


Resonance
 65th Internationale
Filmfestspiele
Berlin
Competition



THE CLUB

A FILM BY PABLO LARRAÍN

A silhouette of a person standing on a dark surface, holding a long pole with a large flag attached. The flag is blowing in the wind, creating a sense of movement. The background is a gradient of colors from a sunset or sunrise, transitioning from a deep blue at the top to a warm orange and red near the horizon. The overall mood is contemplative and symbolic.

*“God saw that the light was good,
and he separated the light
from the darkness”*

GENESIS 1:4



SYNOPSIS

Four men live together in a secluded house in a small, seaside town. Each of them has been sent to this place to purge sins from the past. They live according to a strict regime under the watchful eye of a female caretaker, when the fragile stability of their routine is disrupted by the arrival of a fifth man, a newly-disgraced companion, bringing with him the past they thought they had left behind.



INTERVIEW WITH PABLO LARRAÍN

Where does the idea for this film come from?

I've always been disturbed by the fates of those priests who have been removed from their positions by the church itself, under completely secretive circumstances and detached from public opinion. I was raised in Catholic schools and met plenty of respectable priests who worked and lived based on what they call "the path to sanctity," that is, priests who watched over the word of God behaving much like a spiritual guide, honest men who preached through their own examples. I also met priests who today are in prison, or are undergoing legal procedures for different kinds of offenses. But I also met priests who no one knows where they are, priests who disappeared. This is, priests who are lost, men of faith and spiritual leaders who are no longer on the radar. Priests who were taken to retirement houses in complete silence. Where are those priests? How do they live? Who are they? What do they do?

This film is about those exiled priests, and for that reason, this film is the lost priests' club.

What sort of investigation did you carry out in order to make the film?

Because the film is about the operations that the Catholic church carries out in a secretive, silent way, the materials we obtained through investigation had to be collected through

unusual methods, since the internet or any other classic methods was rendered useless. So we had to interview former clergy members, former priests or religious operators who gave us clues about these retirement homes for priests with “problems”, and carefully investigate the reasons for which a priest is sent to a life of retirement and penance. We also discovered that there’s an international congregation, founded in the United States, called the Servants of the Paraclete, who for the last 60 years have dedicated themselves exclusively to caring for priests who can no longer continue to serve as such for different reasons, in spite of the fact that most of these priests have committed crimes.

How would you define the experience of working with the cast?

I had the privilege of counting on a group of extraordinary actors. Actors whom I have admired all my life, and most of whom I’ve worked with before. In almost every case, the screenplay we wrote together with Daniel and Guillermo was written with these actors in mind, which allowed us to create very precise, dangerous, and extraordinarily mysterious characters.

Music plays an important role within the film. What was the selection process like?

I’ve been an obsessive fanatic of classical music since my childhood, specially of music composed during the 20th century, and when I saw the images that we were creating, I felt that it was a great opportunity to include composers that have been, undeniably, the true artists responsible for what is understood as “motion picture music” today, without ever having worked



with the thought of creating such a thing. For this reason, when we began adding music to the film, I had the privilege of using melodies with great expressive power, melodies that detonate strange emotions and shoot the images to unknown places. At the same time, I also had the possibility of collaborating with Carlos Cabezas, an extraordinary Chilean musician, with whom I’ve collaborated with before (NO) and who created some original pieces for the film.



I
IN THE MORNING, WE WAKE UP
AND WE PRAY

II
THEN WE HAVE BREAKFAST

III
AND AFTER THAT THERE'S
SOME FREE TIME FOR
PERSONAL MATTERS



INTERVIEW WITH ALFREDO CASTRO

This is the fifth film you've worked on with Pablo. How do you relate *The Club* to Chile today?

Although it lacks an evident and specific political moment in time—as it happens in the case of *Tony Manero*, *Post Mortem* or *No*, where the landscape and context of the dictatorship were tremendously present—, in *The Club*, Pablo Larraín persists in addressing a subject that, to my view, runs through all of his films and all of the roles that I've had to play: impunity.

Chilean society has founded itself on a story of power and submission, just like every other society. Economical, social, political and religious powers, but in particular, powers that have inflicted great violence in the shelter of silence. Small groups of people, families, and congregations have received impunity for their acts, which many times are criminal, covered by their protection networks. This becomes obscenely radical during the dictatorship of the 70's and 80's, where this impunity is consecrated, both in the dismantling of the Republican State through the usurpation and privatization of its enterprises, health system, and education, as well as in the cruel and criminal treatment of its victims and all of the abuses against human rights and dignity.

