



a film by MANUEL MOZOS

RAMIRO

A SUBTLE COMEDY

with ANTÓNIO MORTÁGUA and MADALENA ALMEIDA





INDEX

SYNOPSIS

CAST

CREW

MANUEL MOZOS

RAMIRO: GAME, FIGURES AND AFTERWARDS
by Eduardo Brito

CONTACTS



Ramiro is a bookstore owner in Lisbon and a poet in perpetual creative block. He lives, somewhat frustrated, somewhat conformed, between his shop and the tavern, accompanied by his dog, his faithful drinking companions and his neighbors: a pregnant teenager and her grandmother recovering from a stroke. He would gladly continue living this quiet and somewhat anachronistic routine if events worthy of a soap opera did not invade his bubble.

SYNOPSIS



CAST



ANTÓNIO MORTÁGUA

He was born in Coimbra, in 1979, where he attended Law school and Art Studies, followed by a Degree in Theater by the national Theater and Cinema school.

Still at the University of Coimbra, he began as an actor and had a weekly program on the radio.

Since 2010, he has been working regularly with Companhia Primeiros Sintomas, where he directed, with Catarina Rosa and Vera Barreto, the plays *Woyzeck* from Georg Büchner; *Retrato* from Pier Paolo Pasolini and *O Fim* based on original texts. He staged, in co-production with Primeiros Sintomas, *Sonata*, from 'The Ghost Sonata' by August Strindberg.

At Éter - Produções Culturais, under the direction of Filomena Oliveira, he is part of the plays *Vieira - O Sonho do Império* and *Frei Luís de Sousa*.

In cinema he worked with André Santos in the short film *Ossos do Ofício*.

ramiro

Owner of a small book shop in a popular neighborhood in Lisbon. Ramiro is the author of a book, published some years ago, that was considered quite good at the time. It became a small cult and sold out. Ramiro has a couple of prints still in boxes in the store but doesn't expose or sell them. The idea of writing a second book is something that torture him. We don't know any family of his. Ramiro spends his days in the shop and his nights drinking beer. He is a misfit who finds the desires of ordinary people futile, he has no driving license, doesn't have a cell phone, doesn't use the internet. He is Daniela's friend and guardian.

MADALENA ALMEIDA

At 20, the actress who began her career in 2015 in the Soap Opera *Santa Bárbara* has already joined the cast of three tv productions (*Santa Bárbara* – TVI, *Amor Maior* – SIC e *A Herdeira* – TVI), several theatre performances at Teatro Experimental de Cascais and will soon get back on stage at Teatro Aberto with the reprise of the play *Toda a Cidade Ardida*.

Currently a student at Escola Superior de Teatro e Cinema, *Ramiro* is her first cinema experience.

daniela

She attends high school and is a good student. Life doesn't frighten her: she is pregnant and lives well with it. She doesn't tell anyone who the child's father is, it's her business, and so it remains. She's resourceful and practical. She is witty and reveals an intellectual agility superior to the girls of her age. She is generous and sweet (without being mellow). She lost her parents very early and was left at her grandmother's care who she is currently looking after. She is *Ramiro's* friend and finds his unfitness for certain things in life amusing.





FERNANDA NEVES

After high school, she studied drawing and painting at ESBAL and ARCO.

She founded the arts cooperative SPES with Manuel Costa Cabral and Nuno Teotónio Pereira.

She has an acting training by the National Theatre School, A Comuna and Théâtre du Soleil, Paris.

She made her debut as a professional at A Comuna Teatro de Pesquisa.

She founded the Teatro do Mundo with Manuela de Freitas, José Mário Branco and Jean Pierre Tailhade.

She was part of the casts of A Comuna, ACARTE, Teatro do Mundo, Théâtre de L'Éclat, Teatro da Garagem, KARNART and Teatro Rápido.

She is the author of the theatrical adaptations of *A Margem da Alegria* by Ruy Belo, *O Silêncio* by Teolinda Gersão, *Dom Carlos* by Teixeira de Pascoaes.

She worked in Radiophonic Theater, dubbing, television and cinema.

dona amélia

She became a widow early. She raised her granddaughter. She's Daniela's reference. She has a son, Daniela's father. She suffers from aphasia, resulting from a stroke, which makes it difficult for her to speak. In spite of her weakness, she is a cheerful old woman. She is addicted to nicotine and smokes behind Daniela's back. She's a mysterious character. We fail to understand whether her actions result from her clinical condition or from her unintelligible intentions.

