



Morena Films and Backup Media

Presents

PIGGY



Written & Directed by Carlota Pereda

With LAURA GALAN, RICHARD HOLMES, CARMEN MACHI
IRENE FERREIRO & CAMILLE AGUILAR, with the special collaboration of
PILAR CASTRO & CLAUDIA SALAS

Schweizer Verleih : Praesens-Film AG

ta@praesens.com

SPAIN / 2021 / 90 MINUTES / COLOR / SOUND : 5.1 / IMAGE : 1.33:1 / SPANISH

SYNOPSIS

During the sweltering summertime of rural Spain, Sara carries an extra load of teenage agony due to the perpetual bullying from her peers. She's also an outsider at home—her parents and little brother just don't understand her—so, feelings internalized, she's often found buried in her headphones, drowning out her surroundings. One day, Sara's usual solo dip at the local pool is disrupted by the presence of a mysterious stranger in the water and an exceptionally grueling bout of abuse at the hands of three girls. But, in a strange twist of fate, along the way home Sara witnesses her bloodied tormentors being kidnapped in the back of the stranger's van.

In Carlota Pereda's strikingly bold and ominous feature adaptation of her award-winning 2018 short film, Sara must decide whether to cooperate with the police and parents' questioning about the kidnappings, or take her own, unbridled path—while also discovering the power of desire and belonging, and the distinction between revenge and redemption.

INTERVIEW WITH WRITER-DIRECTOR CARLOTA PEREDA

Did you always plan on turning the short film into a feature or was that something that came later after its success?

No, it was not my intention. In fact, I was working on another film, *The Blondes*, but I got this idea for *PIGGY* and I knew I had to shoot it. When I was making the short, one of my best friends told me, "You know, this is the one that should be a movie." I started thinking about it, and one day I woke up in the middle of the night and decided that I just needed to tell this story because Sara's conflict is too great, too powerful to let it go. Also, when we were making the short and rehearsing with Laura Galán, I just fell in love with her character.

What were the differences in shooting the 15-minute short versus a 90-minute feature? And it was during the middle of the pandemic, so what were the challenges there?

Well, I was really lucky because I had the best production team. Making a short film you have to do everything yourself; you have a production team but, in the end, it's you. But I felt really supported during the feature, so all the challenges for me were really story-wise, whether I was being truthful to this girl, whether it was the best way to tell her story.

A lot of the team were people I worked with before; they're friends and we talked a lot about the movie before we made it. So the feature was very planned; the thing was always the problem of time. And we had some setbacks due to COVID. Our plans were to shoot in 2020 but in the end we had to shoot in 2021. And also some people tested positive; luckily it didn't stop production, but we had to rearrange the shooting. We had to be very careful about that, and we also had the massive heat in the Extremadura. We were shooting at 51 degrees Celsius [123 degrees Fahrenheit] in the middle of summer.

Is the remote rural setting a place you were familiar with?

Extremadura is a place where my best friend has a house and part of my family is from there, so it's a place that I know. Actually, I shot the short film in the same place where I wrote it, so the village was always part of the story. It had to be there, it's in the middle of nowhere, so it's very trapped within itself. It also has a kind of timeless atmosphere because it's one of the poorest areas in Spain. I like that eerie kind of feeling it gives to the film.

How much of the story was personal to you?

Well, I always wanted to tell a story about bullying. As a gay teen I had known a bit about that, and I also changed schools a lot so I've seen many different types of bullying. Sometimes I was the object of the bullying and sometimes I would just be quiet so they wouldn't do it to me. So it's always been a theme that I wanted to address, but it was after I saw a girl in the swimming pool before I shot the short that I knew it had to be about grossophobia, because it's something that people cannot escape. And it had to be in the middle of summer because that's when our bodies are most exposed. And bullying is bullying. It's when you question someone's identity, or physique, or whatever it is, and it always comes from the same place of hatred and bigotry. It's something I feel personal about because I have a child and I always thought what kind of child would you bring into the world when you know what children can experience.

Being a teen alone can be horrific enough, but you then toss in the emotional trauma of bullying, the feeling of not being accepted, and then also the threat of physical violence from a serial killer on the loose. By the end, the movie kind of feels like straight horror, but there are so many genre layers to it. What type of film did you set out to make?

For me, it's a mixture of genres. It's almost like a personal thriller, a teenage coming-of-age story in the shape of a thriller, but with a bit of comedy as well, and of course with horror. My idea was to make a horror movie play out in daylight, so that felt very real at times but it also has touches of a fairy tale. I just wanted to do a movie with things that I like. And I like genre and I thought if I had fun making it and it was exciting in some way it would find its audience.

You're also not afraid to let the film get bloody by the end, but you also do practice restraint in leaving things to the imagination. How did you decide how much you wanted to reveal?

I think it's always scarier when you imagine things. Always. And, at the same time, I didn't want to show violence against women. There are things you see the result of, but the only violence you see on-screen is toward someone else.

Was your choice of evolving the villain to a younger, more attractive man in the feature an attempt at adding some sort of romance to the story?

