

YOU CAN'T PROGRAM
WHAT YOU FEEL

DANIEL
BRÜHL

MARTA
ETURA

ALBERTO
AMMANN

CLAUDIA
VEGA

ANNE
CANOVAS

LLUIS
HOMAR

EVA



68
MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE
D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA
La Biennale di Venezia 2011
Out of Competition

SITGES 2011
FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL DE CINEMA DE SITGES

ESCAE PRESENTS AN ESCAPALO FILMS PRODUCTION IN COPRODUCTION WITH RAN ENTERTAINMENT WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF TELEVISIÓ ESPANOLA CANAL+ IN ASSOCIATED PRODUCTION WITH TELEVISIÓ DE CATALUNYA INSTITUTO BUÑUEL-IBERAUTOR
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DIRECTION KIKE MAILLO

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ESCÁNDALO FILMS
PRESENTS



MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE
D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA
la Biennale di Venezia 2011
Out of Competition



EVA

Directed by
KIKE MAÍLLO

2011 · SPAIN · 94 MIN · DCP · DOLBY 5.1 · COLOUR

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SYNOPSIS

Alex, a renowned cybernetic engineer, returns to Santa Irene to carry out a very specific mission for the Robotic Faculty: the creation of a child robot.

During the ten years he's been away, life has moved on for his brother David and for Lana who, after his departure, struggled to get her life back together.

Alex's routine is unexpectedly disrupted when he meets Eva - Lana and David's amazing daughter. She is a very special, charismatic little girl. She and Alex have a special connection from the first time they meet.

Together they set out on an extraordinary journey...

THE PROJECT

The seeds of this project were sown a long time ago, when I was ten or eleven. One afternoon, after seeing an episode of "Dr. Who" with loads of Daleks, I started making robots with stuff from around the house: cardboard boxes, pencils, toilet rolls, etc. This was long before deciding I wanted to make films, and studying at ESCAC (the Film and Audiovisual School in Catalonia).

When I graduated from ESCAC I was much more in love with stories than with machines, but I still dreamt of making a film connected to fantasy, to science fiction. I thought that maybe, with a lot of luck, my second or third film would be about robots. Then I found out that Sergi Casamitjana, the executive producer at Escándalo Films (the production company associate of ESCAC) was trying to push a science fiction project. And that's how it all began.

Martí Roca and I started writing what would become the basis of EVA. After several drafts we realised that, although the characters were interesting, we needed a consistent, dramatic nucleus, something both strong and universal. So we contacted Sergi Belbel, renowned Catalan playwright and current director of the National Catalan Theatre in Barcelona. From this solid base we worked with Aintza Serra to construct each scene of the final screenplay.

Kike Maíllo. Director

EVA is a science fiction project but one very far from the stereotypes of the genre. It is a dramatic adventure which poses a very contemporary debate - an appealing movie for a wide audience, inspired by the immortal classics of the fantastic film genre.

Its plot is simple, local yet universal, with believable characters and tangible drama in an idyllic setting, which will awaken the audience's imagination. EVA is a film about love and death.

EVA is the first international project from Escándalo Films focussed on a new goal: uniting the technical and artistic talents of new filmmakers, writers and actors to create a project of interest to the world market. The film has already been sold by Wild Bunch in Germany, Italy and Latin America, among others, and was acquired by the Weinstein Company for U.S and Canada.

Aintza Serra, Lita Roig & Sergi Casamitjana.
Executive Producers

THE PLOT

The science fiction genre normally formulates questions that propose new rules for the game - new worlds. These fantasy worlds, at times utopian, at others dystopian, usually encourage us to think. When I started to consider the idea of making a science fiction film with a robotic theme I came to the conclusion that what interested me most was the relationship between human beings and robots. Is it possible from us humans to feel so attracted, so close to machines - perfect and so very similar to us - that we establish emotional ties as strong as those we have with other humans? Will it be possible at some stage in the near or distant future for us to fall in love with, or love, a machine even though we know it is an 'emulator'? How will these new relationships affect old relationships with humans?

These questions gave birth to EVA. Alex wants to create a robot so sophisticated that it is capable of stealing somebody's heart.

A FANTASTIC WORLD

Directing a fantasy genre film implies the creation of a distant universe, different to the one we all know. So right from the start, we had to start imagining how we wanted EVA's world to be.

