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Berlin
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ISABELLE HUPPERT

CAPTIVE

A FILM BY BRILLANTE MA. MENDOZA

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A group of people are kidnapped by Islamic separatists and taken on a journey across the sea and high into mountain jungles where they are held captive for over a year, all the while dodging frequent attacks by the Filipino army.

An unbelievable adventure based on real events from the director of KINATAY (Cannes 09 Best Director), LOLA and SERBIS.

France - Philippines - UK - Germany | 2012 | 120 minutes



SYNOPSIS

At a beach resort on the island of Palawan in the Philippines, 20 guests, many of them foreign tourists, are kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), Islamic separatists fighting for the independence of another island, Mindanao. In the confusion, French social worker Therese Bourgoine and her Filipina colleague Soledad are thrown in the company of the original target of the kidnapping.

The hostages are transported by a crowded fishing boat to the island of Basilan, crossing hundreds of kilometers of the Sulu Sea over several days. During the perilous sea journey, everyone is interviewed to determine his/her ransom.

On the island of Basilan, the group is quickly pursued by the military. Refuge is short in a hospital in the city of Lamitan, as a fiery gun battle erupts. The ASG manages to escape with their hostages, also taking with them three nurses and a hospital orderly.

After an exhausting jungle trek in which both hostages and captors face the elements of nature, the group establishes a

camp deep in the mountains on Basilan Peak. ASG members and supporters, as well as civilians friendly to their cause, come and go, bringing in supplies and ammunitions. Therese and the others witness the group's commitment to their cause and their affinity to warfare.

With forces at their heels, hostages and captors are constantly on the run, leaving behind one temporary camp after the other. Due to the indiscriminate firings of the military, the hostages have no option but to stick it out with their kidnapers. As artillery attacks become heavier, it's evident that the hostages are caught up in an all-out war.

Therese and the other hostages try not to lose hope, but they realize that despite persistent pursuit, the military is not doing much to actually rescue them. Little do they know, their emotionally and physically draining ordeal will end up lasting for over one year...

COMMENTS FROM **BRILLANTE MA. MENDOZA**

ORIGIN OF THE FILM

The events depicted in *CAPTIVE* are based on the hostage crisis situations that have taken place in the Philippines, such as the 2001 Dos Palmas kidnappings in Palawan and other abductions by the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and similar separatist organizations. Official reports vary, but during the course of a year or so, there were numerous raids and more than 100 people were kidnapped and held captive for ransom in various places. Dozens of hostages, soldiers and abductors were killed during the whole ordeal. For *CAPTIVE*, I treated the whole film as a single real event. The script was based on my intensive research on certain kidnapping events and where they actually happened, and the testimonies of survivors, captors, the military and others who witnessed and/or were part of the crisis. About 25 percent of the film consists of fictional elements; mostly characters and scenes that I felt were necessary for enhancement and dramatization purposes.

THE JOURNEY

The overall journey in *CAPTIVE* is similar to the trail followed in the Dos Palmas kidnappings. The film begins with the abduction of a group of people from a resort, which I tried to depict as faithfully as it happened in Palawan. The hostages are transported in a crowded boat to the island of Basilan in southern Mindanao, crossing hundreds of kilometers of the Sulu Sea for several days. In the town of Lamitan, a violent siege results from botched nego-

tiations between the military and the ASG. The captors then force the group into the heart of the Basilan National Park (a mountainous jungle region at the center of the island), where they are kept on the move constantly to avoid military attacks.

We did not actually shoot in Palawan, Lamitan, Basilan or any other part of Mindanao, where the events actually happened, mainly for logistics and security reasons. We shot for 25 days in various places in and around Luzon, including my own garden in Metro Manila.

