



PROJECT TITLE: THIRST (SWITZERLAND)

LOGLINE

THIRST tells the story of Batista, a policeman who works for the criminal investigation department in Bari. After he killed a man for no reason, he has to investigate his own crime. He meets the victim's wife and torn between guilt and desire, a fatal attraction begins.

CREDITS

Director: François Bovy

Scriptwriters: François Bovy / Silvia Pasternac / Jon Goldman

Production Company: Hugofilm Productions GmbH

Producer: Christof Neracher, Christian Davi, Thomas Thümena

Total Budget: €1.985.400

Secured Financing: €371.400

Percentage of Secured Financing: 20%

SYNOPSIS

Soif (Thirst) tells the story of Batista, a policeman who works for the criminal investigation department in Bari. In this city, basking beneath the heat of the southern Italian sun, criminal organisations and impunity reign. However, Batista sticks to his principles of honesty. He has built up his defences, he never smiles, stays silent and hides motionless behind his dark sunglasses. Batista is divorced and lives with his mother who suffers from Alzheimer. He has a teenage son who visits him once a week. The relationship with his ex-wife is difficult, as his son would like to leave and move to Germany with his mother.

Batista's only friend is his long-time partner at work, Carlo, even though they don't share the same moral views. Carlo wants to make the best out of his status as a policeman and profit from the opportunities his job offers. Being bribable, he can offer his family the living standard Batista's son is actually dreaming of.

One day, as Batista drives along a deserted road he hits a car that is parked on the verge of the road. The accident isn't serious, but the other driver insults him badly. Batista loses control, and because of a wrong word, out of nothing, he pulls out his gun and shoots the guy.

Batista and Carlo are put on the case and have to investigate the killing. Batista, disorientated and ridden with guilt, doesn't know what to do. Eventually he confesses the murder to Carlo and tells him, that he is prepared to turn himself in. Carlo does everything to talk him out of it and explains, that this would ruin his whole life. He promises to cover the whole thing up and to find another culprit.

Confronted with this unbearable situation, Batista starts to lose control. Trying to save a stranger, he gets shot and is severely wounded. In this, at the same time heroic and absurd act, he sees his only way to escape his guilt.

Batista survives his injuries. When he wakes up in hospital he realises that it was Claire who had operated him, the wife of the man he killed. Unaware that Batista is her husband's killer, she seeks comfort in him. Claire and Batista become attracted to each other. At the same time, Carlo tries to find a solution to cover up the crime committed by his friend and thinks, the easiest way out is to make it look like a mafia killing.

Batista falls in love with Claire but faces an unsolvable dilemma. Should he confide in Claire and lose the woman he loves or should he keep the secret to himself and live with a burden he won't be able to carry? Carlo finds out about the relationship between Batista and Claire. He is sure that this love affair is impossible. Convinced that he is doing the right thing and helping his friend, he focuses the investigation on a crime of passion. Claire could have killed her husband out of jealousy. When Carlo realises that Batista is truly in love with Claire, it is already too late and there is no way to put a stop to what he started.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

While filming "Melodias" in Columbia, I interviewed an off duty police officer who told me a story that had happened to him. He told me he had killed a man who was trying to steal his jacket. He then ran away. Back at the police station he was charged with the task of collecting the body of the man he had just killed and of announcing his death to the family. The crime went unpunished. At the end of the interview, the officer was crying. His story disturbed me. I wondered why the man had told it to me. I thought about the risk he had taken in revealing his secret to me. Perhaps it was the confession of a Catholic. His problem lay not in the actual murder, as the man was a thief. He only realised the extent of his action the moment he saw and felt the grief in the eyes of the man's wife and daughter. I believe he needed to cry, he needed to express the loneliness that he felt – like the loneliness of the victim's wife.

"Thirst" is a kind of "neo-western" without the moral issue of land ownership. The characters are taken from crime fiction but the central point of the film goes beyond solving the crime. The main character lives in a society from which he can distance himself through the notion of justice. He is alone, having to come to terms with the consequences of his actions.

These are the questions I am interested in: How did he get to this point? And what will he do with the burden?

DIRECTOR'S PROFILE AND FILMOGRAPHY

Born on the 25.05.1968. double nationality Switzerland-France

Studies & Diplomas

1994 Diplôme de réalisateur (filmmaker). Ecole Cantonale d'Art de Lausanne

Director

2005 «Melodias» 70 min. docu. Production: Les films de la dernière heure
Nominé European film academy prix Arte. Prix TSR cinema suisse, Prix regard sur le crime, festival Visions du réel, Nyon. Grand Prix et Prix meilleur réalisateur, Punto de vista Pampelona. 2ème Prix festival Filmaker, Milano. Sélection Hot Docs, Toronto, Canada. Mostra, Sao Paulo, Brazil. RIDM, Montréal, Canada. Festival inter. Cinemateca Montevideo, Uruguay. Shadow festival Amsterdam. Amakula inter. Festival, Kampala, Uganda. South festival, Sedrot Israel. Eurodoc, Oslo, Norway.

2002 «Swiss made» 52 min. co-réal. Jeanne Berthoud. Prod. Leapfrog

2001 Habillage soirée thème «En Cavale» prod. ARTE

2000 Co-scénarisation «Le puceau» téléfilm 90 min. prod. Cinémanufacture

1995 «Ted Robert» 13 min Collection Première vue ARTE

1994 «Bel Canto» fiction.16 min. 35mm. Fiction. Prix Canal+ festival Clermont Ferrand. Prix du Jury Poitier. Prix SSR meilleur film suisse festival comédie Vevey, prix spécial du jury rencontres Henry Langlois, Paris. Mention festival de Montréal. Sélection : Kiev. Sao Paulo. Tel Aviv. Rome. 9 ventes TV.

1992 «Joao» 16 min. fiction 16mm.

«Nardo» 5min docu 16mm.

COMPANY PROFILE

Hugofilm was founded 1999 by a group of filmmakers, musicians and artists as an atelier for creative interaction and brainstorming. Meanwhile, Hugofilm is one of Switzerland's leading production companies. Its most successful production so far is VITUS by Fredi M. Murer which premiered at the Berlinale 2006, was shortlisted for the academy awards 2007 „best foreign language film“ and distributed by Sony Pictures Classic in North America. VITUS was sold to over 40 territories.

In 2009 and 2010, two films produced by Hugofilm had their multi-national releases: PEPPERMINTA by Pipilotti Rist (screened at the Venice Film Festival and the Sundance Film Festival) and MURDER FARM by Bettina Oberli. Currently Hugofilm is working on several projects, including the production of two trilateral co-productions (TÖTE MICH by Emily Atef and RUHM by Isabel Kleefeld).