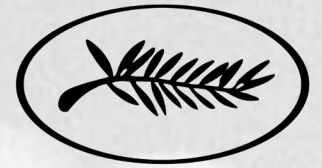


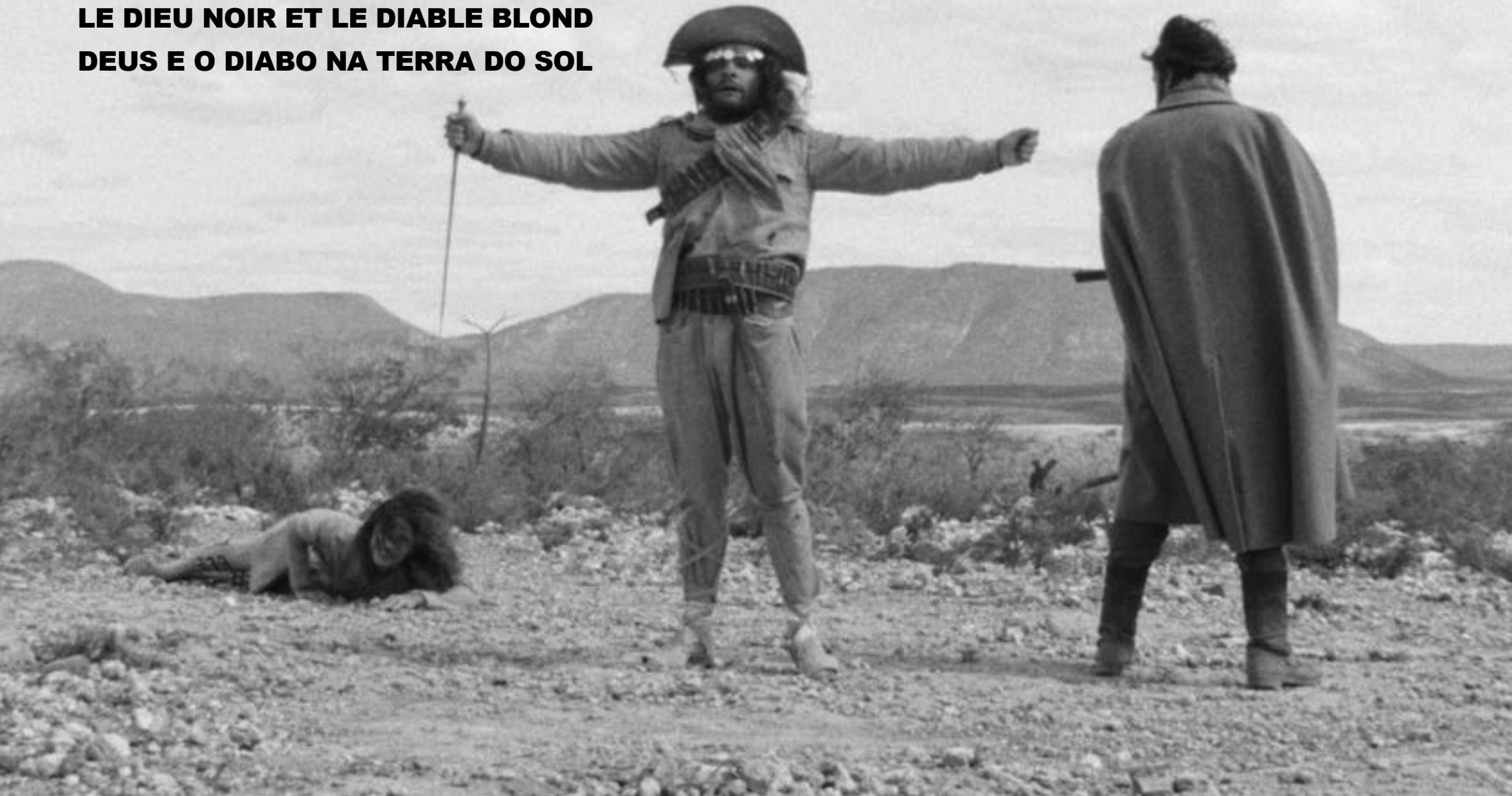
BLACK GOD, WHITE DEVIL

A FILM BY GLAUBER ROCHA

LE DIEU NOIR ET LE DIABLE BLOND
DEUS E O DIABO NA TERRA DO SOL



FESTIVAL DE CANNES
CANNES CLASSICS
2022 OFFICIAL SELECTION



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METROPOLES.COM and PALOMA CINEMATOGRAFICA in association with CINEMATECA BRASILEIRA present

THE 4K RESTORATION

Brazil - 1964/2022 - 120 minutes - Black & White

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BLACK GOD, WHITE DEVIL

A FILM BY GLAUBER ROCHA

Writer and Director – Glauber Rocha
Assistant Directors – Walter Lima Júnior / Paulo Gil Soares

Producers – Luiz Augusto Mendes / Glauber Rocha / Jarbas Barbosa
Line Producer – Agnaldo Azevedo

Cinematography / Camera – Waldemar Lima
Scenography – Paulo Gil Soares
Editor – Rafael Justo Valverde

Sound Recorder – Aluizio Viana
Sound Mixing – Geraldo José
Music – Villa-Lobos
Songs – Sérgio Ricardo / Glauber Rocha

Lettering – Lygia Pape
Machinists – Calazans Neto / Roque

Cast – Geraldo Del Rey (Manuel) / Yoná Magalhães (Rosa) /
Othon Bastos (Corisco) / Sonia dos Humildes (Dadá) /
Lídio Silva (Sebastião) / Maurício do Valle (Antônio das Mortes) /
Marron (Blind Júlio) / João Gama (Priest) / Milton Roda (Morais) /
Antonio Pinto (Colonel) / villagers of Monte Santo