For me it was the idea of "the bad boyfriend." When you're a teenager—and I was for the most part bisexual—your friends push you to whatever guy is into you. Sometimes they don't even know he's good for you, but you just have to lose your

virginity... and I wanted the audience to do that with her. "He's good for her because he's taking care of her and he's kind of sexy." No—he's a fucking serial killer!

How did you find your terrific lead actress, Laura Galán?

When I wrote the script for the short, I knew I had to find someone amazing, and it took me two years. I went to every single underground theater play, and to school plays, theater schools, high schools, I put posters everywhere, did casting calls. I watched every single Spanish movie. And then I went to the theater and saw this amazing actress, Laura Galán. And I thought, she's maybe a bit too old for the role, but my producers went to see her, and said to me, "You have to meet her." So I met her in a café bar and I asked her to do the last look of the short, and she did it perfectly.

Working with someone like Laura, who's so talented but also so intelligent, gives you an amount of freedom, because we speak the same language. So writing the screenplay of the feature knowing that she was going to be the lead gave me immense freedom, because I knew she could do everything perfectly well, and she did.

And what about the rest of the actors? The casting is impeccable across the board.

We always had the idea of Carmen Machi for the mother because she's such a brilliant actress. She has the talents of comedy but can play drama better than anyone, and at the same time there's some kind of other layer, something that you don't even know what it is. She's also very good friends with Laura, so we already had that kind of background story between the two of them. It was so beautiful to see them working together.

And Richard Holmes, who plays the Unknown Man, came as a surprise, because he didn't audition for the role, he auditioned for the police guy. But he came with such a weird proposal, that I started thinking, he has something special, so I asked the casting director, "Do you think he would put on weight—like a lot?" And she just jumped on her seat and said, "YES YES! Let's call him!" He was such a pleasure to work with, and he has amazing chemistry with Laura because they got along together very well. They took care of each other. Sometimes I had to say to Laura, "You cannot trust him so much! I can see from the screen that you really like this guy, but there has to be an element of fear."

Can you talk about your collaboration with the DOP, Rita Noriega? The cinematography is a large part of what makes the film so striking.

We went to film school together and always wanted to work together. She's a workaholic like I am, and we think that the form and theme and story have to really go together. We discussed the progression of the character and how we were going to shoot each of them and how the light was going to be. The characters have an arc, but the images also have an arc. There are three acts and each are quite different, in a sense.

We also discussed using the 1.33:1 aspect ratio, and how it had to be this format because it really gives more importance to the human figure. Also, I also think it reminds teenagers of Instagram, while also reminding older generations of pictures from our younger years. She took a big risk as well visually because while we shot in 1.33:1, the lenses were anamorphic. Also, we intentionally don't move the camera until later in the film. We're such good friends and have a strong relationship – we talked about our families while also discussing how we were going to shoot the next scene, so we talked through all the shots together in this intimate way. It's brilliant to be able to have such a strong relationship.

How much of the visuals were already there in the screenplay?

If you read the script, you would be able to imagine the movie, because I write very visually. Sara doesn't have a lot of dialogue, but all her thoughts are on the paper. So it's like the inner voice of the character is there, and it sets the tone. Also, when you're trying to sell a movie that has such a complicated tone, you have to be very precise in the way you write. A producer invests in the movie, but if they read something different from what you're going to make, you'd have a really difficult time afterwards. But here everybody on board knew exactly the kind of movie we were going to make. With Rita, we did a document on how the visuals were going to look. Sometimes you do these things just for grants and stuff like that, but for us it was a shooting bible.

What was it like working with composer Oliver Arson? It seems like in the beginning the soundtrack is all natural, summer-like sounds, and the score doesn't come in until later when it becomes more of a horror film.

I always knew that I didn't want much music, but the music had to be something to do with the organic whole of the movie. Because music, more than anything else, sets the tone. We discussed the tone of the film with Oliver a lot, and how it is a progression, because there's a mixture of tones, and a mixture of genres — it starts

like a more realistic drama, and then it turns into some kind of a fairy-tale horror in the end. I'm so happy with what he did. I think it's one of the best things about the movie.

INTERVIEW WITH LAURA GALÁN

After making the short film in 2018, did you know that Sara was someone you wanted to spend more time with? And when it was decided that it was going to be expanded to a feature, did you and director Carlota Pereda work on fleshing out the details of the character together?

It all came out of Carlota's head, and I received it all as a gift. The success of the short film really took everybody by surprise; we didn't think that it was going to reach so many people.

Carlota as a director and writer really fleshed out the character, and, in fact, she wouldn't let me read the screenplay until just before we started shooting. Carlota placed a lot of trust in me as an actress, and I just rolled with it. It's a pleasure to work with a writer-director who gives you such a fully formed character.

You were 100 percent believable as a teenager, so it was really surprising to learn that you were actually in your 30s when making both the short and the feature. From the perspective of having those extra years, how did you channel your teenage self and are there similarities in your and Sara's upbringings, including living in a home where you feel like an outsider?

The idea was to get to the essence of what Carlota wanted to tell in the story and for me to put myself in the skin of this character, to lend my body and soul to her. And I've also obviously been favored by good genetics that keep me looking so youthful!

