TECHNICAL SHEET

A Hispanic-Argentine production

Production: TALKA RECORDS & FILMS / BIB2 AINHOA AIE
LAGARITO FILMS / DRAFTOON STUDIO

Gender: POLITICAL THRILLER
Original language: Basque
Animation Technique: 2D, 3D, CUT OUT
Film format: FULL HD
Sound: 5.1
Running Time: 80 min
Classification: 16 years and over
Distribution in Spain: BARTON FILMS
Release date: September 30, 2022
International sales: FILM FACTORY

TECHNICAL TEAM

Director: FERMIN MUGURUZA
Screenplay: HARKAITZ CANO
FERMIN MUGURUZA
ISA CAMPO
Executive producers: JONE UNANUA
HUGO CASTRO FAU
MIREN BERASATEGI
Production Director: IMANOL ZINKUNEGI
Animation Director: MAITE ARROITAJAUREGI “MURSEGO”
Original music: BEÑAT BEITIA
Art Directors: MARiona OMEDES
Digital Composition Director: DANI AZPITARTE
Character creation: JOSEP HOMS
AME TRES VOLTES REBEL

www.blackisbeltza.eus
Ainhoa was born by a miracle in La Paz (Bolivia), after the death of her mother Amanda in a simulated car accident. She grew up in Cuba and in 1988, at the age of 21, she travelled to the Basque Country to discover the land of her father Manex. In the midst of repression and political conflict, she meets Josune, a committed journalist, and her gang of friends.

After one of them dies of a heroin overdose, Ainhoa and Josune set out on an initiatory journey that will take them across Lebanon, Afghanistan and the city of Marseille. These are the last years of the Cold War and they will delve into the dark world of drug trafficking networks and their close links to political plots.
DIRECTOR’S NOTE

Preliminary

The transmedia project BLACK IS BELTZA has been developing before the public during the last 8 years, but obviously it started long before:

- 2014: the graphic novel is released and the exhibition that provides historical context and displays the creative process of the project opens in La Alhóndiga, Bilbao.
- September 2018: the project reaches its own Ithaca with the screening of the animation feature film in the International Film Festival of San Sebastián.
- Since then, and until March 2020, the film has been screened in more than 40 international film festivals and I, as director, have presented it in more than 100 different cities around the world.
- The film is released in the Spanish State on October 5, 2018, and in the French State on May 8, 2019.
- The film is distributed digitally in China, and for the rest of the world, NETFLIX owns its distribution rights.

New project’s appeal

The end of BLACK IS BELTZA left open the possibility of an adventure series sequel with the same main character, Manex, halfway a pirate and a romantic fighter for justice, set in the last years of the decade of the 60s of the last century, or in the following decade. It would showcase a gallery of real and fictional characters, and it was certainly tempting, considering both the events of the year 1968 and the exciting 70s that were around the corner.

But breaking with the past and changing of direction unexpectedly has been a constant features along my career. In this case, if BLACK IS BELTZA fans expect Manex’ adventures to be continued (like if Corto Maltes’ legacy and his travel saga were somehow guiding our characters’ journey), I must say they are wrong, because in the second part (BLACK IS BELTZA II: AINHOA) we take a giant leap, and spinning like a dancing San Fermin giant, we advance 21 years, and this time the main character’s role is for Amanda and Manex’ daughter: AINHOA.
Ainhoa

In this second part, a 21 years old young woman will witness the status quo during the last years of the Cold War. Through her eyes we will observe the conflicts that marked the twilight of a decade, a period some called the end of history.

A lot has been said about the 80s, often with no little mythification of the decade, even if those were also “lead years” in many territories. The harshness of those years is rarely put into perspective. In this regard, this new release of BLACK IS BELTZA will show how different problems were entangled, how local and global issues were connected and why the term globalization began to be used precisely in the year this new release is set, 1988.

Context

Like in the first part, travel will be one of the true protagonists here. Again, an initiatory trip, but without any mission to be accomplished. The narrative structure will be shaped by the ever growing adversities the main characters will have no other choice but to face. They will have to travel a world where major conflicts are apparently in the process of being resolved (the Iran-Irak war, Afghanistan, the civil war in Lebanon, upcoming ETA-Spanish government negotiations in Algeria), but where issues are more multi-layered than they seem.

The script writing

Like in the first part, the script has been written jointly with Harkaitz Cano. Once again, documentation work was thorough: documentaries, books, films, photographies… The difference now is that all of it is imbued with my personal experience, since in 1988 I was 25.

