

**STRAND
RELEASING**

presents

MADRE

A FILM BY
RODRIGO SOROGOYEN

PRESS NOTES

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Venice Film Festival

Country of Origin: Spain / France
Format: DCP/2.39/Color
Sound: 5.1 Surround
Running Time: 129 minutes
Genre: Drama
Not Rated
In Spanish with English Subtitles

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SYNOPSIS

Ten years have gone by since Elena's six-year old son has disappeared. The last thing she heard of him was a phone call he gave her, saying that he was lost on a beach in France and couldn't find his father. Nowadays, Elena lives on this same beach and manages a restaurant. She is finally beginning to emerge from this tragic episode when she meets a French teenager who strongly reminds her of her lost son. The two of them will embark on a relationship which will sow chaos and distrust around them.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

THE STORY

Why make a continuation of the short?

After shooting the short film “Madre”, we were all left with a feeling of immense satisfaction. From the very outset, I had mentioned to creative collaborators and crew members that this short film had always motivated me like a very long first scene of a feature film. And everybody I told agreed with me. It was obvious we had a great piece of material.

We wanted to carry on with Elena’s story. We couldn’t just leave her like that, rushing out of her house, terrified, in search of her son. We put so much effort into telling the story of Elena’s tragedy (or its beginnings) that the key creative talent involved, producer María del Puy Alvarado, actress Marta Nieto and the humble author of these lines, always thought that we owed something to the story and the character.

AN ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND

The feature film wasn’t going to just narrate what happens when the short film ends. Which is what everybody imagines when the idea is mentioned. What the film narrates is what happens to Elena a good number of years later.

What would happen if Elena had lost her son many years before, and now meets an adolescent who vividly reminds her of her lost boy? And she knows it’s not her son. In fact, the boy is French, so he can’t possibly be her son. But she wants to be with him. To get to know him.

This is the premise we, my partner and co-screenwriter Isabel Peña and I, started writing from. We didn’t really know why this French kid was of such interest to Elena, but curiously enough, at the same time, we understood her perfectly.

SWITCHING GENRES

We felt that it would be potent to start out with a short film full of suspense, suggesting a thriller, and end with something which in terms of genre has nothing to do with its origins. It also presented us with the first major hurdle. How to keep an audience happy who doesn’t get at the end what they have been expecting (the resolution of the adventure)? We know the answer: by offering something even better.

So, the challenge was double. But both Isabel and I like nothing better than a challenge. To tackle something which we don’t quite know how to make work but which, if we saw it in another film, we would both love.

So, the idea of giving up the story of a mother’s search for her son in a race against the clock and a possible kidnapper, finally segued into an intimate story about Elena years later, living with her pain and fighting to emerge from the dark tunnel which her life had entered some time before.

JOURNEY FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

“Madre”, the short film, wasn’t so much about maternity as it was about fear. About how fear takes control of us and overpowers us. About how, sometimes, what we most fear ends up coming true. About how we always tend to imagine the worst.

Loving is impossible with fear. Hate, on the other hand, is a feeling (horrible, most certainly) somewhat closer to love. Close to something as visceral and sentimental as an affection. But the opposite, which is to say, that which is furthest from love, is fear. That is when we discovered that “Madre” the feature film had to be a journey to love. A story which begins with two characters who love each other, who one way or another, find love. We built a love triangle between Elena, Joseba and Jean. One of the most bizarre love triangles, but one based on love at the end of the day.

That is what is mysterious (and marvellous) about love, the fact that it doesn’t follow any rules, that it doesn’t respond to reason or the dictates of the mind. It takes hold of you (just like fear does) and you have to be sufficiently lucid and brave to stare it back in the face.

That was the question and the challenge for the couple who are our main characters: will they accept that they are caught up in a love story? A special kind of love. The love of a mother for her son over time. A mother who was never able to say goodbye to her son and who is now ready to do so. Ready because the necessary amount of time has gone by. Because Joseba has been of enormous help to her, and because Jean has appeared in her life, still just a boy who could be her boy if he were there with her.

A question which I would like to leave the audience to answer and which will never be resolved is: does the film take place because Jean looks like Ivan, or because Elena is ready for this catharsis? Otherwise said, if Jean had appeared two years before, would the same thing have happened? I think it is an interesting question.

In conclusion, “Madre” is a journey from darkness to light. From death to life. From guilt to forgiveness. From fear to love.

