



presents

MADAME SATÃ

a Karim Ainouz film

from producer Walter Salles, the director of *The Motorcycle Diaries*

Official Selection Cannes Film Festival

Official Selection Toronto International Film Festival

Official Selection Sundance Film Festival



In Cinemas:

MARCH 17 (Valhalla Cinemas, Sydney)

APRIL (Lumiere Cinemas, Melbourne)

Rated MA (High Level Sex Scene, Drug Use, Medium Level Coarse Language)
99 minutes. Portuguese with English subtitles. IMAGES AVAILABLE AT IMAGE.NET

Madman Cinema

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

Legendary criminal. Proud homosexual. Cabaret star. Passionate lover. Killer. Devoted father of seven adopted children. Saint or devil? Madame Satã.

Born to slaves in the arid wasteland of Northern Brazil and sold by his mother at the age of 7, he pursued his freedom on the mean streets of Lapa, Rio de Janeiro. Jet-black, six feet tall, 180 pounds of proud muscle in a silk shirt and tight pants, a cutthroat razor in his back pocket.

Karim Aïnouz's extraordinary portrait of the triumphs and tragedy of this explosive and paradoxical personality unfolds against the vibrant, sordid background of Lapa: thronging underworld of pimps and whores, of cut-throats, queers and artists, of dark bars and brothels thick with smoke, drenched in sweat and cheap perfume. A world run through with violence and raw desire, where desperate dreams spring from poverty and squalor.

CREDITS

Director - Karim Aïnouz

Screenplay - Karim Aïnouz

Producers - Isabel Diegues, Maurício Andrade Ramos, Donald K. Ranvaud, Marc Beauchamps, Walter Salles

Director Of Photography - Walter Carvalho

Production Design - Marcos Pedroso

Editor - Isabela Monteiro De Castro

Music - Marcos Suzano, Sacha Ambak

Production - Videofilmes

Co-Production - Wild Bunch, Lumiere, Dominant 7

Casting Director - Luiz Henrique Norueira

CAST

Lázaro Ramos - Madame Satã/João Francisco

Marcelia Cartaxo - Laurita

Flavio Bauraqui - Taboo

Felipe Marques - Renatinho

Emiliano Queiroz - Amador

Renata Sorrah - Vitória dos Anjos

Giovana Barbosa - Firmina

Ricardo Blat - José

Guilherme Piva - Alvaro

Marcelo Valle - Commissioner

REVIEWS

"A Voluptuous, Hot-Blooded Portrait! Ramos's incendiary performance burns like a fuse!" - Stephen Holden, NEW YORK TIMES

"Vividly Incandescent! Like Josephine Baker re-imagined as a transvestite brawler... elevating sin to something sublime!" - Scott Tobias, TIME OUT NY

"Imagine a Brazilian Jean Genet, bursting with Wigstock energy, under the guidance of the devil, disguised as Bob Fosse!" - Chris Chang, FILM COMMENT

"There's no denying the incendiary power of Ramos's performance—he's present in nearly every scene." - J. Hoberman, THE VILLAGE VOICE

"Boasting powerful, gritty performances and an immediate sense of the dark streets, bohemian boites, poverty and violence that form the characters' habitat, "Madame Sata" is an intensely realized, beautifully shot drama." - THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

"What emerges in Aïnouz and Ramos' mesmerizing portrait of Dos Santos is a fearless man who had the courage to explore and express every aspect of his being." - Kevin Thomas, LOS ANGELES TIMES

"Sata" keeps us engrossed, steeped in this seething portrait of a body and soul in lust and agony - and, finally, on stage and in glory." - CHICAGO TRIBUNE

"A magnificent visual document" - LOS ANGELES DAILY NEWS

WINNER OF OVER 16 INTERNATIONAL FILM AWARDS, INCLUDING 5 BRAZILIAN ACADEMY AWARDS

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Toronto International Film Festival

Sundance Film Festival

Chicago International Film Festival

International Film Festival Rotterdam

Buenos Aires International Festival of Independent Cinema

Hong Kong International Film Festival

Sydney Film Festival

LONG SYNOPSIS

Lapa, the bohemian district of Rio, 1932.

