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18 Holes to Paradise

a film directed by JOÃO NUNO PINTO

Press Kit

18 Holes to Paradise

World Premiere
29th Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival



Genre
Narrative Feature

Year
2025

Running time
108 mins

Countries of production
Portugal, Italy, Argentina

Language
Portuguese, Italian

Starring
**Margarida Marinho (Francisca), Beatriz Batarda (Catarina),
Rita Cabaço (Susana), Jorge Andrade (Lourenço)**

Production companies
Wonder Maria Filmes, Albolina Film, Aurora Cine

• HI-RES IMAGES •



Logline

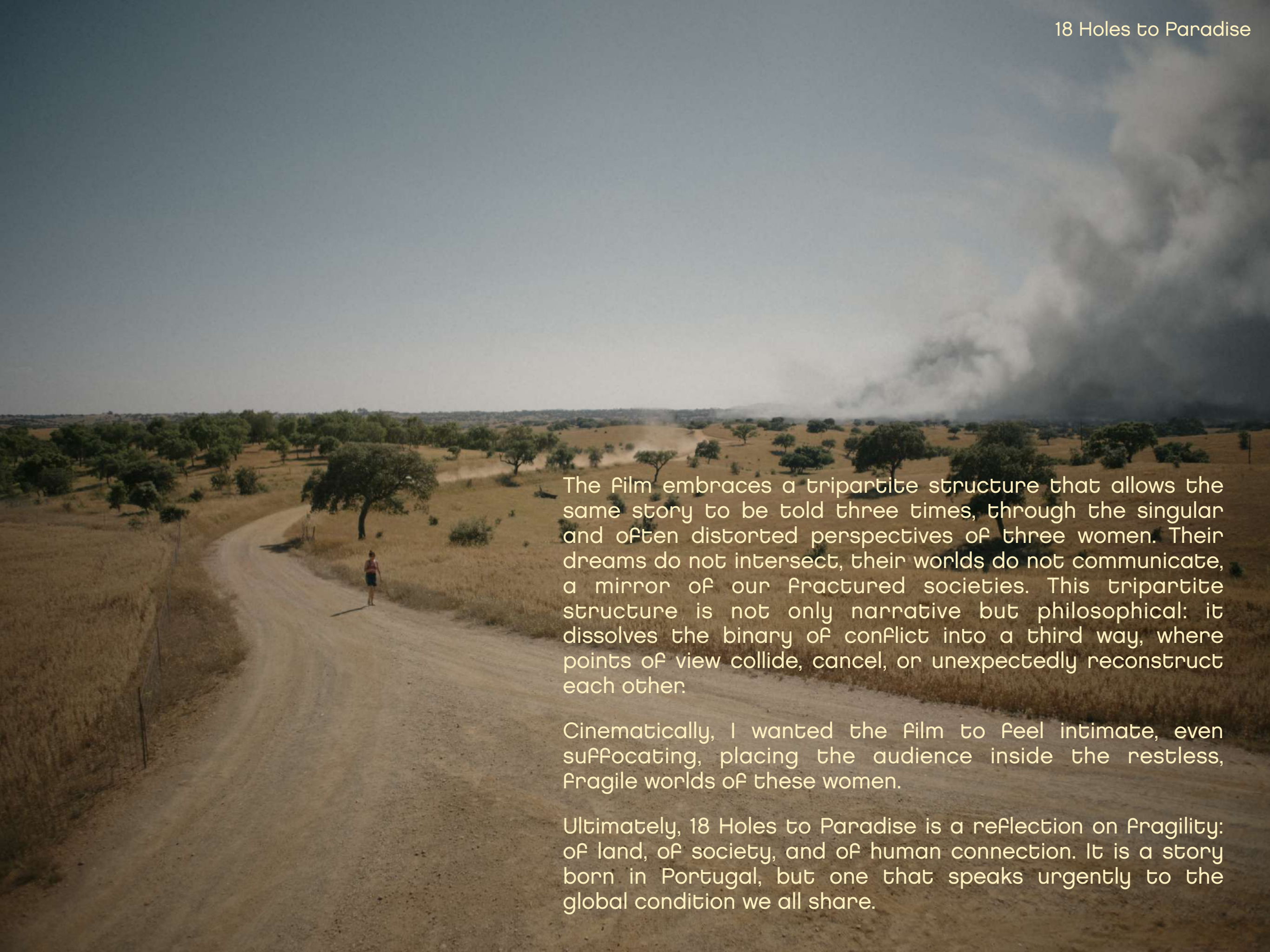
In a drought-stricken Portuguese estate, landowners and servants recount the same story from irreconcilable perspectives, revealing a fractured world on the edge of collapse.