IN SEQUENCE

I intentionally shot the film in sequence – starting from the beach resort to the sea travel by boats; from the military siege at the town hospital to the mountains; and from the constant trekking from one place to another to the various gun battles in between, up to the very end. I did this because I wanted to let the actors feel the fear and the essence of kidnapping and being kidnapped. I wanted them to experience as fully as possible “the abduction” and the events that ensue while they’re in captivity. I was able to accomplish this chronological shoot by slightly maneuvering the chain of events for it to match the clustering of the location sites. As in my previous films, I used a documentary approach in making *CAPTIVE*. I shot the story in a straightforward manner, in keeping with the concept of reality as contained in the material. For the film’s format, I opted for the state-of-the-art Alexa, a high-definition camera, both for convenience and accuracy, especially in the boat scenes at sea and the jungle pursuit situations.



SEGREGATING THE ACTORS

Before starting the shoot, I segregated the actors portraying the Abu Sayyaf kidnapers from the performers comprising the hostages. I did it on purpose because I wanted to establish a cultural wall between the two groups. So actress Isabelle Huppert, like the other actors, never met with her co-stars until the first day of the shoot, in the very moment when the kidnapping scene happened. It was their first time seeing each other, everyone in costume for the reenactment of the kidnapping.

ISABELLE HUPPERT AS THERESE BOURGOINE

Actress Isabelle Huppert plays Therese Bourgoine, a French national and a volunteer social worker for a non-governmental organization based in Palawan. The character was added to provide a microscopic eye on the interior makeup of the ASG and the kidnapping. Although fictional, what Therese experiences in *CAPTIVE* is based on the numerous testimonies that I have discovered during my research. Therese's observations give us some insights into the Muslim identity of the captors — their own personal interpretation of the Koran, their ambitions, their fears, their weaknesses. In Mindanao, she also witnesses the poverty and lack of education in the Islamic community.





EVERYONE IS CAPTIVE

The Abu Sayyaf is a group of Islamic separatists operating in southern Mindanao in the Philippines. Since its inception in the early 1990s, the ASG has made it known that it is fighting for an independent state or sub-state in the country. The same group has claimed responsibility for many kidnappings, bombings, assassinations and extortion activities.

My depiction of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) captors is definitely not one-dimensional. Like anyone else, they can be seen as regular guys — they can be funny at times, angry and violent at other times, even caring and compassionate under certain circumstances. As a filmmaker, I always try to work like a journalist. I try to show as many sides of the situation as possible, no matter my personal beliefs or causes. A filmmaker should not interfere with the truth. If the truth goes against the filmmaker's philosophy, he still has to show it no matter what.

At any rate, I am not trying to defend the ASG and their cause. Nor am I trying to justify anything in the film. CAPTIVE is not about their cause. It's about humanity — the ASG's, the hostages', even the military's as an arm of the government or the so-called established order. I think it's very clear in the film why I chose this subject. Despite its controversy and unresolved conflict, CAPTIVE shows something about the unseen, the "big picture" — that everyone is captive to their own cause.

CONTROVERSY AND CONFLICT

In the Dos Palmas case and other kidnappings, there were accusations of conniving politicians and military, non-reporting or distortions of the truth by media and certain linkages to foreign support. No official statement was ever issued about any ransom, but some sources said several Filipino politicians and military

officers had profited from the controversial exercise.

Today, the Abu Sayyaf Group continues to roam the ramparts of Mindanao in southern Philippines, a region of rich natural resources that refuses to be conquered. From the 16th-century Spanish colonizers who settled in most parts of the archipelago to the American imperialists who persist to base and impose their foreign authority in the area to this very day, Mindanao and its people have been caught in a hostile web. As in the wealthy Near and Middle East countries whose enduring crisis seems to rise and fall with the availability or unavailability of oil, what really captures the attention of the belligerent forces in Mindanao is its vast natural wealth. An unseen hand prevails in the Philippines and its people are being used and abused to serve some selfish ends. We know it, we see it, we sense it, we smell it and we hear about it but, as a people, we have been calloused and rendered oblivious by abject poverty in matter, mind and spirit.

CAPTIVE is about self-preservation, about survival in the face of hardships and situations beyond one's control.

