

THE EARTH GIVETH, THE EARTH TAKETH AWAY

SYNOPSIS

A descendant of slaves who worked as diamond miners, Mr. Pedro de Alexina commands the funeral of his friend João Batista, dead at the age of 120. The burial takes place in historic city of Diamantina. Defying reality and myth with spontaneity, Mr. Pedro blurs the frontier between cinema and life.

PRIZES AND FESTIVALS

- É Tudo Verdade - 15º International Documentary Film Festival- Brazil - Best Brazilian Documentary (2010)
- Mostra Panorâmica 38º Festival de Gramado - Brazil - Best Film (2010)
- Amazônia Doc 2010 - Brazil - Best Film and Best Direction (2010)
- BH Forum Doc 2010 - Brazil - Best Film (2010)
- DOK Leipzig - Germany - Dove Talent Award (2010)
- ATLANTIDOC - Uruguay - Best Sound (2010)
- Prêmio APCA 2010 - Brazil - Best Documentary (2011)
- Festival SESC Melhores Filmes 2011 - Brazil - Best Documentary according to critics (2011)
- Festival Ambulante – México (2011)
- FIG26 – Festival Internacional des Cine en Guadalajara - Mexico (2011)
- 23º Rencontres Cinémas d'Amérique Latine de Toulouse - France (2011)
- Cinelatino - Germany (2011)
- 13ª Festival du Cinéma Brésilien de Paris - France (2011)
- EDOC 2011 - Equator (2011)

TECHNICAL SPECS

Format: DVC PRO HD and 16mm

Exhibition Format: HDCAM

Length: 88 minutes

Genre: Documentary

Date: November 2009

CREDITS

Production Company: 7Estrelo Filmes

Producer: Rodrigo Siqueira

Co- Director: Pedro de Alexina

Cinematography: Pierre de Kerchove

Sound: Célio Dutra

Executive Producer: Rodrigo Siqueira

Research: Lúcia Nascimento e Rodrigo Siqueira

Set producer: Ricardo Magoso, Marcelo Ferrarini and Roberta Canuto

Editing: Rodrigo Siqueira

Opening Tittles and graphic design: Júlio Dui

Color Correction: Alex Yoshinaga

Sound Mix: TIL

Sponsorship: Petrobras

Support: Lei de Incentivo à Cultura

In Cooperation with: UNESCO – Representação no Brasil

Contact: producao@7estrelo.com.br

Shot in May 2007, finished in November 2009, at the Quartel do Indaiá comunity, São João da Chapada, Diamantina, Minas Gerais.

PRESENTATION

"The Earth Giveth, The Earth Taketh Away" was released in October 2010, simultaneously in commercial cinemas and a chain of 800 public cinemas around the country. It has been awarded with the most prestigious prizes for documentaries in Brazil and has been acclaimed by critics as one of the most innovative Brazilian documentaries to have been produced lately.

STATEMAN OF THE DIRECTOR ON THE FILM

Between 2004 and 2005 I found myself immersed and intrigued by the book "Grande Sertão Veredas" by João Guimarães Rosa, one of the most important novelists in the Portuguese language.

Famous for attracting foreigners from all over the world to the hinterland of Minas Gerais, the book inspired my wife and I to travel in search of the mythic and profound hinterland described by Guimarães Rosa. "The 'sertão' is inside us", says Riobaldo, the book's main character.

Halfway into our travels I found Mr. Pedro Vieira, known as Pedro de Alexina, one of the last guardians of the funeral traditions brought by the Africans to the region of Diamantina in the 18th century. The eclectic mix of different African peoples in the diamond mines has made the dialect *banguela* appear in the region of Diamantina, which is a mix of with Portuguese and their native tongue. From the dialect, only a few work and funeral rituals songs - known as *vissungos* - are left. Meeting Mr. Pedro de Alexina has changed my trip into an expedition into the often-imaginative oral traditions which connect the nomadic peoples who have carried their fantastic stories throughout India, China, Africa and the Middle East.

We continued our trip pleased to have found what seemed to us a Sherazade personified in an African Griot. His stories are interconnected, mixing popular tales with real world accounts.

Two years later, in May 2007, I went back to Quartel do Indaiá - a community remaining from a quilombo - to make the film with Mr. Pedro. But this time my trip was much longer. In 30 days, Mr. Pedro transported me to an undefined time and space: distant, but at the same time very close to my childhood memories, next to my inner "hinterland".

Through imagination, accounts of his ancestors and his own personal stories, Pedro took me to a place where the *mineiro* hinterland meets the Africa of centuries ago, where death meets life and God and the Devil co-exist throughout eternity.

PESS CLIPINGS/COMMENTS

"'The Earth Giveth, The Earth Taketh Away' is a tour de force. In one hand, it reveals a unique character that lives in an isolated community, attached to archaic values; in the other hand, it elaborates a sophisticated language that establishes a new level for cinema and for movies that aim to unveil the mysteries of the world". Eduardo Escorel — Revista Piauí.

"Rodrigo Siqueira's documentary 'The Earth Giveth, The Earth Taketh Away' is so realistic that it becomes a fiction, or almost. The greatest documentarians in Brazil are fair for branding him a genius". Luiz Carlos Merten — O Estado de S. Paulo

"'The Earth Giveth, The Earth Taketh Away' is an extraordinary movie, genius." Eduardo Coutinho

"'The Earth Giveth, The Earth Taketh Away' is a marvelous hoax. I think Mr. Pedro de Alexina is about to make his entrance in the anthology of characters of Brazilian documentaries." João Moreira Salles

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Rodrigo Siqueira is 36 years old and lives in São Paulo.

Rodrigo was born in the state of Minas Gerais (Brazil) in 1973. After graduating from the school of journalism at Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais, he started his career as a journalist and editor at the public TV channel of the State of Minas Gerais.

In 1999, due to his work at Rádio Favela, a community radio famous for its black culture and slums community life programming in Belo Horizonte, Rodrigo was invited to work on the research for the feature film about the radio.

As an extended result of this research, the project for a documentary film about the Hip Hop movement in the slums of Belo Horizonte (MG) and São Paulo was born and soon received a grant from the Brazilian Ministry of Culture to become the film "Aqui Favela, o Rap Representa" in 2002.

With this work, Rodrigo received the awards for best script and research at the Festival Internacional do Filme Etnográfico do Rio de Janeiro, in 2003.

Exhibited in the public TV network, the film had an excellent audience, 800 thousands viewers for a film made with little resources and no promotion at all.

Terra Deu, Terra Come is his second documentary and his first feature film, that will be released commercially at the cinemas this time.

As in Terra Deu, Terra Come, Rodrigo Siqueira usually works with small crews, creating a production environment that allows him to actively and creatively participate on each step of the way: script, production, directing and editing.

Filmography:

2010 – Terra Deu, Terra Come

- É Tudo Verdade - 15º International Documentary Film Festival- Brazil - Best Brazilian Documentary (2010)
- Mostra Panorâmica 38º Festival de Gramado - Brazil - Best Film (2010)
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- 13ª Festival du Cinéma Brésilien de Paris - France (2011)
- EDOC 2011 - Equator (2011)

2003 – "Aqui Favela, o Rap Representa"

- São Paulo International Film Festival - Brazil, São Paulo (2003)
- Festival de Biarritz - France (2003)

- Mostra Internacional do Filme Etnográfico - Brazil, Rio de Janeiro (2003)
- Indie 2003 – Mostra Mundial do Cinema Independente - Brazil, BH (2003)
- Forum DOC – Fest. Internacional do Filme Etnográfico e Docum. - Brazil, BH (2003)