On the stage of cabaret Lux, Vitória dos Anjos (Renata Sorrah) sings one of Josephine Baker's greatest hits, "Nuit d'Alger". Backstage, fascinated, her dresser João Francisco (Lázaro Ramos) lip-syncs each word of the song. He worships Vitória: covets her extravagant clothes and her golden costume jewelry, and admires her European poise. Also, to star in a show is João Francisco's big dream. However, his wishes do not make an impression on the decadent diva. To make things worse, he is exploited and humiliated by Gregório (Florian Peixoto), his boss and Vitória's lover. However, João Francisco's submissive attitude becomes proud and provocative when he leaves the cabaret and strolls through the poorly lighted streets of Rio de Janeiro's underworld peopled with shady characters.

From a run-down boarding house in the heart of Lapa he shares his world with Laurita (Márcia Cartaxo), prostitute and "wife"; Firmina (Giovanna Barbosa), Laurita's daughter; and Taboo (Flávio Bauraqui), accomplice in petty crimes and "slave". The patriarch of this selected "family", João Francisco is well acquainted with the local underworld: he is on good terms with Amador (Emiliano Queiroz), owner of the Blue Danube bar, where prostitution, drugs and police corruption run wild. His strong temper and his skills in capoeira-style fighting make him a feared and fascinating character. He is an excellent fighter, and always responds to provocation, whether from bar customers or the police. One night, João Francisco meets Renatinho (Felipe Marques), with whom he falls in love.

Accused by Gregório for a theft he did not commit, João Francisco defies the police, and is convicted to six months in prison for flouting authority. Once he is set free, he convinces Amador to put on a show at the Blue Danube. Costumed and brilliantly made-up by Laurita and Taboo, João Francisco, goes on stage at last, and is received with acclaim by the audience. After so many years, it seems as if luck has finally smiled on him. However, after a second even more flamboyant show, an unwarranted reaction to a provocation from a customer destroys his dream of being an artist.

Lapa, Carnival of 1942. After a 10-year term in prison, João Francisco returns to his district. After inventing and impersonating a number of characters - The Negress of the Bulacoché; Jacy, the Queen of the Forest; Saint Rita of the Coconut Tree; the Shark; and the Wild Pussycat - he wins a carnival costume contest. Successful and reborn to life, he invents a new character: Madame Satã.

INTRODUCTION

Madame Satã is inspired by the legends and myths that grew up around the real life character João Francisco dos Santos (1900-1976), also known as Madame Satã. The film is set in the 1930s, in Rio de Janeiro, in the bohemian neighborhood of Lapa, when João Francisco is about to achieve his dream of becoming a stage star.

A tall black man - a Brazilian version of Jean Genet - a proud rogue, female impersonator, gangster, convicted prisoner and adoptive father, João Francisco spent most of his life in the bohemian streets of Rio de Janeiro.

Madame Satã, the film, is as feverish as Madame Satã, its protagonist. We get to know the cast of characters who surround João Francisco in the sordid, yet lively world of Lapa - a cast of pimps, prostitutes, deviants, samba composers and bohemians.

The film is made up of a series of defining moments in the life of João Francisco and his close friends, which taken together evoke a crucial time in his life, the period immediately before the Madame Satã myth was created. João took his alias from the title character of Cecil B. De Mille's 1930 film *Madame Satan*, which he was passionate about.

Throughout his 76 years - 27 of which were spent in prison - João Francisco dos Santos constantly challenged the stigmas of being illiterate, black, poor, and homosexual. With a remarkable ability to enter the skin of different characters, he defined himself as "son of Iansã and Ogum (deities of African origin, originally worshiped by slaves), and devout follower of Josephine Baker". He created for himself a number of personae, such as: The Negress of the Bulacoché; Jamacy, the Queen of the Forest; the Shark; and the Wild Pussycat.

Through the character of João Francisco, a son of ex-slaves, the film also celebrates the blossoming of a pulsating urban Afro-Brazilian culture that emerged in Rio de Janeiro in the post abolition years. This culture was forged as an expression of resistance in a society that had no use for Black peoples after the abolition of slavery in 1888. Madame Satã not only evokes a fascinating real life character, but also brings to life a crucial moment of the Afro-Brazilian diaspora.

Madame Satã, Karim Aïnouz's first feature, for which he also wrote the script, is actor Lázaro Ramos first leading role. Marcélia Cartaxo (*Hour of the Star*) is Laurita, and first-timer Flávio Bauraqui is Taboo, João Francisco's "family". The fabulous Fellipe Marques, Emiliano Queiroz, Renata Sorrah, Floriano Peixoto, Ricardo Blat and Guilherme Piva complete the cast.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Karim Aïnouz was born in Fortaleza, Brazil, in 1966. He studied Architecture at the University of Brasilia and holds a Master degree in Cinema Studies from New York University.