STAGING THE SHOOTOUTS

The staging of the shootouts was orchestrated as closely as possible to real-life encounters between the ASG and the military, thanks to the advice and guidance of combat specialists from both sides. Several dozen real soldiers were mixed with actors to portray the military using genuine guns with blank bullets. It is much easier to show soldiers using real guns to portray themselves in front of the camera than it is to train actors how to authentically portray soldiers. But some actors still had to undergo basic military training to look and act like real soldiers. Under the supervision of seasoned stuntmen, they were taught how to move properly and protect themselves, especially from falls. Some military were present during the shoot to observe if the actors were appearing authentic.

OUT AT SEA

The water sequences took us five full days to shoot. We went fairly far out at sea. Oftentimes, the waves would get rough and the rolling of the boat nauseated me.

It was physically, emotionally and mentally taxing for everyone concerned.

It's quite difficult to shoot a boat scene, especially one at high seas, because the boats are moving constantly. Before you know it, the waves have drifted you and the others apart, violating the space and scene to be shot.

In one of the most difficult, if not dangerous, scenes we shot in the open sea, we had to make sure we didn't see any islands to capture that sense of distance and helplessness among the hostages. In terms of camera angling, all we had to do was follow the sun and surrender to the moment.

Overall, we had to use several cameras, including those for aerial shots. We also utilized several boats, in addition to the one being filmed. The support boats, including the ones from the Coast Guard, were situated at a reasonable distance so as not to intrude in the filming, and to guide and guard us for anything that might happen in the middle of the sea.

TRADITIONAL MUSIC

For the film's score, I used traditional Muslim Mindanao music, albeit sparingly for minimal effect. I chose this music for its unique sound, using the two most basic and indigenous instruments: the agong (a xylophone consisting of gongs) and the kulintang (a string instrument resembling the guitar).

LIFE AND SURVIVAL

I wanted to integrate many small details in the film that are closely related to life itself and its survival. The scene of the actual birth of a baby was in the script and planned. Seen as part of the siege in Lamitan, amid the relentless exchange of gunfire between the Abu Sayyaf and the military, the birth is a reminder of the perpetuation of life. The scene of the snake eating a chicken took a long time to shoot. We waited for hours on end, to seize the exact moment, and capture the snake's slow, swallowing act. Representing captivity in all its forms, the spider and its web were shot in my own garden in Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila.

THE SARIMANOK

The Sarimanok is a legendary bird of the Maranaw people in Mindanao. It is depicted with colorful wings and feathered tail, and is said to be a symbol of good fortune. The Sarimanok is also believed to have originated from an Islamic legend. The Sarimanok, bright and beautiful, seems to symbolize the original world and aspirations of Muslims everywhere. In troubled Mindanao, it symbolizes the illusion of peace, and like a myth it is elusive and inaccessible, thus ultimately unattainable. In CAPTIVE, Therese's encounter with the Sarimanok, the Muslim mythical bird, was made possible through the magic of computer technology during post-production work.



THE DIRECTOR **BRILLANTE MA. MENDOZA**



Born July 30th, 1960 in San Fernando, Philippines, Brillante Ma. MENDOZA studied fine arts major in advertising at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila. He started his career as a production designer in feature films, television, theater and eventually in television advertising. His production design work was featured in acclaimed local films such as FLIRTING WITH TEMPTATION (1986), PRIVATE SHOW (1986), OLONGAPO (1987), THE GREAT AMERICAN DREAM (1987), and many others.

From feature films, MENDOZA then moved on to television commercial productions, and became one of the most sought-after and in-demand production designers. He designed the production for commercials of most major international companies such as San Miguel Brewery, Asia Brewery, McDonalds, Procter & Gamble and Unilever. This brought him in close working relationships with politicians and some of the biggest names in the Filipino entertainment industry.