Tony Manero becomes a butchering predator for a glass floor where he can dance like Tony Manero. Faced with unrequited love, Mario Cornejo in *Post Mortem* becomes a murderer as well; both characters act with complete impunity. And in *NO*, without

committing a crime, Luis Guzmán becomes a fervent adherent of democracy once it triumphs at the plebiscite right after being a fierce defender and collaborator of the dictatorship, at no ethical cost whatsoever.

Under this logic, *The Club* seems to me like a realistic observation of political, social, and religious contingency, and above all, of justice (or rather, the lack thereof). Networks of power carry on, hidden in the shadows and sheltered beneath the impunity that certain groups still retain.

Exceeding, in its aesthetic treatment and its narrative structure, the most extreme realism, I believe that this film is testimonial, radically political, and relevant because it materializes a common dream: that these promoters of faith, these guardians of a class, be publicly exposed to citizens' trial, a historical trial, for their acts have long directed, profited, and been nourished by civil society; because they've forgotten and have never had the slighting notion of reciprocity; because they haven't respected the social contract.

How did you deal with the need for faith in order to play the role of a priest?

I don't know whether the priest that I play, or any of the others for that matter, truly have faith; it's more like they've adhered to a religious congregation in order to shelter themselves in a niche, in this house on the edge of the abyss, like a group of life-fearing cowards.

Coming back to the question, if you're referring to faith towards dogma: it's no business of mine.

If you're asking about faith as human bonding towards myself, my neighbor, and the world, well, that's what my work consists in.

It wasn't necessary for me to appeal to any trace of religious faith



within myself in order to play this role. My faith, or rather, my fidelity, was placed in these texts, in the images, in the emotional nature that sustained these images, and in the trust—which is also faith, when it comes down to it—in the director, Pablo Larraín.

A close-up, profile shot of a man with short, graying hair and glasses. He is looking out a window with white lace curtains. His right hand is resting on the window frame, and his left hand is near his chin. The lighting is soft and natural, coming from the window. The background is bright and slightly out of focus.

IV
WE CELEBRATE MASS AT 12:00

V
THE PRIESTS TAKE TURNS
HOLDING IT

VI
THE SAME GOES FOR THE
CONFESSIONS



INTERVIEW WITH ROBERTO FARÍAS

Your character, Sandokan, represents a social class and place that experiences religion in a very particular way. How did you face the character from this point of view?

From the precarious position of not having many alternatives for believing. Sandokan believes in something concrete, which protected, helped and raised him; something that permitted him to survive. He sees faith as more of a concrete and functional thing, rather than something philosophical or spiritual, where he was forced to blindly give in to all of the humiliations and sick pleasures of the priests who protected him — in this case, Matias Lazcano. Here, love and faith are confused and disrupted.

Every abuse, fondling or penetration is seen as an offer to a God that only protects, conceals and watches over millionaires. Without a doubt, this reflection corresponds to a much greater intellect than Sandokan's. He is more basic, visceral, and lacking in mechanisms or elements that allow him to have an emotional intelligence with which he can change his own fate. In other words, we are talking about faith... and in the name of faith, God, and the church, anything goes.



VII

IF YOU FEEL THE NEED TO
CONFESS, YOU MUST TELL
ME AND I'LL SPEAK TO THE
PRIESTS SO THAT ONE OF THEM
CONFESSES YOU

VIII

WE EAT LUNCH AT 1:00

IX

THEN WE SING

What was the biggest challenge when playing this character?

The way of facing this character was unquestionably to work with that sordid experiential imagery, filled with concrete images of high-calibre abuse. The language is harsh, commonplace and real... penetrations, foreskin, ejaculations. It might even sound funny, but appropriating these texts, events, and images, verbalizing them, imagining them, and seeing them, is difficult and severe. The map you cut out passes through your body and soul. In spite of trying to distance yourself from it, you still have an opinion. You act with one foot in and the other one out, keeping in mind that it's a character, that it's not you. But the line is a thin one, and you end up getting lost, entangled and suffering through Sandokan's calvary... a man who was given just crumbs, and left to fight over them with the pigeons.





INTERVIEW WITH ANTONIA ZEGERS

What was it like to play the only woman in the film, a retired nun who lives in a house with five other men?

