

CINEUROPA

Industry Report: Financing

Experimental film lives on in the crisis

by EL PAÍS - ANDRÉS GARCÍA DE LA RIVA

11/02/2013 - The story of *Blue Lips* shows that it is still possible to make cinema with a capital C, despite the way in which culture seems to be suffering at the moment. It was shot by six different directors who tell the stories of six different characters from six different countries; yet it all makes up just one film. The project was born when Navarra-born Maiten Muruzábal, head of production company Cronopia Films with Argentinian Candela Figueira (together they wrote and directed 2008's *Under the Snow*), had another of her projects, *Luna Lunera*, bomb in 2011. 'I realised that 10 years had passed since 2001 when I had studied film in Los Angeles and I thought that we could get together the friends that we made there and we could collaborate on a project together'.

(The article continues below - Commercial information)



That's how a project started that 'has never really been under control at any time. It's changed a lot since we started it, because we've been open to new contributions and, in the end, it seems that, us keeping calm has meant everything ran smoothly'. The title of the film is a reference, as Muruzábal remembers, to how, 'when we were in Los Angeles, we would have a few glasses of wine and it would stain our lips blue. We called ourselves the "blue lips". It's also a reference to death in that all the characters in the film die on the inside; they're all in situations in which they feel completely trapped'.

The characters of these six stories are; a chronically ill girl from Argentina, an Italian photographer, a Hawaiian dancer, a Brazilian footballer, an American journalist, a Spanish widow. They all happen to meet at the San Fermin Festival in Spain, a legendary event where people flock to celebrate life itself; for Muruzábal it's a 'symbol of meetings between people', and in *Blue Lips* this has a double meaning: celebrating the festival not only brings together six characters in the fictional story, but also brought together six new directors of the film in real-life. Argentinians Daniel de Carlo and Julieta Lima, Brazilian Gustavo Lipzstein, Peruvian Nobuo Shima, Italian Antonello Novellino and Spanish Nacho Ruipérez; these final two directors were chosen through a contest held by Cronopia Films on the project's webpage: www.bluelipsthemovie.com.

The film was shot at the most recent San Fermin festival and included the live recording of some scenes out on the open street during the festival's most famous events; the letting off of the rocket, which officially marks the beginning of the festival, the running of the Bulls, the parade and the different clubs gathering together. This was done mainly because 'recreating these events would have been very difficult and expensive. We preferred to have live images even though it meant shooting was a bit harder to control'. Both producers had already participated in a similar way in Kevin Noland's 2005 film, *Americano*.

Despite having many different people work on the same project together; having a sole director of photography, Robert C. Webb, brought a level of aesthetic unity to the film. Going by the look of the first [teaser](#), put up on the project's website, it will be a film with roots in independent cinema.

After a brief period in Pamplona, shooting moved to cities such as Matera in Italy, Los Angeles, Oahu in Hawaii, Rio de Janeiro; it rounded up on 6th January in Buenos Aires, where, in the space of two days, separate scenes of each director with their character, were filmed.

At the moment, Catalan production company Fosca Films is working on the post-production of the film, after having recently put together a first edit. It is thought that it will be ready in time for May and then shown at film festivals over the summer. Now it is time to start selling the film and Muruzábal and Figueira will visit the next Berlin International Film Festival so as to get in contact with agents.

The project was financed in many different ways; personal loans were sought, [15,000 euros were raised through crowd funding](#), help was given by the Navarra Institute of Film and Audio-visual Arts (*JNAAC*) and the MEDIA Programme of the EU. Furthermore there were contributions from the Youth Institute of Navarra and the Council of Pamplona. Both the directors and producers worked without taking a salary though they are sure that they will get a return on their investment.

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