But there aren't many parallels in the sense that I've been very fortunate to be raised in a very loving, supportive family, who always pushed me to be myself, but of course, like in any family, you see your parents' fears, and my mother has always been overweight and feared that I would suffer for this. Sara and I also share similar fears, like the fears of bullying that can affect you at any age, really. But I have no personal experience of bullying; thankfully I've never encountered that in my life.

The emotional and especially the physical bullying scenes are really harrowing, so the role of Sara requires a lot of heavy-duty emoting. How did you approach these scenes? Actors have their little tricks to get the tears flowing—what did you have to do to get there?

These were obviously the most difficult sequences to shoot. This was my first leading role and I wasn't sure if I was going to be able to get there.

But there's a lot to be said about the environment that you're shooting in, and the set always felt like a very safe space for me. I was surrounded by a great crew and cast. And Carlota took me by the hand any time I needed guidance. And, remember, we were shooting in the midst of a pandemic, but everything was done so carefully, so safely, and in a really good working environment.

It must have been excruciating for the other young actors to have filmed the bullying scenes as well; was it a lot of them apologizing?

They really suffered, probably more than I did. Before shooting the sequences, they'd apologize profusely. And I'd say, "Look, do whatever you need to do, we need to do this properly, so if you need to insult me, you insult me in order for us to do Sara justice, as well as all the people who actually suffer this kind of thing in real life." The girls are such lovely people, so they had a terrible time. Even the guys who give Sara a hard time later on struggled with it.

Also, the advantage of being 35 and not 16 is that I'm at a point in my life where I know that my foundations are strong and that I can cope with these things, but perhaps if I shot something like this at 16 it would have been completely different.

The role of Sara relies very little on dialogue, so how did you go about conveying her emotional state mostly using facial expressions?

I feel like I've discovered that—despite being a very talkative person in real life—I really love acting with my body, that I'm a very physical actress, and I'm happy to speak less and to express more with my body. When we were in rehearsals, I would actually say to Carlota: "Can we get rid of this line of dialogue?" Because I discovered that my body is the most important tool that I have as an actor. I also feel that Carlota had written the details of Sara's character so well in the screenplay that she didn't really need to talk much.

It seems that as the film goes on, Sara becomes a much stronger, more assured character—did you actively play her as less vulnerable as the time passed?

Again, this is all down to Carlota's screenplay, which is water-tight. I didn't really realize until I was filming the different sequences that Sara becomes another woman; by the end of the film she's not the little girl that she was at the beginning. She's grown up in a certain respect.

As the film went along, the character was changing, but it happened organically. I thought of it similarly as a plane... that in the beginning, Sara's on this plane and she's not controlling anything, but then she's taken the controls, and she's really flying the plane by the end. And this has really been a journey for me as much as for Sara. As an actress, it was also a process of growth—growing along with Sara.

It's so striking: the girl walking down the road humiliated in her bikini is like a totally different person than the girl walking down the road at the end. Did you film those scenes in the same day?

The film was shot more or less in order, so the final sequence was shot very near the end. And by the time I was shooting that, it felt like a lifetime had passed since the day of shooting the bikini sequence. And that seemed like such an insignificant part of the day, of the journey, like a grain of sand in the context of the whole story... But the crazy thing is that the film takes place over the course of one day, so this all happened to her in one night!

One of the differences in the feature versus the short is that the villain, the killer character, went from an older, creepier man to a younger, sexier figure—more of an object of desire for Sara. Do you think of the film as something of a love story? Or a meditation on how young crushes can make lonely girls crave dangerous situations?

You can almost view this unknown man as kind of a gift to Sara. In a certain sense, it's like her first love story. It's so adolescent to fall so deeply in love so quickly, but in the beginning, we see that the unknown man is very generous with her; he's very kind to her. The actor who plays him, Richard Holmes, he's very sexy, but he's very scary at the same time, which gives off this kind of sense of danger. There's really something quite magnetic about that—you're drawn to what's obviously not the best influence, but it's this danger that's ultimately a gift to this character.

The film almost plays like this dark fairytale, in which he just appears to kind of fulfill everything that's missing in Sara's life. But there's so many other different elements to this film, some of it, social thriller, some domestic drama, and then pretty straight-up horror. What is the movie to you?

It's very hard to categorize because at different points I felt like we were doing any type of genre. Carlota and Merry Colomer, the producer, called it a "rural thriller"—the environment in which this child finds herself is so important to the story.

At times, it really felt like a comedy because there are some darkly funny moments in the film, and it's really like life itself—often when you're confronted by your worst

moment you have to laugh. Just as sometimes in your happiest moments you cry. But over the course of the film, I sometimes felt that it was an action film or a horror film. Certainly for Sara, it was horror, horror in the way that only a small town can provide. A nightmare.

Is horror a genre that you're usually drawn to and something you want to continue working in?

I really enjoyed shooting this horror film and I actually just finished shooting another film in which I wouldn't describe my character as particularly light. The funny thing is that in real life, I'm a bit of a scaredy-cat, so this has been great because I saw the tricks behind horror and that maybe I don't need to be that frightened by it.

This film could fit into so many different categories, and one thing I've learned shooting both the short and the feature is that horror can be luminous as well and that monsters are not usually hiding under the bed. They're often right there on top of it.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

FEAR

We all experience fear. It's a primary human emotion, essential to our survival.