Directors' note

18 Holes to Paradise was born out of a long-standing desire to reflect on the environmental catastrophe we are witnessing; not as an abstract threat, but as a daily reality. Since moving to the arid Alentejo region of Portugal in 2020, I have lived side by side with a community facing drought, desertification, and the pressures of tourism and real estate speculation. I have witnessed a landscape where streams no longer fill, grass no longer grows, and the anxiety of the absence of water. This local reality echoes a global crisis.

The film is, at its core, about the fire — both literal and metaphorical — born from predatory thinking, a mindset that continues to dominate and drive us toward an abyss.

Narratively, 18 Holes to Paradise unfolds as a multi-character story. In the first two acts, the landowners' perspective shapes the narrative, while the servants remain almost invisible, moving through the house and grounds only as guardians of property. In the final act, the roles reverse: the servants' voices emerge, shifting the story's balance and reconfiguring our perception of everything that came before.



The Film embraces a tripartite structure that allows the same story to be told three times, through the singular and often distorted perspectives of three women. Their dreams do not intersect, their worlds do not communicate, a mirror of our fractured societies. This tripartite structure is not only narrative but philosophical: it dissolves the binary of conflict into a third way, where points of view collide, cancel, or unexpectedly reconstruct each other.

Cinematically, I wanted the Film to feel intimate, even suffocating, placing the audience inside the restless, fragile worlds of these women.

Ultimately, 18 Holes to Paradise is a reflection on fragility: of land, of society, and of human connection. It is a story born in Portugal, but one that speaks urgently to the global condition we all share.

Cast

Francisca **Margarida Marinho**
Catarina **Beatriz Batarda**
Susana **Rita Cabaço**
Lourenço **Jorge Andrade**

