

# DAMNED SUMMER

## VERÃO DANADO

A FILM BY PEDRO CABELEIRA

---

Portugal | o.v. Portuguese | 128' | 2017

Idling afternoons, drugs, heartbreaks, psychedelic moods immersed in music. An adrenaline rush with Lisbon as the backdrop of a drifting youth.



WORLD PREMIERE  
70<sup>th</sup> Film Festival Locarno  
Cineasti del Presente

 Locarno Festival  
Official selection

## SYNOPSIS

The summer of Chico starts at home, with his grandparents, under the cover of the lemon trees. An outlet. The ground of his childhood memories. But now, he belongs to Lisbon, where he graduated and where his hope to find a career lies. Chico is part of a generation without prospects and expectations, where reaching adulthood seems to be perpetually delayed. The nights of Lisbon, intoxicated by its affections and heartbreaks, hold him into a psychedelic hedonism, where burning anguish fuels into euphoria.



## CAST & CREW

**CHICO** Pedro Marujo

**MARIA** Lia Carvalho

**TÂNIA** Ana Valentim

**TELMO** Daniel Viana

**NANDO** Sérgio Coragem

**QUARTAFEIRA** João Robalo

**HÉLDER** Luís Magalhães

**CATARINA** Maria Leite

**CARLOTA** Ana Tang

**MIGUEL** Rodrigo Perdigão

**GALÁXIA** Eugeniu Ilco

**CLARA** Cleo Tavares

**THIERRY** Isac Graça

**DIRECTOR** Pedro Cabeleira

**SCRIPT** Pedro Cabeleira

**PRODUCERS** Pedro Cabeleira, Marta Ribeiro & Abel Ribeiro Chaves

**CINEMATOGRAPHY** Leonor Teles

**EDITING** Rúben Gonçalves

**SOUND MIXING** Tiago Raposinho

**PRODUCTION** OPTEC FILMS

**ASSOCIATE PRODUCTION** VIDEOLOTION

**NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION** Filmin Portugal

**WORLD SALES** Slingshot Films

**SLINGSHOT FILMS**

## DIRECTOR

Pedro Cabeleira was born in 1992 in Portugal. He lived his childhood between football and other dreams and fantasies where his own imaginary heroes and eccentric characters coexisted. The emotional naivety didn't disappear; in an earlier stage he became more aware of the human being and its condition through fictional stories and the technical dimensions of cinema. The backstage of the movies that moved him emotionally and sensorially became, simultaneously, magnetic. During this period of discovery, Pedro had the chance of directing two-short films that pushed him, for the first time, into contact with filmic material. This experience helped him to experiment and gain new technical and communicational notions, gaining affection over the possibilities and prospects that come from the limitations of working with little resources. In 2010, he concedes a chance for art and imagination to regulate his path; he enrolls into ESTC, Lisbon's Theatre and Film School, where he graduated from in 2013, with a specialization in Film Direction. Throughout college, he has the chance to work in several projects, where he gains experience in teamwork and filmmaking techniques in different areas like editing, cinematography, directing and