Summer in Extremadura, a deserted road, adolescents crossing paths. There's no reason this should be terrifying, right? It all depends on our expectations. And our experience.

I wrote *PIGGY* to confront my own fears. Real life fears. Things that make me feel vulnerable. Violence; sexual assault; and, since becoming a mother, bullying.

Because being a teen can be terrifying.

WHY PIGGY?

PIGGY is the story of an outsider that wants to fit in. It's terrifying because it's real and relatable, because it shows adolescence at its most brutal. Believe me, if you're an overweight teen, social anxiety can be as paralyzing and horrific as murder.

PIGGY is Sara's story. A story that most of us have experienced on one side or the other. We've all been teens, awkward and senseless. We've all failed to stand up to injustice or hid our true selves in order to belong.

As an LGBTQIA youth, I grew up closeted, hiding my true feelings, laughing when people made jokes at my expense and joining in when jibes were aimed at others. Pure survival.

Sara's story is similar to mine and that of countless self-conscious teens bogged down by the weight of their families and a society which prevent them being themselves. The difference is that Sara has no closet in which to hide her body, or her guilt.

Nobody is indifferent in a village. Everyone knows everyone. Invisibility is not an option. Hence the saying: Small town, big hell.

As a writer, I feel compelled to show the consequence of this type of violence, which has become completely normalized. It is crucial that this story is told and that it is told now.

PIGGY is an ode to difference in every way. Even morally. Sara isn't slim, or cool, or good. But she is human, and as such, eventually comes to accept herself and be free.

PIGGY is also a tale of redemption. Because if we fail to break the cycle of violence, it will go on forever. Film can't change the world, but it can show us life from a different perspective. Being in someone else's shoes is a powerful thing. And once you've been there, you cannot look at them in the same way ever again.

As Marcel Proust said, "The real voyage of discovery consists, not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes." That is what *PIGGY* is about. We've seen the hero's journey a thousand times. Or coming of age stories of girls falling in love awakening sexually. But we've never seen the story of a girl like Sara, imperfect, a victim of her looks and the role assigned to her by villagers by accident of birth. A girl who makes an unforgivable mistake and, uncompromising, comes to understand and forgive herself and emerge as the story's heroine.

PIGGY is a coming of age tale with a young female protagonist that confronts herself, her inner monsters and her desire.

I like the idea of the "bad boyfriend". Something happens as you hit adolescence, when the weight of losing your virginity or having your first kiss pushes you to do it as soon as possible. The vaguest show of interest from a boy suddenly awakens a chorus of so-called friends shoving you toward this rite of passage.

Just as the narrator does with Unknown Man, guiding the viewer, telling them: this sexy, mysterious man (overweight, indeed, but let's celebrate bodies and sex, because all flesh is sexual and thus, beautiful) wants you, Sara. He's seen something in you. To be desired is enough. Then we flip this on its head when we realise, along with Sara, that what he sees in her is her passivity, her weakness, her anger and her complexes. This man is, ultimately, a predator and is no good for her. Which is why, in her sexual frustration and justified rage, Sara devours him. Not without mourning what could have been. In this final act, Sara stops being a passive object and becomes a woman who no longer hides.

In everything I write and direct, I like to hand power back to the victim. Whether it's the supposedly dumb blondes in *The Blondes*, my dear Sara, or the protagonist of *There Will be Monsters*, who stands up to a pack of would be rapists. There's beauty

in the cathartic power of fiction. The same can be said of the end of *PIGGY*, in which Sara reclaims power without having to step on the other young women who, in the end, have been as much a victim as her.

Sara doesn't reestablish order, she devours it.

FIRST TIME DIRECTOR

PIGGY is my first film. It's a story close to my heart, that pulses deep within me, set in a familiar and authentic place. It's a simple story, with few characters and locations, which we were able to shoot on our available budget. It's true that it's artistically ambitious, but it's a project in which I feel absolutely comfortable thanks to over 20 years of work experience, during which I've written and/or directed hundreds of television episodes.

As David Lean once said: "Good films can only be made by a crew of dedicated maniacs." It has been wonderful to share this experience with an incredible, supportive team. Together we have turned what began as a very personal project into something that's ours. In addition, it's been a real pleasure to work with some of Spain's finest acting talent, newcomer Laura Galán, Carmen Machi and Pilar Castro among others.

GENRE

Most horror films are about our fear of the other. In *PIGGY* the other is us. The fear of otherness inherent to adolescence and non conforming bodies.

Horror is the perfect vehicle to address important issues. While it may be true that social cinema can go deeper, its reach is almost always limited to an already convinced audience.

With horror, the viewer connects with protagonist's feelings, Sara's feelings, which helps us create an analogy between the film and the real world. This could happen to you. It could happen to your children, Here and now. A call to arms via raw emotion.