Rather than placing emphasis on how the character relates to five men, the emphasis is placed on how they are her boys, her brothers. She is greatly attached to the daily routine of living with them, mainly because taking care of them means that she can escape from herself, and be happy.

What was it like to work with a character who is uncomfortable with the idea of redemption and forgiveness?

She finds redemption, forgiveness and joy in that house and in every rule that exists there.

From sunrise to sunset, she finds peace in the labor of doing things, of taking care of these men.

Each rule exempts her from herself, giving her the opportunity of living through others, of avoiding contact.



X
THEN WE HAVE FREE TIME

XI
WE PRAY THE ROSARY AT 8:00

XII
AT 8:30 WE HAVE DINNER

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Pablo Larraín was born in Santiago, Chile, in 1976.

He is a founding partner of Fabula, a production company dedicated to film, television, advertising and production services.

In 2005, he directed his first feature-length film, *Fuga*.

In 2007, he directed *Tony Manero*, which premiered at the Directors' Fortnight of the 2008 Cannes Film Festival.

Post Mortem is his third feature-length film. It premiered in Official Competition at the Venice Film Festival in September of 2010.


In 2010, he directed *Profugos*, HBO's first ever series produced in Chile.

The following year, Pablo Larraín directed the film *No*, which premiered at the Directors' Fortnight of the 2012 Cannes Film Festival and was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

The second season of HBO's *Profugos* was aired in September 2013.

The Club, his fifth feature-length film, premieres in Official Competition at the 2015 Berlin International Film Festival.



A man with a beard, wearing a dark jacket and pants, is walking on a beach at dusk. The sky is a mix of blue and purple, and the ocean waves are visible in the background. The man is looking down and to the left. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

XIII
YOU CAN'T GO OUT INTO THE
TOWN UNLESS IT'S BETWEEN
6:30 AND 8:30 AM AND
BETWEEN 7:00 AND 9:00 PM

XIV
IF YOU WANT TO GO OUT
DURING THAT TIME, YOU MAY,
BUT ON YOUR OWN

XV
YOU CAN'T BE TOGETHER OUT ON
THE STREETS

CAST CREDITS

Alfredo Castro as *Father Vidal*

Roberto Farías as *Sandokan*

Antonia Zegers as *Mother Mónica*

Jaime Vadell as *Father Silva*

Alejandro Goic as *Father Ortega*

Alejandro Sieveking as *Father Ramírez*

Marcelo Alonso as *Father García*

José Soza as *Father Lazcano*

Francisco Reyes as *Father Alfonso*

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Director Pablo Larraín

Producer Juan de Dios Larraín

Screenplay Guillermo Calderón,
Daniel Villalobos,
Pablo Larraín

Director of photography Sergio Armstrong

Production Designer / Costume Designer Estefanía Larraín

Line Producer Eduardo Castro C.

Editor Sebastián Sepúlveda

Sound Designer Miguel Hormazábal

Post Producer Cristián Echeverría

Executive producer Rocío Jadue
Juan Ignacio Correa,
Mariane Hartard

Year 2015

Length 97 minutes

Country Chile

Production company Fabula

Language Spanish

Film format Red Epic 4K

Film ratio 2:39

Exhibition format DCP

SCREENING DATES

Mon Feb 9th

9:00 at Berlinale Palast (Press & Industry)

Mon Feb 9th

16:00 at Berlinale Palast (Premiere)

Tue Feb 10th

9:30 at Friedrichstadt Palast (Public)

Tue Feb 10th

13:00 at Zoo Palast 1 (Public)

Tue Feb 10th

13:15 at CinemaxX 10 (Market Screening)

Tue Feb 10th

18:00 at Friedrichstadt Palast (Public)

Thu Feb 12th

11:00 at CinemaxX 4 (Market Screening)

Sun Feb 15th

22:30 at International (Public)



CONTACT INFORMATION

A photograph of a brindle dog with a red collar running in a fenced area. The dog is in motion, with its mouth open and tail slightly raised. The background shows a chain-link fence and some greenery.

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XVI

IT'S ABSOLUTELY FORBIDDEN THAT
YOU COMMUNICATE WITH ANY
PERSON OUTSIDE OF THIS HOUSE

XVII

ANY SELF-FLAGELLANT ACTIVITY
OR SELF-INFLICTED PLEASURE IS
PROHIBITED

XVIII

YOU MAY NOT MANIPULATE MONEY
NOR CELL PHONES



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A FILM BY PABLO LARRAÍN



FUNNY BALLOONS