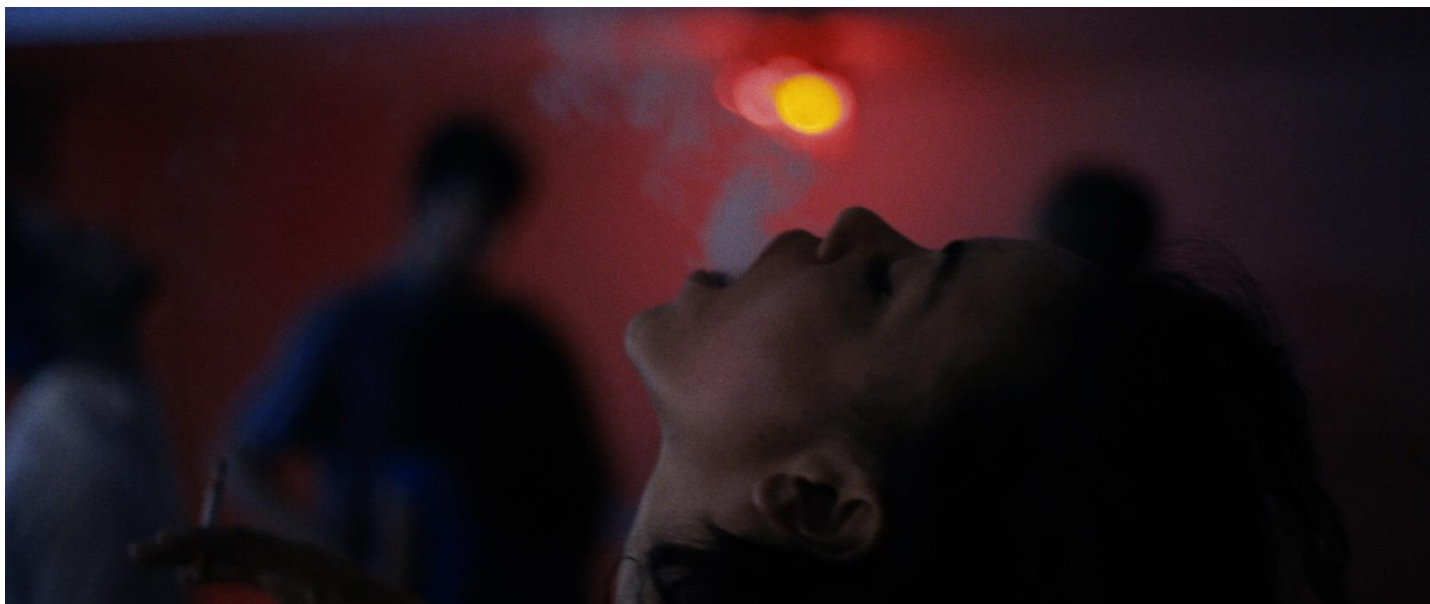
production. These processes became a stepping-stone for his fascination for Cinema and Filmmaking as art and technique. He goes through a learning process, by which he gains knowledge about the themes and methods of work that he wants to approach, what aesthetics are closer to him and how he should explore his own cinematic cosmos. While in college, he has the opportunity to know an emerging wave of young actors, filled with energy and talent, with whom he understands that his academic experience was, essentially, a field for shared experiences and for knowing people with the same interests, where new ideas, discourses and approaches boiled between this new wave of filmmakers. As his thesis, he directs the short-film *Estranhamento*, where he approaches strange ambiences with oneiric and hypnotic images. This movie was essential in the development of his skills as a filmmaker, in terms of leading the cast and crew and in the progression of his method as a



director. The project made part of the official selection of Fantasporto 2014. After these experiences, Pedro decides to begin the journey of *Verão Danado – Damned Summer* -, his first feature film and the biggest challenge in which he has endured so far as a film director. Simultaneously, Pedro creates *VIDEOLOTION*, with former colleagues of ESTC, a production company, based in Lisbon, in which he pretends to develop a structure capable of producing not only his own films, but also the projects of an emerging wave of artist and technicians. Currently, Pedro's developing his new feature film, *Entroncamento*, and starting the pre-production of a series of new films by several young directors.



## DIRECTOR'S NOTES



### A GENERATION OF EXPERIENCES

I was 21 and had just finished Film School when I set out to inhabit and truly live inside a film, in the company of people from my generation, which ended up becoming *Damned Summer*. Most people get used to routine. I got used to the absence of it. I adapted myself to randomness and suspension, a precarious and unstable way of life that very much characterizes today's young adulthood in my country, namely most of my friends and young people I was getting along with at the time. Maybe that became my routine. I still feel it in my bones. We were going through a lot of experiences and I grew increasingly clearer: we needed to encapsulate all of it, all this youthful energy paired with a reeling frustration. Amid anguish, anxiety and euphoria, the movie

started to take form in a very organic fashion. I wanted *Damned Summer* to be the closest possible to an idea of ensembled life. Jumping from one person to the other, and yet another, and then to a group, and then to another group. Letting people weave into each other and create webs and behave like agitated atoms, and have their knitted patterns challenged throughout the shifting contexts. I wanted the experience of watching this film to provoke a sort of an immersive adrenaline rush. Chico, the main character, is a 23-year-old hedonist, bohemian, welcoming young man, fresh out of school, a free spirit determined to live in the present, in the immediate. Through him I got to know his friends, how they interacted, what their passions were, where they'd