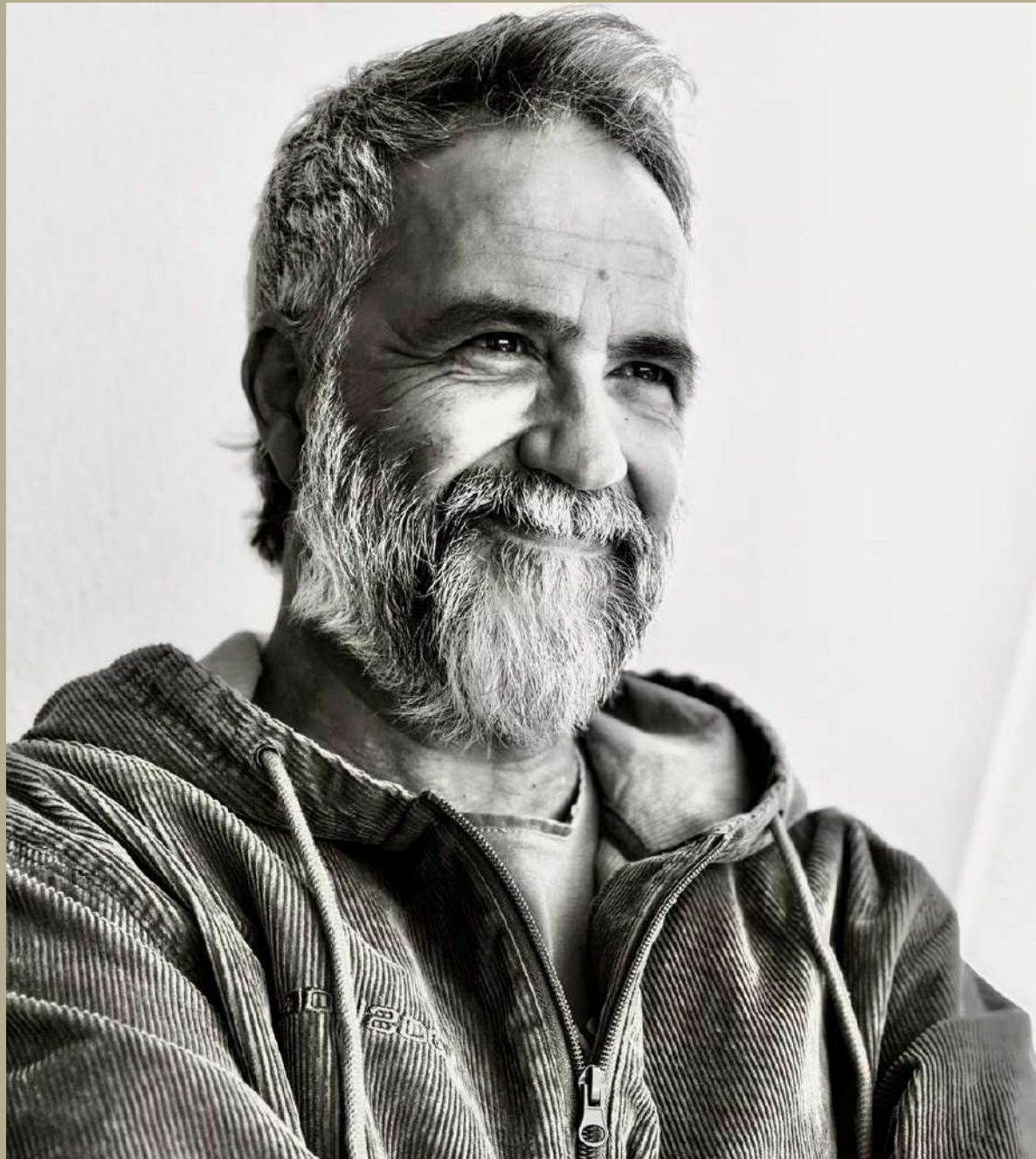
Diretor **João Nuno Pinto**
Screenplay **Fernanda Polacow**
Editing **Rosario Suárez & João Nuno Pinto**
DOP **Kamil Plocki**
Music **Ginevra Nervi**
Sound design **Tiago Raposinho**
Sound **Samuele Zandron**
Production design **Isabel Branco**
Costumes **Lucha D'Orey**
Make-Up **Marija Pavlovic**
Casting **Ricardo Moura**

Producer **Andreia Nunes** Wonder Maria Filmes (Portugal)
Co-producers **Roberto Cavallini, Debora Nischler** Albolina Film (Italy)
Laura Huberman, Ramiro Pavón Aurora Cine (Argentina)

With the participation and support of
ICA; PIC Portugal; Ministero della Cultura; IDM Film Commission Südtirol;
INCAA; Mecenazgo; RTP; NOS; Câmara Municipal de Serpa

18 Holes to Paradise is a  **GREEN FILM**

JOÃO NUNO PINTO (director)



João Nuno (b. 1969, Mozambique) is a Portuguese Film director currently living in Lisbon. He began his career in design and art direction before establishing an international reputation as a director of TV commercials. Alongside commercial work, Pinto has consistently pursued more personal projects, directing music videos, shorts, and Feature Films that explore identity, displacement, and the impact of history on the present.

