

Strand Releasing presents

FUTURO BEACH

A film by KARIM AÏNOUZ

Starring Wagner Moura, Clemens Schick and Jesuita Barbosa

*Official Selection:
Berlin Film Festival
Outfest*

Country of Origin: Brazil/Germany

Format: DCP/2.35/Color

Sound Format: Dolby SRD

Running Time: 107 minutes

Genre: Drama

Not Rated

In Portuguese & German with English Subtitles

National Press Contact:

Jenna Martin / Marcus Hu

Strand Releasing

Phone: 310.836.7500

jenna@strandreleasing.com

marcus@strandreleasing.com

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<http://strandreleasing.com/films/futuro-beach/>

SYNOPSIS

Part gay romance, part inquisitive self-journey, FUTURO BEACH is a stunning examination of lives lost and found. Donato (Wagner Moura) works as a lifeguard at the spectacular but treacherous Praia do Futuro beach in Brazil; Konrad (Clemens Schick) is an ex-military thrill-seeker from Germany vacationing with a friend. After Donato saves Konrad from drowning, but fails to save his other friend, initial sexual sparks give way to a deeper, emotional connection. Donato decides to leave everything behind, including his ailing mother and younger brother, Ayrton, to travel back to Berlin with Konrad. There, he finds both confusion and liberation, and his journey for love soon turns into a deeper search for his own identity. Eight years later, an unexpected visit from Ayrton, brings all three men back together as they struggle to reconcile the pain of loss and longing, instinctively drawn to each other in search of hope and a brighter future.

INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR KARIM AÏNOUZ

***Praia Do Futuro* is at once a love story, a family story, a travel story...how did all of these elements evolve and come together in this film?**

When we imagined the film, we thought of a story about courage and fear, about characters that are brave and cowardly at the same time. We wanted to talk about the times we live in - when trepidation is everywhere. We have immersed ourselves in a conservative moment, a moment where religion, intolerance and a wish for stability are ever present. Adventure, risk-taking, and danger seem no longer very welcome. So we pictured a story that could encompass all of that, a story that could be relevant – we imagined a film about passion, voyage and discovery. We envisioned a film in which the characters would love unconditionally, a story of men, but men who make mistakes and who are vulnerable and lack bravery at times.

Having the guts to leave everything behind and reinvent your life was the idea at the core of *Praia do Futuro*. It's something that we all desire but are often afraid of. Maybe because we have to leave so much behind in order to actually take the leap. The film is a portrait of characters that have the courage to take this step, to take the plunge to somewhere completely unknown. The sensation of doing this is embedded in the title of the film itself – futuro, future, moving forward.

I come from a generation where taking risks was mandatory – we wanted to change the world. These days I have the sense that this kind of collective utopian thinking is not so present anymore. *Praia do Futuro* is in a sense fueled by that wish to begin anew, to confront things, to engage in unexpected possibilities.

The challenge was to develop the main characters as facets of the same idea, we had to achieve a tone that was truthful to these ideals - ultimately to express it all through the characters and their actions, the perils they undertake, the journeys they embark on, and the mistakes they end up making along the way. Besides all the travel and adventure, there was also the wish to create a male melodrama. A contemporary, intimate melodrama inhabited only by male characters but without villains.

Konrad is an Afghanistan war veteran, he is a motorbike racer, he loves speed and to explore the world. He has been through so much danger and loss. Donato is a lifeguard, a lifesaver, an almost immaculate hero. Ayrton is a rebel, a badass and an angry kid who has been forgotten by his beloved older brother, Donato. They each represent different facets of masculinity and they are propelled by a strong passion for one another. We see so many action films where the action revolves around fights and death and loss. Here I wanted to use “action” as trigger for life.

Your three main characters - Donato, Konrad and Ayrton - are all risk takers and dreamers. What inspires them seek out faraway adventure, speed, and excitement? Do you think of them as romantic characters, idealists, daredevils?

I had always wanted to make a film about super heroes, about romantic masculine super heroes that would cross the world and confront anything for love. My last films have portrayed mostly female characters and I was eager to dive into a journey of male characters. But I wanted these characters to be textured, daring, imperfect and contradictory.

The main characters in *Praia* chase after their dreams, no matter what the cost. So there is definitely something romantic and idealistic about them. I wanted them to pulsate with a physicality, with bravery but also to be clearly made of flesh and blood, to make mistakes, to be frail. And it is so beautiful to see them fall apart and pull themselves back together throughout the movie.

I had this picture of a character that had a relevant, heroic profession. That's when the idea of a lifeguard came to mind. The idea for the first character imposed itself on us very quickly, the beach, the lifeguard, the silence and the secrets of the lifeguard.