-Rodrigo Sorogoyen

RODRIGO SOROGOYEN | DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Rodrigo Sorogoyen studied at the Madrid School of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts, specializing in scriptwriting, before starting his career as a screenwriter for TV series.

At the age of 25, he co-directed his first feature *EIGHT DATES*. He then worked for the production company Isla de Babel, writing and directing TV series such as *Impares*, *La pecera de Eva* or *Frágiles*.

In 2011, he co-founded Caballo Films with three partners. Together they produced *STOCKHOLM*, which he has directed and co-written. The film was critically acclaimed and won several prestigious awards in Spain, including three Biznagas during Malaga Film Festival (including Best Director and Best Screenplay), three medals from the Circle of Cinema Screenwriters (including Best Director), and the Feroz Prize for Best Film. The Goya for Best Up-coming Actor was awarded to Javier Pereira while Rodrigo Sorogoyen was nominated for Best Director.

MAY GOD SAVE US, Rodrigo Sorogoyen's third feature film, was nominated for two Forqué Prizes (Best Film and Best Actor), seven Feroz Prizes and seven Goyas including Best Film, Best Screenplay and Best Director. It was awarded with the Best Screenplay Prize in San Sebastian Festival as well as numerous Prizes from international festivals. Roberto Álamo won the Goya, the José María Forqué Prize and the Feroz Prize for Best Actor.

Rodrigo Sorogoyen's short film *MADRE*, starring Marta Nieto as the main character, was selected to compete in the most important festivals including the Toronto International Film Festival, and won more than fifty prizes in Spain and worldwide, such as the Audience and Best Actress Awards at the Malaga Film Festival, the José María Forqué Best Short Feature Prize and the Goya for Best Short Feature. It was nominated for the scar of Best Live Action Short Film at the 91st Academy awards.

THE REALM (EL REINO), Rodrigo Sorogoyen's fourth feature, won seven Goyas including Best Director, Best Screenplay and Best Actor for Antonio de la Torre.

Isabel Peña has been Rodrigo Sorogoyen's co-writer on *MAY GOD SAVE US*, *THE REALM (EL REINO)*, and *MADRE*, his fifth feature, based on the eponymous short film and starring Marta Nieto again. The film was selected at the 2019 Venice International Film Festival (Orrizonti), establishing him as one of Spain's most prominent directors.

RODRIGO SOROGOYEN | FILMOGRAPHY

- 2019** *Madre*
- 2018** *The Realm (El Reino)*
- 2017** *Madre (short film)*
- 2016** *May God Save Us (Que Dios Nos Perdone)*
- 2013** *Stockholm (Estocolmo)*
- 2008** *Eight Dates (Ocho Citas)*

MARTA NIETO | FILMOGRAPHY

- 2019** *Madre* by Rodrigo Sorogoyen
Litus by Dani de la Orden
- 2013** *The Chase* by Daniel Calparsoro
- 2005** *Face of Terror* by Bryan Goeres

JULES PORIER | FILMOGRAPHY

- 2019** *Madre* by Rodrigo Sorogoyen
Play by Anthony Marciano
- 2017** *Reinventing Marvin* by Anne Fontaine

ANNE CONSIGNY | FILMOGRAPHY

- 2019** *Madre* by Rodrigo Sorogoyen
D'une Folie L'autre by Gilles Blanchard
- 2018** *At Eternity's Gate* by Julian Schnabel
7 Minutes by Michele Placido
Abdel and the Countess by Isabelle Doval
- 2017** *Let it Snow* by Lucien Jean-Baptiste
- 2016** *Elle* by Paul Verhoeven
- 2015** *History's Future* by Fiona Tan
- 2012** *You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet* by Alain Resnais
What The Day Owes The Night by Alexandre Arcady
- 2009** *Rapt* by Lucas Belvaux
Bambou by Didier Bourdon
Wild Grass by Alain Resnais
La Premiere Etoile by Lucien Jean-Baptiste
John Rabe by Florian Gallenberger
- 2008** *Largo Winch* by Jérôme Salle

- A Christmas Tale* by Arnaud Desplechin
The Great Alibi by Pascal Bonitzer
2007 *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* by Julian Schnabel
One Fine Day by Philippe Le Guay
2005 *Not Here To Be Loved* by Stéphane Brizé
2004 *The Light* by Philippe Lioret
2003 *And His Neighbor Dorine* by Isabelle Nanty
Playing "In The Company of Men" by Arnaud Desplechin
1985 *The Satin Slipper* by Manoel de Oliveira

