



GUILLERMO ARRIAGA

HECTOR BABENCO

BAHMAN GHOBADI

AMOS GITAI

EMIR KUSTURICA

MIRA NAIR

HIDEO NAKATA

WARWICK THORNTON

ALEX DE LA IGLESIA

WORDS WITH GODS

PRESS KIT



WORDS WITH GODS



It is time to know each other

DIRECTED BY

Guillermo **ARRIAGA** Hector **BABENCO** Bahman **GHOBADI** Amos **GITAI**
Emir **KUSTURICA** Mira **NAIR** Hideo **NAKATA** Warwick **THORNTON**
Alex **DE LA IGLESIA**

Original Music by Peter **GABRIEL** Film order curated by Mario **VARGAS LLOSA**
Produced by Guillermo **ARRIAGA**, Alex **GARCIA** & Lucas **AKOSKIN**
Based on a concept created by Guillermo **ARRIAGA**
Animation by Maribel **MARTINEZ**

COMING SOON



WORDS WITH GODS

Directed by
Guillermo Arriaga, Héctor Babenco,
Bahman Ghobadi, Amos Gitai, Emir Kusturica,
Mira Nair, Hideo Nakata, Warwick Thornton
and Álex de la Iglesia.

Animation concept by Alex García
Animation Creative Director Maribel Martínez.

Produced by
Alex García, Lucas Akoskin and Guillermo Arriaga.

Based on a Concept by Guillermo Arriaga
Film order curated by Mario Vargas Llosa
Original music by Peter Gabriel

2014

Mexico & USA

Color

134 minutes



MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE
D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA
la Biennale di Venezia 2014

Venezia 71 – Out of Competition

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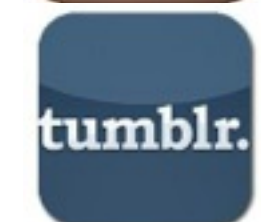
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SYNOPSIS



SHORT SYNOPSIS

Words with Gods features nine powerful stories of faith, created by some of the world's most celebrated filmmakers. A dramatic spectrum of beliefs are represented, with each filmmaker speaking about the one closest to the culture they depict in their story: Warwick Thornton deals with Aboriginal Spirituality, Héctor Babenco with Umbanda, Mira Nair with Hinduism, Hideo Nakata with Shinto Buddhism, Amos Gitai with Judaism, Álex de la Iglesia with Catholicism, Emir Kusturica with Orthodox Christianity, Bahman Ghobadi with Islam and Guillermo Arriaga with Atheism. The film is a panoramic global story that confronts birth & death, fateful choices and faith lost & found.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Words with Gods tells the story of a global cast of characters, from nine different cultures. It is a dialogue of nine cultures reflected in stories where faith and traditions are present. Aboriginal Spirituality, Umbanda, Hinduism, Shinto Buddhism, Judaism, Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity, Islam and Atheism, are represented through the visions of nine of the world's most revered directors.

Warwick Thornton opens with his short film *True Gods*. Set against a backdrop of the Australian wilderness, it is an animistic meditation on the relationship between motherhood, the earth, ancestry and spirit.

Héctor Babenco's, *The Man Who Stole a Duck* is the story of an abusive husband whose life falls into disarray after the breakdown of his young family. Unable to cope, destitute and stunned, he spends his days drifting around the streets of São Paulo in search of solace.

In *God Room*, Mira Nair tells the story of a wealthy family going over the final plans for the construction of their luxury apartment in Mumbai. The family members argue over the allocation of rooms in the house and crucially where God's room should be placed.

Hideo Nakata's *Sufferings* is a tale of loss, sorrow and acceptance. A Japanese fisherman loses all his family in the 2011 tsunami. Trying to come to terms with his grief, he questions his life purpose in an encounter with a Shinto Buddhist monk.

In *Book of Amos*, director Amos Gitai vividly contrasts Israel's contemporary political moment and its mythical past. Soldiers and civilians fight against one another, oblivious to a group who are reciting prophetic passages from the Hebrew Bible.

Álex de la Iglesia's *The Confession* tells of the misadventures of an assassin who encounters a taxi driver, who is a devout Catholic and mistakes the dark clad assassin for a priest, shifting his fate in an expected direction.

In *Our Life*, Emir Kusturica depicts a day in the life of a Christian Orthodox priest in the remote and mountainous Serbian landscape. He puts himself through sacrifice during an unconventional spiritual journey.

Bahman Ghobadi's *Sometimes Look Up* is a tragicomic tale of lust and faith, where two brothers must come to terms with their divergent personalities and approaches to life and faith.

Guillermo Arriaga's closing film *God's Blood* is the story of a middle-aged mining engineer, whose elderly father seems to be having dreams about god. Being an atheist he dismisses his father's feelings as the result of stress or senility, with unforeseen consequences.

