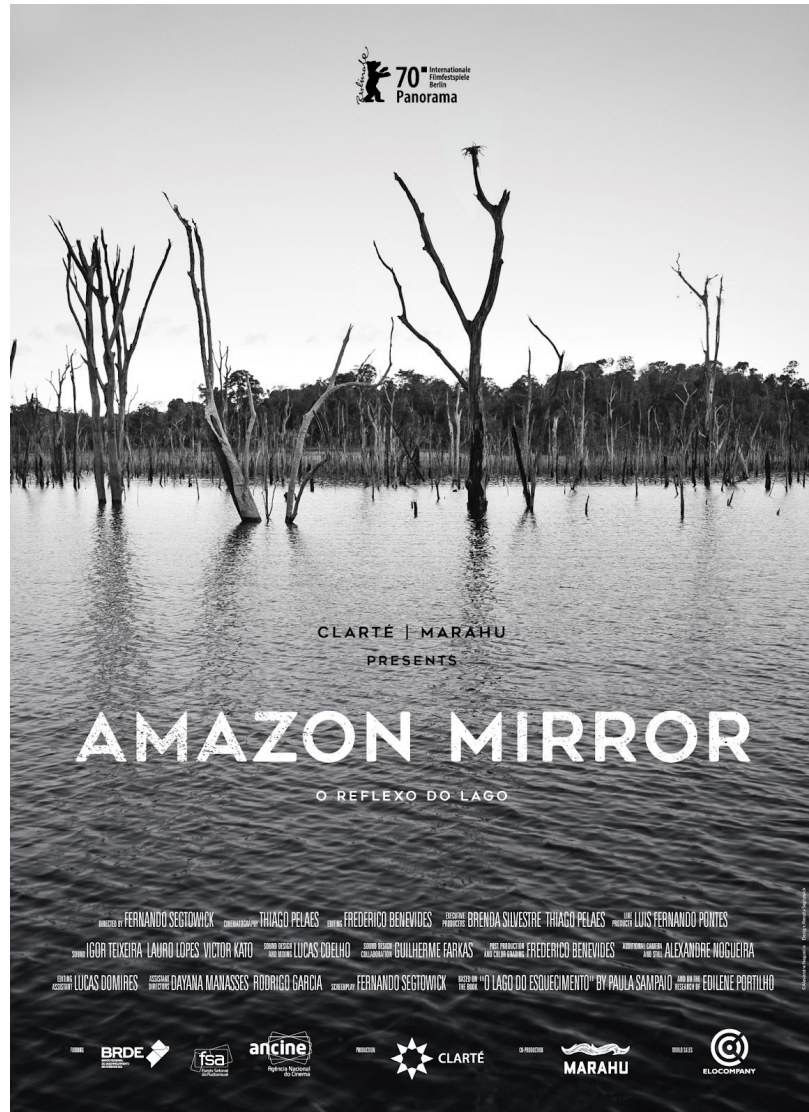


CLARTÉ | MARAHU PRESENTS:



AMAZON MIRROR

Original title: O Reflexo do Lago

A documentary by **Fernando Segtowitz**

Brazil, 2020, 70'

PRESS NOTES

Berlinale 2020

Panorama

****world premiere****

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SCREENING DATES BERLINALE

Monday	24 February 2020	17:00	Kino International (world premiere)
Tuesday	25 February 2020	11:30	CinemaxX 6
Wednesday	26 February 2020	13:15	Cubix 7
Thursday	27 February 2020	20:30	Cubix 5
Sunday	1 March 2020	13:15	Cubix 7



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SHORT SYNOPSIS

In the 1980s, the largest hydroelectric dam in the Amazon forest was built in the city of Tucuruí in order to supply power to the aluminum industry. Forty years later, the people living in the archipelago of the Caraipé River, within the plant's reservoir, still have no access to electricity in their homes. A filmmaker and his crew arrive at the scene to shoot the outcomes of men's quest for development reflected on a community living with traces of deforestation all around them.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Following two decades of acclaimed shorts, Brazilian director Fernando Segtowick makes his feature-length debut with *O Reflexo do Lago* ('Amazon Mirror'), a stunning, black and white documentary concerning the environmental and social impact of deforestation in Brazil.

