



NASTY BABY

A FILM BY SEBASTIÁN SILVA



NASTY BABY

USA, 2015, Drama, English, 100', Camera: Epic, Audio: 5.1, Screening format: DCP

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SYNOPSIS

Nasty Baby centers on a Brooklyn couple, Freddy and his boyfriend Mo, who are trying to have a baby with the help of their best friend, Polly. The film follows the trio as they navigate the idea of creating life while confronted by growing harassment from a menacing local known as 'The Bishop.' As things take a dark turn, their joyous pursuit of parenthood is suddenly clouded.



“I fell in love with Kristen instantly. I thought she was the brightest, funniest woman ever! We hit it off immediately and became really great friends right away. It was such an immediate type of chemistry and we share a similar sensibility and sense of humor”.

SEBASTIÁN SILVA

“Alia Shawkat (who plays Wendy in the film) suggested that I meet Sebastian to talk about the movie and the possibility of playing Mo. Sebastian outlined the story for me and I was so repelled by it that I agreed to do it immediately”.

TUNDE ADEBIMPE

“I think Sebastian is a revolutionary filmmaker. He is a true artist. As far as the script, I loved the story and the relationships I thought were just very interesting and unique”.

KRISTEN WIIG





INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR SEBASTIÁN SILVA

Nasty Baby is a real document of my current lifestyle in Brooklyn, an irresponsible little essay about gentrification and parenthood, and ultimately a fun, manipulative experiment that I hope leaves you morally confused.

With this film, I wanted to explore what happens when a gay couple and their female friend decide they're desperate to have a baby. These three dynamic, fun characters live in Brooklyn and typify the neighborhood. Life here is vibrant – you see artists and yuppies; multi-racial couples; public projects next to million dollar brownstones. People are calling Brooklyn the 'new' Manhattan. But this gentrified lifestyle is stamping out humble neighborhoods, and we're ignoring a harder, poorer existence. Nasty Baby is a very agile movie – lots of action, movement, quick cuts. The suspense hits you just as you've started falling in love with the characters. Like my previous films, they are real individuals with complexities and depth, and viewers are dropped into their lives. It's the build up of the tension – the play between the trio and The Bishop – that elevates this story. What steps will they take to create life and potentially protect life, at all costs? We want the audience to be so fully engaged with the characters that they will have trouble condemning the trio in the end.

What was your inspiration for NASTY BABY?

I once lived in a neighborhood where there was this one guy who would hang out outside my building and was really violent, especially towards women. He was a really nasty presence in the neighborhood, which was very friendly and generally quiet. This guy just showed up and slowly started terrorizing everyone. I remember being so annoyed by how noisy he was, and how he would make people feel uncomfortable. I had never had the real desire to kill anyone before, until I started fantasizing about how it would be so easy to get rid of this man without any consequences, namely because everybody detested him, he didn't have anyone, and he wasn't very mentally stable. In the beginning, the title of this film was going to be "I Can Kill," and in my mind, this was a film that I always knew that I would be in.

So I wrote this story about a man who detests his neighbor, but then the story became something completely different. It became a story about my neighborhood, the place where I live, and the life that I have. Several of the locations are scenarios that I am very familiar with, although the story of three friends trying to make a baby is entirely fictional. The idea for my character Freddy's art project "Nasty Baby" was also something that I had been carrying around for a while. I remember I was once invited to something called "The Week of Dance", and

the curators asked me to do a performance dance piece. One idea I thought of doing was a piece where I act like a baby in front of an audience and make them feel extremely uncomfortable. You know how nasty it gets when people baby talk to each other? I wanted to take "baby talk" to its nastiest extreme, so that the performance would make people extremely uncomfortable and embarrassed for me. That idea was so perfect for this film: that the artist was developing this performance because of his obsession with becoming a biological father.

How does this film relate to your previous works, and how does it connect with what you've done in the past?

This film connects to my previous films, specifically to CRYSTAL FAIRY, in the way that it was shot. Neither film had a formal screenplay; all we used was a treatment that outlined the main events in the story. The rest was improvised, which accounts for the spontaneity that went into creating both films. Another similarity is that neither film has any heroes or villains. My characters' roles are more open for interpretation. I like that it's unclear whether I am judging them or identifying with them.

How do you balance directing and acting in your films?

In a couple of my movies in the past I directed entirely





behind the monitor, where you watch exactly what is being shot as it's happening. But in this movie, I definitely had to be on set because I was acting as well. I didn't really have much time to watch the playback and it was more practical to just trust Kristen, Tunde and my DP. We let each other know if we were making fools of ourselves, or messing up. I decided not to re-watch each scene after we shot it, but instead immersed myself in the acting of the scene and sensing the reality of the moments. By just being in the scene I could figure out if something felt fake or real. That aspect was very interesting for me. I was also able to find a way of directing from within the scene itself. For example, I was able to speed up actions by initiating them in a scene. That was a revelation I had, that I could direct a lot through my acting. It was really exhausting - if I ever act again I will give myself twice the time I gave myself on this movie.