Personally, I was fed up with the apocalyptic visions of many futuristic worlds, which portray a dark, murky universe where violence reigns. From my point of view, it is more interesting to create an atmosphere that, without being perfect, suggests a correct coexistence between civilization and nature. This is why the forest, the mountains and the snow are so present in the film, creating a kind of ecofuturist universe.

Along with this idea of creating a slightly optimistic future, we also tried to conjure a universe in which Man has known how to keep or recover the good things from the past. Something similar to our homes, where it's easy to find tools, furniture or clothes from 15, 20 or 30 years ago. We weren't interested in creating a completely innovative or high-tech future: we wanted the audience to feel at home. So we tried to add the concept of retrofuturism to this universe of ecofuturism.

We believed that with these two concepts, we would also manage to bring the genre of science fiction to all those people who find it uncomfortable to imagine the future as somewhere totally different, a place too strange to identify with. In fact, EVA tries to create the opposite effect of what the genre does normally, by establishing a very familiar and recognisable base for the audience.

What would our lives be like with a robot wandering round the house?

With the intention of creating this familiar yet innovative universe, we have recovered the forms, lines and aesthetics of a past era: the 70s and early 80s. The film talks about Alex's return home and therefore about nostalgia. And for me, the most nostalgic era of my childhood coincides with the end of the 70s and beginning of the 80s. It was an era with a very attractive aesthetic, as well as a time of brilliant filmmaking, to which this movie is certainly indebted.

THE SETTING

EVA takes place amongst snow-clad mountains. One of the reasons we chose these landscapes is that snow is exotic for much of the Spanish audience. When we were preparing the film, which combines the cold side of science fiction with a powerful emotional charge, I thought that the tone should be intimate but the landscape could be set in a context which was not totally familiar.

We opted to shoot on snowy steppes, in snow-covered meadows and valleys like those one imagines in Canada or New England. Luckily we were able to find these kinds of landscapes very close to home, just under an hour's flight away, on the cold Swiss steppes. To be precise, we shot in Chaux-de-Fonds, in Switzerland, and in Panticosa, in the Spanish province of Huesca. These amazing places were perfect for what we were looking for.

The fact that the external setting was so cold obliged us to make the interiors very warm. The concept of home grows stronger the greater the contrast between interior and exterior temperatures. This is why I would define EVA as a film constructed from snow and wood.

The interiors of Alex's house and laboratory were built in a studio in Barcelona. And only the final scene was shot in a warm place: on the island of Tenerife.

THE CHARACTERS IN THE FILM

THE ROBOTS

The aforementioned landscapes are inhabited by numerous characters, who can be divided into two groups: humans and robots.

There are basically two kinds of robots in the film: functional and androids. The functional robots are there to help humans with time-consuming chores: cleaning, tidying, transport etc. They were designed as machines and their appearance is far removed from the human. The androids, on the other hand, look more or less entirely human (as is the case with the characters of Dorotea or Max) since they were created to act as companions. Human actors play the androids while the functional robots were essentially digital creations.

Apart from Max, who is played by the excellent Lluís Homar, the two most important robots in the film are the cat Gris and the SI-9 prototype. The cat is a mechanical construction, a combination of a puppet

operated by three manipulators and a digital creature. In the case of SI-9, on the other hand, we followed the design used to create C3PO in Star Wars. SI-9 was played by an actress inside a full-body, armour-plated suit, designed by Arturo Balseiro. Digital magic did the rest so that at no point does it appear that the armour is inhabited.

The realism of the robots in EVA is due to the techniques we used when shooting them: a lot of progress has been made in the field of digital effects and we are now at a point totally unimaginable 25 years ago, but during the shoot we felt it necessary to have the maximum number of physical elements possible in the scene. This is why both the cat and the prototype were constructed physically. It was absolutely necessary that the actors could handle them, and that they weighed something, to give their scenes a realistic feel.

As well as the robots, EVA is well populated with other futuristic machines; on the one hand, Alex is given the job of designing the processor (brain) of a robotic child. The engineer uses the Hand-up for this, a tool we created specifically for the film. This interface allows him to work while standing up with volumetric pieces of glass he can pick up, move and alter as regards size or shape. Each piece represents a character trait of the robot. This approach to the robot brain is based on phrenology, a pseudoscience which flourished in the 19th century and which was based on the idea that each part of the brain was connected to a character trait. We chose 24 regulators from these traits and converted them into pieces of glass that Alex would modulate to build the brain.

The rest of the machines in the film are basically screens and cars created as Motion Graphics, which we applied to screens, operative systems, automatic doors and navigators. These objects were designed by The Own and inspired by domestic appliances (fridges, record players, amplifiers) from the 60s and 70s.