Segtowick's contemplative film delves the societal impact of major industry, presenting a gentle observation of the lives of the residents of Tucuruí, a beautiful region alongside the Amazon that has nonetheless been severely impacted by the building of a hydroelectric dam. In the dark waters, the remains of dead trees serve as a bleak reminder of whole ecosystems long since lost. And yet, the river still flows on, as workers and their families invite Segtowick into their livelihoods and homes with warmth and generosity.

Failed repeatedly by local governments and the supposed guaranteed benefits of economic progress that arrive with industry, those living alongside the Caraipé River maintain a quiet dignity and optimism, as well as a warm bond across generations. As the older residents reflect on the course of their lives, their children remain cautiously optimistic about the future. Meanwhile, the very youngest generation still find freedom and excitement in a scorched environment.

Wary of inviting a problematic western gaze, Segtowick subtly de-exoticizes and demystifies Tucuruí's breathtaking landscape with his dramatic monochrome photography, without once sacrificing its power. Often appearing on-camera himself, Segtowick respectfully observes intimate moments amongst the community. Despite the enormous toll on their daily lives, he witnesses the joy as they pray, love, sing and prosper, shooting with a natural style that seamlessly blends both land and water, nature and humanity, the personal and the political.

O Reflexo do Lago is a patient testimony to resistance, as well as a striking document of an environment in crisis.

CREDITS

DIRECTOR	Fernando Segtowick
PRODUCER	Thiago Pelaes for Marahu Filmes
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS	Thiago Pelaes and Brenda Silvestre
PRODUCTION MANAGER	Fernando Pontes
SCREENPLAY	Fernando Segtowick
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY	Thiago Pelaes
ASSISTANTS DIRECTOR	Rodrigo Garcia and Dayana Manasses
EDITING	Frederico Benevides
SOUND	Victor Kato Igor Amaral Lauro Lopes
SOUND DESIGN AND MIXING	Lucas Coelho
SOUND DESIGN COLLABORATION	Guilherme Farkas



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I have always been passionate about cinema and television. Since adolescence, however, something that has always caught my attention in Brazilian films, and especially in North American films, was how the Amazon was portrayed.

I was born and grew up in this place, when I was little, I heard my grandfather narrate Amazon mythologies and I heard my father tell stories about people from the interior of the state of Pará. The representations of the Amazon did not awaken the feeling of identification in me and I did not see myself in those films.

Years later, in my first short film and also in series that I developed, I saw that population of the Amazon, strong men and women, who despite the adversities and lack of access to basic rights, welcomed me and the film crew in a welcoming way with a smile on his face.

It took some time, working as a journalist and documentary filmmaker, to realize that the fate of those people was often being decided in distant places, in rooms of government officials or businessmen. And that they were the ones who would suffer the consequences of the decisions taken by others, whether in Brazil or worldwide.

In 2015, when I read "O Lago do Esquecimento", a book by photographer Paula Sampaio, which portrayed - in black and white photographs - the dead trees in the Tucuruí Hydroelectric Lake and narrated stories of residents of the region, I realized the potential of work on becoming a documentary, a narrative about the Amazon and its inhabitants unlike anything I have seen over the years. There I started to do *O Reflexo do Lago*.

I was raised in a family of engineers and, for four years, I studied electrical engineering, making a technical visit to Tucuruí once. As the film developed and I understood my relationship with the project, I realized that I needed to participate as a character too. My personal journey as a former engineering student and current filmmaker who returns to this region and its residents would directly affect the documentary.

So, since 2016, I made regular trips to the hydroelectric lake region, getting to know residents, their stories and living conditions. In parallel to this, the project obtained, through public policies for the decentralization of audiovisual productions, funding for research and development of the film, and later, for production.

At the same time that I had an extremely strong theme at hand, for being my first feature film, I also wanted the film to have an impactful visual proposal, all in black and white. So, my challenge was to reconcile the environmental theme already so explored with a contemporary cinematographic proposal.