Restoration Team

Director – Paloma Rocha
Producer – Lino Meireles

Cinematographer – Luís Abramo
Restoration Consultant for Image and Sound – Rodrigo Mercês

Sound Restoration – Estúdio JLS
Technicians – José Luiz Sasso, ABC / Toco Cerqueira / Daniel Sasso

Image Restoration – Cinecolor Digital
Director – David Trejo
Operations – Cláudio Avino
Post-Production Coordination – Ana Camargo / Beatriz Piloto / Luís Totem
Restoration Supervisors – Cesar Tuma / Renato Merlino

Restoration – Carllos Alves / Carlos Campos / José Mercindo / Paulo Vinicius Calheiros
Colorist – Rogério Moraes
Compositions – Ailton Piuí / Renato Merlino
Mastering – Carllos Alves

Subtitles – Punto y Coma Traduções
Trailer and Teaser – VFBH Produções LTDA.

Synopsis

Cowhand Manuel and his wife Rosa flee their home after he kills a rich local rancher who tries to swindle him. In the drought-plagued and violent Brazilian badlands, they meet two iconic figures: Sebastião, who claims to be divine, and Corisco, who labels himself demonic.

Casting their fates with these figures proves tragic, however, for mercenary Antonio das Mortes is on their trail.

Awards

Nominated for the Palme d'Or- Cannes Film Festival, France, 1964.
Critics' Award- Acapulco Film Festival (Reseña Mundial de Cine de Acapulco), 1964.
Grand Prix- La Mostra Internazionale del Cinema Libero, Italy, 1964.
Naiade d'oro- Festival del Cinema di Porretta Terme, Itália, 1964.
Saci Trophy/ Best Supporting Actor: Maurício do Valle, 1965
Latin-American Grand Prix- I Festival Internacional de Cine de Mar del Plata 1966.





Lino Meireles **Producer**

Black God, White Devil is the most recognizable turning point in Brazilian cinema. In the US, that film is *Citizen Kane*, in France, *À Bout de Souffle* (*Breathless*). Plenty came before, and plenty after, but everyone knows these names and their images, even those who haven't seen the films in question. In Brazil, that film is *Black God, White Devil*.

Every country seems to have one of these: films that stand out and point towards an important direction in the nation's culture (and also world cinema). These films usually come decades after a particular country begins producing cinema, and although they come after important works, their existence eclipses everything that came before, becoming recognizable to cinephiles and even those who may never have watched it.

In my view, *Black God, White Devil* is the film that actually establishes Cinema Novo. Before it, the movement was very attached to Italian neorealism. I think it's Glauber who takes this influence and sets off to make something else: real Brazilian cinema. I must have been around 20 years old, young and impressionable, when the DVD was released, and I remember I rented it. That's how I first watched the film, and was stunned.

Still unable to recognize the film's cinematic merits, I watched the story of a humble cowhand who first allies himself with a figure claiming to be divine and then another claiming to be demonic. Things turn disastrous with both supposed icons, despite the cowhand's poor wife's desperate and best attempts to escape the obvious conclusion to this story, she who found herself forced to accompany her husband. Everyone in the story turns out to be mere mortals, after all, and the search for a messianic figure in our country is always doomed to fail.

At age 20, I managed to get that emancipatory message out of the film. And that affected me deeply. It was that feeling of discovering through art that we need to depend on ourselves.

Is there anything more prescient and necessary today? At a time when much of our critical thinking is outsourced to something forwarded by a social network, Glauber remains perennial.



Glauber Rocha

Director

1939. Glauber de Andrade Rocha, the first child of Adamastor Bráulio Silva Rocha and Lúcia Mendes de Andrade Rocha, is born on March 14 at 3:40 am in Vitória da Conquista, Bahia. The name Glauber, given by his mother, is inspired by that of the German scientist Johann Rudolf Glauber (1603-68).

1947. Glauber accompanies his father on trips through the backlands of Bahia.

1948. Glauber's family moves to Salvador. His father, a highway engineer, suffers an automobile accident that leaves him with serious health impairments. The 29-year-old matriarch takes over the family business.

1952. At the age of thirteen, Glauber participates as a film critic in the radio program "Cinema em Close-Up", on Rádio Sociedade da Bahia.

1956. Glauber, Calazans Neto, Sante Scaldaferrri, Luis Paulino, Zé Telles, Fernando da Rocha Peres, and Fred Castro, among others, found a film coop named "Yemanjá". As a provocation, they leave graffiti on city walls: "Do you believe in Cinema from Bahia?".

1957. Glauber shoots *Pátio*, starring Solon Barreto and Helena Ignez, a formalist film influenced by Concrete Art, using leftover film negatives from Roberto Pires' feature film *Redenção*.

1958. Glauber accompanies Italian director Roberto Rossellini while the Italian director researches locations in Salvador with a 16mm camera (an experience narrated in the film *Di*).

1960. After organizing the production, Glauber rewrites the script and takes on the direction of *The Turning Wind* (*Barravento*), using some of the footage filmed by Luiz Paulino dos Santos, the original director.

In a letter to Paulo Emílio Sales Gomes, Glauber explains how he unexpectedly became the director of this first feature film.

1961. Glauber finishes *The Turning Wind* (*Barravento*) in Rio de Janeiro, with editor Nelson Pereira dos Santos. He receives a visit from the filmmaker François Truffaut, interested in getting to know the new style of Brazilian cinema.



Glauber Rocha

Director

1962. The “Cinema Novo” movement is formally established after a boom of cinematographic production in Rio de Janeiro. *Five Times Favela (Cinco Vezes Favela)* brings together five short films by Leon Hirszman, Joaquim Pedro de Andrade, Cacá Diegues, Miguel Borges and Marcos Farias.