THE HUMANS

It is difficult to imagine a better Spanish cast to play the roles in EVA. I feel very lucky. From the rehearsals I felt every minute I worked with Daniel, Marta, Alberto or Claudia that the film was growing and getting better. In a very intuitive way I tried to take them to where I felt the film was and they not only accompanied me but filled any gaps in the script.

Daniel Brühl plays the lead role, Alex Garel. Brühl is already a star. He knows Spain very well and speaks Catalan and Spanish fluently. He is above all a marvellous actor. It is very easy to work with him, as he is an actor with an excellent control of his body, his voice and his reactions. Very elegant and possessing a great mind, he is capable of staying in the same emotional space for a long time and knowing why he is there.

Marta Etura plays the role of Lana. Marta is an actress who is capable of getting into a scene in a snap of a finger. She masters moments of high drama and seemingly effortlessly controls the most emotionally charged scenes. Marta is possibly the protagonist of two of the three most beautiful scenes in the film, and it is without doubt to her that they owe their power.

The marvellous Alberto Ammann plays David. As with the rest of the cast, I find it impossible to think of any other actor who could have played this role. It was difficult for us to find an actor to make the character work. David had to be played by somebody attractive enough to make Lana fall in love with him (she decides to marry him even though she's been in love with his brother), but also an actor able to control his presence so as not to upstage Alex. Alberto knew exactly how to live with what his brother Brühl gave him. I think a real 'fraternal' chemistry developed between them, which greatly enriched the film.

Claudia Vega plays Eva. Finding her was a very tough job, since we were looking for a magnetic little girl capable of conveying great truth, and not necessarily somebody who had already worked in film or television. For six months we interviewed and auditioned more than 3,000 girls until we found Claudia. She did an amazing audition and there wasn't much discussion. You can spend months desperately looking for a diamond buried in sand but once you have the glittering stone, the whole process is worth it.

Claudia has something which is very difficult to find in a child actor: the ability to give weight to what she is saying and what she is doing. You believe her completely, however deep or serious what she is communicating. Children don't really have acting technique but tend to emulate, they tend to say things the way they have seen adults say them. Claudia goes beyond this: she has the ability to talk about sadness, nostalgia and happiness with real frankness and real understanding. Very few children have this skill.

She's a very extrovert little girl, extremely sociable but with something very deep. And I must thank Laura Jou for her work as coach, preparing Claudia for each scene in an extraordinary way.

After 10 years working in commercials, where I have shot with children many times, I have never come across a case like Claudia: everyone knows that there comes a stage when children get tired, cry, get angry or blocked. That's normal, they're children. But Claudia didn't cry even once, she never once lost her sense of humour during eleven long weeks of shooting, even when lying in the snow at minus 20 degrees.

THE SHOOT

We started shooting exteriors, and like good Mediterraneans we were frightened by the meteorological conditions. We felt panic at the thought of working in such adverse conditions. And I think that this fear of external factors made us work as a team and kept us together.

A good atmosphere on set in a film as physical as ours was vital. It is necessary that the crew believes in the project, that they really believe that the film they are working on is special. I feel very proud of what happened during the shoot and of the atmosphere during the preparation and filming of EVA.

THE CREW

The crew was very young, with an average age of about 25-30, and the majority come from ESCAC. We met there, we studied there, and when I made the jump to a feature film, I wanted to have these people close. One of the biggest complications when you're shooting with friends - almost family - is that when you get angry, you're getting angry with somebody you're probably going to see at the weekend. It's one of the special qualities of Escándalo Films productions; you're working with your brothers and sisters.

Directed by
KIKE MAÍLLO

Screenplay
SERGI BELBEL
CRISTINA CLEMENTE
MARTÍ ROCA
AINZA SERRA

Original Music
EVGUENI GALPERINE and
SACHA GALPERINE

DP
ARNAU VALLS COLOMER

Editor
ELENA RUIZ

Executive Producers
SERGI CASAMITJANA
AINZA SERRA
LITA ROIG

Sound Designer
ORIOI TARRAGÓ

Sound
JORDI ROSSINYOL

Visual Effects Supervisors
LLUÍS CASTELLS
JAVIER GARCÍA

Art Director
LAIA COLET

Line Producer
TONI CARRIZOSA

Casting
YOLANDA SERRANO and
EVA LEIRA

Make-up
CONCHA RODRÍGUEZ

Hair
JESÚS MARTOS

Costume
MARÍA GIL

CAST

CLAUDIA VEGA

EVA is Claudia's first film.

