



— SYNOPSIS —

Tito is a shy 10-year-old boy who lives with his mother. Suddenly, an unusual epidemic starts to spread, making people sick whenever they get scared. Tito quickly discovers that the cure is somehow related to his missing father's research on bird song. He embarks on a journey to save the world from the epidemic with his friends. Tito's search for the antidote becomes a quest for his missing father and for his own identity.



— DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT —

My home city, São Paulo, is known as the “city of walls”. Twenty million people live here, most of whom hiding behind fences, barbed and electric wires – it is as if fear has become an epidemic, a disease. Perhaps because of this, the idea that fear is contagious has always fascinated me. And imagined violence – which may be based on facts, but is greatly amplified by the media – contributes as much to this epidemic as real violence.

When we first started conceiving the movie, in 2011, this was perhaps not as obvious as today, but lately, especially with a certain hyperactivity deriving from an excess of connections, it has become clearer. And it seems to be happening everywhere - for different reasons, social inequality, economic crisis,

terrorism etc., fear is taking over the world. And, in the name of fear, people build walls to protect themselves from other people, start wars, elect autocratic leaders... The dream of reaching a truly democratic society is going down the drain not because of real dangers, which can be fought, but because of imagined ones.

I thought there were not many people making movies about this epidemic, especially for children. And I think that it might fall upon children to find a way out of this mess that we created for them. I hope they do!

PIGEONS

The pigeons and doves are very important in the movie: they are key to the outbreak's resolution and they are a permanent presence in Tito's journey, either from afar or from a close

distance, protecting and accompanying the main characters. Having pigeons and doves as such prominent characters was not a casual choice. Pigeons have been living alongside human beings for as long as there are cities. They are some of the most adapted animals to urban life – with the possible exception of humans and insects. They transmit dangerous diseases, such as toxoplasmosis, and their excrements ruin monuments and facades. On the other hand, they do occupy a privileged space in our culture's imagination – from the Holy Spirit and the white dove of peace to carrier-pigeons, some of whom have even received honor medals, such as Cher Ami, the French pigeon who saved dozens of soldiers when he crossed enemy lines with a message, even after having been shot in the leg, and GI Joe, a British carrier-pigeon who saved a whole platoon. Pigeons seem to evoke many symbols that have a direct relationship with the movie's central themes.

THE PRODUCTION

The movie was created over seven years, three of which in full production. I owe a lot to Daniel Greco, our executive producer, who is much more experienced in animation than I am and helped me make the right decisions along the way, and also to Split studio, that brought my project to a much higher level of quality.

THE SCREENPLAY

Eduardo Benaim and I share a conceptual and aesthetic proximity – we had worked together before and I thought he would be the right person to write the screenplay with me. The screenplay changed a lot over time as the story evolved. It was our first animation, so we had to find out what worked and what did not through trial and error. To discover all

the possibilities that working with animatic allows for was incredible. To be able to create a whole universe from scratch – something that only animation enables one to do – was a very liberating, almost metaphysical experience!

SCREENWRITER'S STATEMENT

Eduardo Benaim - Screenwriter

I was very enthusiastic about this project from the beginning, both because I know Gustavo and I share worldviews and because of the challenge he proposed: to create a story that had things to say to children, young adults and adults. The first treatment was developed trying to answer the following question: "How can one address our culture of fear, of social segregation and of private security from the point of view of children?" As the treatment evolved into a screenplay,