1964. *Black God, White Devil (Deus e o Diabo na Terra do Sol)* competes for the Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival. In Brazil, a coup d’etat installs a military dictatorship. Glauber goes to Europe.

Black God, White Devil (Deus e o Diabo na Terra do Sol) premieres in June on the Rio circuit.

1965. In January, Glauber publishes a manifesto, “The Aesthetics of Hunger” (A Estética da Fome), during the Review of Latin American Cinema, in Genoa. The text, written on the plane between Los Angeles and Milan, formalizes the aesthetic and political foundations of Cinema Novo and criticizes European paternalism in relation to the Third World.

1967. *Entranced Earth (Terra em Transe)* is banned in Brazil by the federal government, as it is considered subversive and offensive to the Church.

Screened at the Cannes Film Festival, *Entranced Earth (Terra em Transe)* wins the Luis Buñuel Award from a group of Spanish critics and the FIPRESCI (Fédération Internationale de la Presse Cinématographique). In Rio de Janeiro, the film runs for four weeks in ten theaters.

1969. Glauber heads back to Europe with *Antonio das Mortes (O Dragão da Maldade contra o Santo Guerreiro)* at the 1969 Cannes Film Festival, which awards him the Best Director Award, in addition to the FIPRESCI, the Luis Buñuel Award, and an award from the International Confederation of Art Films.

Glauber attributes his Best Director award to the efforts of Luchino Visconti, president of the jury.

The French magazine “Cahiers du Cinéma” a cover story and interview with Glauber.

Glauber travels to Brazzaville, Congo, to film *The Lion Has Seven Heads (Der Leone Have Sept Cabeças)*.

1970. *The Lion Has Seven Heads (Der Leone Have Sept Cabeças)* is rejected by the Cannes Film Festival.



Glauber Rocha

Director

In July, *Cutting Heads (Cabezas Cortadas)*, filmed in Catalonia, is shown for the first time at the San Sebastian Festival and in August it is released at the Venice Festival.

1975. Glauber returns to Rome, where he shoots *Claro*, starring Juliet Berto and Carmelo Bene. *Claro* premieres in October, and causes controversy at the Taormina Festival. When screened at the Paris Film Festival in November, the film receives heavy criticism.

1977. The short film *Di (Di Cavalcanti / Di Glauber)* wins the special jury prize at the Cannes Film Festival, with jury president Roberto Rossellini.

1980. Glauber participates in the Venice International Film Festival competition with *The Age of the Earth (A Idade da Terra)*. The film's experimental style shocks the public and divides critical opinion. Filmmaker Michelangelo Antonioni states that the film "is a true lesson in modern cinema".

1981. Glauber is admitted in August to a hospital near Lisbon, Portugal, due to a bronchopulmonary condition. Extremely ill, he is brought back to Brazil on the night of the 20th, without medical supervision.

At his arrival in Rio de Janeiro on the 21st, he begins treatment while in the airport infirmary, and is subsequently taken to a clinic. Glauber dies at 4 am on the 22nd of August. Glauber's wake is at Parque Lage, the setting for *Entranced Earth (Terra em Transe)*, in an atmosphere of agitation and exultation.



THE LAND SHALL BECOME THE SEA...



...AND THE SEA SHALL BECOME THE LAND



Paloma Rocha

Director

Paloma Rocha is a Brazilian producer and director who has made several documentaries about Brazilian personalities. At Tempo Glauber, named after her father, Brazilian Cinema Novo pioneer Glauber Rocha, she undertook audiovisual preservation and training efforts, acting to restore and disseminate the collection, in Brazil and abroad. She directed and produced *Anabazys*, which had its world première at the Venice Film Festival in 2007, and the short film *GRAMATYKA*, premiering at the Short Film Corner at the Cannes Film Festival (2015).

Between 2017 and 2019, Paloma wrote, produced, and directed the series *Antena da Raça* for Cine Brasil TV; *Antena da Raça- The Film* was selected for Cannes Classics in the 2020 selection. Her latest film as a director is *Tentehar - Architecture of the Sensitive*.

Filmography

Director

2020 Antena da Raça (Documentary)
2020 Tentehar: Arquitetura do Sensível (Documentary)
2010 A Hora do leão - Os sete leões de Glauber (Documentary short)
2008 Ecos de Cannes (Documentary short)
2008 Milagrez (Short documentary)
2008 O Retorno do Dragão (Documentary short)
2007 Anabazys (Documentary)
2006 A Restauração de Terra em Transe (Documentary short)
2006 Depois do Transe (Documentary)
2004 Glauber Rocha (TV Movie documentary)
2004 Retrato da Terra (Documentary)
2003 Abry (Documentary short)
2003 Rogério Sganzerla: Elogio da Luz (Documentary short)

Producer

2020 Antena da Raça (Documentary) (producer)
2005 Dormente (Documentary short) (associate producer) / (executive producer)
2004 Glauber Rocha (TV Movie documentary) (executive producer)
2003 Abry (Documentary short) (executive producer)

Lino Meireles

Producer

Lino Meireles is a Brazilian director, producer, screenwriter and film critic, whose cinephilia spans the last three generations of his own family. He has directed six films, among shorts and features, including Joyride and Candango: Memories From a Festival.

Lino participates in digital restorations of remarkable works that have impacted Brazil's filmic history.