VÍTOR CORREIA

Has an actor training by the Dramatic Center of Évora. Made his professional debut in Ödon von Horvath's *The Italian Evening* and then participated in several plays at the Évora Drama Center, the Teatro das Beiras and the Algarve Drama Center with Luís Varela, Isabel Bilou, Gil Salgueiro Nave, José Meireles, Domingos Semedo, José Leitão. He directed in 1999 the project *Multi-Poesia* premiered at the Covilhã Festival.



alfredo, pai da daniela

He became a father at 19 and killed his wife (Daniela's mother) at 21. He is serving a 17-year sentence (of which 14 have already passed). His face is marked by the difficulties of life. He is mysterious and hard to read.



patrícia

She is in love with Ramiro and part of his small group of friends. She is an engineer at LNEC (National Laboratory of Civil Engineering) and is involved in the construction of a bridge. She is friendly and talkative. Feminine and practical.

SOFIA MARQUES

Actress and director, she has acting training by the Professional Theater School of Cascais. She has worked with the Cornucopia Theater since 1996, and works with other projects and companies. In cinema she worked with directors such as Jean Claude Biette, João César Monteiro, Raquel Freire, João Botelho, Christine Laurent, Jacinto Lucas Pires. In television, she participated in several series of fiction. She is the founder of Sul - Cultural and Artistic Association. She directed the documentary films: *Vê-los assim tão pertinho* (2010), *8816 versos* (2013) and *Ilusão* (2014).

AMÉRICO SILVA

Works mainly in theater and cinema. He has a training from the Instituto de Formação, Investigação e Criação Teatral and Escola Superior de Teatro e Cinema . He started on the stages of Sociedade Guilherme Cossoul in *A Morte no Bairro*, by Alfonso Sastre. He works with the Artistas Unidos since 1996 and has been part of the cast of the plays *Comemoração*, *Gata em Telhado de Zinco Quente*, *Um Homem Falido*, among others. On the big screen his participation in the trilogy *Arabian Nights* (2015) by director Miguel Gomes, stands out.



josé

He spends his days at Ramiro's shop, supposedly helping. Ramiro doesn't pay him much attention. Ask the price of books often even though he never buy any. He is a passive spectator of everything that happens in the store.



DUARTE GUIMARÃES
saavedra



RICARDO AIBÉO
fernando



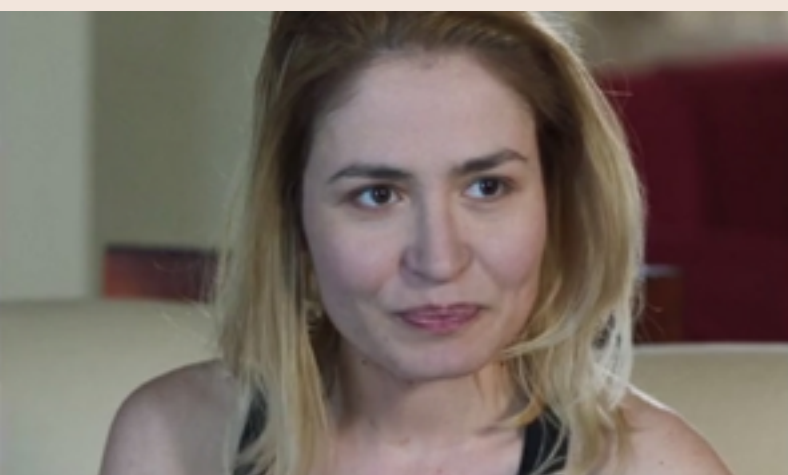
JOÃO TEMPERA
marcos



ANTÓNIO SIMÃO
vicente



CRISTINA CARVALHAL
isabel



SARA CARINHAS
mariana



JOÃO PEDRO BÉNARD
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DOP JOÃO RIBEIRO
director assistant BRUNO LOURENÇO
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sound MIGUEL MARTINS
art direction ARTUR PINHEIRO
wardrobe LUCHA D'OREY
characterization RITA CASTRO
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production director EMÍDIO MIGUEL
producers LUÍS URBANO, SANDRO AGUILAR

Color | 104' | DCP
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CREW

MANUEL MOZOS

Manuel Mozos was born in Lisbon in 1959. He graduated in Cinema in 1984 at the Escola de Cinema do Conservatório de Lisboa (National Film School). He then worked with several prominent portuguese directors as Editor, Scriptwriter or Assistant director.

He has also worked in theater and maintains a regular collaboration with various publications, schools, universities, cultural associations, film societies and festivals. Since 2002 he works in ANIM, the film archives of the Portuguese Cinematheque on the identification, preservation and restoration of 35mm and 16mm films.

As a director, his first work was *A STEP, THEN ANOTHER STEP..* (1989) which won the Award for Best Foreign Film at Entrevues, Belfort Film Festival in 1990. Since then he has directed over twenty films ranging from fiction to documentary, both shorts and features. Among those the most influential fiction features are: *WHEN IT THUNDERS* (1999), *XAVIER* (2002) and *4 HEARTS* (2008) and the documentaries: *LISBON IN CINEMA* (1994), *PORTUGUESE CINEMA? - DIALOGUES WITH JOÃO BÉNARD DA COSTA* (1997) and *RUINS* (2009) which on several awards in film festivals.