His innovative short features *Paixão Nacional* and *O Preso* and his documentary film *Seams* were shown in over 50 festivals in Brazil and abroad, including Rotterdam, Oberhausen, London, Vancouver, Atlanta and at New York City's Museum of Modern Art. Aïnouz has won many awards including Best Short Film Award at the Atlanta Festival (1994); Best Short Film Award at the Ann Arbor Festival (Michigan, 1997); and a fellowship from the New York State Council on the Arts and from the Jerome Foundation for the Arts. Aïnouz was also a resident artist at New York Film Video Arts and the Banff Centre for the Arts (Canada).

Aïnouz worked as an assistant editor, and assistant director on a number of feature films including: *Poison* (Todd Haynes, 1990), *Swoon* (Tom Kalin, 1991), and *Postcards from America* (First name?McLean, 1993). He was also one of the screenwriters of Walter Salles' *Behind the Sun*. *Madame Satã* is his first feature film.

Filmography:

2002 *Madame Satã*, 35mm, color, 105 min.

2000 *Rifa-me*, 35 mm, color, 28 min.

1998 *Les Ballons des Bairros*, documentary for France 3, video, 26 min.

1996 *Hic Habitat Felicitas*, 35mm, color, 26 min.

1994 *Paixão Nacional*, 16mm, color, 9 min.

1993 *Seams*, documentary, 16mm, color, 29 min.

1992 *O Preso*, fiction, video, color, 19 min.

EXCERPT FROM MADAME SATÃ

"There lived, in China a cruel and brutal shark. All that it bit would turn into dust. To placate the shark, the Chinese sacrificed everyday seven wild pussycats, that it ate before sunset. To end this cruelty came Jamacy, goddess of the Tijuca forest. She ran through the woods and flew over the hills. One day Jamacy turned into a golden puma, salty? and magical. She fought the shark for one thousand and one nights. After the fierce battle, the glorious Jamacy and the furious shark were so sore that we couldn't tell one from the other. And in the end they became one and the same creature: The Divine Negress of Bulacoché."

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

"Madame Satã remains an unexplored myth of Brazilian culture, a marvelous hybrid of Josephine Baker, Jean Genet and some Robin Hood of the tropics. With the film, I have tried to portray an explosive and complex character; a human being at once passionate, feverish, and driven by a domineering passion for life.

"Through a swift and emotionally dense plot, I have exposed the daily life of João Francisco and his family, dwellers of a boarding house in the "Republic of Lapa." These characters lived in the early 1930s, in a world apart, inhabited by outcasts, with its own laws, codes and rituals, a world in which João Francisco was once king and queen, saint and Satan.

"One of my goals was to construct, with cinematic intimacy, the portrait of a man possessed with the enthusiasm and the pain of being an outlaw in Brazil at the beginning of the 20th century.

"My approach was neither epic nor biographic. I wanted to create different imaginary stories of the different characters created and impersonated by João Francisco and those who lived close to him in a pivotal moment of his life. The film was shot entirely on location, in the district of Lapa and vicinity, in Rio de Janeiro. As the action takes place in the early 1930s, the costumes and production design reflect that time. Despite the faithfulness of the setting my goal was to convey a visual suggestion of an emotional universe. One of my intentions was to capture on celluloid the heat, the sweat, the brilliance and the smells; impressions basic to a portrayal of Rio de Janeiro at the beginning of the 20th century.

"Lavishness, poverty, violence, playfulness, and tragedy go together in Madame Satã, like the many elements seen through the lens of a kaleidoscope. João Francisco's ability to transmute the most adverse events of his life into singular moments of pleasure - a typically Brazilian strategy of political and cultural resistance - is the hallmark of the film. "

- Karim Ainouz, Rio de Janeiro, July 2002

CAST AND CREW

Lázaro Ramos - Madame Satã

Born in Salvador, Bahia, in 1978, Lázaro Ramos took courses in acting, dancing and singing, and for 9 years has been a member of the Olodum Theater Group (Bando de Teatro Olodum), directed by Marcio Meirelles, and comprised of black actors. Since 1994 he has acted in over 14 plays, including João Falcão's big hit *A Máquina*, which led to his move to Rio. He was also in the cast of *Mamãe Não Quer Que Eu Saiba*, again with director João Falcão. He has also made various films including Aluizio Abranches' *As Três Marias*, José Henrique Fonseca's *O Homem do Ano*, Jorge Furtado's *O Homem que Copiava*, and Hector Babenco's *Carandiru*, the last three currently in post-production. *Madame Satã* is his first leading role in a film.