Filmography

Director

- 2020 Candango: Memories From a Festival (Documentary)
- 2015 Joyride (Short)
- 2011 How You Like Me Now (Short)

Producer

- 2021 Já que Ninguém me Tira para Dançar (Documentary) (co-producer)
- 2020 Candango: Memories From a Festival (Documentary) (producer)
- 2015 Joyride (Short) (producer)
- 2011 How You Like Me Now (Short) (producer)



A Statement from Cinemateca Brasileira

It's with an immense sense of satisfaction that we present **BLACK GOD, WHITE DEVIL** - one of the most important films in the entire history of Brazilian cinema - in its newly completed 4K restoration, to the 2022 Cannes Film Festival's "Cannes Classics" selection. This is also the year in which Glauber Rocha, the director, would have turned 83 years old.

As an institution officially co-responsible for the preservation of Glauber Rocha's work (along with the filmmaker's family) it was blissful to know that his daughter Paloma Rocha and the producer Lino Meireles were able to fund and make this restoration. Although it was restored with outside partners, it was the Cinemateca Brasileira that had maintained and stored the original materials used throughout the process. In addition, our institution provided guidance and expertise every step of the way. This project reaffirms the meaning of our mission, that of preservation and dissemination of Brazil's audiovisual culture.

It should be noted that the Cinemateca's contribution to this project took place in a difficult period, during which it was closed for 16 months and eventually suffered a large fire that could have burned down our institution.

Given the magnitude of the challenge, however, and this particular film's unquestionable relevance to our country, we gave it all of our best efforts to ensure the result that is now presented to you. The Cannes Film Festival was the first place where **BLACK GOD, WHITE DEVIL** was shown, making it a part of the story as well.

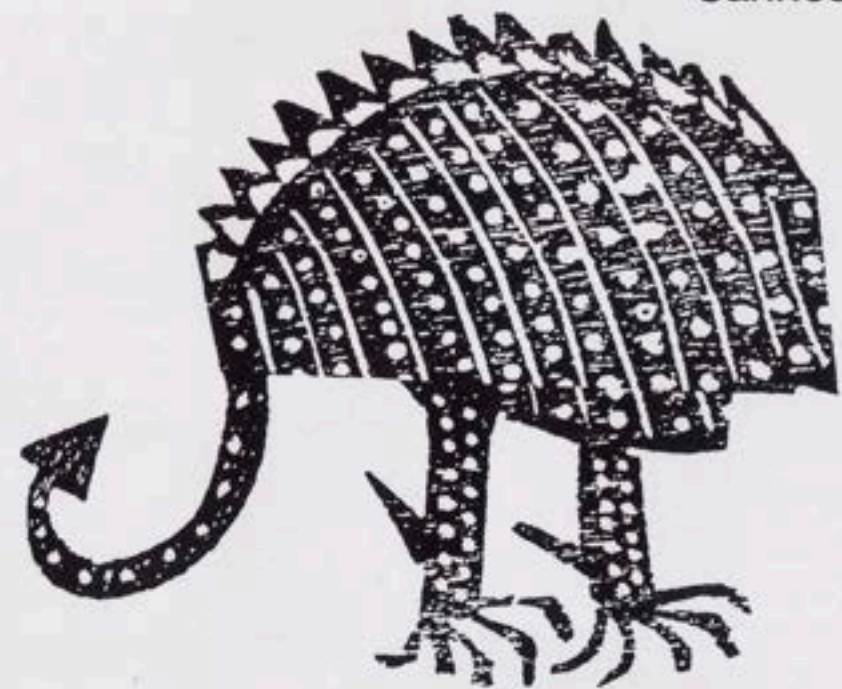
It is also a reason for celebration that the film has its new premiere at the same time that SAC - Sociedade Amigos da Cinemateca (re)starts managing the Cinemateca, resuming the work on all fronts of the institution.

Glauber Rocha's film is now ready to inspire audiences, introducing those who have not yet seen it, to a Brazil that still endures across our land, and rescuing the emotion of the public that's already seen it, but never in this manner. This restoration also bears testimony to the importance of preserving the audiovisual memory of the world.

Our best hopes are for a memorable world premiere of this masterpiece.



Le Brésil présente
Au XVII Festival International de Films de
Cannes



LE DIEU NOIR ET LE DIABLE BLOND

UN FILM DE GLAUBER ROCHA

Production de Luiz Augusto Mendes - Copacabana Films - Rio

Story of a Restoration

by Guilherme Lobão

When *Black God, White Devil* (1964) reached the 21st century, audiences that watched 2002's digitized copy on DVD or any 2K exhibitions on the big screen, did not experience Glauber Rocha's foundational rock of Brazil's Cinema Novo in all of its glory.

With the gradual and irreversible obsolescence of cinema projectors, the film's previous digital scans had never actually undergone a restoration. *Black God, White Devil* sat idly in five cans of 35mm film at the Brazilian Cinematheque, or, as it's called in Portuguese, Cinemateca.

Then, in 2019, an ambitious – but challenging – project emerged by filmmakers Paloma Rocha and Lino Meireles: judiciously restoring the Cinema Novo landmark film, in digital format, with a resolution of 4,000 pixels (or 4k). The process is in its final stage and will reach movie screens as soon as possible, considering the current pandemic scenario.

copacabana filmes apresenta **deus e o diabo
na terra do sol**
yoná magalhães
gerald d'el rey
othon bastos
mauricio do valle
um filme de glauber rocha
produção: luiz augusto mendes



Lino sought out Paloma, Glauber's daughter and owner of the rights to his work, with the aim of finding and recovering one of the director's deep cuts.

"I wanted to restore movies that weren't available to the public. And Paloma mentioned it could be this one. It wasn't my original idea, but I wasn't aware it had never been properly restored. *Black God, White Devil* is something you can't pass up. It marks the beginning of a truly original Brazilian cinema", says Lino.