In 2014, directed the documentary, *JOÃO BÉNARD DA COSTA - OTHERS WILL LOVE THE THINGS I HAVE LOVED*, and his latest work, is the feature-length fiction *RAMIRO*.



RAMIRO:
GAME, FIGURES
AND AFTERWARDS

by EDUARDO BRITO

START AND FALL

Lets begin with the following premise: cinema is a game. Every film brings with it a set of rules, with greater or lesser formality, greater or lesser interiority. Within these lines, a set (a game) of illusions (of games) operates (plays). It is perhaps through this logic of understanding - for we know not to exclude any of the others that are possible - that *each cinema* contains, so to speak, something that brings it closer

Ramiro's game is envisaged in subtlety

to magic, understanding as such the process of transformation of one thing into another, like in the beam of light that transports the recorded image to its projection.

In a general frame, Ramiro's *game* is envisaged in subtlety, in subtleties: this is a film that is grasped like the line of a long circumference, that is composed by an arc with a very wide angle: the curvature of the line exists, it is far, and perceiving it requires wandering.

If speed were a rule it would be said that Ramiro is a film about a writer and bookshop keeper who faces several *blockades* - in writing, in relationships, in his own business, and in his more or less difficult adaptation with present time. It is not that time is a disadvantage: Ramiro, in fact, can be all of that. However, this very slowness is the rhythm that allows us to arrive to the close shot of detail, and from there, to drift to other lands: this happens in the perception that the characters begin the film in downfall. Not an abrupt fall, steep and vertical, but rather slow and discreet, like soft water, like the open curve. Ramiro (António Mortágua), for example, is faced with the hardship of an acknowledged talent as a writer that does not correspond with creating. Patrícia (Sofia Marques) with the unrequited affection (lets call it *singularity*) of Ramiro. The Grandmother (Fernanda Neves) with paraphasia, and Daniela (Madalena Almeida), the granddaughter, with teen pregnancy and her biological father (Vitor Correia) is in prison. Processes that translate into a harshness that exists, but that is restraint, without aggressivity or brusqueness, discrete and persistent like a grave horizontal sound that since the beginning, runs under a false inaudibility. Nothing else is known: we enter into a game with no beginning, we arrive to the film with the certainty that there is a backstory that we do not have to fully understand, that something has already started despite us not having missed anything - an *ignorance* that will steer us away from the tyranny of judgments (in other words, the why of things). And, from here, the game operates its logic, triggering the flows of chance that carry us throughout the story.

[...] into a harshness that exists, but that is restraint, without aggressivity or brusqueness, discrete and persistent

FIGURES AND SPACES

Characteristic of Manuel Mozos, the characters, inhabitants or passengers of his territories, occur in a marginalia also graceful, far from any accentuated extreme between good and evil, heroes and villains. Ramiro does not possess - as does not possess (2002) - an encoding, a symbology that allows us an automatic understanding of the role of each one in the film. Not only of the main characters, but also of all of those that surround them (curious note: both characters provide the title of the films, but they do not take away the space for other presences).

This refusal of typification (in other words, this refusal of a stereotype) singularizes Mozos' filmmaking, a film style distant from speed and polarities, judgments and labels: frequently used strategies for a language that, by existing with the right tempo, has to tell the story *quickly* (a challenge in this regard: understand the timing and the way we discern that Ramiro does not have a driver license). This is why the figures filmed by Mozos, and written, in this case, by Telmo Churro and Mariana Ricardo, are dense, complex and inconsistent, without these predicates corresponding to the weight of the categories. Another subtlety of the game resides here: understand them without judging, accept them in their passage through the filmed world, not necessarily good or bad, happy or sad. It is this way that we are close to them, it is for this reason that they stay with us after the credits. Beginning with Ramiro's case: he assumes the role of Daniela's adoptive father, with a tenderness that is infinite while at the same time restrained; he helps his grandmother, but is disturbed by his limitation; he becomes involved with Patrícia but is tormented by the comfort he can give her. He is a cult writer, who when finally overcomes his creative block, loses his manuscript on a night out drinking.

Through this paradigm, maneuvered by Mozos within the figures themselves and their psychology, we slowly realize that we are in a process of wonder at an idea of normalcy, captivated by a common story, without shocks or peaks of euphoria, although they are all potentially there - and we are aware that the difficulty in the process is to resist the temptation of explosions. Now this *principle of wonder*, when practiced in a game such as this, implies not only the already mentioned subtlety, but also a profound capacity of storytelling, of knowing how to play, of knowing

a profound capacity of
storytelling, of knowing
how to play, of knowing
how to sharpen the detail

how to sharpen the detail, from writing to filming, from lighting to editing. Ramiro is, in this aspect, a manifesto in which the coincidences of the stories counter the rigor and the criterion of everything that, under the illusion of the accessory, revolves around it.