In the first part the third scriptwriter was Eduard Sola. In this second one we counted on Isa Campo. Scriptwriter, producer and filmmaker, she has won along with Isaki Lacuesta two Golden Shells for “Los pasos dobles” and “Entre dos aguas”. Isa Campo has been in charge of filtering the storyline through emotions, looking for a thriller feeling very focused on the characters, while at the same time it is kept fairly realistic. The characters gain in this way several layers: what they say, what they think, their self-delusions, what they ignore and what they don’t say.
Life and death in the 80s

The intensity we lived with at the time coexisted with a sinister guest: premature death. In the Basque Country the cocktail was perfect: ETA attacks, dirty war, repression, mass influx of high purity heroin and the threat of AIDS.

The death of my brother Iñigo in September 2019 was devastating. He was my musical companion since we formed our first ska-punk band, Kortatu, in 1984. Iñigo was 54, and his leaving caused me to reflect deeply on the generation of musicians with whom Kortatu shared stage at the time. There isn’t even one single of those bands whose members remain all alive: La Polla’s drummer died of a heart attack, Gavilan from Tijuana in Blue committed suicide, and all the others suffered the furious attack of either heroin or AIDS.

The band we more often played with, Cicatriz, lost all its four members; Eskorbuto 2 out of its 3 members; RIP 3 out of 4; Vulpess the drummer, and Vomito its singer, Biktor Perez, my best friend since our school days.

Was the mass influx of heroin something planned by the State apparatus to deactivate a rebel and combative youth? Who else was involved in that political strategy and its resulting profits? Which were the routes used by drug trafficking? Where else did this phenomenon take place and why?

Arguments on these issues are still heated and the aim of BLACK IS BELTZA: AINHOA, apart from having an Original Soundtrack that pays tribute to that era, is to contribute to the debate and promote discussion.
A new way of expressing

Adult animation is consolidating as a new form of storytelling. If some years ago production was scarce (“Persepolis”, 2007; “Vals with Bashir”, 2009; “Chico y Rita”, 2011; “Arrugas”, 2012; “Psiconautas, los niños olvidados”, 2015; “The Red Turtle”, 2016), from 2018 on more than 10 adult animation feature films are internationally released every year. There are also well established awards for animation, like iberoamerican Premios Quirino (third edition this year, 2020) and the European Emile Awards (first ceremony in December, 2017).

In that very trend I’d include the animation part of the documentary about the leader of Nirvana (“Kurt Kobain, Montage of Heck”, 2016), which narrates the existential anguish moments that lead to his repertory; exploring the use of animation in musical or fiction films in the same way it was done before in films such as “The Great Rock ‘n’ Roll Swindle” (1980) about the Sex Pistols or Pink Floyd’s “The Wall” (1997).

Moreover, a third way is emerging and making its way apart from Disney/Pixar/Dreamworks and the totemic Japanese studio Ghibly. Films like “J’ai perdu mon corps” or “Les hirondelles de Kabuł”, both from 2019, share a new aesthetic language and assert a new trend in animation, one of which BLACK IS BELTZA is part of.

Fermin Muguruza
AINHOA

Born on October 9, 1967, in a traumatic way, just after the death of her Cuban mother in a simulated car accident—presumably an attack—in La Paz, Bolivia; on the same day that Che Guevara was murdered in Cochabamba.

Raised in Cuba in her Basque father’s absence, who visited her intermittently over the years, she is 18 in 1985, when the story begins. She is a Fine Art student, especially fond of photography. Her favourite artist is Frida Kahlo, and she loves dance and music above anything else. Her favourite musicians are Benny Moré and Bob Marley. She practices martial arts. She is also secretly related to Santeria, especially to Elegua, the Orisha who opens all paths, of whom she wears a necklace, which seems to protect her from all danger.

Her life hasn’t been easy, and her daily struggle is reflected in the nightmares she usually has at nights, but even so, she is an empowered young woman who always has known how to make her own way. She speaks French and English, in addition to Spanish and Basque. About to turn 21, she travels to Europe for the first time in her life, with the photo camera her father gave her as a present. As the story is developed, we will discover she is a more layered character that it seemed at first.

Josune

Born in 1964 in Bilbao. She is 24 and has recently finished her journalism degree. She did her internship in the leftist independentist journal EGIN, where she currently works.

She harbors an eternal doubt about the political position where a journalist stands while covering a war from the trenches. Can she change the reality she is writing about? Her role model is the polish master of journalism Ryszard Kapuscinski.

She moved to Pamplona when she fell in love with Diego, a young punk and activist of the Squatter’s Movement. Josune, committed to the cause of the Basque Country and internationalism, suffered tortures during a 10 days in solitary confinement detention, after which she was released without charges.

She is crazy about the Basque radical rock of that period: Kortatu, Eskorbuto, La Polla Records. And her favourite international artist is Nina Hagen.