There was a reason Paloma made *Black God, White Devil* a priority: "A lot of people thought the movie was restored because it was on DVD, but that copy never went through digital post-production. The original print is still available, so thanks to the technology and the experts available today, we can make the best restoration possible."

To better understand the decision to restore *Black God, White Devil*, it is necessary to understand what kind of prints are available as source material. In this case, a negative print. "Glauber's other digitized films (*Barravento*,

Antonio das Mortes) were made from scratched copies, from positive copies. And this one was practically flawless", adds Paloma.

With this scenario in place, Lino's wish met Paloma's need: "He realized that this is an important project, not only because it's difficult, but also because it represents a great happening for cinephiles around the world", recognizes the restoration's director. Lino signed into the project, convinced of the importance of restoring one of his most beloved films.

For him, the film's renown might also enable a more permanent restoration plan for other Brazilian films. "I'm not in the distribution market; my goal was to fund a restoration, regardless of return. But *Black God, White Devil* is so historic, there just might be some financial return. And that'll be great, because then we'll restore another film," he hopes.

The initial seed

Before starting work on restoring *Black God, White Devil*, Lino Meireles became interested in film preservation while directing his first feature, *Candango: Memories From a Festival*. Centering around the story of Brazil's longest-running film festival, it also told the story of Brazilian Cinema itself after the country descended into a military dictatorship in 1964.

"When I made *Candango*, I deepened my understanding of how difficult it is to find and watch classic Brazilian films," says Lino, as he began searching for various deep cuts in directors' filmographies. "Most of the films by great Brazilian directors are simply not available for us to watch. I had to watch several on YouTube – because I didn't want to interview someone without watching the work in question – but in a terrible state of picture quality."

After preliminary contacts with some filmmakers, it was with Paloma Rocha that the conversation proved to be fruitful.

The Brazilian Cinemateca

Lino and Paloma then decided on the Cinemateca as their starting point. "Our initial idea was to carry out the whole restoration process with the institution itself. But the last restoration they did was in 2013, with *A Man Marked for Death* (1984), by Eduardo Coutinho", explained Paloma.

In 2019, therefore, the Cinemateca's equipment had been idle for more than half a decade. So, after years of neglect and funding cuts by the federal government, it became impossible to carry out a project of this magnitude in the home of Brazilian cinema itself. Paloma, however, has always maintained a good institutional relationship with the Cinemateca, and so the filmmaker found an opening.

"I had a meeting with our Secretary of Culture. I have all of Glauber's work at the Cinemateca, more than three hundred boxes, and I could spend my time being outraged by everything that is happening, but I've put in some effort not to be angry with Brazil. I don't aim for the stars anymore, I'm just trying not

to skin my butt while falling”, she quips.

With *Black God, White Devil*’s cans of film in hand, Paloma added cinematographer and constant set partner Luís Abramo to the restoration crew for coloring and lighting, along with the Cinemateca’s preservation coordinator, Rodrigo Mercês. Image restoration was done by CineColor post-production studios, and sound restoration by specialist José Luiz Sasso, from JLS Studios.

Abramo recognizes the strength of this restoration project, especially with regards to the technical crew involved: “It was an act of courage to bring this team together, around this film, and to carry out such a thorough restoration. Because it’s an expensive process. And there’s Paloma, who knows the work very well, not only for being Glauber’s daughter, but for researching and working with his collection for the last 40 years”.

Rodrigo Mercês, a specialist in the preservation of Brazilian cinema, also believes that the process of restoring *Black God, White Devil* set up a very favorable relationship, between



Luís Abramo



Rodrigo Mercês

the Cinemateca’s status as a public institution with private funding.

“This partnership is the crux of the project’s approach, in addition to Lino and Paloma’s insistence on ensuring the best result”, praises Mercês, who left the Cinemateca in August 2019 and returned in December of that same year to participate in the restoration project.

One of the restoration’s first steps was a study of the cans of film the Cinemateca had preserved. Mere months before the Brazilian government closed it, the crew projected an original 35mm copy at the Cinemateca itself, with filmmaker Walter Lima Jr., who was Glauber’s assistant director, in attendance.

“It was a very good copy and it was very important to have Walter commenting on it, because he remembers the film’s first copies”, remembers Abramo.

After the screening, the team held its first conversations on how the restoration would be carried out. “It was important for us to set out and debate the ethics and techniques that

would guide us in interpreting the original intentions of the picture’s photography and direction, combined with what was present in that print”, details the cinematographer.

The team is proud of the new copy of *Black God, White Devil*. “It will be a milestone in the restoration of Brazilian cinematography”, hopes Abramo. “And it’s a response to everything that has been going on with our country’s cultural politics: that we must not give up and that we must take care of the history of our cinema. Forwards and backwards. It will surely inspire future generations.”

Paloma confirms that this is the best version of the film: “It’s as if you were seeing a copy from a new negative. In fact, I think it will be better than it used to be, because current technology breathes life into it, in a way that laboratories at the time could not.”

The Work and the Canon

There aren't grandiose enough adjectives to account for the cinematic feat that is *Black God, White Devil*. This is one of those rare cases where the description "masterpiece" can be used without fear of controversy. Its laurels and praises are among the best in Brazil, and it constantly grabs attention on international lists, all of it doing justice to the work and its creative genius, Glauber Rocha.

Unlike many of the resounding classics of world cinema, this film is not buried by the weight of canon, presenting its themes and ideas constantly throughout generations.

Black God, White Devil was commercially released in Rio de Janeiro on July 10, 1964. Riding a nascent wave of European interest in Brazilian cinema, along with an actual coup d'état, it debuted in Cannes to astonishment and acclaim, although it would not win the Palme d'Or.