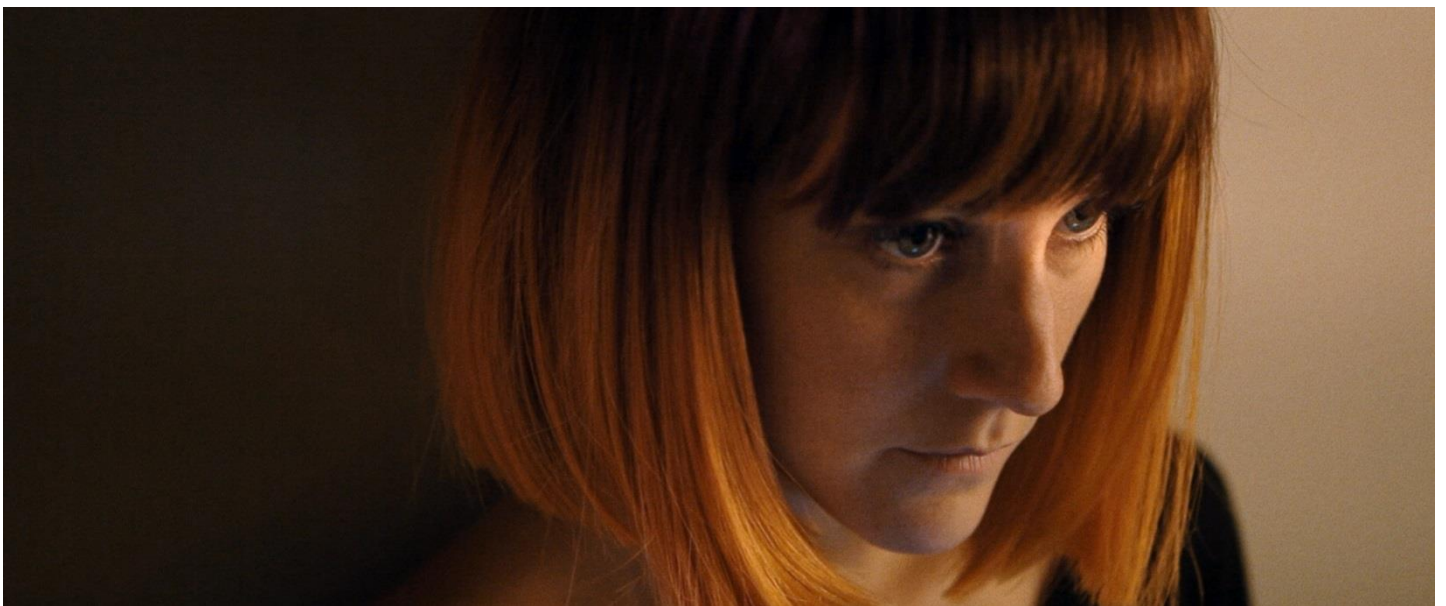
be during the summer, what moods would permeate their lives. After designing a core structure that would allow me to film chronologically and a setting up a skeleton for all the characters, I ventured into casting. While attending Lisbon Film and Theatre School, I met and lived with uncountable promising young actors and actresses. I decided to work with them through an unrestricted process, with each scene becoming enriched by thoughts, insights and ideas coming up at the moment of rehearsal or shooting, which could, and sometimes did, alter the course of the story and the path of the characters (that's one of the main reasons why I wanted to film chronologically). The movie had to be lived, not just acted. We explored all possibilities, from the

shots to the conversations to the gestures. We discovered distinct and unique personalities and during seven months this enormous group of people lived in the world of Damned Summer. The shoulder camera gave us the freedom to keep up with improvisation and unexpected reactions. Life pulsates, as the eye needs to get in sync with the energy of the characters and the specific vibration of each scene.

