



OFFICIAL SELECTION
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL
ROTTERDAM
2017



2017 | 81 min | Chile | Spanish | Drama

Family Life

A FILM BY

CRISTIÁN JIMÉNEZ
(BONSAI, VOICEOVER)

ALICIA SCHERSON
(IL FUTURO, TOURISTS)

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LOGLINE

While housesitting for a distant cousin, a lonely man fabricates the existence of a vindictive ex-wife withholding his daughter in order to gain the sympathy of the single mother he has just met.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

When a married couple decides to move to France with their young daughter for a few months, they ask a distant cousin, Martín, to housesit and take care of their cat. At 40 years old, Martín has no kids, no wife, and no job. Despite Martín's brooding and strange demeanor, the family dismisses any doubts they have and leave the house in his care. Left to his own devices, Martín spends his days indoors chain-smoking, looking through their belongings, trying on their clothes, and moving the furniture around how he likes. Slowly, Martín becomes seduced by the idea of family life, treating the house as if it's his own.

One day, the cat goes missing. Martín goes out searching for him and falls for Pachi, an attractive single mother. He brings her to the house and wins her over by posing as a divorcee who doesn't get to see his daughter because of his vindictive ex-wife. Before long, Pachi is bringing her young son over to the house, turning their casual fling into domestic bliss. As the imminent return of the real family gets closer and closer, Martín's pseudo-family begins to unravel.



DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

Family life is a comfortable, stable, but sometimes overwhelming everyday experience. It is also an idea, an imaginary place for us to desire, despise, or fear.

In this movie, there is a real family carrying all the weight of its reality, and a fake one carelessly floating around a house that has become an empty stage. The *mise-en-scène* explores the tensions between the artificial and the real, because that's what family always is: an instinct and a simulation.

The point of view at the beginning of the film seems to be the family's. Martín is just an outsider, a random visitor. However, when the family leaves, the camera opts to stay home with Martín. At first, Martín inhabits the house like a stranger, looking around with indifference, but the house progressively takes control over him. The place he originally despised proves to be more fascinating than he could ever predict. He begins to follow the routines of the family and take control of their belongings. He follows the traces left behind by them, which indicate the existence of a kind of life he is secretly attracted to. It is an attraction underlined by mystery, but also nostalgia, tenderness, and vertigo. Until he lets himself fall.

When the family returns, everything returns to normal - but only on the surface. Suspicion permeates the air. The flow is corrupted, contaminated. Something is wrong, but they cannot tell what it is. It is an intuition, a bad omen maybe. They do their best effort to continue as if nothing had happened, but the house itself has changed. The real family feels as if they could no longer perform the most ordinary actions (eating, reading, making love) naturally.

As if they were a fake family, performing for an audience.

- Alicia Scherson & Cristián Jiménez



ALICIA SCHERSON

Co-Director / Co-Writer



Alicia Scherson was born in Santiago, Chile, in 1974. After graduating as a biologist, she studied filmmaking at the Escuela de Cine de Cuba (EICTV). She then received an MFA from the University of Illinois in Chicago. In 2003, she founded the production company La Ventura. Alicia's debut, *Play* (2005), won multiple awards including the Best New Narrative Filmmaker Award at the Tribeca Film Festival and the Independent Camera Award at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. Her second film, *Turistas* (2009), premiered at the Rotterdam Film Festival and won the New Director's Showcase Award at the Seattle International Film Festival. Her latest film, *Il Futuro* (2013), was an adaptation of Roberto Bolaño's *Una novelita lumpen* and premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. The film also won the KNF Prize at the Rotterdam Film Festival.

CRISTIÁN JIMÉNEZ

Co-Director / Co-Writer



Cristián Jiménez was born in Valdivia (Chile) in 1975. Before becoming a filmmaker, he studied sociology.