DANIEL BRÜHL

KING'S ROAD - Valdis Óskarsdóttir
INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS - Quentin Tarantino
TWO DAYS IN PARIS - Julie Delpy
THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM - Paul Greengrass
SALVADOR - Manuel Hueriga
GOODBYE LENIN! - Wolfgang Becker

MARTA ETURA

CELL 211 - Daniel Monzón
LAS 13 ROSAS - Emilio Martínez Lázaro
PARA QUE NO ME OLVIDES - Patricia Ferreira
YOUR NEXT LIFE - Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón
NOBODY'S LIFE - Eduard Cortés
NO SHAME - Joaquín Oristrell

ALBERTO AMMANN

LOPE - Andrucha Waddington
CELL 211 - Daniel Monzón

ANNE CANOVAS

LES LYONNAIS - Olivier Marchal
I FORGOT TO TELL YOU - Laurent Vinas Raymond
LE DIVORCE - James Ivory
PRÊT À PORTER - Robert Altman
VINCENT & THEO - Robert Altman

LLUÍS HOMAR

BROKEN EMBRACES - Pedro Almodóvar
COWARDS - José Corbacho and Juan Cruz
CHAOTIC ANA - Julio Medem
OBABA - Montxo Armendáriz
BAD EDUCATION - Pedro Almodóvar
LA CIUDAD DE LOS PRODIGIOS - Mario Camus
LA CELESTINA - Gerardo Vera
ADOSADOS - Mario Camus
EL PERQUÈ DE TOT PLEGAT - Ventura Pons

CLAUDIA VEGA - *Eva*

EVA is my first film. I play the daughter of David and Lana, a fun, extrovert and clever girl who is chosen by her uncle Alex as the model for his robot.

I'd never had anything to do with film before and in fact, it was a bit of a coincidence that got me into this project. I was at a summer camp and the head of it was a friend of the casting director and so one day they came and auditioned all the girls between 9 and 12 years old. I did 5 castings but I didn't know that I was going to be the lead in the film until the last one, when I started to think: "I'm not sure, but I think I'm going to be in this film, because so many call backs is a bit weird."

From then on, it was all a lot of fun. Especially the shoot, except for a very cold period we had. I was freezing, especially during the scenes where I had to lie down in the snow on the mountains. But in general I had a great time making EVA. I had a lot of fun with Kike and all the crew. I hope people have as much fun seeing the film as I had on set. They are definitely going to find EVA a very original, entertaining and emotional film... with robots!

DANIEL BRÜHL - *Alex Garel*

I play Alex Garel, an introverted guy but not a nerd. Our intention was not to recreate a scientific stereotype with glasses and paranoia. It's true that he's shy and spends a lot of his time studying and working, but on the other hand, he has a very special relationship with his brother. They have a lot of respect and affection for each other, precisely due to the qualities that each one lacks and sees in the other: Alex admires David's sense of humour and his ability to socialize, while David admires Alex's brain and talent.

Asides from the interest I felt in the role itself when I read the script, I was interested by a mixture of things. On the one hand, it was a genre film and I'd never done one before... also because I think it's the first robot film to be made in Spain. I felt that the aesthetic was going to be interesting. And furthermore, I felt it was a good thriller with traces of a love triangle, which gave it a classic drama tone.

For me, filming EVA was like filming my first big film and there's always a special energy when you're making your first big film. After the first stage of warming-up and getting to know all the crew and getting over nerves, I really enjoyed the whole process. It's been a pleasure to work with Kike Maillo: he's a very clever guy and very quick to find solutions to problems. He also allows you to experiment and to change scenes - not just a phrase here or there, but to create twists in scenes which we felt would make it better... and I like that.

I'm very happy to have taken part in EVA. This is my first genre film. The Spanish industry does these films very well, they are of an

incredible quality, like THE ORPHANAGE or PAN'S LABYRINTH which were both very successful.

MARTA ETURA - Lana

In EVA I play Lana, a clever, lively extrovert who is passionate about her work.

The origin of the conflicts in this film is to be found in the time when Lana, David and Alex were studying robotics at the University of Santa Irene. At that time we were asked to make a robot with a social function and decided to make a child, something you can teach, educate and love. We found this appealing but it also started to generate differences between us.

