

caimán cuadernosdecine



FID Marseille 2022

Jaime Pena , August 24, 2022

those beautiful summers

The great surprise of the last edition of the FID Marseille was that the grand prize of its international competition went to a documentary, we could even say that a canonical documentary. The surprise should not be such: Marseille is a documentary festival; Yes, but a festival that, over the years, also in this edition, the first without Jean-Pierre Rehm in charge of the artistic direction, has been betting on fictions, those that, like the traditional documentary, they also address the representation of reality, only from other narrative assumptions.

But, indeed, the main award went to *The Unstable Object II*, by Daniel Eisenberg (there is a first part from 2011), a rigorous documentary of more than three hours focused on the work of three factories or workshops: the first in Germany, where they make prostheses for hands and legs; the second in France, where they make leather gloves; the third is

already a large jean factory in Turkey. It goes without saying that there is a discourse as subtle as it is obvious that links the three parts (hands and legs, gloves and pants), while Eisenberg patiently attends to the manual work of the operators: those of the first two workshops are still artisanal and manual work. who seeks perfection and uniqueness; that of the Istanbul factory, a job carried out in a chain that, paradoxically, ends up looking for imperfection, with those pants that once finished fade, stain and tear.

The mere presence of a Lav Diaz film in a 'documentary' competition should be considered a radical and programmatic gesture, but in Marseille it has something of an accepted normality. *A Tale of Filipino Violence* (seven and a half hours, so no one thinks he's a minor Lav Diaz) is set in 1974, by which time Ferdinand Marcos has already imposed martial law and modified the constitution to become a *de facto dictator*., persecuting all the opposition. Reconstructing the past, Diaz is also talking about the present, about the very son of Marcos who had come to power in the Philippines a few days before the start of the festival, while anticipating all the fears of the future. It could have been a documentary, of course, but Diaz has always been a storyteller, a storyteller who, in his way of understanding cinema, intertwines the personal (fiction) with history (the facts).

There is also something of this in *Aftersun*, by Lluís Galter, although in a more intimate and historically modest register. At first we have a summer film set in a *campsite* on the Costa Brava and starring three adolescent girls whose gazes introduce us to a disturbing fiction that is interrelated with an event that occurred in 1980, the disappearance of a Swiss boy whose story is told by the judge who handled the case. Shot over several years with an analog DV camera, Galter's film seems set in an indeterminate time, accumulating ideas and suggestions that never materialize. That's why *Aftersun* is such an uplifting movie.

Summer is also the theme of one of the best films at the festival, included in the competition for first works (and with a special mention), *Mourir à Ibiza (a film en trois étés)*, by Anton Balekdjian, Léo Couture and Mattéo Eustachon, filmed over three summers (in Arles, Étretat and Ibiza) and with the same characters, a girl and three boys, who are establishing friendship and sentimental ties in that period of time. The most Rohmerian film one can imagine, *Mourir à Ibiza* is also an evocation of our melancholic and literary desires to navigate distant oceans.

One last note on three outstanding short films: *Les Algues méfiques*, by Antonin Peretjatko, a satire on the revulsion that seaweed provokes in inland vacationers; *Against Time*, Ben Russell's best film in many years; and *Welcome*, Jean-Claude Rousseau's beautiful interior exploration of Chantal Akerman's New York universe. **Jaime Pena**

Chronicle made through *online* viewings provided by the festival itself