Violence is a constant in society and in genre films. The difference is how we choose to approach it. Violence as evidence of our frailty and driver of our fears. As an incentive to face and conquer them. Genre films rarely show pain, loss, or guilt. Here, that pain and loss is at the centre of the action. Every action, every death has a

consequence. Every victim has a name. Families suffer their losses. "Piggy" shows us that death is not easy. There is no violence for violence's sake. The aim is to show how we live with pain and fear. Our story oozes contained violence and sexual and social repression, until we reach the climax and the violence explodes, cathartic, liberating. Never aiming for gore, always with the intention of revealing our character's internal conflict in an aesthetic and moral way. Our protagonist will have to live with her transgression at the slaughterhouse for the rest of her life. And the beauty is that Sara embraces it, despite having the chance to make it all disappear.

I love genre films. Their freedom, their intensity, their predilection for the unexpected. No topic is too taboo, no form too extreme. But best of all is the way they invite you to observe those fears in order to interpret and share them.

In a world in which evil overwhelms us and we are guilty of inaction against injustice, horror films allow us to vanquish evil and serve justice in fiction.

The power of catharsis.

LOCATION

PIGGY is Spanish horror set under the scorching summer sun. In the style of the Chicho Ibáñez Serrador classic, *Who can Kill a Child?* and Stephen King's stories, with a Spanish twist. With its Calippo ice lollies, siestas, bulls, open air dances, ladies basking in the evening breeze, and, of course, the fear of "what the neighbours might say." An apparently benevolent society which hides a deep darkness.

A populace utterly indifferent to adolescents where there is something that is literally killing them. A way of showing everyday violence in film, bringing it to the forefront. A normalized perpetual violence, passed from parents to children.

Villanueva del la Vera, Extremadura. A place in which I grew up and know like the back of my hand. Stuck halfway between the present day and the 80s due to poverty and lack of infrastructure. A place where cars are around 20 years old and the high street chain store is the market that sets up in the village once a week. Somehow, everyone still seems to have the latest cell phone. A location that enhances a nightmarish timelessness which reinforces the teen viewer's empathy with the characters, as well as older viewer's nostalgia for their own teenage summers.

A small village, with few streets and locations that appear repeatedly, yet look different every time as Sara changes and experiences particular moments of her life differently.

FINAL WORDS

When we experience fear, we feel helpless. It is a passive emotion which attempts to extract us from what is happening. Sara is defined by her passivity, by what she doesn't do, as we define ourselves by what we allow. And this inaction defines us.

As the master of modern horror says, monsters don't live inside closets, monsters live inside us.

And sometimes, they win.

PRODUCER'S NOTE

PIGGY is the feature length adaptation of Carlota Pereda's short film of the same name. A project which has piqued the interest of critics and audiences alike, and has been selected at more than 300 international film festivals, received more than 90 awards, including the Goya and Forque awards for best short film.

PIGGY, the short film, submerged us in a universe from which it was hard to return when it ended. Carlota had masterfully managed to capture one of the pressing social issues of our time: bullying. And she did it using a genre and an aesthetic rarely used for this type issue in film. It's precisely because of this thriller tone, which borders on horror, with its frenetic pace, that Carlota was able to criticise and condemn this situation whilst engaging and entertaining the viewer at all times.

It is a short film that, besides making you shudder, makes you wonder, "what happened next?" Which is precisely the story we wanted to tell.

This project is Carlota Pereda's debut feature, a film with a social theme far removed from political correctness.

Though *PIGGY* is Carlota's first feature length film, she has abundant experience in writing and directing for television. Over the last 15 years she has worked as screenwriter and director on TV series such as "Aguila Roja", "Acacias 38" and "Los Hombres de Paco", among others. This varied experience has given Carlota a unique sense of rhythm, entertainment, the universality of stories and of audiovisual language.

Furthermore, Carlota is in the international spotlight as a filmmaker. She has been invited to participate in events and workshops such as Oxbelly Labs, Les Nuits en Or tour, organised by the French Academy of Film and the Talent Village, organised by Les Arcs Film Festival. Her latest short film, *There Will be Monsters*, produced in collaboration with the French Academy of Film, has been selected at festivals such as San Sebastian Horror and Fantasy Film Festival, ALCINE, Medina del Campo and Brussels Fantastic Film Festival (BIFFF), among others.

At last year's Slamdance, Carlota was awarded the AGBO Fellowship Award, a mentoring programme presented by the Russo Brothers, writers and directors of *The Avengers: Infinity War* and *Endgame*, *Captain America* and "Community".

It is worth noting, that despite being in development, the feature project for *PIGGY* was selected to participate at Cannes' Focus CoPro, where it won the Pop Up Residency. It was also awarded the "Ventana Sur" prize at Ventana CineMad and participated in "Oltrecorto" at Torino Film Festival and the EFM at Berlinale.

It's clear that *PIGGY* is here to stay. Having come to leave its mark and change the rules of horror film (and even social cinema). Just as Coralie Fargeat did with *Revenge* and Jordan Peele with *Get Out* and *Us*, Carlota joins the new wave of critical, social cinema that uses the suspense of the thriller to discuss the horrors of modern society.

We live in a pluralistic and diverse society in which people's fears, which had until recently been treated the same, are pluralistic and diverse. This perspective is what interests me most about Carlota as a director. As a filmmaker, as a woman and as a horror storyteller who has no need to create monsters, as her monsters already surround us: they are our neighbours, people who look just like us. It is society, that often sick place, that we have to examine, not the fantasy worlds of our imaginations. This is exactly what *PIGGY* does.