Next came the question of danger. There is a Fassbinder movie I like very much called *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul* (1974), and I always have its title in my mind. I wanted my characters to be fearless. But it is important that this boundless courage does not make them immune to fear. It is the contradiction between the fear they sometimes experience and their true heroism that ultimately makes them empathic and singular. This is the friction that interested me and made me fall in love with them. I think what inspires them to seek adventure, speed and excitement is this wild determination to go on – and the movie could almost be called “Courage Feeds the Soul.”

Each character is dealing with an absence or a longing. Are they each trying to save themselves in different ways? And are they also trying to save each other?

What ultimately drives them is desire, the desire to experiment, to explore, to live life to its fullest. And when you do that you always end up leaving things behind, embracing certain things and abandoning others.

And in these journeys, the characters endure loss. Konrad's loss of his best friend renders him weak and helpless. That's when he meets Donato, who helps him move ahead and cope with the loss and they fall in love. So Donato leaves his brother and family behind and flees with Konrad to a new life. Then it's Konrad who saves Donato, who takes him out of his comfort zone and presents him with a whole new universe. And Donato vanishes into this new world. And later, Donato's young brother, now a teenager, comes back to find him, to confront him, which ultimately saves Donato from the shame and cowardice he feels for having vanished without explanation.

I think the matrix of the film is the figure of the man who risks his life to save the life of another.

The film is structured in a prologue, three chapters and an epilogue. Almost like a literary adventure, a travel novel where the three characters are the pillars of every chapter.

Every movement is structured on the different route embarked upon by Konrad, Donato and Ayrton.

In the particular case of Donato, I wanted him to do something absolutely unexpected, I wanted him to disappear and to emerge on the other side as someone completely different. I have always been fascinated by people who fade away and start their life again somewhere else. We did a lot of research about real life characters in order to imagine Donato. And in his case in particular the question of sexuality is an important triggering element for that move.

Colors are very strong in your film and there's a contrast as well as an echo happening between the hot blues and greens of the Brazilian coastline and the cold grey of the Berlin streets. How did a sense of place influence the film aesthetically, and what were the moods and meanings you wanted to give these two locations as you filmed there?

The movie is built around those contrasts, contrasts in colors, in light, contrast in temperature, in the soundscapes of both geographies. I wanted to create tension between these sensorial elements and in doing that make a movie that fully translates the experiences of these characters – I wanted to make their dislocation tactile.

The characters are affected by their environment, by the colors, by the heat, by the salty wind that comes from the sea, by the cold air of the Berlin winter, by the mist. I wanted to give power to these elements that are beyond sound or image.

I very much appreciate saturated and vibrant colors, and I am a big fan of photographers like Eggleston, Shore, Depardon or Nan Goldin. There is a potency in the way these photographers use color that I thought would be appropriate for the story. And there was the blue sky and the green sea of Praia do Futuro. I had shot there before many times, and I had always used Super 8 Kodachrome. I wanted to do justice to that memory, my Kodachrome memories. I wanted to capture Praia do Futuro with the colors I had always sensed, vibrant and saturated blues and greens.

I am particularly fascinated by how celluloid captures light and color. I have never shot on digital. We shot on 35mm with a very sensitive film (ASA 50), as a way to capture the colors of harsh, white equatorial light, the blue skies. In Berlin we shot with a less contrasted film in order to capture the faded colors of Berlin and the filtered winter light – but the characters were often points of color in the landscape. If this film were a painting I would have used gouache instead of water-color and that's how we proceeded to construct the visual register.

We were also very inspired by travelogues from the 70's, at a time when traveling was often about discovery and exploration. There is a slight vintage quality to the film. And we wanted to create a mood that reminded us of travel books, of an old school Cibachrome slide show.

Do these places also have a special significance for you?

The Praia do Futuro is a neighborhood of Fortaleza, my hometown. For me it is a place full of memories. It was there where I spent my teenage years, partying, hanging out, flirting, swimming (that's where I learned to swim), just discovering life. It was also there that I saw a drowned man's body for the first time, lying on the shore.

Praia do Futuro was a neighborhood that was built in the 1970s and it was meant to define a direction the city was supposed to develop - it was the quarter built for the future. Fortaleza was a small city that had dreams of becoming a coastal metropolis. And as years went by Praia do Futuro became just the opposite. There was so much salt in the air that everything started to corrode. They say the air there has the second highest density of salt in the entire world, right after the Dead Sea. And the consequence was that everything there started to crumble: the iron in the concrete of the buildings, the housing appliances, the computers.