We danced along with the characters, in the same way that Chico jumps from heartbreak to heartbreak. Lisbon was the backdrop for these disquieted youth. The summer was the season through which they grew - although they refrain to mature, which is what I felt that was happening to my generation. Damned Summer is ultimately a film about youth. It doesn't have the ambition to represent a

universal youth or what's happening to all young people. But this was a project that born and was developed by young people, speaking to the world about their youth with no other voice but their own, in an honest and outright way. We've exposed the way we lived and the way we perceived the world, what fascinated and, at the same time, destroyed us.

## GENRE & MOOD



I wanted to explore characters that were under the effects of drugs in a realistic way but with respect, avoiding to diminish them or to create a portrait of decadence, opening, simultaneously, a space for comedy and drama. The result is, in a way, a hybrid film, that mixes ideas that come from genres like documentary, stoner and psychedelism. Stoner movies, for example, are heavily stylized. I

wanted to maintain some predictable gags and slapstick moments but never opening a chance to fall into the category of caricature. Over all these ideas, the priority was that the naturalism that I valued so much while I was working with the actors in the start of the process had to endure and stick close to all the moments of the film. In terms of psychedelism, I wanted to be both inside and

outside of the characters at the same time and include in each shot a free subjective force - music, lights and fluctuations had to give a first degree experience to the spectators, putting them in contact with what they were seeing like if they were actually living those moments, perceiving all those characters, their movements, impulses and actions as if they were real. The narrative

branched into a coral film, in which we jump from character to character, in which their number

seems infinite, in which each one has its own voice, even if they

seem irrelevant to the main plot - an almost pynchonian option.

## A RELENTLESS ACTOR



Pedro Marujo was a real finding. He had just enrolled in the course of actors in ESTC, Lisbon's Theatre and Film School, without any experience, when I invited him into this challenge, into the agreement of taking a kind of double-life divided between his own and Chico's, and that would last the course of a year. This symbiosis carried the film on its back. Simple gestures and expressions from Marujo gave body to the mystery that involved the character and, by intuition, gave flux to its emotional drama. Marujo's authenticity brought ambiguity to Chico - we feel something's up with him but, at the same time, we are forced to question ourselves continually without being give the possibility to uncover a definite answer. With

him, everything's more about sight, feelings and expressions than words. His face says it all. Marujo never saw any money while we were developing Chico's universe and psychology. Even so, he was always by my side and never gave up. I edited the film respecting the chronological order of the shooting and I tried to connect Pedro's progression as an actor, during this year, to Chico's progression as a character. At the start, Pedro was a naiver person and actor, discovering cinema and ideas of representation; and, by then, Chico was also a more cheerful and warm-hearted character, open to every possibility. As the film progressed, and Pedro was getting to know Chico's world more deeply, he felt the weight and the responsibility

about the theme and the journey that we were tracing, in a parallel to a least dazzled, but still incessant, Chico. All this until he goes down into the ultimate after party, where he meets Tânia. During all the shooting process of this scene, which took four days, Pedro didn't get out of character for a second, getting closer and closer to the abyss that was reserved for Chico. The vitality of the film - without taking into account the great talent and incredible commitment of the other actors - drank a lot from his versatility and evolution as an actor and as a person, in terms of his capacity to give life and body to such dissimilar and strong traces present in Chico, from moments of utter ecstasy to absolute despair.