This love triangle is very interesting. When I received the project I found the idea of working with Daniel very attractive, as well as working with Alberto again. It was also a very daring project in the sense that it was different to everything else being done in Spain, because of its genre and because it allows a Spanish film to talk about robotics without any sense of 'inadequacy'.

The whole crew was just as dedicated as I was. Young crews possess something special - a great energy - and the crew on EVA was young and very motivated, happy... they created a very refreshing atmosphere. ESCAC graduates are very well trained, with good technical and practical knowledge and this gave me a lot of confidence. It has been a pleasure to work with Kike Mallo; he is a very open person, not just to what you might suggest as an actor, but to everything that happens on set.

ALBERTO AMMANN - David Garel

When I received the script of EVA, what attracted me most was the story and my role, since it coincided with a very special moment in my life. I was also very keen on working with Daniel Brühl and Marta Etura. As far as Kike Mallo was concerned, the first time we talked, we understood each other perfectly. All this meant that I could really enjoy this project. It wasn't a determining factor that this was the first Spanish robot movie; that was something that added to the whole project and which represented a challenge, but the whole crew was an even more important factor.

And that's what it was like during the shoot. The entire crew overflowed with love every day. I was only on set intermittently, but every time I came back I found an atmosphere that was relaxed, practical and fun. As well as being very healthy on a shoot, it demonstrates the great love that everyone had for what we were doing.

Observing this, I took it for granted that this was a crew with a wealth of professional experience and that they had worked together on numerous occasions, but I slowly found out that for many of them it was their first or second job. They had got to know each other and studied together at ESCAC and this showed: trust was an all-important working tool in EVA.

DIRECTOR'S BIO/ FILMOGRAPHY

Born 3rd June 1975, in Barcelona.

In 1994 Kike Maillo began his film studies at ESCAC (Catalonia Superior Film and Audiovisual School), where he graduated, having majored in direction, with the short film LAS CABRAS DE FREUD (FREUD'S GOATS) (1999), starring Tristán Ulloa.

In 2000 he began his professional career as a commercials director. So far he has directed more than 30 television campaigns for brands including Nestlé, Fotoprix, Telepizza, Cola Cao, Consum, Caixa de Pensions, F.C. Barcelona, Chips Ahoy, Euskaltel and Costa Blanca, as well as work for cultural institutions Curtficcions, Base Film Festival, Universitat de Barcelona, Filmoteca de Catalunya and Mercat de les Flors. Several short pieces have won prizes, such as the Premi Drac for Best Director. Maillo has also directed several music videos for artists including Pastora Soler, Raphael and Manos de Topo.

In 2003 he wrote and directed his second short, LOS PERROS DE PAVLOV (PAVLOV'S DOGS), a story told from five different points of view, with Andrés Gertrudix, Marta Larralde and Crispulo Cabezas. The film won a dozen awards at a variety of festivals, including Award for Best Spanish Short at MECAL 2004 and Award for Best Script and Special Jury Prize at the Munich Film Festival.

Since 2000 Kike Maillo has taught scriptwriting and film directing at ESCAC.

In 2009 he directed the very successful animation series ARRÒS COVAT (RICE PUDDING), based on an original idea by Juanjo Saez.

EVA is his first feature film.

ESCÁNDALO FILMS

ESCÁNDALO FILMS was founded in 1995. In 1999 the company signed a collaboration agreement with ESCAC. Its aim is to find and promote new talent in Spanish filmmaking.

In twelve years the company has produced almost 200 short films with more than 500 national and international awards between them (Sundance Film Festival, Student Academy Awards, Méliès d'Argent, Festival de Mar del Plata, SGAE Spanish Version Awards, etc...)

THE ÓPERA PRIMA PROJECT

OPERA PRIMA is a strategic project of Escándalo Films and ESCAC, set up to promote the introduction of new writing and technical talent to the world of cinematography. Three years on it is bearing its first fruit.

2007 **THE BEST OF ME** - Roser Aguilar
Critics' Award and Award for Best Actress - Locarno Film Festival

2008 **THREE DAYS WITH THE FAMILY** - Mar Coll
Best Director, Actor and Actress -
XII Festival of Malaga
Best Picture, Director and Actress - II Premis Gaudi
Goya for Best New Director, 2009

2009 **BLOG** - Elena Trapé
Special Mention - "Otra mirada". San Sebastián Film Festival
Zinemaldia (Sección Zabaltegi)

2010 **EVA** - Kike Maíllo

2011 **ANIMALS** - Marçal Forés (post-production)