In 2005, MENDOZA formed a small independent production outfit called Centerstage Productions. His first feature film, THE MASSEUR, won a Golden Leopard Award at the 2005 Locarno Film Festival, the Interfaith Award in Brisbane and the Audience Award at the Torino Film Festival. His subsequent feature films won further major international awards. MENDOZA's second feature film, SUMMER HEAT won the Netpac award in 2007 Jeonju Film Festival in South Korea and actress Cherry Pie Picache won the Best Actress award in Durban Film Festival. His documentary film THE TEACHER won the Cinemavenir at the 2006 Torino film festival and best picture and director awards at the 2006 Cinemania. FOSTER CHILD was presented at the Directors' Fortnight in 2007. The main actress Cherry Pie Picache won the Best Actress award in 2007 New Delhi Film Festival. SLINGSHOT won the Jury Award in 2007 Marrakech Film Festival and the Caligari Award in 2008 Berlin Film Festival. It was also given the Best Film, Best Director and Netpac awards in the 2008 Singapore Film Festival. SERBIS, a co-production of the Philippines and France, was in the main competition at the 2008 Cannes Film Festival becoming the first Filipino film to compete since 1984. Brillante Ma. MENDOZA won with KINATAY the Best Director award in the 2009 Cannes Film Festival. The same year, LOLA was presented in competition in September at the Venice Film Festival and won the Best Feature Film award in Dubai Film Festival.

FILMOGRAPHY & AWARDS

2012 **CAPTIVE**

Berlin 2012 - Official selection, competition

2009 **LOLA**

Venice Film Festival 2009 – Official selection, competition

Dubai IFF 2009 – Best Film Award

Miami IFF 2010 – Special Jury Award

Las Palmas Film Festival – Best Film award / Best actress ex aequo

for Anita Linda & Rustica Carpio / Best cinematography

Fribourg IFF 2010 – Ecumenical Jury Prize

KINATAY

Cannes 2009 – Official selection, Best Director Prize

Sitges IFF 2009 – Best Director Prize / Best Original Soundtrack

(Teresa Barrozo)

2008 **SERBIS**

Cannes 2008 – Official selection, competition

Vladivostok IFF 2008 – Best Director Prize / Best actress

Bangkok IFF 2008 – Golden Kinnaree

2007 **TIRADOR (SLINGSHOT)**

Marrakech IFF 2007 – Special Jury Award

Berlin IFF 2008 – Caligari Film Award

Singapour IFF 2008 – Best Feature Film /

Best Director, Netpac award

2007 **FOSTER CHILD**

Cannes 2007 – Director's Fortnight

New Delhi Film Festival 2007 – Best actress

Eurasia 2007 – Special Jury Prize

Las Palmas Film festival 2008 – Signis Award

2006 **KALELDO (SUMMER HEAT)**

JeonJu IFF 2007 – Netpac award

Durban IFF 2006 – Best actress

MANORO (THE TEACHER) - documentary

Turin Film Festival 2006 – CinemAvenir Prize

Cinemania 2006 – Best Film / Best Director

2005 **MASAHISTA**

Locarno Film Festival 2005 – Golden Leopard

Turin GLFF 2006 – Public prize

Brisbane IFF 2006 – Interfaith Award



NOTES FROM **ISABELLE HUPPERT**

The first time I met Brillante Ma. MENDOZA was at the Cannes Film Festival in 2009, during the closing ceremony when I was president of the jury. His film KINATAY had won the award for Best Director. I was also familiar with his film SERBIS. I had liked the feeling of freedom in KINATAY, a sort of first cinematic gesture that was unencumbered by any restraints. Then by pure coincidence I saw Brillante Ma. MENDOZA again, a few months later in Sao Paulo, where I was playing on stage in QUARTET, directed by Bob Wilson, while Brillante was presenting KINATAY. He was also preparing his next film, CAPTIVE, and he offered me a role.

During the first few days of shooting, Brillante Ma. MENDOZA made sure that the actors didn't meet, which included the "terrorists" as well as the "hostages", so that a certain atmosphere could be preserved for the shoot. When I turned up, I didn't know anyone and the actors playing the terrorists were particularly frightening. The actors weren't in the psychology of their characters because we were following the sequence of events as closely as possible. As we were being filmed, day after day, according to the story's chronology, the movie was capturing a form of progression. During the shoot I was reading Ingrid Betancourt's magnificent book, which nourished my character: the utter exhaustion, the feeling that it is never going to end, continually being moved to different places. We filmed in different locations, 5 hours from Manila, and ended up on a former American base in the heart of the jungle where Coppola had supposedly shot certain scenes from APOCALYPSE NOW.