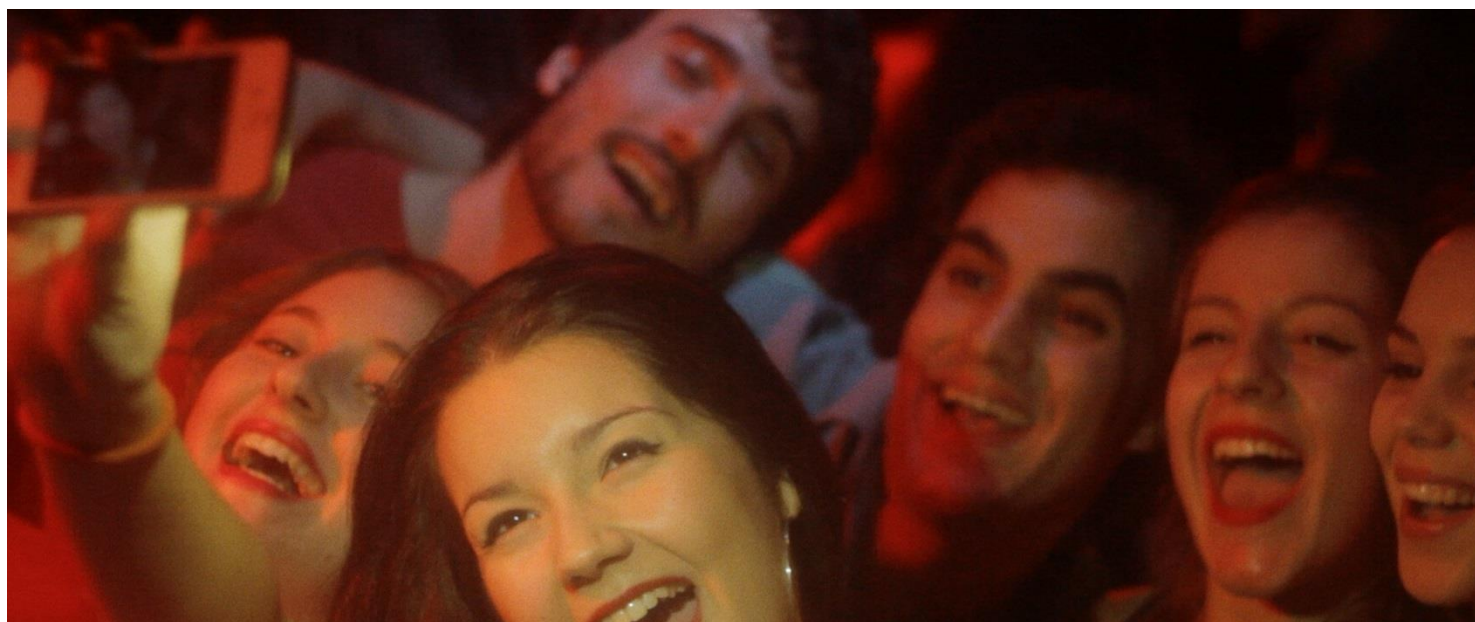


## THE PRODUCTION

The film was never written thinking about the editing process nor the final object. My mind was fully focused on the shooting, of what would happen and needed to happen in front of the camera. I knew I would be exposed to frailties and problems. There was only money for the simpler and most essential things, like food and transportation of crew and material. Several friends and acquaintances supported me, and the project, borrowing equipment and opening up the doors of their own homes for the shooting. The team, composed by people who were fighting for their life's, had their own jobs or were still in school, had to change constantly during the forty-three days of shooting, that happened during seven months. The editing process lasted more than four hundred days. I gathered with the

actors in coffee shops, days after days, during mornings, afternoons and into the night, to prepare the roles of an endless cast - more than hundred and fifty actors, in total. The general energy was close to burning out several times. But with each new sequence that we had to shoot, constantly bringing new blood into the project, made us push even harder, revitalizing the energy of the film over and over again. The final scene was shot during four days in an emblematic disco, Jamaica; in Cais do Sodré, which counted with a total of a hundred and thirty actors. Each one of them gave themselves completely, embodying their characters in its fullness, never losing focus. It's still crazy to think that I was twenty one years old when I started shooting the movie, and that the majority of the cast and crew was even

younger. Damned Summer is a film about young people. Because of all these factors, the shooting never ignored their lived life, their own realities, happening in parallel to the movie. Many episodes that really did happen between those months of May to November of 2014 influenced and entered the narrative itself - whether by content or production. The truth is that many scenes had loose ends and, during the process, we were able to start to tie them together, finding the precise places where to knot them. Everyone was involved in this very authentic and organic creative process and, because of this, we could find a common voice and will for this large group of people. A joint scream of liberation and release.



