

THE BLUE TRAIL

[O ÚLTIMO AZUL]

A FILM BY GABRIEL MASCARO

BRAZIL | MEXICO | NETHERLANDS | CHILE 2025 | 86 MINS | COLOUR | PORTUGUES



INTERNATIONAL
SALES AND
FESTIVALS

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LOGLINE

**TO MAXIMIZE ECONOMIC PRODUCTIVITY,
THE GOVERNMENT ORDERS THE
ELDERLY TO RELOCATE TO DISTANT
HOUSING COLONIES. TEREZA, 77,
REFUSES—INSTEAD EMBARKING ON A
JOURNEY THROUGH THE AMAZON THAT
WILL CHANGE HER DESTINY FOREVER.**





"I WANTED TO CREATE AN INTERPLAY BETWEEN THE LYRICAL AND THE PLAYFUL. A POST-TROPICAL DELIRIUM THAT BLURS THE LINES BETWEEN DYSTOPIA AND FANTASY."

GABRIEL MASCARO,
DIRECTOR

SYNOPSIS

TEREZA, 77, HAS LIVED HER WHOLE LIFE IN A SMALL INDUSTRIALIZED TOWN IN THE AMAZON, UNTIL ONE DAY SHE RECEIVES AN OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT ORDER TO RELOCATE TO A SENIOR HOUSING COLONY. THE COLONY IS AN ISOLATED AREA WHERE THE ELDERLY ARE BROUGHT TO "ENJOY" THEIR FINAL YEARS, FREEING THE YOUNGER GENERATION TO FOCUS FULLY ON PRODUCTIVITY AND GROWTH. TEREZA REFUSES TO ACCEPT THIS IMPOSED FATE. INSTEAD, SHE EMBARKS ON A TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY THROUGH THE RIVERS AND TRIBUTARIES OF THE AMAZON TO FULFILL ONE LAST WISH BEFORE HER FREEDOM IS TAKEN AWAY—A DECISION THAT WILL CHANGE HER DESTINY FOREVER.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Narratives about old age often reduce the elderly to memories and finitude. They are commonly limited to being portrayed as living in the past and dealing with the imminence of death, rarely are they seen as protagonists of the present. THE BLUE TRAIL vindicates the potential of elderly bodies to be seen on screen as pulsating with vital energy and the desire to live. In the film I am interested in playing with different genres in order to think about ageing in a way that is not melancholic or nostalgic. I didn't want to make a film about a time that has passed, or a time that will end, but a time that is very much ongoing. The Amazon provides the context for this journey and the forest echoes new paths for a body that is present, and that, although ageing, still has dreams to fulfill..





CAST

DENISE WEINBERG
RODRIGO SANTORO
MIRIAM SOCARRÁS
ADANILO

CREW

PRODUCTION Desvia (Brazil), Cinevinay (Mexico)

CO-PRODUCTION Quijote Films (Chile), Viking Film (The Netherlands), Globo Filmes (Brazil)

PRODUCERS Rachel Daisy Ellis, Sandino Saravia Vinay

CO-PRODUCERS Giancarlo Nasi, Marleen Slot

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER Nicole Barbery Bleyleben

DIRECTOR Gabriel Mascaro

SCREENWRITERS Gabriel Mascaro, Tibério Azul

CINEMATOGRAPHY Guillermo Garza AMC

EDITOR Sebastián Sepúlveda, Omar Guzmán

MUSIC COMPOSER Memo Guerra

ART DIRECTOR Dayse Barreto

COSTUME Gabriella Marra

SOUND DESIGN María Alejandra Rojas & Arturo Salazar RB

SOUND MIX Vincent Sinceretti

LINE PRODUCERS Paulo Serpa, Rayssa Costa, Rachel Ellis

PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT Sidney Medina, Robson Medina

SCRIPT COLLABORATION Murilo Hauser, Heitor Lorega

CASTING DIRECTOR Gabriel Domingues





ABOUT GABRIEL MASCARO

Gabriel Mascaro (1983) is a Brazilian director and screenwriter based in Recife, Brazil, best known for his films *NEON BULL* (Venice, 2015), *DIVINE LOVE* (Sundance, Berlinale Panorama 2019) and *AUGUST WINDS* (Locarno, 2014). His films have garnered over 50 international awards and *NEON BULL* was highlighted in the New York Times Top 10 Best Films of 2016. In the same year Mascaro had a retrospective at the Lincoln Center in New York. *THE BLUE TRAIL* is his latest film premiering in Competition at the Berlinale 2025.