Everything has been consistently devoured by the salty air. So what was supposed to be a utopia became a dystopia. Nevertheless there was something beautiful about it all, something I wanted to capture in a film. I wanted to make a film about this place which maybe one day would not exist anymore. We are such a young country in Brazil, and everything is about the future, and how great we will be, particularly now. and that's wonderful, this strong optimism. I found there was something unique about that place, a certain equatorial melancholy, something against the grain of the joyfulness entrenched in the Brazilian identity.

And then came Berlin, a city that enraptured me from the very beginning. Berlin is like an old man trapped in a young man's body. It is a city that has undergone so much pain and war and change. It has so many scars and wounds and spilled blood. But I am not German, I can understand all of that, but I don't carry the burden of history that Germans do. For me, Berlin is like a Phoenix.

Despite the past it is a city that is pointing towards the future. After the fall of the wall, the divided city came back together and it became something that doesn't have a name yet. It is a place where one can experiment. There is a brand of new capitalism happening here, but there is also a very critical stance towards capitalism. Berlin is a city with a dynamic identity, a city in constant process. And that is something that, as a Latin American, we relate to very much.

The emptiness of Berlin makes me think of the future - what will it be like when it will be fully occupied again? I walk in my street and there are still a lot of empty lots. These were places that were bombed and have remained empty since then. They became, most of them, public spaces - playgrounds, small parks, sports courts. It is a city full of holes, of blanks to be filled in. So the places where the film happens are complementary, in many ways. And perhaps the real Praia do Futuro is in a third place, yet to be unveiled.

There is an interesting thing about the two places: they are both built on white sand, on arenous terrain. Praia do Futuro is built on sand dunes, and Berlin is also built on white, soft sand.

I nurture an immense affection for both places. One, for what it meant to me in the past, the other for how it inspires me to think of the future. It is from this affection that I started to envision *Praia do Futuro*.

Last but not least, there is the wall. Berlin was cut in half by a wall for almost 40 years. Donato and Ayrton were also apart for many years, like the city. And the film looks at them at a moment when they come together again, when the wall comes down. What is ahead of them after that? That's where the film stops, but not the characters. So in way it is also an intimate metaphor of the city, of its future prospects.

Are there any autobiographical or metaphorical elements to the interlinking stories? Did you draw on any elements of your own history to write the script?

I always let biographical elements slip into my films. All of my films are quite personal, and I think it is important to let that "slippage" happen. But in *Praia do Futuro* there were also certain elements that were consciously woven into the story, but which I prefer to keep secret.

I left home very young. 16 years old, and at 18 I left Brazil, the country where I was born. In every place I lived afterwards I started a new life, I confronted a new reality, and I am very happy I did that. So I wanted to have characters that did that, who traveled, who threw themselves into the tide of life.

And ultimately film is also a place where we can imagine the things we don't or cannot live. I also always wanted to have a brother. I am an only child, and I have often thought what it would have been like to have an older brother. So the film was also a way to imagine that.

What was your inspiration for the music in the film?

It's funny, when we started to write the movie, to picture it, Heroes by Bowie always came to mind. I didn't know then that it was an emblematic track in *Cristiane F. – Wir Kinder von Bahnhof Zoo* (1981). It was just one of my favorite songs of all time. I thought the movie should somehow have the tone of that song.

I love to use songs in my films and have a special relationship with pop songs, which transport me in time. I have done that with all my previous films. But here I felt we also needed something else, not just songs but also an original score, written for the characters for certain situations. I wanted to have a kind of personal theme for them.

And that's when Hauschka came in. We had never worked together before and in the beginning we were figuring each other out. But it was a great process. I think his sensibility was very precise and very keen to the film's tone. The first thing I told him was: don't be afraid to be sentimental – as part of our flirtation with melodrama...I didn't want the music to be underlining anything but rather to create a lyrical soundspace for the characters. And that's what he did.

So finally the film has a very diverse musical panorama – it has original stuff from Haushka, Aline from Christophe, songs by Suicide, Khaled, Bowie, and Michael Meyer. Once again, it is impure, but somehow, close to my heart.

KARIM AÏNOUZ - BIOGRAPHY

Director and visual artist, his feature debut, *Madame Satã*, premiered in 2002 at the Cannes Film Festival - Un Certain Regard and has won over 40 prizes in national and international film festivals. *Love for Sale*, his following film, premiered at the Venice Film Festival, Orizzonti, in 2006 and won the Grand Coral – First Prize at the Havana Film Festival among other 50 awards.