## ACTOR'S NOTE by Pedro Marujo



To talk about *Verão Danado*; there are many things that I can say about the way this movie was made. I don't even know where I should start. This experience was a film inside the film itself; it's like each scene was a short-film in itself. This could happen; definitely... each scene could be a film, a series, with episodes of immeasurable duration. Some would be ten minutes long; others could take forty or so. This doesn't mean that the movie would lose its intensity or rhythm. On the contrary; the suspense and the mystery mixed the history of those kids that like to get together, to go out, to live socially and suddenly... everything's connected. Everything makes sense; I mean; this film makes all sense. I don't refer to any specific sense, but to an idea of identification. I'm sure that everyone will connect to

several moments of the film; people will be happy, people will laugh and jump from their seats. And all this will happen for a simple reason: That also happened to me, when Pedro approached me, and I'm sure that more people will identify their own life's and experiences in the moments of the film. Suddenly, all the weight that movies induce on people will fade, the idea of an obligation to try to find meanings. This is what interests me in this *Damned Summer*. How this film represents everyday actions. It seems that reality is impregnated in it, that there are no boundaries in this representation, there's no way to find a separation between character and actor. A master, I'd say, was finding a way to fight that separation. He was able to question, in my opinion, that frontier between fiction and

reality. Looking back, I find so easy to say that I'm sure of that. I didn't think two times about all of this, everything was so swift and fast. In the beginning I was scared, it was my first experience in cinema and I knew, from the start, that I'd work with many actors I hadn't work with beforehand, that I didn't even know that existed. But obviously, I accepted. The adventure started in February of 2014. That's when the rehearsals started, I met a lot of different people, and by then I was already ecstatic. It wasn't simply by the idea of being part of a movie and everything that that could bring me in professional terms. Things developed and that lost importance, the only focus was to forget that I was being part of a movie. I felt that everything I was doing should be done in the most natural terms, and how I could achieve that. How could I be



natural? I asked myself that question over and over again, like there was a solution, a formulae to be real. I watched the scenes that were already shot, thought about them, watched myself, trying to not forget any lines. And that was a good approach, many told me. I memorized my movements and things felt organic. In some scenes, that was indispensable. The movie needed that and my acting would only work having this base of approach to it. And it felt great to work like that. I became stronger; I was fully focused in the scenes. This focus is, what I believe, the reason why I have this film so close to heart and why I believe so much in it. Attentiveness, like in any other area, is an indispensable quality.

And I dare to say that this was always present in the entirety of the movie. Everyone was fully focused and that created energy for every scene. Everyone involved had the capacity to give themselves fully to this project. And I admit that the more improvised scenes were the ones that motivated me the most; we had total freedom to do whatever we felt like for those scenes. The actors and all the crew were fully committed to the ideas of Pedro. He transmitted so many things to everyone, an idea of reality, in a very peculiar way, a reflex of a new generation that wasn't happy with what they had done, in the past, in their free time. Everyone who hid from their parents to do whatever they felt like renewed the

generations with new citizens that have no shame in showing how they have fun, because they are fully aware that they can organize their life and their responsibilities outside of those moments. Everything was natural, nothing bad happened, it was tiring, for sure, but we enjoyed every moment and it was spectacular. The large process of work helped everyone in their own personal development, I mean, everyone, I think, developed their own work into another level, discovered a more intense rhythm, influencing them for everything that their life would give them from that point on. Will I keep acting? I don't know, I can't be sure. For now, I'll work in that sense and wait for this film, that interests me so much.