Astonished spectators witnessed an unsteady camera that captured Brazil's depth. In the

microcosm of its northeastern badlands (the sertão), Rocha's tale voiced a continental malaise that inhabited every corner of this land full of strife and suffering.

The sertanejo epic starts off with a couple of humble farm workers: Manuel (Geraldo del Rey), a dispirited ranch hand, and Rosa, the housewife tasked with piling flour day after day (with a deep resignation present in the eyes of Yoná Magalhães), until their romantic-spiritual encounter with Corisco (Othon Bastos).

Manuel rebels against the system after his boss leaves him penniless. Angry, he murders the man and runs away with Rosa to join a rag-tag group of believers in the self-proclaimed prophet Sebastião (Lídio Silva). Inspired by the real figure of Antônio Conselheiro, Sebastião predicts a re-founding of the biblical city of Canaan, where poverty and suffering will be eradicated.

Glauber uses regional iconography, to navigate universal concepts: good and evil juxtaposed in the symbolism of the white devil

(Corisco) and the black god (Sebastião); in naive masculinity (Manuel) and perceptive femininity (Rosa); in the hypocrisy of a priest (João Gama) and the heroic morality of the mercenary Antônio das Mortes (Mauricio do Valle); abundance and scarcity; the desert and the sea.

In the Manichean dilemma between Divine and Satanic imagery, Glauber reframes the debate to direct it between nihilism and enlightenment. He layers a more complex perspective than the dualism suggested by the title. His odyssey is for deep understanding: that our land and our existence belong neither to God or to the Devil, but rather to ourselves.

The Aesthetics of Hunger

In Glauber's filmography—though this is technically his second work—*Black God, White Devil* (1964) emerged as the manifestation of a new aesthetics that would change the course of Brazilian cinema and its perspective on the world. *Black God, White Devil* is the very aesthetics of hunger – or Eztetyka da Fome, as the manifesto signed by Glauber in the year following the film's release was named.

This was the scheduled to be the man from Bahia's first film, even before his slogan "cinema is a camera in your hand and an idea in your head" was coined. The film was born in 1959 – that is, before *Barravento* (1962), his first feature, began production. But it spent that time maturing, ripening amid re-writes. After *Keeper of Promises*, by Anselmo Duarte, won the Palme d'Or at the 1962 Cannes Film Festival, the world's gaze was cast on Brazilian cinema. Glauber sought an abandonment of foreign aesthetics in the name of creating a truly Brazilian method of expression.

Black God, White Devil summarized Glau-

ber's proposal. A film that emerged soaked in references and allusions to the literature of Graciliano Ramos and Euclides da Cunha, in the history of its own setting (rural Bahia), but also aware of other movements (such as Italian neorealism and the French nouvelle vague) that pioneered new possibilities.

The aesthetics of hunger presented a type of cinema that reflected on scarcity. Not only by vividly showing social issues and economic inequality, but also the modern ghost of colonization. Glauber pointed to the lack of technical and technological resources as a strategy to construct a filmic aesthetic that would break with entertainment industries such as Hollywood.

The hand-held camera, natural light, operatic performances, improvised dialogue and blocking, the use of non-actors... Nothing happened by accident during the production of *Black God, White Devil*. An already postmodern and anthropophagic perspective of Brazilian culture generated a new aesthetic experience that would establish Cinema Novo.

Glauber's work marches into the 21st century as a powerhouse of invention, and, equally, as a very precise illustration of the social abyss and collective delirium in which we still live today.

A complex, inexhaustible film, fed by a perfect storm national crises that remain embedded in our society: the usury and insatiability of a landlord elite; the political authoritarianism that persecutes those who bother it; the religious power that weaves the web of corruption beneath frocks and ties; the demagoguery that makes society hostage under a cloak of ignorance; and the people made up of figures like Manoel and Rosa who have no choice but to persevere in their survival.



Preservation and Access

After the analog media formats (film and VHS), the first digital version of *Black God, White Devil* was released in 2002, when a scanning process of the original negative was carried out in a standard format.

“At the time, we barely had the technology available for that,” says Paloma Rocha. “It generated a lot of controversy. I was attacked by many people who said that a DVD would never replace film. But I wanted people to be able to watch the film, and there was federal funding for that via Petrobras (the national oil company). This film started digital restoration in Brazil”, she boasts.

The project was directed by Paloma and her producer, in partnership with the Tempo Glauher institution, which preserves, researches and stores her father’s collection. “That was the first time film was scanned digitally here in the country. Some films were eventually scanned in 2K,” recalls Paloma.

When talking about the restoration of a film,

some concepts remain little understood by most audiences, even cinephiles. The first and most important one is film preservation. *Black God, White Devil* is one of the more than 250 thousand rolls of prints maintained by the Cinemateca Brasileira.

Though it is trying to keep the lights on in this critical time, the institution charged with caring for the memory of Brazilian is a reference around the world in its tutelage of the film production. That practice encompasses more than the mere cataloguing and storage within the building, originally erected as a meat-packing plant in Vila Clementino, in São Paulo.

Rodrigo Mercês, Preservation Coordinator at the Cinemateca Brasileira, teaches that preservation is not limited to guarding, but also in providing access to the preserved materials. “Preserving a work of art can’t be just about keeping it safe, but also adapting it to constantly changing technology in viewing habits”, he says.

In other words, a lot was said about *Black God, White Devil* being preserved, an allusion

to the 35mm print kept in the institution; it is inaccessible, however, by current digital technology. “The work was only accessible in photochemical technology, until now, there was no preservation in digital formats”, he ponders.

For Mercês, there is a consensus that the digital medium is not the most suitable for storing materials in the long term. Therefore, the 35mm copy deposited at the Cinemateca Brasileira is still the best way to keep the work’s integrity unaltered.