Just after a police charge, she meets Ainhoa, who has just arrived to Pamplona, and they connect right away. Their friendship will get deeper when, after Diego’s death as result of a drug overdose, Ainhoa invites Josune to join her in her trip, and she decides to accept.
AINHOA voiced by MARIA CRUICKSHANK
CAST - VOICE ACTORS

MARIA CRUICKSHANK
ITZIAR ITUÑO
MANEX FUCHS
ANTONIO DE LA TORRE
DARKO PERIC
ARIADNA GIL
ENEKO SAGARDOY
MIKELOSADA
RAMON AGIRRE
MIRENGAZTANAGA
MAITE LARBURU
XIMUN FUCHS
GORKA OTXOA
FERMIN MUGURUZA
JON PLAZAOLA
PEIO BERTERETXE
MARYSE URRUTY
ISIDRO
JOSEBA SARRIONANDIA
MARIA FORNI
IBAN RUSIÑOL
NATALIA ABU-SHARAR
MORAYSYS SILVA
MAYKEL GARCÍA CARDÓ
BRUNO COSCIA
MARIA AMOLATEGI
PAPET-J

Ainhoa
Josune
Hamid
Rafael
Igor
Isabelle
Diego
Mikel
Xebero
AmatxiTere
Iman
Jean-Pierre
IñigoKortatu
FerminKortatu
JavierSalutregi
Didier
Armineh
Isidro
Martin
Yady
CommisairMarcel
offSabraandShatila
Tania
FelixTheCat
Arthur
AmaiaApaolaza
ChefChérif
Original music by MAITE ARROITAJAUREGI “MURSEGO”

Mursego is Maite Arroitajauregi. Mursego is bat in Portuguese. Mursego makes music with a cello, a pedal loop station, a whistle, Chinese cymbals, slide whistle, tambourine, ukelele, keyboard with colourful lights, autoharp, rhymes, claps, improvisation and voice. Maite has been a cellist in many bands in the Basque Country: Anari, Lisabó, Xabier Montoia, Amasay, etcetera.

Mursego is her solo project and in 2009 she recorded and published what was her first album, Bat (1), self-edited. In late 2012, Maite published her second album as Mursego Bi (2), a clear progression in sound, increasingly further away from the experimental and approaching a song format. After a period in which she collaborated on several projects related to film (“Emak Bakia”, “Invisible”), dance and theatre, her third album arrived Hiru (3), her definitive confirmation and the consolidation of a fascinating universe that is increasingly her own. After another immersion in other film projects (“Amama” by Asier Altuna and “Morir” by Fernando Franco) and presenting live stage performances with Harkaitz Cano and Ixiar Rozas, she presented her latest project: “100% Oion”, a collective album recorded with and for the village of Oion (Álava).

In 2021 she won the Goya Award for Best Music for his work in the film “Akelarre” with Arantzazu Calleja.
Born in 1963, Muguruza is a musician with international projection, first with his bands Kortatu and Negu Gorriak, and later on his own. He began making documentaries in 2006, the year in which he founded his own music and film production company TALKA RECORDS & FILMS, in which he has worked as director, screenwriter, producer and creator of Original Soundtracks. He has been awarded for “Checkpoint Rock” at the Amal Festival in Galicia as best documentary (2009), at the In-Edit Festival in Barcelona as best documentary for the series “Next Music Station” (2011), special mention at the Krafta Doc International - Art Making Film Festival from Glasgow for « NOLA ? » (2016) and best animated film at the Monterrey International Festival for « Black is Beltza » (2019), and for the best sound design for the same film at the Quirino Festival of Ibero-American animation (2019).

FERMIN MUGURUZA
DIRECTOR

FILMOGRAPHY

2006 Bass-que Culture (documentary)
2009 Checkpoint Rock
Music from Palestine (documentary)
2011 Next Music Station (11 documentary series about music in Arab world)
2012 Zuloak (mockumentary)
2013 No More Tour (documentary), co-directed with Daniel Gómez
2015 NOLA ? Irun meets New Orleans (documentary)
2018 Black is Beltza (animation feature film)
2019 Beltza Naiz (documentary)
2022 Black is Beltza II : AINHOA (animation feature film)
TRANSMEDIA

COMIC BOOK
Comic Artist: Susanna Martin
Release date: October 6, 2022
Basque: Elkar Editoriala
Spanish: Reservoir Books
Catalan: Pol·Len Edicions
Galician: Demo Editorial

ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK
(2 LP / CD / Digital)
Release date: September 15, 2022
INTERNATIONAL SALES AGENCY:

FILM FACTORY

Contact: Manon Barat <manon@filmfactory.es>
www.filmfactoryentertainment.com

BLACKISBELTZA
blackisbeltza.2.ainhoa
www.blackisbeltza.eus

Head of Communication:
NAGORE VEGA
nagorevega@blackisbeltza.eus
+34 619 513 016

Black_is_Beltza  BlackisBeltza  blackisbeltza_2.ainhoa
www.blackisbeltza.eus