little, must learn to stop resisting, to stop playing against all odds, not as an indication of compliance but just the opposite. They must learn to accept their own limitations in order to advance –

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slowly. So that they will end up in a place completely different of the one they dreamed of, but alike or maybe more cozy and pleasant.

Today, after the film is finished and having returned to the wonderful solitude of being a writer, I realize that I haven't reached the finish line and that this is only the beginning and that I can't relinquish. I must go forward – I want to. I realize that I'll continue to need "my people" around me, protecting me, teaching me and conferring me all their talent in an attempt for this to never end.

daniel sánchez arévalo

Daniel Sánchez Arévalo was born in Madrid in 1970 and has a B.A. in Business Administration. Daniel has been a professional screenwriter since 1993 in acclaimed Spanish TV series such as: "Farmacia de guardia", "Querido maestro", "Ellas son así" and "Hospital Central". Having been awarded a Fulbright Scholarship he completed an MFA at Columbia University, New York, where he started his career as a director.

Back in Spain, he won two consecutive years (2002-2003) the Notodofilmfest (Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award) with "Gol" ("Goal") and "Exprés" ("Express"). This last one was also nominated for Best Short Film to the Spanish Academy Awards (GOYA). "Física II" ("Physics' II"), his first 35mm short film, has earned over fifty awards, including a preselection to the Oscars 2005 in the Short Fiction Category. "La culpa del alpinista" ("The mountaineer's guilt"), with more than twenty awards, was written by Spanish worldwide known director Julio Medem. It has participated in the 61st Mostra Di Venezia, as part of the official selection in Corto Cortissimo.

quim gutiérrez (jorge)

Born in Barcelona, Quim started acting when he was 12 years-old in the TV series "Poble Nou" in Catalunya, known in Spanish as "Los mejores años". After taking a break from acting to obtain a Bachelor of Arts degree while still attending drama school, he soon starred again in the TV series "El cor de la ciutat."

His debut on stage was in 2001 with "Explicit polaroids" by Mark Ravenhill, role for which he received the 2002 "Butaca" Award for best supporting actor. "DarkBlueAlmostBlack" is his first leading role in a film.

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Filmography

2006 - "DarkBlueAlmostBlack" Dir. Daniel Sánchez Arévalo.
2005 - "Sin ti" Dir. Raimon Masllorens.

Teatro - Stage Works

2003 - "Romeo and Juliet" W. Shakespeare. Dir. Josep M. Mestres.
2002 - "Saturday, Sunday, Monday" Eduardo de Filippo. Dir. Sergi Belbel.
2001/02 - "Explicit polaroids" Mark Ravenhill. Dir. Josep M. Mestres.

marta etura (paula)

At 17, Marta Etura began her Drama studies at the Cristina Rota Acting School. Soon, the director Joaquín Oristrell, asked her to try out for a role in "No Shame". Shortly afterwards, Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón offered her the role of Dulcinea in "Don Quixote, Knight Errant". In only a few years and after various works on TV and stage - "Tartufo" or "La gaviota", her nominations to several Goya Awards have made Marta one of the most relevant actresses in Spain. She has recently been selected as "Shooting Star" at the Berlin International Film Festival.

Filmography

2006 - "DarkBlueAlmostBlack" Dir. D.Sánchez Arévalo.
2006 - "Remake" Dir. Roger Gual.
2005 - "Para que no me olvides" Dir. Patricia Ferreira.
Goya Awards - nominated as Best Actress.
2004 - "Hay motivo" Dir: varios.
2004 - "Frío sol de invierno" Dir: Pablo Malo.
2004 - "Your next life" Dir. Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón.
Best Actress - Nantes Spanish Film Festival.
Best Basque Actress El Mundo Awards
Best Actress of the Year 2004.
Best Actress Cáceres Film Festival.
Best Emerging Actress (Turia Awards).
2004 - "Entre vivir y soñar" Dir. Menkes y Albacete.
2002 - "Thirteen Chimes" Dir. Xavier Villaverde.
2002 - "Nobody's Life" Dir. Eduard Cortés.
Goya Awards - nominated as Best Emerging Actress.
Best Emerging Actress - Toulouse Film Festival.
Best Actress - Tudela Film Festival.
2002 - "Don Quixote, Knight Errant" Dir. Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón.
2001 - "No shame" Dir. Joaquín Oristrell.