His latest film *La Voz En Off* (Voice Over, 2014) premiered in Toronto and San Sebastián. He also wrote and directed *Bonsái* (2011), which premiered in Cannes, *Un Certain Regard*, and *Ilusiones Ópticas* (Optical Illusions, 2009), which premiered in San Sebastián. He also directed the award-winning TV series *El Reemplazante* (The Substitute Teacher, 2012-13) and more recently *Bichos Raros* (Weirdos), a series co-produced by Chile and Argentina.

As a child, he dreamt of being a stand up comedian.

CAST



JORGE BECKER (Martín) has been working in theater, dance, film and TV since 2000. He co-founded the theater company Teatro en Blanco, along with Guillermo Calderón, Paula Zuñiga and Trinidad Gonzalez. Their staged plays include *La Reunion*, in coproduction with Santiago a Mil, and *Diciembre* and *Neva*, both of which received national and international attention. In 2011, he played Hamlet, directed by Gustavo Meza. His film roles include *Thursday Till Sunday*, by Dominga Sotomayor; *Litoral*, by Raúl Ruiz; and *El Bosque de Karadima*, by Matias Lira. His latest film *Family Life*, by Alicia Scherson and Cristián Jiménez, will premiere at the Sundance Film Festival.



GABRIELA ARANCIBIA (Pachi) has developed her career as an actress in theater and cinema, dancer, performer and teacher. In theater, she has been a part of the company Teatro del Territorio and has worked with the Samoan choreographer Lemi Ponifasio, with whom she has had residencies in Chile, France, Austria and Germany.

On film, her roles include *Bonsái*, by Cristián Jiménez; *Niño Rojo*, by Ricardo Larraín; *Las Plantas*, by Roberto Doveris; *Family Life*, by Alicia Scherson and Cristián Jiménez; and *The Verses of Oblivion*, by Alireza Khatami.



CRISTIÁN CARVAJAL (Bruno) has been in a range of films, plays, and TV series since 2003. As a stage actor, he has performed in more than 40 theatrical projects under the most renowned Chilean directors. In 2006, he joined the Company Teatro de Chile, along with Manuela Infante and Hector Morales, among others. On TV, he stars in several television series including *Gen Mishima*, *12 Days*, *Karma*, and *Women's Prison*, and has had roles in films including *Román's Circuit*, *Dog Meat*, *Blood*, and *Gloria*. He has received several nominations and prizes for his acting work in theater, film, and TV.



BLANCA LEWIN (Consuelo) started her career on the TV series *Tic Tac*. Since then, her career has skyrocketed, making her one of the most renowned actresses in Chile. She has been in numerous television series including *Lorana*, *La Fiera*, *Romané*, *Lola*, and *Feroz*, to name a few. She was awarded the Best Actress Award at the Mannheim-Heidelberg International Film Festival for her performance in the movie *Sabado*, by Matías Bize. She has also had roles in films including *In Bed*, by Matías Bize; *New Brooklyn*, by Christopher Cannucciari; and *The Life of Fish*, by Matías Bize. Besides acting, Blanca is also a columnist for the magazine *El Periodista*.

CREDITS

CAST

Martín	Jorge Becker
Pachi	Gabriela Arancibia
Consuelo	Blanca Lewin
Bruno	Cristián Carbajal
Sofi	Adara Casassus
Seba	Lucas Miranda
Rafa	Alejandro Zambra
Rosita	Alejandra Yañez
Alicia	Maria Siebald

CREW

Directed by	Alicia Scherson Cristián Jiménez
Written by	Alejandro Zambra Alicia Scherson Cristián Jiménez
Producers	Carlos Olivares Fernando Bascuñán
Associate Producers	Daniel Hammer Rodrigo Terc Pablo Egaña
Cinematography	Cristián Petit Laurent
Art Direction	Jorge Zambrano
Costume Designer	Javiera Espinosa
Editing	Soledad Salfate
Original Music	Caroline Chaspoul Eduardo Henríquez
Production Company	Peso Pluma