Marcélia Cartaxo - Laurita

Born in the State of Paraíba, Marcélia Cartaxo won the 1986 Berlin Festival "Silver Bear" award as best actress for her first feature film, Suzana Amaral's *Hour of the Star*. After her unforgettable performance as Macabea, the vulnerable and unprotected migrant from Northeast Brazil (a character created by Brazilian author Clarice Lispector), she continued her career in film and theater. Sixteen years after being acclaimed in Brazil and abroad, Marcélia has acted in a number of films, including *For All, o Trampolim da Vitória* (1998), *Dezesseis Zero Sessenta* (1995) and *Brasa Adormecida* (1987).

Flavio Bauraqui - Taboo

Born in Santa Maria, Rio Grande do Sul, Flávio Bauraqui acted in plays in his native town and in Porto Alegre. He came to Rio in 1993 and, since then, appeared in almost 30 plays, with directors André Paes Leme, Jorge Fernando, Luiz Artur Nunes, amongst others. He also has experience in musicals, having played a part in *Crioula*, about the life of singer Elza Soares, *Capital Federal*, and Jorge Fernando's *Cabaret Betty Boop*. He was praised by his role as singer Jair Rodrigues in *Elis*, *Estrela do Brasil*. In spite of dedicating himself to musicals, Flávio Bauraqui considers himself a self-taught actor, as he never had acting, dancing or singing lessons.

Felippe Marques - Renatinho

Felippe Marques started doing children's theatre at age 16. Studied with Sura Berditchevsky and went to Tablado Theater School. Among the plays he appeared in are *Minha Amada Imortal*, *Lancelot*, and Tim Rescala's musical *Doidas Folias*, which represented Brazil in the Lyon Festival. He studied in the Actors Esper Studio, in New York. He had a part in the soap opera *Era uma Vez*, and in an episode of the TV series *Confissões de Adolescente*. *Madame Satã* is his film debut.

Renata Sorrah - Vitória dos Anjos

Over a career of 34 years, Renata Sorrah has appeared in some 25 plays and 18 television serials. She received a number of prizes, amongst them two Molière awards (Os Veranistas and Afinal uma Mulher de Negócios), four Mambembe awards (for those two plays, for Mary Stuart and as a producer of O Grande e o Pequeno), and also the first Sated (Actors' Union) award for Shirley Valentine. Celebrated as one of Brazil's most talented actresses, her debut in cinema was in 1968, co-starring with Caetano Veloso in Haroldo Marinho Barbosa's short film Don Quixote. In the following year, she had the main role in Julio Bressane's classic underground film Matou a Família e Foi ao Cinema. She also appeared in Avaeté, a Semente da Violência, (Zelito Viana, 1985), in two of Julio Bressane's films, and in one episode of Lua de Mel e Amendoim. Madame Satã brings her back to the screen and a new challenge: as Vitória dos Anjos, she agreed to sing for the first time.

Luiz Henrique Nogueira - Casting Director

With a 12-year career in acting in the groups of Antonio Abujamra, Marco Alvisi and Moacyr Góes, Luiz Henrique Nogueira took over the job of cast director in Madame Satã by chance. He was in the cast of Chekhov's Three Sisters, directed by Bia Lessa, when executive producer, Isabel Diegues, asked him to go for an interview with Karim Aïnouz, who was looking for a casting director. He became the first person to join the film's production team on October 1st, 2000.

According to Luiz Henrique, 25 actresses were tested for the role of Laurita, Marcélia being the first one. For the role of Taboo, over 30 tests were held, with Flávio Bauraqui the last. Over 200 actors were auditioned over more than a year for the part of João Francisco. Finally, Lázaro Ramos was selected three weeks prior to the start of the shoot.

Luiz Henrique calls the preparation of the cast "violent". "It was ten hours a day for ten weeks. As a stage actor, I could not understand, because rehearsals for a play take so long, whereas for movies rehearsals are faster, almost like TV. We had detailed rehearsals, every idea was discussed, thought over, questioned."

