

The Pearl Button

Cert 12A Chile 2015 82 mins

Crew

Director/ writer	Patricio Guzmán
Cinematography	Katell Djian
Film Editing	Patricio Guzmán & Emmanuelle Joly
Original music	Hughes Maréchal Miguel Miranda José Miguel Tobar

Cast

Patricio Guzmán	Narrator (voice)
Raúl Zurita	as himself
Cristina, Gabriel & Martín	as themselves

Synopsis

Chile, the present. Using archival images and new footage the film conveys different aspects of Chile's history and geography, with water as its starting point, and two buttons as a link between the narratives. Exploring the country's long indented coastline Guzmán investigates the fate of Patagonia's indigenous tribes: nomadic boat people who are now, thanks in no small degree to the arrival of European colonisers, extinct save for a few survivors. The film then considers the more recent disappearances of those tortured, killed and dumped in the ocean by Pinochet's regime.



Booking Information

Distributor: Verve Pictures

DVD bookings:

contact Nellie Alston
0207 299 3681
bill@vervepics.com
www.vivaverve.com

Available: now



Reviews

Of the documentaries released in the UK, most tend to be single-minded about their subject matter. If I were to recommend - and I would! - *Hitchcock/Truffaut*, for instance (a non-fiction film currently in cinemas), I'd say it was about an encounter in 1960 between a famous Hollywood director and an admiring French critic.

But the Chilean documentary *The Pearl Button* isn't so selective. It ranges movingly through time and location across an array of topics and concerns. Its first image is a close-up of a piece of translucent quartz - and, like the light that passes through this object, the film's focus is prismic, refracted and illuminates in many directions.

The fashionable term for this species of documentary is essay film but that makes *The Pearl Button* sound dry and academic. I prefer to think the film exerts a free-flowing conversationalist appeal; director Patricio Guzmán has a number of important things to say, and his tone of quietly compelling urgency keeps us in his spell.

...Guzmán's 2010 film *Nostalgia for the Light* is one of the past decade's great films, and *The Pearl Button* is a worthy companion piece. This is a film of masterly artistry, heaving political anger and uncontained ambition.

Edward Larensen, The Big Issue, March 2016

...If, as the poet Raúl Zurita testifies, the process of returning the dead is about allowing the living to grieve, *The Pearl Button* is ultimately about cinema's unique way of retelling the past, about a visual language that links Pinochet's victims to the Yámana peoples through the image of a button. Water is ultimately the conduit that Guzmán uses to bind the different memories into a bold, poetic narrative that asks profound questions of humanity and indeed of cinema's responsibilities to the wider world.

Maria Delgado, Sight and Sound, April 2016

FILM FACTS...

- ☆ The film premiered at the Berlin Film Festival 2015 where it won the Silver Bear for Best Script and the Prize of the Ecumenical Jury.
- ☆ Patricio Guzmán has said the film is part of a triptych, with *Nostalgia for the Light* as the first part. He says the third part will focus on the Andes.

***The Pearl Button* is part of the BFI FAN New Release Strategy**

If you are planning to show it and want a marketing pack, or marketing support - a guest speaker, boosted facebook post etc. - please contact Alice Quigley at Film Hub SWWM as soon as possible
e-mail: alice.q@watershed.co.uk