

COBRADORES, a contemporary drama by Fabien Oliva

Statement of intention

On the day Marco, twenty five years old, goes out of jail, his older brother Ignacio, dressed up as a Sheriff, picks him up in a Ford Mustang. Marco learns by Ignacio that while he was serving his sentence, his family set up a debt collection agency which became prosperous. At their mother's orders, Ignacio asks his brother to join the family business, Cobranzas del Oeste (the western collectors). But Marco, outraged by the nature of the business and revolted by his brother's choice, refuses.

Upon his return to his mobile home where he lives with his wife and daughter, Marco stumbles upon two former corrupted prison guards, threatening to kill his family if he doesn't pay off a prison trafficking debt.

Reluctantly, and with an agenda of his own, Marco decides to join Las Cobranzas del Oeste. Ignacio teaches him the job, but the first recovery operation that they launch confronts them to a bad debtor who plays dead and two fake collectors who were not initially part of the plan.

Since 1988, many companies in Spain have been created using the same pattern as the Cobrador del Frac (the debt collector in top hat and tails) - a collection agency which harasses bad debtors until debt is repaid. There is the El Torero del Moroso ("The Bullfighter of the Bad Debtor") whose collectors appear in bullfighter costumes. Those from El Monasterio del Cobro ("The Monastery of Recovery") are wearing 18th century monk robes and Zorro Cobrador sends men wearing masks and black capes and driving advertising cars. This list of debt collection agencies, which are sometimes very small businesses, has been growing as the Spanish crisis goes on. Nowadays bad debtors can expect to get not-so-discreet visits from clowns, town criers, bagpipe players, monkeys, etc.

I imagined a debt collection agency that pushes cynicism all the way through its name and its costumes: Cobranzas del Oeste (Western Debt Collection). It could not better reflect the nonsense of this farce and the absence of rules in which these businesses operate. In this jungle, outlawed practices are considered more effective than the law itself, and they beget characters fitting bounty hunters and lex talionis. My project *Cobradores* stylizes this real-life starting point using the western genre's codes and creates a contemporary version of the mythological world of the spaghetti westerns - where bounty hunters, having the appearance of men of law, hide, fearing neither God or men.

Locations

The story takes us from a town setting, where the Sheriff's only purpose is to harass and publicly humiliate bad debtors, to an abandoned poblado in Cabo de Gata, the natural setting for spaghetti westerns where the national myth of the pioneers and mercenaries of America has been replayed countless times.

Direction

Film-making is a subtle balance between overall creative energy, the director's intention and the production resources available. The subject of the movie being rooted in the reality of contemporary Spain, the first draft of the script was written in Spanish. Obviously, I also intend to shoot in Spanish. After developing and rewriting a final draft of the script, I will look for locations suiting the story in the desert of Tabernas and the surrounding abandoned poblados. I would like those locations to be natural, authentic, and located mainly outdoors (no set construction will be needed).



COBRADORES, a contemporary drama by Fabien Oliva

The chosen locations will provide a source of inspiration and allow me to produce the most accurate and significant shooting schedule possible. The poblados will call for wide angle shots, following the codes of the western genre. The locations will allow the actors to move around freely. They will also enable me to work with natural elements, like wind and dust. I want to film men evolving in a natural environment, hostile and dry - almost post-apocalyptic - and also express the hostile nature of men when the social contract breaks up.

The story takes place over a period of time of one day, under the Andalusian sun which will be a character of its own. One of the main issues of the photography will be to give us an account of the sun's curve, scene after scene, to give us an account of the time passing by.

We will have to organize rehearsals in order to help the actors find their marks, so they can start working together in an open-minded way, communicating between each other, and respecting each other's creative energy. I will encourage my actors to pace their intentions, to show restraint, in order to contrast with the explosion of violence and feelings. We will be looking for the tone of each scene together.

For a more spontaneous acting, I also want to participate in maintaining a work-driven but joyful atmosphere on the set, so that the actors can feel at ease and let themselves loose. The 1st AD will have to organize the set so that I can focus on my directing and rehearsing with the actors directly on the set, which should inspire and stimulate them.

Marco is an impulsive and silent character, marked by years in jail. His older brother Ignacio is bursting with joy thinking about becoming Marco's mentor. Marta's role is very tenuous, both subtle and brutal. Her character has very few lines but her presence and looks will be explicit and decisive. The two guards are complementary characters: Dario, who's very talkative and affable, represents evil's ordinariness; Coyote, silent - maybe dumb - is his right-hand man, archetype of the "villain" Aldo Sambrell-style.

I will be very flexible in adapting my technical cutting process in order to better capture the actors suggestions. Following my indications, the crew will have to adapt. Rehearsals will be there to help synchronize this choreography. I don't like to have too many takes in order not to break the crew's energy and concentration.

The soundtrack will be entirely instrumental. The music composed by Red Bob will gradually develop into a powerful and organic sound, with rock influences. It will reveal the tone of the script and will help the sound editing process. I like to think of the music composer as a co-director: I'd like to play music on the set, to inspire the rhythm of the movie and put it into a choreography. Masters like Michael Powell, Stanley Kubrick and Sergio Leone did so in their time.



COBRADORES, a contemporary drama by Fabien Oliva

Crew members

CHIEF CAMERAMAN Sébastien Pinsard
FILM COMPOSER Boris Bakik
ACTOR Francisco Javier Pinto Sánchez
ACTOR Pablo de la Chica
ACTOR Gabriel Burgao Flores

Francisco Javier Pinto Sánchez known as Javier Pinto, is a Spanish actor, TV host and voice-over artist. After training in Spain, France and North America, he got the leading role of the upcoming Spanish movie *El Manuscrito*. Previously, he worked as an actor in several short films, TV series and movies. He also participated in the 2012 thriller *The Cold Light of Day*.



Light on ...



In addition to his film studies, **Fabien Oliva** is a researcher at the Institut National de l'Audiovisuel (or INA, French for National Audio-visual Institute). He directed the movie for the Bartabas equestrian show *Entr'aperçu* and co-wrote the show *Gina Razzini's Death*. He also directed two short films that both received awards: *Bird's Gallantry* and *Lola Waterloo*.