Three small examples, (only regarding the books, in face of the *atlantic* impossibility of a complete taxonomy of precious details): the television program "Os Livros em Volta" (The Books Around) - a reference to Herberto Helder's book *Os Passos em Volta* (The Steps Around), the cut from that scene takes us to a room where Ramiro is, in fact, with the books around him, and later, when the film returns to that space, we discreetly see *The Sound and the Fury*¹ by William Faulkner.

¹ Translator note: the name of the film's production company - O Som e a Fúria



And after, the space where stories occur, always with Mozos' fascination for the night (Ramiro is also *nocturnal*) and for demarcations: the city is no longer expanding, like in the stroll through Ameixoeira in Xavier - a reference to the wandering of Ilda and Júlio in the Park of Bela Vista in *Verdes Anos* (Paulo Rocha, 1963) - but transforming into something else in its center, and into its own ruin in the margins: when Ramiro goes to Quinta da Torre, he goes to a place of *heinous crime*, a hybrid margin between the buildings and the abandoned, a place where he is frightened. And the city is also no longer so obvious in the locations - it is Lisbon, right, but it could be any *Somewhere, Portugal* (save for one or another identifiable exceptions and the characteristic brightness).

the city is also no longer so obvious in the locations

INTERMISSION (mirrors)

The idea goes back to 2009. The scriptwriters Telmo Churro and Mariana Ricardo approached Mozos with Ramiro's story. Between debates and adjustments, Ramiro is set into a script and turns into cinema. One could begin with the title and say, by summoning the rule of speed, that immediately one learns that what is coming revolves around the character. However, as soon as the film begins and the tempos (of the cinema and of the own film) decelerate, Ramiro is already larger than itself. In a certain way, it is a reflection of Manuel Mozos, written by Churro and Ricardo

[...] the resistance to a reactive exaggeration in face of what disturbs us

and filmed by the man behind the mirror: Mozos himself. And it is so in its colloquial expressions (discreet yet incisive humor), in the resistance to a reactive exaggeration in face of what disturbs us (Ramiro's

smooth adaptation to the Casa de Tapas, the non dramatization of the loss of the manuscript), in the resistance to the idea of survival through technology (the disuse of devices and the use of notebooks). In the end, Ramiro is a film, it is its director, its character and it is clearly a *game*. Or would it not be Jean-Luc Godard who appears before Ramiro at the book market right in front of a copy of *Bande à Part*, written by Jacques Perret.



THE AFTERWARDS IS YESTERDAY

Recapitulating: Ramiro is a film in which the viewer enjoys the illusion of nothing-happening (because its associated to the long curve, because it stems from a game). At this point, we are already in the frame of another time; and the story, as if by magic, is taking place. And this frame from another temporality is not just fixed on the already mentioned slow tempo (where, if not in cinema, is there time to mend a sofa with duct tape?), but also, in the understanding of a *former* time, not necessarily old or

outdated, but simply distant from the speed of technology, of the currentness of the spaces. This idea of *low-tech* counters the vertigo of updates and of the latest model, it is everything but a disadvantage: in Ramiro, there is no internet and the film is set in the present day. In Ramiro, paper comes before digital again - like this, for example, with the character's lost manuscript, with the books, the press that prints - and no presentness is lost. The disfigurement of time turns Ramiro into a piece with no time - what, as we know, keeps it in the present, disconnected from the epiphenomenon of being dated. But in Ramiro there is also another time, a past time that is projected and functions in today's time: there is the music of Heróis do Mar (rock band), the coin toy dispenser, the microfilm, the soap opera that is watched at night on a kinescope television, the school with old maps, the lessons in classrooms that date back to before the school buildings being remodeled, the people who write on paper and look for books: we are already in a frame of resistance, of a resistance that, by the presence of a today where stories occur and matter, radically moves away from a simple exercise of nostalgia. In other words, we look at what we were again, we return to be once more: we exist beyond the devices.

we look at what we were
again, we return to be
once more

AND FINALLY, THE BALLAD.

Ramiro is thus a ballad to which we arrive when everything appears to be in downfall. Nevertheless, with the proper timing and in with due restraint, the path we walk on through the film detaches itself from the sadness, in an acceptance that better days will come. Mozos, with an inherent delicacy for melancholy, makes of Ramiro a

Mozos, with an inherent delicacy
for melancholy, makes of Ramiro a
praise to a day-to-day in which euphoria
and sadness converge in a wait

praise to a day-to-day
in which euphoria
and sadness converge
in a wait, in a wait
where we like to see
ourselves, against all
odds of the days in

which we live. With Ramiro, there is still space for a cinema (for a game, therefore) delicate in time and in the manner, subtle in the hope with which it closes.

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