Brillante is a director who recreates all the conditions of a documentary, to the very edge of insanity and the unexpected. As the story unfolds, and with the narration, he is able to sculpt time, for he contracts it, or sometimes expands it... There were spectacular scenes, the hostage-taking for instance, for which we were all piled into a minuscule boat way off shore in the scalding heat; other scenes were either violent or focused on fear. We were sharing the characters' experience, and, as actors, reacted to the situations, to the places, to being cold, to the rain, to the grueling physical conditions, day after day. The comfort on the shoot was, to say the least, rather precarious. We filmed at night, in the mud, in rivers, in hilly and uneven places that were difficult to reach.

Basically, since I started my career as an actress, I have always imagined this profession as giving me the possibility to cross boundaries, to take myself as far as possible. Shooting elsewhere, with filmmakers from other horizons, intensifies the journey made within. The further one travels in the exterior world, the more one has the impression of pushing the limits of what one can accomplish within. I'm attracted to filmmakers that I perceive as being far from where I am, for I feel that this combination can produce unexpected things. It's almost organic, resulting from the simple fact of being transposed into another universe.

Moreover, being with people who don't know me well gives me even more liberty. One might believe that it could be a restraint, or intimidating, but it's the contrary. It corresponds with my conception of filmmaking, which consists in creating one's own territory, both real and fictitious, in which one's imagination can entirely unfurl. I am able to open myself up all the more easily, and with much greater freedom in this territory when in an unfamiliar setting. So much so that I regularly need to put myself in this position in order to further establish my work. If I was only within a French framework, I wouldn't enjoy my work as much.

*Excerpts from an interview
by Charles Tesson for "Les Cahiers du Cinema"*



ISABELLE HUPPERT

SELECTIVE FILMOGRAPHY

CAPTIVE by Brillante Ma. MENDOZA

IN ANOTHER COUNTRY by HONG Sang-soo (*in post-production*)

LOVE / AMOUR by Michael HANEKE (*in post-production*)