## VIDEOLOTION

VIDEOLOTION's a film production company based in Lisbon. Founded in the summer of 2013, as a creative collective, it established itself as an official company in the end of 2016. Its objective is to develop adaptable production models, which fundament themselves on the specific needs of each movie, giving priority to the work itself, to the filmmakers, to the artists and to the parties involved. Determined to give voice to an

emerging generation of filmmakers and technicians, their objective is to provide them a structured and professionalizing platform in a, often times, intransigent and hierarchical industry, fostering the development of new film projects and stimulating formulae of dialogue between filmmakers and artists with an already established audience and, simultaneously, for the maximization of a universe of new audiences, both in domestic

and international terms. These are the premises and standpoints that VIDEOLOTION pretends to establish in the current portuguese cinematographic reality, something that has been taking form, in a ruled and consistent way, with the conclusion and distribution of its first feature films, *Verão Danado*, by Pedro Cabeleira, *Frágil* by João Eça and *crês ser* by Marta Ribeiro.

## VIDEOLOTION'S PRODUCTION NOTE

VIDEOLOTION presents *Verão Danado* as its first feature film, a fundamental stepstone for this recent production company, based in Lisbon, created from the desires and motivations of five young filmmakers; reflex of a new generation of portuguese artists and technicians that, beyond all difficulties and obstacles that the market imposes them, seek to create their own language and to express their own purposes, desires and idiosyncrasies with their films. *Verão Danado* is the perfect example of all this, the materialization of all the impulses of this energetic and belligerent youth, a collective cry for liberation, of hope, exteriorization and introspection. The director, Pedro Cabeleira, one the

founding members of VIDEOLOTION, took of with the project right after he graduated from ESTC, Lisbon's Theatre and Film School. An ambitious project, considering its dimension in terms of cast, crew and logistic needs, worthy of a large scale production but that, however, was made, during the preproduction and shooting phases, without any financing other than the director's own funds. The determination and will to make all these ideas come to life, of bringing an universe of emotions and doubts to the surface, lifted the project from all barriers and moments of difficulties, discussions and uncertainties. Potency rose to everything. Pedro and the, then only his, *Verão Danado* were

capable of uniting the efforts and the commitment of more than one hundred individuals that made this project also theirs. And this film is not only the summer of Chico, the character that guide us and allow us to access these fragments-portraits of energies and realities of a generation that lives in Lisbon, territory of a perpetual ebullition of emotions and sensations, but also the summer of all these participants that, during the process of the film, gave, in the most dissimilar ways, their faces, their body, their ideas, their experiences and their commitment to this film; of the summer that became the time of idyllic sacrifices, the bleeding of beliefs and most profound desires of each one of them.

## OPTEC

The Sociedade Óptica Técnica (OPTEC) was founded on November 15, 1934. OPTEC was originally involved in the import and marketing of products in the field of photographic optics - lenses, filters, etc. - and other cinematographic material. By the end of the 80's, it represented, in Portugal, the brands Zeiss Ikon, Bilora, Eumig, Silma, among

others. A diversified and multi-purpose structure was subsequently created, linked to cinema, video, contemporary visual and fine arts. In 2001, established as a film production company (OPTEC) and specializes in audiovisual production, associated with television and cinema projects. In 2006, began with the director Pedro Costa a

partnership that consolidates, until today, in a stimulating journey of cinematographic production with a national and international impact. Experienced and able to face the new challenges, OPTEC focuses its efforts on film production on the national scene, focusing its attention on both consolidated names and new emerging talent.

## OPTEC'S PRODUCTION NOTE

It was one more of the many visits we have from recently graduated film students that I met Pedro Cabeleira. A firm handshake, a serene discourse and above all, a humble stare packed with conviction, made us take a chance

and desire to be at his side in his first feature film. The character and quality that Pedro demonstrated, associated with OPTEC's culture of support for young talents, which is part of our DNA are now reflected in Damned

Summer. More than a very special film portraying a restless youth it's the first work of an immensely talented director for whom we have very high expectations.







## CONTACTS

---

**SLINGSHOT FILMS**

Slingshot Films

[info@slingshotfilms.it](mailto:info@slingshotfilms.it)

[www.slingshotfilms.it](http://www.slingshotfilms.it)