

## Mannheim-Heidelberg 2004

### coming soon

- Sofia
- Fribourg
- Mar del Plata
- Guadalajara
- Toulouse
- Hong Kong
- Istanbul
- Singapore

### The Burden of Disappointment By Nabeeha Lotfy

*The Murmuring Coast* (*A Costa dos Murmúrios*) by Portuguese director Margarida Cardoso is a film about love, complex feelings and clash emotions. It is also a film about power, blind folded ideas, subordinations, revolt, independence, vanity, pride, struggle and defeat. All this is wrapped up in a bundle of controversies and ready to fall apart.

We meet Evita who is coming from Portugal to Africa in order to marry her Louis, the sensitive mathematician she loves. The bride opens her eyes. She sees Angola, a fading star in the sky of the Portuguese empire. Louis in his military service is reflecting a different picture: "My captain should deal with them, teach them a lesson." And the captain to whom Louis is looking with admiration says: "We should finish them." Evita, the disappointed bride, swallows up her disappointment but she is terrified. "Her husband wants her to accept the facts of that life." "Don't be naïve; we cannot deliver the country to the enemy." "But if the land belongs to the enemy, why not?" She refuses the new facts. They had built their facts together when they were still in Portugal. But here in Africa the arguments are different, "It is not their country. We made it what it is, let them go back to the jungle."



Evita's dream is collapsing, the clash of ideas gets harder than she is able to bear and the battle of emotions grows stronger. She loves Louis, but she asks questions: Where is he? Who is this stranger? What are these people doing here? In all that turmoil the film goes quietly from one storm to another, keeping the low key of expression till the end. It is a film about war, with no fighting scenes, yet those who fight the war on the only side we can see and hear, have ideas that keep the war going. The war is hidden, we do not see the enemy, yet we feel its heavy load through the split on the conqueror's side.

Evita's dilemma never reaches the height of hysterics, it stays inside. The volcano is about to erupt at any time, but it doesn't. She is watching, she is fending and fighting her own battle of resistance, delicately and with a great care for love. Every object is dear to her, every object is vulnerable. Her ideas, her love for Louis, her love for freedom, her self esteem, they are fighting inside making her battle bitter and heavy but always quiet. So there are no screams, no loud outbursts, and no battle scenes. All emotions are boiling inside the people motivating their actions and behavior.

When Louis comes back from battle, tired and defeated, she

### recent festivals

- Berlin (daily coverage)
- Miami
- Göteborg
- Rotterdam
- Sundance
- Tromsø
- Bangkok
- Mumbai

● archive

### Mannheim 2004

Borderline Experiences

A Certain Tendency

Wars, Gangsters and Corruption in Transition

Doo Wop

*The Murmuring Coast*

welcomes him calmly but with a broken heart. When victory is announced by broadcast, he tells her "it is a bluff, a load of shit." She feels that she regains him and the sensitive love of her life, but love is not always enough. The loss is too big to swallow. Evita keeps her eyes and heart open; she loves that bright yellow country. But Louis has his eyes open during the defeat that is the real tragedy. When Evita is called to identify Louis' body at the shore she looks at the dead man under the cover. We look into her face and we see that she leaves Louis at the shore. She is quiet but the burden is too heavy. The wrapped up bundle of all the conflicts is scattered in the air when this feeling of emptiness is concentrated. She keeps repeating to herself: "I know who you are, you are the best" looking at the man who did not leave and did not run away, but was unable to face it all.

When Margarida Cordoso was asked how to characterize a good film she answered: "Something that comes from inside, from the fields of doubts and uncertainties, because that is the field where human beings normally reside."

In a way she was describing the construction of her film completely built on inner reflections of outraging events and disturbing changes, with conflicts as the basis of relations and the ignition of inside emotions, love, hate, pity, sorrow, revenge, challenge but most of all the uncertainty which marks the wrapped bundle.

We end up with everything at the end of the rope, that's why the film has taken that slow and quiet pace. It is the pace of fatigue. Everybody is exhausted, even the country itself. Everybody is falling apart even the winners. Everybody is at a loss. This film tells not only the story of a woman, but of a whole clash of logics and civilizations with a pacific analysis for an extremely violent situation. The flames are burning inside and they really hurt.

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