Besides Carlota's formidable talents, the need for a story like *PIGGY*, the reinvention of genre, and the global reach I see both in the project and in Carlota herself, as a woman producer, I feel a sense of responsibility to women, as we remain sorely under represented in media.

This is what makes embarking upon the adventure of producing this film, written, directed by a woman and featuring a largely female cast, whose intention, form and aesthetic are aimed at a wide, global audience, willing to enjoy a film which mixes social engagement with pure unbridled entertainment, so exciting.

Our commitment to representation of women in film was carried though to the shoot, where the crew was comprised mostly of women, from technical crew though to many senior positions.

Of note were DoP, Rita Noriega; First Assistant Director, Sara San Marfín; Head of Production and Locations, Clara Salvador; Costume Designer, Arantxa Ezquerro; Head of Make-up, Paloma Lozano; Associate Producer, María Soler; Post-production Supervisor at Morena Films, Elena Alcolea; Line Producer, Sara Garcia; Casting by

Arantza Velez and Paula Cámara and Morena Films Executive Producer, Pilar Benito. Accompanying this formidable group of women, Head of Sound, Nicolas Mas & Sound Editor, Nacho Arenas; Art Director, Oscar Sempere; Composer, Olivier Arson and Editor, David Pelegrín.

In addition, the *PIGGY* shoot was environmentally sustainable, as well as being the first Spanish film to have a creche facility on location, to facilitate work for crew with young children.

This film, packed with tension, revenge, fear, dirt and sweat was produced by MORENA FILMS in co-production with BACKUP STUDIO and CERDITA AIE, in association with La Banque Postale 15; Indéfilms 10 and Triodos Bank, backed by RTVE and Movistar+, with the support of the Spanish Institute of Culture and Audiovisual Arts; Junta de Extremadura; Eurimages; EU Creative Europe - MEDIA Programme; and the Community of Madrid.

Above all else, I believe that *PIGGY* is an important project. A unique, original, entertaining, yet horrifying tale, which needs to be told. And no one can tell this story better than Carlota Pereda, alongside whom I, as a producer, am proud to embark upon this journey.

PIGGY is a realistic horror story. Told in broad daylight, under the harsh Extremadura summer sun. Sara, helpless in her bikini and jelly shoes. Not a shadow of darkness in which to hide. There are no ghosts or paranormal events, it's simply summer in the village. Something that anyone could experience. *PIGGY* doesn't hide any monsters under the bed, instead showing us how monstrous people can be. Young people enjoy horror because it's enjoyable, while films about bullying tend to be less so. *PIGGY* is an entertaining, disquieting film with a macabre touch of black humour, which at the same time has an important message to share.

PIGGY is a stark film which is unlikely to leave anyone indifferent.

CAST & CREW BIOGRAPHIES

CARLOTA PEREDA - WRITER & DIRECTOR

Born in 1975 in Madrid, Carlota Pereda is a film and drama series director. After graduating from the ECAM (Escuela de Cinematografía y del Audiovisual de la Comunidad de Madrid), she started her career as writer, director and script supervisor in TV series such as *Periodistas*, *Acacias 38*, *El secreto de Puente Viejo*, *Lex*, *Los hombres de Paco*, and *Águila roja (Red Eagle)*, for which she was nominated for the Iris Award of the Television Academy.

Her first short film, *Las Rubias (The Blondes)*, has been selected in more than 140 national and international festivals and awarded in prestigious festivals. *Cerdita (Piggy)*, her second short film as a director, has been selected for more than 300 international festivals, winning over 90 awards, including the Forqué and the Goya Awards. "There will be monsters" is her latest short film, produced by Movistar+.

In the last Slamdance festival, Carlota Pereda received the AGBO fellowship, based on mentoring by the Russo brothers, writers, and directors of *Avengers: Endgame*.

PIGGY is her first feature film. First released in Sundance 2022, the project was selected in the Focus CoPro in Cannes, winning the Pop Up Residency. It also won the Ventana Sur Award at the Ventana CineMad, ARRI Award at the European Work in Progress in Cologne, and has participated in *Oltrecorto* at the Torino Film Festival and the Berlinale Co-Production Market.

LAURA GALÁN - SARA

Born in 1986 in Guadalajara, Spain, Laura Galán is an actress who began her training in theatre at a very young age until she went to Madrid at the age of 18 to study Drama at the Arte4 school. She complemented her training with directors and actors such as Will Keen, Pablo Messiez, and Andrés Lima. She worked in different theatre plays such as *Los Mácbez* (adaptation of "Macbeth"), *Medea* or *Sueño* (inspired by *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and participated in the theatre trilogy *Las crónicas de Peter Sanchidrián*, directed by José Padilla. Since then, she has made different appearances in TV drama series and films, such as *The man who killed Don Quixote*, by Terry Gilliam; *Orígenes Secretos (Secret Origins)*, by David Galán Galindo, and the feature film *CERDITA (PIGGY)*, by Carlota Pereda.