FILMOGRAPHY

DIVINO AMOR (DIVINE LOVE) 2019, Brazil / Uruguay / Denmark, 99', fiction, HD
Sundance International Competition/ Berlinale Panorama, 2019

BOI NEON (NEON BULL) 2015 Brazil / Uruguay / Netherlands, 101', fiction, HD
71st Venice Film Festival –Special Orizzonti Jury Prize

VENTOS DE AGOSTO (AUGUST WINDS) 2014, Brazil, 85', fiction, HD
67th Festival del Filme Locarno, Special Mention

DOMÉSTICA (HOUSEMAIDS) 2012, Brazil, 75' documentary, HD
Internacional Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, 2012

A ONDA TRAZ O VENTO LEVA (EBB & FLOW) 2012, Brazil / Spain, 25', documentary, HD
Internacional Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam, 2012, Oberhausen.
Jury Prize

AVENIDA BRASÍLIA TEIMOSA (DEFIANT BRASÍLIA), 2010, Brazil, 85', documentary, HD
39th Internacional Film Festival Rotterdam

UM LUGAR AO SOL (HIGH-RISE) 2009, Brazil, 70', documentary, HD
BAFICI –Buenos Aires Festival Internacional de Cine Independiente.
Special Mention

THE BLUE TRAIL UNFOLDS AS A ROAD MOVIE BY BOAT, TAKING US ON A MAGICAL ADVENTURE ALONG THE BANKS OF THE AMAZON.



THE BLUE TRAIL IS A FILM ABOUT THE RIGHT TO DREAM, FEATURING AN OLDER PROTAGONIST WHO DECIDES NOT TO ACCEPT THE FATE THAT SOMEONE ELSE TRACED FOR HER. I WANTED TO MAKE A FILM THAT SERVES AS AN ODE TO FREEDOM, SIGNALING IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO FIND NEW MEANING IN LIFE.



Q&A WITH THE DIRECTOR, GABRIEL MASCARO

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO FOCUS THIS STORY AROUND A MAIN CHARACTER LIKE TEREZA, AND HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE THE GENRE OF THIS NEW FILM?

THE BLUE TRAIL is a film about the right to dream, featuring an older protagonist who decides not to accept the fate that someone else, in this case the state, traced for her. I wanted to make a film that serves as an ode to freedom, showcasing a rebellious septuagenarian dealing with her imminent seclusion in a senior colony, and signaling it is never too late to find new meaning in life.

I find that it is unusual to see elderly protagonists in cinema, especially in dystopias, fantasies, and also in anything resembling a 'coming-of-age' drama. Genre conventions in cinema are powerful tools for storytelling, but they can be oppressive to storytellers as well. It often seems as though rebellion against the system is something reserved for the young. Like the quest for maturity, understanding and finding your place in the world, should be rites of passage meant only for high school students or people not much older.

I hope it is a film that plays with genres in a fun way. Instead of adhering to a single genre, I wanted to create an interaction between the lyrical and the playful in a sort of post-tropical delirium that challenges some of these rigid lines.

Playfully engaging with genre is an important part of my work, exploring possible cracks, and the potential they reveal, within the narrative tradition.

I have a special affection for cinema that makes speculations of reality from fantastical notions, but that could still be real.

There doesn't need to be a flying car on screen to create a displacement of space and time. Cultural or behavioral changes can signal a dystopia even more radically than a technology or a gadget. The challenge here was to think about a hypothetical world unique and singular to the world of the film – neither past, present, nor future.

This time, I also wanted to show the vitality of the elderly body. This film is set in a society obsessed with productivity where older citizens are invited to exile themselves from the rest of the community upon reaching a certain age. I see it as a near dystopian, yet simultaneously inspiring, fable about Tereza, a 77-year-old woman whose time to "go away" has just arrived.

Refusing to accept this "social euthanasia", Tereza embarks on a journey in search of freedom and a long held dream. Her journey truly begins when she runs away on a boat that will take her deep into the Amazon, and deep into her own soul.

HOW DID YOU BECOME INTERESTED IN THE REPRESENTATION OF OLDER CHARACTERS IN CINEMA OR ON SCREEN?

Growing up, I lived in a house with many people and my grandparents were always in my life. My grandmother was someone who learned to paint at 80 years old, after my grandfather's death, and seeing things like this changed my perspective on ageing. It showed me how the elderly can become protagonists of their own self-discovery and make significant changes, even impressive or astonishing ones.

The narratives we see often focus on older characters left behind in a world that is moving on without them, portraying ageing as a period of painful isolation or physical decline. In many cases, the past becomes a driving force in these stories, motivating the protagonist to seek a final purpose, perhaps to allow them





to die in peace. These stories often carry an undercurrent of nostalgia and inevitability, where death unconsciously shapes the narrative's tension.

In my film, I wanted to explore a different perspective. My approach proposes a journey, with elements of adventure and fantasy, and reconnecting with one's desire to be free. It's a 'boat-movie' about ageing and dreaming, with older women taking center stage.

WHY SET THE STORY AND SHOOT IN THE AMAZON?