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antonio de la torre (antonio)

Antonio de la Torre moved to Madrid to study Drama and since then, hasn't stopped acting on stage, in films and TV where his first role was "Lleno por favor". However, he became well-known after his work in the TV mini-series "Padre Coraje."

Since the early 90's, he has worked in over thirty films and after starring in two of Daniel Sánchez Arevalo's shorts, he couldn't miss a role in "DarkBlueAlmostBlack". Presently, Antonio plays one of the two only male roles in Pedro Almodovar's new film: "Volver".

héctor colomé (andrés)

Héctor Colomé studied Drama and Economics at the University of Córdoba in Argentina. He began acting in 1960 and in 1969 he received the "Theater Award". In Spain he has acted in over 80 plays performing at the Teatro Español, the María Guerrero, the Classical Theatre National Company and the Cultural Center of Madrid, among others. He has interpreted all genres ranging from classical to contemporary plays.

Later, Héctor decided to try out on films and TV and since the early 90's, he has become a very well known supporting actor. Some of his works in film include: "Freedomfighters", "Tu nombre envenena mis sueños", "La hora de los valientes", "Madness of Love", "Wolf", "Obaba" and now, "DarkBlueAlmostBlack".

raúl arévalo (israel)

His acting career began in a TV series entitled "Compañeros". Since then he has played different roles in various TV productions although he has concentrated on stage work. In film works, Raul has worked with Joaquín Oristrell in "Los abajo firmantes" and with Manuel Gómez Pereira in "Cosas que hacen que la vida valga la pena" before starring in "DarkBlueAlmostBlack". At present, he is working in Antonio Banderas' new film "El camino de los ingleses".

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eva pallarés (natalia)

When Eva Pallarés was still a child, she was in several theatre groups. At only 15 years of age, she wrote and directed a play to be performed in her school in Tarragona (where she was born). She moved to Madrid to study Arts but soon decided to dedicate herself exclusively to her calling: acting. Her work in advertising, stage and shorts ("Game Over", "Don Quichotte le Retour", "La culpa del alpinista" or "Profilaxis" among others), led her to obtain a main role in "DarkBlueAlmostBlack".

technical data

Production Co.:	Tesela, P.C.
Year of Production:	2005
Country of Origin:	Spain
Language:	Spanish
Laboratories:	Technicolor, Exa, Kinema
Running time:	105 min.
Length:	2.870 m.
Reels:	6
Aspect Ratio:	Scope - 1:2,35 - Color
Film stock:	Kodak
Sound:	Dolby Digital Surround

cast

Jorge	Quim Gutiérrez
Paula	Marta Etura
Antonio	Antonio de la Torre
Andrés	Héctor Colomé
Israel	Raúl Arévalo
Natalia	Eva Pallarés

with the special appearance of:

Fernando	Manuel Morón
Ana	Ana Wagener
Roberto	Roberto Enríquez

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crew

Director	Daniel Sánchez Arévalo
Executive Producer	José Antonio Félez
Screenplay	Daniel Sánchez Arévalo
Director of Photography	Juan Carlos Gómez (A.E.C.)
Editor	Nacho Ruiz Capillas
Art Director	Federico García Cambero
Wardrobe Design	Nereida Bonmatí
Make-up Artist	Karmele Soler
Hair Stylist	Francisco Rodríguez
Original Score	Pascal Gaigne
Line Producer	Daniel Goldstein
Assistant Director	Antton Zabala
Direc Sound	Jaime Barros

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