RICHARD HOLMES - UNKNOWN MAN

Born in 1992 in Spain from a Spanish mother and a British father, Richard Holmes is a newcomer actor and musician. He started studying drama at the school of Juan Carlos Corazza, who later directed him in the play *Hermaix*. After five years of training at the school, Richard started working in TV series such as *Servir y proteger* (*Serve and Protect*) and features films such as *Hasta el cielo* (*Sky High*) by Daniel Calparsoro and *CERDITA (PIGGY)* by Carlota Pereda. He is currently shooting the drama series adaptation of *Hasta el cielo* (*Sky High*) for Netflix.

CARMEN MACHI - MOTHER

Born in 1961 in Madrid, Spain, Carmen Machi is one of the most prolific and appreciated actresses in Spain. She took her first steps in the theatre and debuted in the film *Shacky Carmine* by Chema de la Peña. Her popularity would come later, with the TV series *7 Vidas* and its subsequent spin-off based on her character: *Aida*. Her success on the small screen launched her presence in films such as *Hable con Ella* (*Talk to her*) and *Los Abrazos Rotos* (*Broken Embraces*) by Pedro Almodóvar, or *Sin Vergüenza* (*No Shame*) by Joaquín Oristrell. Since then, she has starred in numerous films such as *Mi gran noche* (*My Big Night*) and *El Bar* (*The Bar*) by Álex de la Iglesia, *La puerta abierta* (*The Open Door*) by Marina Seresesky and *Ocho apellidos vascos* (*Spanish Affair*) by Emilio Martínez-Lázaro, for which she won a Goya Award. At the same time, she continues her career in theatre with plays such as *Juicio a Una Zorra*. And she has participated in drama series such as *Arde Madrid* by Paco León, *30 monedas* (*30 coins*) by Álex de la Iglesia and *Criminal: Spain*, the hit Netflix series.

IRENE FERREIRO - CLAUDIA

Born in 2001 in Madrid, Spain, Irene Ferreiro is a young actress who studied performance at the Prime Toma school and continued her training with Yaël Belicha. In 2018 she started her career in television as the lead role in *SKAM*, the Spanish adaptation of the internationally successful Norwegian drama series. In the following years, she worked in the drama series *Circular*, videos like Manel Navarro's *Keep on Falling*, and films such as Carlota Pereda's *CERDITA (PIGGY)*. Irene Ferreiro is a multifaceted artist who combines acting with writing and design. She has published her poetry book *Voces* (*Voices*) with Penguin Random House and has launched her first fashion brand, *KEI*.

CAMILLE AGUILAR - ROCI

Born in 1995 in Villepinte, France, Camille Aguilar is an actress in theatre, film, and television. She began her career with *Le Ciel Attendra* (*Heaven will wait*), directed

by Marie-Castille Mention Schaar, and has worked on other projects such as Naydra Ayadi's *Ma Fille*, Philippe Guillardy's *Papy Sitter*, and Cécile Manneville's *The other side*. At the same time, she is involved in plays such as *Théâtre de Rue en Improvisation*, *Mr Jones*, *Le médecin Malgré Lui*, *Les Caprices de Marianne*, and *Garde Alternée (Alternative Guard)*. In television, she has been part of drama series such as *Falco*, *Le sang de la vigne*, *Elles, les filles du plessis*, *Génération libérée*, *Les adieux*, *Nina*, *L'art du crime*, *Les secrets*, *Like me*, and the acclaimed Netflix drama series *Zone Blanche*. Most recently, she has participated in *Maricón Perdido (Queer you are)*, the Spanish series created by Bob Pop, and the film *CERDITA (PIGGY)* by Carlota Pereda

CLAUDIA SALAS - MACA

Born in 1994 in Madrid, Spain, Claudia Salas is an actress best known for her leading role in *Elite*, the hit Netflix series. She began her career performing in plays such as *No hay burlas con el amor (No teasing with love)*, *El hotel de los suicidas (The Suicide Hotel)*, *El sueño de una noche de verano (A Midsummer Night's Dream)*, *Aún respiras*, *Maribel y la extraña familia*, *La importancia de llamarse Ernesto*, and *Hace mucho tiempo que no veía uno de esos (It's been a long time since I've seen one of those)*.

Her first drama series roles include *Centro médico* and *Seis hermanas*. Later, in 2018 she joined the cast of *La Peste (The Plague)* by Alberto Rodriguez, a performance for which she got her first nomination for Best New Actress at the Actors Union. Eventually, in 2019 she joined as a lead actress in the second season of *Elite*.

Claudia Salas has recently premiered *Que no...?*, a play directed by Jesús Cracio for the Teatro Español and her upcoming premieres include the drama series *La Ruta* and the film *CERDITA (PIGGY)* by Carlota Pereda.

PILAR CASTRO - ELENA

Born in 1970 in Madrid, Spain, Pilar Castro began her career as a dancer and afterward studied acting at Cristina Roja's school. She made her debut in Montxo Armendáriz's *Historias del Kronen (Stories from the Kronen)*, and since then, she has developed a prolific career in film, television, and theatre. She has starred drama series such as *Cuestión de Sexo*, *Olmos y Robles* and *Vivir sin permiso (Unauthorized Living)*; and has appeared in films such as *Gordos (Fat People)* by Daniel Sánchez Arévalo, for which she received a Goya Award nomination, *Julieta* by Pedro Almodóvar, *Ventajas de viajar en tren (Advantages of Travelling by Train)* by Aritz

Moreno, for which she was nominated for the Forqué and Feroz Awards, and *Competencia Oficial (Official Competition)* by Gastón Duprat & Mariano Cohn.

