



Tales of Two Who Dreamt

Andrea Bussmann, Nicolás Pereda

Producer Nicolás Pereda, Andrea Bussmann, Dan Montgomery. **Production companies** Nicolás Pereda (New York, USA), Andrea Bussmann (New York, USA), Medium Density Fibreboard Films (MDFF) (Toronto, Canada). **Written and directed by** Andrea Bussmann, Nicolás Pereda. **Director of photography** Noe Rodríguez, Andrea Bussmann. **Editor** Andrea Bussmann. **Sound** Dan Montgomery.

With Sandor Laska, Sandorné Laska, Timea Laska, Alexander Laska, Jozsef Radics, Orsika Radics, Jennyfer Radics, Dani Laska, Norbi Tokes, Viki Laska.

DCP, black/white. 87 min. Hungarian.

Premiere 16 February 2016, Berlinale Forum

Once upon a time, there was an aging tower block in Toronto, a place where people would wait for their asylum applications to be processed, a place you'd hardly call inviting. The trains would rattle alongside, the police would wait by the lifts to prevent robberies and the netting before the balconies would flutter, a reminder for people not to jump. A place of hardship perhaps, but also one of imagination, for waiting offers fertile soil for legends, fables and dreams. And so the inhabitants would repeat stories to themselves, just as they would repeat what should or should not be said at their asylum hearings. There's the tale of the dog left to starve in an empty flat, the tale of the lawyer's child, and the tale of the boy who woke up to find himself transformed into a bird. You'd think all these stories could make for a mesmerising film and you'd be right, but what sort of film would it be? An observational documentary, a family portrait they themselves help mould, a Kafka-esque fairy story, the making-of the same? But there are no clear explanations here, for it is also a place of infinite shifting boundaries. If you want answers, you might as well ask the devil.

James Lattimer

The promised fortune

Tales of Two Who Dreamt is based on a fragment of a manuscript we chanced upon in the home of an archivist. It contained no mention of its author. We discerned a small note in the margin mentioning the difficulties the author appears to have had in translating it from its original language – a language whose origin we too had little familiarity with. The title on the parchment began with the words ‘A Personal Narrative From the East...’ Below we have pieced together the story as best we could.

An impoverished husband and wife from the East lived with their children in a small village at the foot of a hill. After they put their youngest child to bed, they went to their garden and sat together on the mossy ground. Oppressed and overwhelmed, they took a small amount of pleasure in making out shapes in the evening sky, before falling into a deep sleep. A kind of strange occurrence followed, as often does when one falls asleep in unusual places. That night they dreamt a dream, the same dream. In their sleep they saw an ordinary man in a fraying suit. He held open his coat, from which he pulled out a single purple peony concealed in a pocket. He said to them, ‘Truly your fortune is west of the Ilhéu de Monchique [the westernmost island of the Azores, -ed.]: therefore seek it.’

In the morning they sold their few possessions and readied their family for the long journey ahead. They had to leave quickly and quietly, for their village was not a forgiving one and the authorities would try to stop them. During their westward odyssey, they travelled through lands inhabited by all manner of strange people and met with many hardships and dangers: storms, forests, beasts, and robbers. When at last they reached the land promised to them in their dream, they took shelter in a giant tower on the outskirts of an immense city.

Exhausted, they were overtaken by the evening, and they all gathered together in a single room. Next to this room was another room left abandoned by another family who too had sought their fortunes in this tower. Leaving hastily, that family had abandoned a chained-up dog. Sometime in the night the husband awoke to that dog’s persistent barking and a flood of smoke entering their room. They fled to the corridor and into the arms of those who ruled this new land.

The men took them to a place for questioning. After three long days the Judge entered and asked the family, ‘From what country art thou?’ The father tried his best to answer in the man’s tongue, but all the Judge could discern were the words east, dream, and fortune. Impatient and frustrated, the Judge demanded to see their paperwork. But they could not understand him or what he wanted. The Translator was brought forth. A large dark-haired man with spectacles and a sly grin on his face, he told the Judge about the dream the parents had in the garden.

The Judge laughed and remarked, ‘I too have dreamed three times of a boy with the face of a bird who said to me, ‘Truly your fortune is east of Cape Spear [Newfoundland, -ed.]: therefore seek it.’ But I went not. Dreams are only the effect of confusions in the mind. I know the easternmost point of my lands is past the Cape. Under their civilised gaze they’ve claimed it as their own. But I know it sits within the West. So there, you see, it is all in the details. You’ve journeyed city to city with treasure-hunter momentum on account of something seen in sleep.’ The Judge decided to arrange to return them to the place from whence they came, for he judged them to have only stories and no evidence to prove

they did not also come from a land of (mis)fortune. But the Translator did not translate these last lines. He left the family with tickets in their hands, and images of a birdlike creature swirling in their minds.

This is as much of the story as we have been able to piece together. As we sit here, the sun is rising in the land of mornings, and a blind man stands outside the window. From his mouth he pulls a crumpled, forgotten paper, and he whispers to us: ‘A beautiful language, like all languages perhaps... when spoken by foreigners.’

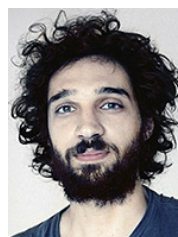
Nicolás Pereda, Andrea Bussmann



Andrea Bussmann was born in 1980 in Toronto, Canada. From 2001 to 2007, she studied Social Anthropology at York University in Canada, where she also earned a Master of Fine Arts in Film Production in 2009. *Tales of Two Who Dreamt* is her first full-length feature film.

Films

2006: *Unfinished Disposal* (6 min.). 2007: *PickMeUp* (1 min.), *The Perfect Human On The Screen* (5 min.). 2008: *Penalty* (5 min.). 2010: *I Want You to Sleep Here* (7 min.), *In The Beginning Was The Word And The Word Began With The Blueness Of The Sky* (52 min.). 2011: *He Whose Face Gives No Light* (40 min.). 2016: *Tales of Two Who Dreamt*.



Nicolás Pereda was born in 1982 in Mexico City, Mexico. He studied Film Production at York University, Canada. In 2007, he made his first film, *¿Dónde están sus historias? / Where Are Their Stories?* Since then, he has made around a dozen other works.

Films

2007: *¿Dónde están sus historias? / Where Are Their Stories?* (73 min.). 2008: *Interview with the Earth* (18 min.). 2009: *Perpetuum Mobile* (86 min.), *Juntos* (74 min.). 2010: *Summer of Goliath* (76 min.), *All Things Were Now Overtaken by Silence* (61 min.), *Summer of Goliath* (76 min.). 2012: *Greatest Hits* (100 min.). 2013: *Matar extraños / Killing Strangers* (63 min., Berlinale Forum 2013), *The Palace* (34 min.). 2014: *The Absent* (80 min.). 2015: *Minotaur* (52 min.). 2016: *Tales of Two Who Dreamt*.