MY WORST NIGHTMARE by Anne FONTAINE

MY LITTLE PRINCESS by Eva IONESCO

SPECIAL TREATMENT by Jeanne LABRUNE

COPACABANA by Marc FITOUSSI

VILLA AMALIA by Benoît JACQUOT

WHITE MATERIAL by Claire DENIS

THE SEA WALL by Rithy PANH

HOME by Ursula MEIER

PRIVATE PROPERTY by Joachim LAFOSSE

COMEDY OF POWER by Claude CHABROL

GABRIELLE by Patrice CHEREAU

LES SOEURS FACHÉES by Alexandra LECLERE

I HEART HUCKABEES by David O'RUSSEL

MY MOTHER by Christophe HONORE

TIME OF THE WOLF by Michael HANEKE

GHOST RIVER / LA VIE PROMISE by Olivier DAHAN

TWO by Werner SCHROETER

8 WOMEN by François OZON

THE PIANO TEACHER by Michael HANEKE

COMEDY OF INNOCENCE by Raoul RUIZ

SENTIMENTAL DESTINIES by Olivier ASSAYAS

THE KING'S DAUGHTER / SAINT CYR by Patricia MAZUY

MERCI POUR LE CHOCOLAT by Claude CHABROL

FALSE SERVANT / PAS DE SCANDALE by Benoit JACQUOT

THE SCHOOL OF FLESH by Benoit JACQUOT

THE SWINDLE / RIEN NE VA PLUS by Claude CHABROL

LES PALMES DE MONSIEUR SCHUTZ by Claude PINOTEAU

THE ELECTIVE AFFINITIES by Paolo and Vittorio TAVIANI

LA CÉRÉMONIE by Claude CHABROL

LA SÉPARATION by Christian VINCENT

AMATEUR by Hal HARTLEY

MADAME BOVARY by Claude CHABROL

LA VENGEANCE D'UNE FEMME by Jacques DOILLON

STORY OF WOMEN by Claude CHABROL

ENTRE NOUS / COUP DE FOUDRE by Diane KURYS

PASSION by Jean-Luc GODARD

COUP DE TORCHON by Bertrand TAVERNIER

THE LADY OF THE CAMELIAS by Mauro BOLOGNINI

HEAVEN'S GATE by Michael CIMINO

LOULOU by Maurice PIALAT

SLOW MOTION by Jean-Luc GODARD

VIOLETTE NOZIERE by Claude CHABROL

THE INDIANS ARE STILL FAR AWAY by Patricia MORAZ

THE LACEMAKER by Claude GORETTA

THE JUDGE AND THE ASSASSIN by Bertrand TAVERNIER

DOCTEUR FRANCOISE GAILLAND by Jean-Louis BERTUCCELLI

GOING PLACES / LES VALSEUSES by Bertrand BLIER

CÉSAR ET ROSALIE by Claude SAUTET

FAUSTINE OU LE BEL ÉTÉ by Nina COMPANEEZ

PRODUCER

DIDIER COSTET

In 1992, Didier Costet created Paris-based *SWIFT PRODUCTIONS* with the goal of specializing in the production, acquisition and distribution of quality motion pictures.

In addition to TV distribution (200 titles) and a video label, theatrical film distribution is handled through its sister company *EQUATION*.

In 2008, Didier Costet produced Brillante Ma. MENDOZA's *SERBIS*. It was the first Filipino film selected for the Cannes official competition since 1984. In 2009, he produced both MENDOZA's *KINATAY* (which won the Cannes Best Director Prize) and *LOLA* (selected in Venice official competition). In 2011, he produced 27-year-old South African Oliver HERMANUS' *BEAUTY* (Un Certain Regard Cannes). It was the first Afrikaans film to screen at the festival and the first official French/South African co-production. The same year, he produced MENDOZA's latest feature, *CAPTIVE*, starring Isabelle Huppert, which makes its world premiere in official competition at the 2012 Berlin festival.

FILMOGRAPHY AS A PRODUCER

2012 **CAPTIVE** by Brillante Ma. MENDOZA

2011 **BEAUTY** by Oliver HERMANUS

2009 **LOLA** by Brillante Ma. MENDOZA

2009 **KINATAY** by Brillante Ma. MENDOZA

2008 **SERBIS** by Brillante Ma. MENDOZA



CREW

Directed by
Written by

Produced by
Co-Produced by

Line Producer
Director of Photography
Music
Editors

Production Design

Sound Design

Produced by
In association with

Brillante Ma. Mendoza
Brillante Ma. Mendoza
Patrick Bancarel
Boots Agbayani Pastor
Arlyn de la Cruz
Didier Costet, *Swift Productions*
Brillante Ma. Mendoza, *Centerstage*
Antonio Exacoustos, *B.A. Produktion*
Jamie Brown & Alex Brown, *Studio Eight Productions*
Larry Castillo
Odyssey Flores
Teresa Barrozo
Yves Deschamps
Gilles Fargout
Kats Serrao
Simon Legré
Benjamin Padero
Laurent Chassigne
Stéphane De Rocquigny
Albert Michael Idioma
Addiss Tabong
Swift Productions
ARTE France Cinéma,
Centerstage Productions
B.A. Produktion
Studio Eight Productions

CAST

Therese Bourgoine
Sophie Bernstein
John Bernstein
Soledad Carpio
Abu Azali
Marianne Agudo Pineda
Olive Reyes
Abu Mokhif
Abu Saiyed
Hamed
Emma Policarpio

Isabelle Huppert
Kathy Mulville
Marc Zanetta
Rustica Carpio
Ronnie Lazaro
Maria Isabel Lopez
Angel Aquino
Sid Lucero
Raymond Bagatsing
Timothy Mabalot
Mercedes Cabral





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