ABOUT MORENA FILMS

Morena Films was founded in 1999 with the objective of producing innovative, high-quality content aimed specifically at the international market. Since then we have produced more than sixty feature films, documentaries, animated works and TV series with directors such as Asghar Farhadi, Oliver Stone, Iciar Bollain, Steven Soderbergh, Carlos Saura, Javier Fesser, Pablo Trapero and Wim Wenders to name just a few.

Morena's titles have been entered at the most prestigious film festivals and have garnered both national and international awards & recognition. They include: *Everybody knows* (Asghar Farhadi, 2018) that inaugurated the 71st edition of Cannes Film Festival; *Even the Rain* (I. Bollaín, 2010), which was nominated at the Toronto Film Festival, won the People's Choice award at Berlinale, represented Spain at the Oscars (2011) and received the Silread Ariel for best Latin American film, as well as three Goya Awards in 2011; *Cell 211* (D. Monzón, 2009), nominated for 16 Goya Awards in 2010, winning eight including Best Film; *Submergence* (Wim Wenders, 2017) which was the San Sebastian Film Festival opening movie and was selected for Toronto International Film Festival; and *Che and Che: Part II* (S. Soderbergh, 2008), the two films that tell the life of Che Guevara, for which Benicio del Toro won Best Male Actor at the Cannes Film Festival in 2008.

Moreover, Morena's movies have also a clear commercial ambition. The films *Champions* (Javier Fesser, 2018) and *Cell 211* (Daniel Monzón, 2009) are two of the twenty biggest blockbusters of the Spanish film history.

ABOUT BACKUP MEDIA

Backup Media was launched in 2002 to finance ambitious films from all over the world. Backup's lineup includes Richard Glatzer and Wash Westmoreland's *STILL ALICE*, winning an academy award for Julianne Moore in 2015, Cannes Grand Jury Prize winner *REALITY* by Matteo Garrone, worldwide animation box office success *MINUSCULE* by Hélène Giraud and Thomas Szabo, hit French TV series *THE RETURNED*, Martin Koolhoven's *BRIMSTONE* starring Dakota Fanning, Guy Pearce and Kit Harrington, Eva Husson's 2015 Toronto Platform sensation *BANG GANG* and 2018 Cannes' *GIRLS OF THE SUN*, Jim Mickle's *COLD IN JULY* starring Michel C Hall, Sam Sheppard and Don Johnson which played at both Sundance and Cannes Directors

Fortnight, Evan Katz' *SMALL CRIMES* starring Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Du Welz' *MESSAGE FROM THE KING* starring Chadwick Boseman, Morena Films' produced *Mama* starring Penelope Cruz, Wim Wender's *SUBMERGENCE*, starring James MacAvoy and Alicia Vikander, Brian De Palma's *DOMINO* starring Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Carice Van Houten and Guy Pearce, 2017 Cannes' documentary *PROMISED LAND* aka *THE KING* by Eugene Jarecki, 2018 TIFF's *DONNYBROOK* by Tim Sutton, starring Jamie Bell, Margaret Qualley and Frank Grillo, and Ari Folman's 2021 Cannes Official Selection *WHERE IS ANNE FRANK*.

Backup Media additionally operates rights management app *MOVIECHAINER* enabling filmmakers from all over the world to manage their IP rights and make a living out of it.

CREDITS

A MORENA FILMS production · coproduced by BACKUP STUDIO & CERDITA A.I.E. · in association with LA BANQUE POSTALE 15, INDÉFILMS 10 & TRIODOS BANK · with the participation of RTVE & MOVISTAR+ · with the financing of GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA, ICAA · with the support of CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA, TURISMO Y DEPORTES DE LA JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA, EURIMAGES, CREATIVE EUROPE PROGRAMME – MEDIA OF THE EUROPEAN UNION & COMUNIDAD DE MADRID · International Sales by CHARADES

LAURA GALÁN, RICHARD HOLMES, CARMEN MACHI, IRENE FERREIRO & CAMILLE AGUILAR with the special collaboration of PILAR CASTRO & CLAUDIA SALAS · casting directors ARANTZA VÉLEZ & PAULA CÁMARA · 1st Assistant to the director SARA SAN MARTÍN · postproduction supervisor ELENA ALCOLEA · line producer SARA GARCÍA · make up & hair PALOMA LOZANO · sound NICOLAS MAS, NACHO ARENAS & NICOLAS DE POULPIQUET · wardrobe design ARANTXA EZQUERRO · art director ÓSCAR SEMPERE · editor DAVID PELEGRÍN · composer OLIVIER ARSON · director of photography RITA NORIEGA · associate producer MARÍA SOLER · coproduced by DAVID ATLAN-JACKSON, JEAN-BAPTISTE BABIN & JOEL THIBOUT · executive produced by PILAR BENITO · produced by MERRY COLOMER · written and directed by CARLOTA PEREDA

© Morena Films S.L. / BackUp Studio / Cerdita A.I.E. / 2021