I already knew the Amazon from a project training indigenous filmmakers called Video in the Villages, which I took part in as a teacher when I was younger. I also recently had the opportunity to attend a film festival in Goa, India, where I saw a huge casino boat in the middle of a large river. I already had the script for this film in development, and it reminded me that the Amazon would be a very special place to consider setting a very unique 'state of the world' that could house and deepen the narrative of the film. There is an important scene where Tereza puts her future on the line and bets everything she has, and even what she doesn't have, in this floating casino. I wanted the Amazon to become a character in its own right and it came to life during revisions of the script after my trip.

It's curious that the Amazon, as consumed in cinema and TV outside of Brazil, is still so idealized. I wanted to challenge this romanticized, skewed representation we often see when it's about conservation. The film takes us into an Amazon that is simultaneously magical and industrial, almost surreal, and deeply political.

The story speculates about a political system marked by tropical populist, developmental fascism, placing the Amazon not in the

idealized space of 'the lungs of the world,' but as the region at the heart of the planet's contradictions. I see the Amazon as a character with its own life, laden with its own complexities.

THIS ALSO IS NOT YOUR FIRST FILM IN WHICH ANIMALS PLAY AN IMPORTANT, ALMOST MYSTICAL ROLE.

I faced the challenge of redefining the idealization of Amazonian fauna. Thus, the viewer will be confronted with an unusual industrial-scale meat-processing factory for alligator meat and a betting house featuring fish fighting rings. The premise was to accentuate how large-scale capital and pop culture have appropriated the imagery of the region where the film is set.

The film also dedicates a special place to an enchanted snail that emits a blue slime with magical powers to open new paths and see the future. The snail signals a poetic contradiction that can be associated with old age as well: slow in movement but infinite in possibilities. The blue slime snail leaves a blue trail wherever it goes, as if planting a seed for a new future.

HOW DO YOU CAST FOR A FILM LIKE THIS?

DENISE WEINBERG is an excellent actress with an established reputation in Brazilian theater and a growing presence in cinema. On the film set, she surprised me with a deep and radical ability to study the text and take ownership of the character. There was not a single day of filming in which Denise was not on set - she's in every scene of the film. Even just through a small monitor and all the apparatus of artifice on set, she was capable of moving the team during the shoot, even repeatedly when doing a scene over several times.

RODRIGO SANTORO is an actor I have admired since I was young. I was 16 when I had the opportunity to see him on stage presenting a new film when it premiered in my city. That was





in 2000. I was deeply marked by how different he was on stage and on screen. The desire to make a film with him, I think, blends with my desire to make films. And now we finally had that opportunity.

When our main character Tereza is prevented from traveling on passenger boats, she seeks out Cadu, Rodrigo Santoro's character, for a paid ride on a boat that transports dubious merchandise. Cadu is a heartbroken traveling man. The idea was to show a man suffering the pain of distance from his love, the opposite of how films generally associate this type of character with the masculine freedom of a traveler away from home pressures. But Cadu is different. The boat is his prison. He is in deep mourning and will need to use supernatural forces to leave this life and accept his heart's desire.

MIRIAM SOCARRÁS is a force of nature. The costume test for her character Roberta was curious because her body always demanded more, so we kept going to riskier choices like an iridescent violet jacket and a red military cap. Her character lands in a cosmopolitan Amazon speaking a unique Spanglish. Piloting her boat while selling bibles and a promise of a new life for the protagonist Tereza. I feel like the encounter of these two actresses – Denise Weinberg and Miriam Socarrás – has an air of magic.

ADANILO plays the part of Ludemir, a man who lives in eternal waiting of promised development, on the riverbank. Adanilo gave a very generous and insightful perspective on how to represent the "Amazonian riverside body". He is an actor from the Amazon region alongside more than 20 other Amazonian actors who are in the film and lent *THE BLUE TRAIL* the poetics and uniqueness of the local reality, in addition to enriching the film with the creative and political issues of Amazonian cinema.

DESPITE THE STORY BEING ANCHORED IN THIS DYSTOPIAN WORLD THAT ACTIVELY THREATENS TEREZA, HOW DID YOU STILL MAKE A HOPEFUL AND LIBERATING FILM?

I think *THE BLUE TRAIL* indirectly addresses a lot of serious and delicate contemporary issues: especially related to the forced displacement of people, groups, or ethnicities from their homes in the name of a state project.

It's about the elderly being removed from society but it also resonates with so many others groups of people. From gentrification, to the removal of indigenous communities from their lands for economic exploitation, to wars waged for territorial gain while wealthy countries profit from arms sales, the treatment of refugees and immigrants forced to leave their countries due to conflicts or oppression.

I hope the film can indirectly highlight these realities and inspire reflection on resistance and finding our freedom, sometimes in our own ways.

Above all, I wanted to make a film that was passionate about the present and the possibilities of our drive for life. A film about the character of a woman—a mother, grandmother, older, yet still not confined to a fixed identity. Tereza embodies the desire to live out this journey, the willingness to try on new identities and experience new things in a unique, original, and undogmatic way.



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Viking Film

QUOTOTE
CINE



Actinver