In your film your character is an artist. Why did you think bringing that performance art into the film was important?

I wanted Freddy to be an unsuccessful artist. He's going to be part of a collective show, and we see how his original idea is not as bad as the mediocre final product. I liked the idea of incorporating how in Brooklyn or New York there are so many young people who are doing

the most random things; they're leading their lives by making Nasty Baby videos or painting genitals and taking pictures of them! People do weird shit in NY. It's such an elitist group that can do and live a life like that. Most people in the world have to do a real job to make money and make a living, but in New York you have people who are doing the most whimsical things. I felt that having the main character be a conceptual artist doing this video, and then suddenly being confronted by such a real type of person as The Bishop was important. It's like having somebody in your gentrified neighborhood who is sort of staining your perfect reality of conceptual art, iPhones and cappuccinos. I thought it was good to give the main character a brushstroke like that; he's doing something that nobody needs.

Can you discuss some of the themes explored in the film?

The morals of the film are very blurry. I don't explicitly say what I want people to make of my characters or story – by design there is specifically not any type of moral conclusion to the story or the characters. The film is so nonchalant about this gay couple trying to have a baby this modern way. We never judge it. It's not addressed that they are gay and trying to make a baby – the film forces the audience to accept this as normal.

But then these are also very irresponsible characters – hipsters who do something terrible with seemingly no consequences. So you have to wonder which side the director is on? What are the morals? Is he supporting this gay couple, or is he saying these monsters could never have a proper family because they did something unspeakable and so are unprepared to be responsible for another person? I feel the open moral conflict that the film leaves is something to talk about. It might be too hermetic or leave too much of an aftertaste for some people, but for me I really like the open moral conflict that the movie leaves.

Socially, I think it is good that the movie is portraying gay marriage, and exploring race. The movie was never about being or not being a homosexual. I am completely taking for granted that they are a gay couple. It's not relevant to the story at all. It's also very progressive in the way that it's treating race, that it's not even paying attention to who's black and who's white. I find that interesting. I also find the subject of gentrification is very interesting in the film, like what is happening in Brooklyn or any city that is growing so fast. It looks at how people are being displaced from their original homes, and displaced by rich kids buying everything. This film is a fable and lesson for these hipsters.

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

Crystal Fairy (2013)

Winner of the Directing Award (Sundance)

Magic Magic (2013)


Old Cats (2010)

The Maid (2009)

Winner of the Grand Jury Prize (Sundance)

La Vida Me Mata (2007)





“I asked Tunde, “would you be my boyfriend in a movie?” and he said “Yeah man, I’ll be your boyfriend!”. We both love to draw cartoons and he just seemed like the perfect person to play the role of Mo. We both kind of play a version of ourselves in the movie”.

SEBASTIÁN SILVA

“My long term memory is abysmal, but we still like each other, so it must have been fantastic? I ’m pretty sure it was fantastic. I ’m 98% sure it was fantastic”.

TUNDE ADEBIMPE

“Sebastián Silva is incredibly collaborative on set”.

KRISTEN WIIG

CAST & CREDITS

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <i>Written and directed by</i> | Sebastián Silva |
| <i>Produced by</i> | Juan de Dios Larraín and Pablo Larraín |
| <i>Executive producer</i> | Peter Danner - Pape Boye - Violaine Pichon |
| <i>Executive producer</i> | Sebastián Silva - Christine Vachon |
| <i>Producer</i> | Charlie Dibe - David Hinojosa - Julia Oh |
| <i>Co Producer</i> | Alia Shawkat |
| <i>Edited by</i> | Sofía Subercaseaux |
| <i>Cinematography by</i> | Sergio Armstrong (ADFCH) |
| <i>Music by</i> | Danny Bensi and Saunder Jurriaans |
| <i>Creative Consultant</i> | Pedro Peirano |
| <i>Costume Design by</i> | Mark Grattan |
| <i>Production Design by</i> | Nico Arze |
| <i>Casting by</i> | Jessica Daniels, CSA & Katja Blichfeld, CSA |
| <i>Cast</i> | Agustin Silva - Chino Alia Shawkat - Wendy Anthony Chisolm - Mo's Father Kristen Wiig - Polly Lillias White - Cecilia Neal Huf - Gallery Owner Mark Margolis - Richard Reg E. Cathey - The Bishop Sebastián Silva - Freddy Tunde Adebimpe - Mo |





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