Preparation included individual meetings - in which each actor received a reference list - books, pictures, films - and then there was group work and some experiments actually living the situations of the characters. For instance, he says, "Flávio Bauraqui went out dressed as a woman, Marcélia Cartaxo as a hooker, and Lázaro Ramos slept a few nights in a boarding house in Lapa, daily rate of \$5, breakfast included." In addition, they took swimming and capoeira classes, and exercised with personal trainer, Daniela Visco.

Luiz Henrique also relates how Lázaro Ramos would run for some 10 minutes and go straight to the set, where the camera was already shooting. "By polishing the acting details, the production achieved not only the desired

artistic result, but even some savings: we were supposed to shoot in eight weeks, but it took six and a half."

Walter Carvalho - Director of Photography

A native from the State of Paraíba, he is one of the best known and honored professionals in his field in Brazil. In a career lasting more than 25 years, he has worked on many films both documentary and fiction: *Que Bom Te Ver Viva* (Lúcia Murat), *Terra para Rose* (Tetê Moraes), *Conterrâneos Velhos de Guerra* (Wladimir Carvalho). As one of the most active professionals in the field, he has developed a solid partnership with Walter Salles, for whom he filmed *Foreign Land* (Terra Estrangeira,) *Central Station* ("Central do Brasil"), *Midnight* (O Primeiro Dia), *Behind the Sun* (Abril Despedaçado). He has also worked on other films, including *Pequeno Dicionário Amoroso* and *Amores Possíveis* (Sandra Werneck), *Villa-Lobos, Uma Vida de Paixão* (Zelito Viana), *Lavoura Arcaica* (Luiz Fernando Carvalho), and also *Estação Carandiru* (Hector Babenco), currently in post-production. He co-directed with João Jardim the documentary *Janela da Alma*.

A statement by Walter Carvalho:

"The narrative of *Madame Satã* is not from the point of view of the history of the character, but rather from an unspecified or unconventional point of view. Cinegraphy, i.e. the scenic image - is conceived in such a way, that it is as if the camera goes where the spectator's imagination can't go. And the camera tries to become invisible at the exact moment it could become a character. I would say the camera went closer to the characters, somewhat duplicating the encounter between Renatinho and João Francisco - through a simultaneous process of rejection and attraction.

"*Madame Satã* is not a "period" film, but it is about a moment in history. Therefore, I did not try to create a historic background, but to represent history through visual sensations. Theoretically, the objects like the walls, would have the same narrative importance as the characters. It is like the characters came out of the moisture, the mildew, the mold of those environments.

"Our lighting focused not on the main objects, but on the secondary ones. The relation between figure and background should establish a photographic narrative. At times, the black of a non-lighted area would mix with João Francisco's skin color.

"The film's visual-chromatic process comes from a special development done in the lab, with no electronic intervention. I believe film photography should keep its mystery, to prolong a sense of uneasiness in the spectator."

Marcos Pedroso - Production Designer

Born in São Paulo, his background is in the Visual Arts. As production designer for the theater, he has worked with a number of directors, including José Celso Martinez Correa (As Bacantes), Renato Borghi (Tio Vânia), Cibeles Forjaz (Woyzeck). He is a member of the theater group Teatro da Vertigem, having done Paraíso Perdido, Livro de Jó, Apocalypse.

His cinema debut as production designer was in Laís Bodansky's Brainstorm (Bicho de Sete Cabeças). Madame Satã is his second feature film.

A statement by Marcos Pedroso:

"My starting point was to understand what Karim wanted to convey. Once the approach was established, we spent months creating maps of the physical geography of the scenes, summarizing each sequence through boards with colors, textures, materials. We designed each one of the 75 sequences of the film with a chromatic arch for the dramatic development of the characters. We spent quite some time studying how Rio de Janeiro was in the 30s - a metropolis connected to the world. The Panama Canal didn't exist then. Lapa was just by the port, facing the world, and we tried to incorporate this cosmopolitan atmosphere in the scenes. Our intention was not to make a stereotype of Lapa or Satã, but to focus on regional and international features of the city at that time - and Satã and his cohorts were quite modern. It is not hard to do a historical film using references, we did a lot of research, had lectures from historians. We sought a visual conception that could translate the ethnical and social polyphony of the characters. And because they were poor people, we looked at the details of the pictures we studied in our research. I would say that in this film, the details were more important than the whole. The idea was to be surgical, accurate, focus on the small objects. One of the aspects of the film is the physical closeness of the actors. Karim would say that the film should convey warmth, smell. The camera is very close to the bodies, the clothes; and skin is very significant to the chromatic texture of the film, which was very carefully treated by the process used in developing."