His third feature, *I Travel Because I Have To, I Come Back Because I Love You*, premiered also at the Venice Film Festival, Orizzonti 2010 and won the Grand Prix Coup de Coeur of the 22nd Rencontres Cinémas D'Amérique Latine of Toulouse, France. *The Silver Cliff*, premiered at the Quinzaine des Réalisateurs at the Cannes Film Festival in 2011 and won Best Director at Rio de Janeiro International Film Festival.

In 2011 Aïnouz directed a short for the Destricted Colletion and was invited to direct a commissioned film for the Sharjah Biennial 10. He also collaborated with Olafur Eliasson creating the video installation *Your Empathic City* for Videobrasil Festival. He is co-author of the films *Behind The Sun* by Walter Salles, *Cinema, Aspirins and Vultures* by Marcelo Gomes and *Lower City*, by Sergio Machado.

In 2012 he was invited as jury at the Cannes Film Festival for the Cinéfondation and Short Film Competition and took part on the project *Cathedrals of Culture*, a 3D film project about the soul of buildings which features Wim Wenders as executive producer and Aïnouz as one of the directors. He shot, in Germany and Brazil, his next feature, *FUTURO BEACH (Praia do Futuro)*, which premiered at the 64th Berlinale Competition.

He directed several shorts and documentaries including *Seams* (1993, 29') and *Paixão Nacional* (1994, 9'). His work as visual artist has been shown at The Whitney Museum of American Art, São Paulo Biennial, Temporäre Kunsthalle Berlin, the Sharjah Biennial and Videobrasil. He was part of the Cannes Residency, Cinefondation, and a resident artist of the Banff Centre for the Arts in Canada and of the DAAD – German Academic Exchange Service.

He was also a jury member at the Abu Dhabi Film Festival and Tokyo Short Shorts Film Festival among others. As invited lecturer Aïnouz has been to Princeton University – Princeton, Birkbeck College – London, MIT - Program in Art, Culture and Technology – Boston, EICTV – Cuba and SFAI – San Francisco.

Karim holds a degree in Architecture from the University of Brasilia and in Cinema Studies from New York University. After his Master's, he enrolled in the Program of Independent Studies of the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Aïnouz lives and works in Berlin.

KARIM AÏNOUZ – FILMOGRAPHY

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| 2014 – Futuro Beach | Feature film |
| 2014 – Cathedrals of Culture | Documentary, (Co-director) |
| 2011 – Your Empathic City | Video Installation |
| 2011 – The Silver Cliff | Feature Film |
| 2010 – I Travel Because I Have To, I Come Back Because I Love You | Feature film |
| 2008 – Alice | TV series |
| 2006 – Love For Sale | Feature Film |
| 2004 – Sertão de Acrílico Azul Piscina | Documentary |
| 2002 – Madame Satã | Feature Film |
| 2000 – Rifa-Me | Short |
| 1996 – Hic Habitat Felicitas | Short |
| 1994 – Paixão Nacional | Short |
| 1993 – Seams | Documentary |

CAST

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|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Donato | Wagner Moura |
| Konrad | Clemens Schick |
| Ayrton 18 years old | Jesuita Barbosa |
| Ayrton 10 years old | Savio Ygor Ramos |
| Dakota | Sophie Charlotte Conrad |
| Heiko's wife | Sabine Timoteo |
| Heiko's son | Yannik Burwieck |
| Heiko | Fred Lima |
| Bartender | Natascha Paulick |
| Nanna | Emily Cox |
| Mechanic | Ingo Naujoks |
| Jefferson | Thomas Aquino |
| School Janitor | Christoph Zrenner |
| Grocery store clerk | Jean Philippe Kodjo Adabba |
| Captain Mota | Démick Lopes |
| Diver # 1 | Maj. Barreto |
| Diver # 2 | Marcus Davis Andrade Braga |

CREW

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| Director | Karim Aïnouz |
| Producers | Geórgia Costa Araújo Hank Levine |
| Coproducers | Fabian Gasmia Henning Kamm Christopher Zitterbart |
| Executive Producers | Luciano Patrick Andro Steinborn |
| Delegate Producer | Dorissa Berninger |
| Screenplay | Felipe Bragança Karim Aïnouz |
| Director of Photography | Ali Olcay Gözkaya |
| Production Designer | Marcos Pedroso |
| Costumes | Camila Soares |
| Make Up | Milena Pfliederer |
| Editor | Isabela Monteiro de Castro |
| Sound Designer | Waldir Xavier |
| Mixing | Matthias Schwab |
| Music | Hauschka |
| Casting Coach | Fátima Toledo |
| Casting | Armando Praça Uwe & Antje Bünker |
| Still Photography | Alexandre Ermel |