His debut Feature, *América* (2010), an ironic portrait of Portugal seen through the eyes of illegal immigrants, premiered at the Rio International Film Festival and won multiple accolades, including Best Director at the Sofia International Film Festival and Best Cinematography at IndieLisboa. His second Feature, *Mosquito* (2020), inspired by his grandfather's experience in Mozambique during World War I, opened the International Film Festival Rotterdam and went on to win the Critics' Award for Best International Film at the Mostra de São Paulo International Film Festival. João Nuno Pinto made his television debut with the crime drama TV series *Natural Law*, for the Portuguese broadcaster RTP1, which became the network's top-rated scripted program and won the Sophia Award for Best Portuguese TV Series.

18 Holes to Paradise, his third Feature, continues this trajectory, combining social and environmental concerns with an intimate cinematic approach. It is the first Portuguese Film internationally certified with the Green Film sustainability label.

Wonder Maria Filmes is a boutique production company Founded in 2020 by four longtime friends, dedicated to bold, author-driven cinema with a strong focus on people and vision. Recent highlights include the upcoming feature *18 Holes to Paradise* (29th PÖFF BNFF, 40th Mar del Plata IFF), *Honeyjoon* (winner of TRIBECA / AT&T Untold Stories 2024), shorts like *We Made a Film* (IndieLisboa 2024 Short Public Award) and *Alive and Dead* (Lisbon Screenings – IndieLisboa 2024), and documentaries such as *Them*, *Fado Bicha* (IndieLisboa 2024, Porto Queer, Thessaloniki premiere). Previous successes include *Big Bang Henda* (awards at Le FIFA, FICA, Kinoarte) and *Terra (In)submissa* (Museum of Aljube). Currently in development are *Sun in Saturn* (CNC Pitch Award, Best Debut Project at Dot.On.The.Map), *Oriana* (first Portuguese project at Cinekid Script Lab), *Sarah* (co-production with Senegal and Guinea Bissau), *Atropical Energy* (Torino Script Lab 2024), *Under My Skin* (Cannes Semaine de la Critique NEXT STEP), and the mockumentary series *Porta Premium* for RTP.

Albolina Film was established in 2012 as a film production and service company based in Bolzano (South Tyrol, Italy).

Since 2020 we produced and co-produced more than 10 feature films, TV series and documentaries, among others with Latvia (*SISTERS* by Linda Olte Best Film in '1-2' competition and FIPRESCI award at Warsaw Film Festival in 2022), Austria (*VISTA MARE* by Julia Gutweniger and Florian Kofler, world premiere at the Semaine de la Critique in Locarno 2023, Best Italian Doc at Festival dei Popoli 2023) Luxembourg (*MARIANENGRABEN* by Eileen Byrne, world premiere at Hamburg FF 2024), Germany (*COSÌ COM'È* by Antonello Scarpelli, Best Film at Gabbiano Competition at Bellaria FF 2025).

We are a member of the European Producers Club and AGICI - Producers Guild of Italy, and our team has memberships with the EWA, EAVE, FAS South Tyrol, European Film Academy. Since 2025, Albolina has been jointly owned 50/50 by Raetia Edition Publishing House and Studio Hamburg Production Group.

Aurora Cine Based in Buenos Aires, Founded by Laura Huberman, a producer, screenwriter, and director with a long career, who produced *Presente Imperfecto* (Iair Said. Cannes 2015), *55 pastillas* (Sebastián Muro. Orizzonti Venecia 2016), *Alanís* (Anahí Berneri. San Sebastián 2017), *Implosión* (Javier Van de Couter. BaFici 2021), *The Dog Who Wouldn't Be Quiet* (Ana Katz, Sundance 2021) among others; and Ramiro Pavón, producer of *The Dog Who Wouldn't Be Quiet* (Ana Katz, Sundance 2021), *Malta* (Natalia Santa. SXSW), and *The Perfect David* (Felipe Gómez Aparicio, Tribeca) among others. They are currently developing projects by Agustina Comedi, Renzo Cozz and Julia Solomonoff.



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