ALEX BREMDEMÜHL | FILMOGRAPHY

- 2019** *Madre* by Rodrigo Sorogoyen
El Silencio De La Ciudad Blanca by Daniel Calparsoro
7 Reasons To Run Away by Esteve Soler, Gerard Quinto, David Torras
2018 *The Prayer* by Cédric Kahn
Petra by Jaimes Rosales
Transit by Christian Petzold
2016 *7 Years* by Roger Gual
Django by Etienne Comar
From The Land of the Moon by Nicole Garcia
2015 *Call Me Francesco* by Daniele Luchetti
Hedi Schneider Is Stuck by Sonja Heiss
The Invisible Artery by Pere Vila Barcelo
Sanctuaire by Olivier Masset-Depasse
Truman by Cesc Gay
2014 *Dying Beyond Their Means* by Isaki Lacuesta
Ma Ma by Julio Medem
2013 *The German Doctor* by Lucia Puenzo
2012 *Painless* by Juan Carlos Medina
2011 *The Mosquito Net* by Agusti Vila
2010 *Forever Young* by Paul Freixas
Among Wolves by Gerardo Olivares
The Consul of Sodom by Sigfrid Monleon
Rage by Sebastian Cordero
2008 *The Two Lives of Andres Rabadan* by Ventura Durall
2007 *The Silence Before Bach* by Pere Portabella
Me by Rafa Cortès
Remake by Roger Gual
2006 *53 Winter Days* by Judith Colell
2004 *Searching For Love* by Alfonso Albacete and David Menkes
Unconscious by Joaquim Oristrell
2003 *The Hours of the Day* by Jaime Rosales

FRÉDÉRIC PIERROT | FILMOGRAPHY

- 2019** *Madre* by Rodrigo Sorogoyen
By The Grace of God by François Ozon
The Specials by Eric Toledano and Olivier Nakache
- 2018** *Persona Non Grata* by Roschdy Zem
- 2017** *Place Publique* by Agnès Jaoui
- 2016** *Chocolat* by Roschdy Zem
- 2015** *Marguerite & Julien* by Valérie Donzelli
The Cocktail Party by Alice and Rose Philippon
- 2013** *Young And Beautiful* by François Ozon
- 2012** *Populaire* by Régis Roinsard
- 2011** *Declaration of War* by Valérie Donzelli
Poliss by Maïwenn
- 2010** *Sarah's Key* by Gilles Baquet-Brennier
- 2008** *Let It Rain* by Agnès Jaoui
I've Loved You So Long by Philippe Claudel
- 2005** *A Song of Innocence* by Antoine Santana
- 2004** *Holy Lola* by Bertrand Tavernier
They Came Back by Robin Campillo
The Woman Trap by Enki Bilal

GUILLAUME ARNAULT | FILMOGRAPHY

- 2019** *Madre* by Rodrigo Sorogoyen
Déjà Loin by Yvan Georges-Dit-Soudril
- 2018** *#Eurotrip* by Carmen Alessandrin
- 2016** *Les Mistères De Lîle* by François Guérin

CAST

Elena	Marta Nieto
Jean	Jules Porier
Joseba	Alex Brendemühl
Lea	Anne Consigny
Gregory	Frédéric Pierrot
Benoit	Guillaume Arnault

CREW

Director	Rodrigo Sorogoyen
Screenwriters	Isabel Peña Rodrigo Sorogoyen
Cinematography	Álex De Pablo
Editing	Alberto Del Campo
Production Designer	Lorena Puerto
Casting	Julie Navarro
Sound	Nicolas Mas
Sound Designer and Mixer	Fabiola Ordoyo
Re-Recording Mixer	Nicolas De Poulpique
Costumes	Ana López Cobos
Original Score	Olivier Arson
Make-Up	Sylvie Imbert
Hair Stylist	Jesús Gil
Produced by	María Del Puy Alvarado, Ibon Cormenzana, Rodrigo Sorogoyen, Ignasi Estapé, Thomas Pibarot, Jean LAbadie, Anne-Laure Labide, Jérôme Vidal
Delegate Producers	Eduardo Villanueva, Jofre Farré
Delegate Producer	Sandra Tapia
Executive Producer	María Del Puy Alvarado
Production Manager	María José Díez Álvarez
French Distribution	Le Pacte
International Sales	Le Pacte

Distributed by STRAND RELEASING

For more information, please contact Carly Hildebrant at carly@strandreleasing.com

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