Isabel Diegues - Producer and Executive Producer

Daughter of film-maker Carlos Diegues, Isabel Diegues has followed a number of diverse paths: in 1987, she began as assistant editor and assistant sound editor; she was the Brazilian casting director (non professionals) of Hector Babenco's At Play in the Fields of the Lord; she has also worked in publicity. She spent two years in New York studying cinema, where she met director Karim Aïnouz. Back in Brazil in 1993, she was assistant director for Veja Esta Canção, and also wrote the script for the episode À Sombra does Grande Amor. She directed the short film Vila Isabel, which won the Best Director award in Miami and Biarritz. In 1998, after opening Sambascope Productions, she began

to develop the Madame Satã project. Three months later, Walter Salles became associated with the project.

Isabel Diegues defines Madame Satã as a puzzle in reconciling opposites.

A statement by Isabel Diegues:

"Karim wanted to shoot on location, to get as realistic a result as possible. He also wanted an intimate film, and to work with a small and close team. As the film takes place in the 30s, and there is very little left of that time in the city, we had to recreate the settings in mini-studios, which theoretically would require a larger crew. Also, 80% of the sequences took place at night, which would require also a larger lighting crew. I mean, this is a historical film, with a number of night shots, with over 30 characters, and this is unusual for a small film. And Karim wanted to rehearse a lot on the set, so that their lines could be said as if they were improvising. He also wanted space so that the camera, ordinarily in his hand, could rotate 360 degrees, and move sideways, free, with no visual interference. And he wanted locations that seemed real, not fake. All these requirements demanded careful design, difficult to put together, because Madame Satã required the care and perfection of a major production, but it was done in an intimate way, with a small, quiet and close crew, not to mention the lean budget we had.

"Fortunately things worked out very well. The small team was handpicked, and the feeling of being part of a family was contagious - people became very close. On the last day, everybody cried. They were all really dedicated and involved. We were really lucky with this certainly unforgettable process."

Walter Salles - Producer

Walter Salles' work, both as a documentary and fiction filmmaker centers around the theme of exile and the search for identity. His first feature film "Foreign Land," shot in 1995 and co-directed by Daniela Thomas, holds a crucial place in the renaissance of Brazilian cinema. The film won seven international prizes and has been selected by over thirty film festivals. It was named Best Film of the Year in Brazil in 1996, where it played theatrically for over six months. It was shown to great acclaim in the U.S. in 1997.

His documentaries, including "Life Somewhere Else" ("Socorro Nobre") and "Krajcberg, the Poet of the Remains," among others, have won awards in many international festivals, including the Fipa D'Or at the Festival International des Programmes Audio-Visuels, and the Best Documentary and the Public's Prize at the Festival dei Popoli in Italy.

Since completing "Central Station," which will have its world premiere at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival prior to its showing in competition at Berlin, Salles also directed "Minuit" (together with Daniela Thomas), a short film for the series "2000 Seen By. . ." for the French television station Arte.

A statement by Walter Salles:

"I read the script of Madame Satã four years ago, when it was sent to the Sundance Institute and the NHK award. At that time, I did not know Karim Aïnouz. I was impressed by how visceral and vertical the text was. It did not just portray a time in history, but actually the inner geography of the characters. There wasn't a bit of sentimentalism or academicism in the development of the plot. It was a dry, well-designed drama, pitilessly developed, but with affection.

"Some months later, by coincidence, I had the chance to watch some short films Karim had directed, when they were shown at the Rotterdam Festival. I was fascinated with the poetic quality and the power of what I saw on the screen. There was no question: in addition to being a fine screenwriter, Karim proved to be a talented director, with an extremely original voice.

"We finally met each other, became friends, and Videofilmes had the opportunity of helping the production of the film. Watching Madame Satã, I feel Karim went beyond what we could expect - he realized on paper a story of rare density, developed a original narrative form to tell it, and directed talented artists in a masterly way. I think Karim brings a viewpoint that will really enrich Brazilian cinema."