“We will continue to keep it stored and preserved, with any and all best practices. We have taken it out of storage in order to generate a digital matrix that can be duplicated and shown to viewers. In the future, technology will change again, and if a new matrix is needed, they’ll use the original print once again. It lasts for decades”, he says.

That durability depends on the sustainability of storage conditions. “The migration process must be constant and continuous. In our current doomsday scenario, everything pre-

served in our warehouse can still be migrated to digital formats. But time keeps on ticking, and it is even more complicated if we are to use storage tapes like LTO magnetic technology.”

To restore *Black God, White Devil*, the team coordinated by Paloma Rocha sought to be faithful to technical standards. “The process followed current best practices, using the best possible storage materials (files with specifications aimed at greater durability) and better access formats (current technological supports, such as digital projectors, international streaming standards and blurays)”, guarantees Rodrigo Mercês.

Luís Abramo adds that the restoration process essentially seeks to preserve the film’s memory. “And memory is not only what is in the negative, but in the methods of production employed to make the film”, he says.

The biggest challenge, according to him, will be taking the film to different formats, theaters, and projectors. “It’s like a brand new film. Very potent and sure to provoke a lot of

debate going forward. We are committing to the future. It's not just about preservation, but also showing the film and inspiring generations."

The Light and the Image

No matter how complex the attributes of a film, it is the image that usually predominates. *Black God, White Devil* carries nuances of light, contrasting and framing, which underscore a whole new concept for the imagery of Brazilian cinema, strengthening Cinema Novo's aesthetic ideal.

Rogério Moraes, Cláudio Avino, and Renato Merlino



There lies the restoration crew's challenge: to bring all of the majesty within the 1964 film into the digital realm, without compromising Glauber's original intentions and gaze.

Paloma Rocha and Luís Abramo had already worked together with post-production studio Cinecolor, one of the most respected in Latin America, when restoring *Der Leone Have Sept Cabeças* (1971) back in 2011. Ten years later, with *Black God, White Devil*, Cinecolor is a full-fledged partner in the restoration process.

Abramo was responsible for marking and balancing light, based on its original roll. Now he could use digital tools to approximate the 4K scan into that same film. "We tried to create an analogical similarity. We are always pushing only so far as that original reference. And then we can interpret together what the cinematography, and Glauber's direction were aiming at", he details.

Renato Merlino, digital restoration coordinator at Cinecolor, was responsible for laying out and establishing what was possible in the

process: cleaning (removal of dirt, whites and blacks), analysis and restoration of marks and scratches, depth of field assessment, and, subsequently, execution of a processing tool known as 'diamond'.

"At Paloma's request, we didn't filter the images through any digital 'camera corrections'. So we don't interfere with the original shots and framing. If the image was shaky for a given scene, that was a handheld shot, one of Glauber's decisions. If he shot it by hand, I'm not going to put it on a tripod", sums up Merlino.

Access to the film's "first generation", as he calls the original negative roll, also allowed him to know the level of grain with which the film was photographed. "To give you an idea, current prints that we would see with a film projector, the versions people have seen throughout the years, are 'fourth generation' copies", he explains.

As a result, the new print will be unique. "The digital *Black God, White Devil* that we are going to see has never been seen. People will

know how it looked on Glauber’s editing station”, he celebrates.

Rogério Moraes, colorist and restoration technician at Cinecolor, was the person who ensured that the new copy, now digital, preserved the same look seen at the time of release. “We started with an original negative that, technically, was very good. On the technical side, our challenge was to bring forth what was really in the negative during the development process”, he summarizes.

There were many conversations with Walter Lima Jr., who was an actual onset presence, Luís Abramo, and Paloma Rocha. While debating what Glauber had in mind, and Waldemar Lima (the film’s cinematographer) saw, a couple of decisions had to be made, even while preserving the framing and the editing. “We had to think together with Waldemar”, says Moraes, who had been a pupil of the late photographer.

Luís Abramo remembers that *Black God, White Devil* was filmed during mostly cloudy days. Current copies, however, had limi-

ted contrast when showing the sky. “We try to keep this historical memory between the negative and our copy. To try and figure out how much color and light balance they wanted when developing their original copies. We need to maintain ethical and technical standards, and try to reflect upon the intentions of their moment, to be faithful to the history of the work itself, in order to make these decisions”, says Abramo.

The Dignity within a Scratch

“A restoration means bringing back the colors that the negative loses over time.” This is how the colorist Rogério Moraes summarizes the objective of the restoration process of *Black God, White Devil*. The possibilities are endless, but there is a fine line between what is remastered, what is modified and what is restored.

Past memory is key to staying within an ethical framework for restoration. “There are digital tools that can put a little extra light on the character’s face. But then we remember that this kind of alteration wasn’t available back then. We need to keep the work like it was conceived for its first exhibition”, says Moraes.

According to him, cinema is an art that depends on its exhibition medium, unlike a book. “We are not updating it or making it modern. It’s not a retelling. The film has its own imperfections, things that happened while filming with that time’s cameras. We’re keeping those”, he guarantees.

It was another expert, Fábio Fraccaroli, one of the technicians involved in the restoration of other works by Glauber (*Entranced Earth, Barravento*), who suggested the theory of “the dignity of a scratch”. In other words, during process of restoring a film, lens scratches make up the organic material of the captured image and cannot be simply erased.

“Sasso [José Luiz Sasso, sound technician] follows this theory of the dignity within hisses and scratches”, says Paloma Rocha, adding that, unlike Glauber’s other films, *Black God, White Devil* didn’t have a lot of scratches. “Our print won’t have much scratching. But that’s not because we’re changing anything, but rather because of the quality of the negative print”, she guarantees.