O Reflexo do Lago is an invitation to the spectator to join this film crew, who arrives to shoot a documentary about the inhabitants of the Caraipé River, amid the dead trees of the lake formed by the Tucuruí hydroelectric plant.

An invitation for the audience to see the destruction of the forest and the death of animals, but also for them to be able to travel on Seu Manduca's boat and see that people also dance, pray, smile, in short... they live.

They resist, despite the power of economic cycles and the rulers that continue to haunt them, in a story that is the history of the Amazon itself.

- Fernando Segtowitz, January 2020



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PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

O Reflexo do Lago is my first feature film in five years as a producer. The project interested me not only because it was an urgent documentary, but also because of the partnership developed with the director, Fernando Segtowick, my partner at Marahu Filmes.

We met eight years ago, when I was still working only as a photographer. At the time, Fernando used his vacation as a journalist to produce his short films, it was the only time available to exercise the office of director. His determination has always been a source of admiration for me.

One day, he invited me to be on his next project: a short film "No Movimento da Fé", about one of the largest religious manifestations in the world that takes place in the city of Belém. After participating in a film festival and reading the positive reviews on a beach in northeastern Brazil, we decided it was time to have stories from the Amazon told by people who live here: us.

Marahu came up with the proposal to be a production company located in an Amazonian metropolis and to bring important issues of that region to the camera. Since 2015, we produced short films and television series about quilombola (slave descendants) populations, young people from the Amazon peripheries, about gastronomy, music and photography. The challenge was, and remains, to make these local stories into universal narratives.

O Reflexo do Lago reflects the socio-political system of several underdeveloped countries, in which governmental works of all kinds, in the name of progress, leave their own inhabitants out of benefits of development. In addition, the director's experience in filming populations in the Amazon made this an interesting challenge for a feature documentary film.

In 2015, much was said about the Belo Monte hydroelectric plant construction on the city of Altamira, Pará. There were several news articles in the national and international media,, but it was for us a repeated story.

Tucuruí and its consequences were already forgotten and it was time to deal with this matter again. Inspired by Paula Sampaio's photo book, "O Lago do Esquecimento", and Edilene Portilho's research on the region, we decided to tell this story in a contemporary language, with the dramas of real characters and with an impact that only aesthetics, cinema art and technique are capable of generating.

Over the four years of development and production, we made five trips of seven to ten days to the lake of the hydroelectric plant, with a team of a maximum of six people. Filming in the Amazon is more complex than it seems, the distances are long and much of the way is done by boat. This is something that is reflected in the film by the trips we take with Seu Manduca. The reduced team was a strategy for the displacement, but also to facilitate the approach with the people of the community, since even the production base was the home of one of the residents.

The intimacy that the team established with that location and those people, especially director Fernando Segtowick, is one of the strengths of the film.

O Reflexo do Lago is a journey of discovery.

No matter how long those people live waiting for a development that never comes, they still live their lives and with that, transform ours.

- Thiago Pelaes, January 2020



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ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



FERNANDO SEGTOWICK

Fernando Segtowick was born in Belém, Brazil in 1971 and studied journalism at Universidade Federal do Pará. In 2015 he co-founded Marahu Films and produced and directed nationally awarded short films and television series focused on Amazonian themes. He attended Rotterdam Lab in 2019 with the feature project *Passagem Esperança*. *O Reflexo do Lago* ('Amazon Mirror') is his first feature-length film.

FILMOGRAPHY

2000 *Dias / Days* (short film)

2010 *Matinta / Matinta* (short film)

2013 *No Movimento da Fé - Moved by Faith*, co-directed by Thiago Pelaes (short film)

2015 *Diz Aí Amazônida / Tell Me About Amazonia* (tv series)

2017 *O Caminho das Pedras / The Stone Path*, co-directed by Alexandre Nogueira (short film)

2018 *Canção do Amor Perfeito / Perfect Love's Song*, co-directed by Alexandre Nogueira (short film)

2020 *Sabores da Floresta / Amazon Taste* (tv series)

2020 *O Reflexo do Lago / Amazon Mirror* (feature documentary)