Rogério Moraes adds: “My intention as a colorist is to leave the image as it was. I can fix photometry errors, for example, but not other things. We are not adding any effects. People have the impression that the sky in Cinema Novo films always had their whites blown out. But we noticed clouds and plenty of volume in the original print. There’s still a very bright sky, but with a lot more detail”, he explains.

Sound and Noise

If, in order to restore the image of *Black God, White Devil*, the crew had to search for visual references in the original copy and seek to interpret Glauber Rocha's intentions, for the sound it would be no different.

Rodrigo Mercês, restoration coordinator at the Cinemateca Brasileira, believed that the best image and sound matrix for the film would be extracted from the same rolls preserved at the institution. There were, however, limitations of a technical nature, especially with regards to sound.

“The Cinemateca has always focused a lot on image. There hadn't been sound restoration done in house. That's when we started working with Sasso in our restoration projects,” says Mercês.

José Luiz Sasso, from JLS Studios, is Brazilian cinema's great specialist in sound restoration. “There aren't more than two people in Brazil who can still talk about sound negatives. I'm under extinction”, he jokes.

The first technician in the entire country to be certified in Dolby Stereo sound systems since the 1980s, he was invited by Paloma Rocha to take on a very challenging part of the process: interpreting, correcting and, finally, digitizing the film's audio.

Although film sound was never a highlight of early Brazilian cinema, either during production or in regards to preservation, the copy of *Black God, White Devil* was of surprisingly good quality, in Sasso's assessment.

“There was never much of a concern in preserving films' sound materials. The best you can hope for with Cinema Novo is a well-preserved sound negative. *Black God, White Devil* was less problematic than others by Glauber that I restored, because the copy was very well kept at the Cinemateca”, he considers.

The process of refining a film's sound starts with a copy of the negative print, in order to try to find the best possible sound for a positive print. As such, the analog part of the film roll is as close as possible to what was origi-

nally idealized. “We should transfer the sound from a positive print, and not a negative print. Many people today scan the sound from negative print. That distorts it”, he says.

Before the pandemic, Sasso joined Rodrigo Mercês at the Cinemateca Brasileira to go through all of the film's available material. “The sound negative of this film could not be used. And there aren't any labs that carries out the photochemical processes necessary to create a positive print for it – neither in Brazil nor in all of South America”.

Technically, the solution was to transfer the soundtrack with the Cinemateca's optical sound equipment. “The quality of the print we used was quite good compared to others. I don't remember if I reviewed five or six copies. But we arrived at a very well-preserved sound matrix”, he details.

As with all restorations, the sound work is equally thorough. Excerpt by excerpt, sequence by sequence, even scene by scene, the sound was cleared of mechanical noise to eliminate any crackling. All of it done by

hand.

“A plugin can't do that. The digital world works until page 4 of a user's manual. Because, at some point, we start to create digital noise, digital artifacts in the original track. That's like curing a patient by killing him”, ponders Sasso.

The Dignity Within a Hiss

There is, for José Luiz Sasso, a limit to wiping clean the sound within an older film print. His logic is the same as explained with the context of the films' image, about which the restorer Fábio Fraccaroli explained "the dignity of a scratch". "I will call it 'the dignity of the hiss', for our purposes. A lot of people want to get rid of all that sonic impurity that was caused by the equipment at the time. But the hissing was part of the film", he acknowledges.

For Sasso, one must understand that the equipment on which *Black God, White Devil* was filmed had a narrow recording range. "The quality and frequency of response were very small. If we try to restore the sound to a pattern that didn't exist, we'll create other problems", he analyzes. "You need to know the technology of the time in order to bring it to modernity, without tampering with any technical characteristics", he teaches.

The restoration process, therefore, cannot make the mistake of seeking a perfection

that never existed. Sasso recalls that Cinema Novo, like all Brazilian production until the 1980s, suffered from poor sound quality. "And the problem even extended to a film's exhibition, since theatres had precarious sound", he warns.

The private sector only began a process of importing projection equipment, which would consequently improve the quality of the films that were seen, in the early 1990s. "It was a time when we had to do everything possible to emphasize dialog, and actually keep it intelligible."

Technically, this is a film with an original mix of five tracks at most, while a blockbuster at the time used eight. There was a limitation on the amount of simultaneous sounds a mixer could insert into the soundtrack. Not every detail of the mise-en-scène went into the final sound mix.

"You will find that ambient sound is practically non-existent in *Black God, White Devil*. The ambience was absolutely neutral. By our standards today, something seems to be



José Luiz Sasso and Toco Cerqueira

missing. During the restoration, you start noticing things that, in current film-making, are strange", says Sasso.

For him, restoration cannot be concerned with filling gaps and supplanting the technical limitations imposed by the technology with

which the film was made. *Black God, White Devil*, for example, was dubbed, because there was no direct sound recording. "What mattered was the actor's interpretation. Directors would have to prioritize between synching an actor's lips to his lines sometimes, and his on-camera performance. This is something

we need to take into account when restoring Brazilian cinema”, he advises.

Decisions, therefore, involve ethical and aesthetic issues. “How far should one interfere without changing the work in question?”, he asks. The goal is not to overly correct anything. “I always try to preserve as much of the original as possible, for aesthetic reasons.”

This aesthetic question was what guided the restoration team’s work from beginning to end, recognizing how central the look and feel of it was in Glauber’s filmography. In the name of this aesthetic, it was, in fact, possible to rescue the clinical, inventive and subversive gaze of the creator of *Black God, White Devil*. 21st century viewers will be able to watch a work that remains embedded in the national culture return to life in light, shadow, depth, sound and all that built a vision that would change the course of Brazilian cinema.





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