With animations by Maribel Martinez and a soundtrack by Peter Gabriel, the film's nine episodes – arranged in order by Mario Vargas Llosa – present a radical international perspective on the diversity, commonality and significance of beliefs in our lives as human beings.

CAST & CREW

CAST:

TRUE GODS

Miranda Tapsell
Kiarrah-Jayde
Buzzacott

GOD ROOM

Tanuja
Ram Kapoor
Shefali Shah
Amardeep Jha
Raj Kumar Yadav
Richa Chadda
Naman Jain
Anand Tiwari
Vinay Pathak
Cyrus Sahukar
Harish Khanna

SUFFERINGS

Masatoshi Nagase
Kazuya Takahashi
Makiko Watanabe
Miu Tsushima
Yamamoto Oshiba
Yoko Imamoto
Yui Tateishi
Daichi Miyazawa
Daikichi Sugawara

BOOK OF AMOS

Yael Abecassis
Zohar Strauss
Sarai Givaty
Shady Srour
Ruti Asrai
Eran Sebbag
Arnon Ophir

THE CONFESSION

Juan Fernández
Pepón Nieto
Paco Zagarzazu
Inma Cuesta
Mariano Venancio
Guadalupe Lancho
Purificación Arrieta
Jacobó Sánchez
David Arribas
Diego Herberg

OUR LIFE

Emir Kusturica

SOMETIMES LOOK UP

Yilmaz Erdoğan
Amir A. Fekri
Menderes Samancilar
Pooneh
Hajimohammadi
Sinan Dag
Bunyamin Basci
Dilek Bingol
Acelya Gurbuz

GOD'S BLOOD

Demián Bichir
Emilio Echevarría
Jorge A. Jiménez

THE MAN WHO STOLE A DUCK

Chico Díaz
Bárbara Paz
Regiane Vieira
Claudio Viera
Anna Julia Vieira

CREW:

DIRECTORS

TRUE GODS - Warwick Thornton
THE MAN WHO STOLE A DUCK - Héctor Babenco
GOD ROOM - Mira Nair
SUFFERINGS - Hideo Nakata
BOOK OF AMOS - Amos Gitai
THE CONFESSION - Álex de la Iglesia
OUR LIFE - Emir Kusturica
SOMETIMES LOOK UP - Bahman Ghobadi
GOD'S BLOOD - Guillermo Arriaga

WRITERS

TRUE GODS - Warwick Thornton
THE MAN WHO STOLE A DUCK - Héctor Babenco
GOD ROOM - Zoya Akhtar, Reema Kagti
SUFFERINGS - Hideo Nakata
BOOK OF AMOS - Amos Gitai
THE CONFESSION - Álex de la Iglesia, Jorge Guerricaechevarría
OUR LIFE - Emir Kusturica, Dunja Kusturica
SOMETIMES LOOK UP - Bahman Ghobadi
GOD'S BLOOD - Guillermo Arriaga

PRODUCERS

TRUE GODS - Kath Shelper
THE MAN WHO STOLE A DUCK - Francisco Ramalho Jr,
Chico Díaz, Bárbara Paz
GOD ROOM - Ami Boghani, Mira Nair
SUFFERINGS - Atsuyuki Shimoda
BOOK OF AMOS - Michael Thapuah
THE CONFESSION - Álex de la Iglesia, Yousaf Bokhari
OUR LIFE - Paula Vaccaro
SOMETIMES LOOK UP - Mij Film
GOD'S BLOOD - Alex García, Guillermo Arriaga, Santiago García Galván, Adrián Zurita

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

Alex García
Armando Lozano
Jonathan Gray
Adrián Zurita

COMPOSERS

TRUE GODS - Elizabeth Lansen, Shellie Morris, Patrick McCloskey
GOD ROOM - Sneha Khanwalkar
SUFFERINGS - Kenji Kawai
BOOK OF AMOS - Tali Weisman
THE CONFESSION - Joan Valent
OUR LIFE - Stribor Kusturica
GOD'S BLOOD - Lorne Balfe

DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

TRUE GODS - Warwick Thornton
THE MAN WHO STOLE A DUCK - Adrian Teijido, ABC
GOD ROOM - Shanker Raman
SUFFERINGS - Tetsuro Sano
BOOK OF AMOS - Giora Bejach
THE CONFESSION - Kiko de la Rica
OUR LIFE - Martin Šec
SOMETIMES LOOK UP - Igor Martinovic
GOD'S BLOOD - Sergio Yazbek

SOUND DESIGNERS

TRUE GODS - Liam Egan
THE MAN WHO STOLE A DUCK - Miriam
Biderman ABC, Ricardo Reis
GOD ROOM - Cheerag Cama
SUFFERINGS - Kiyoshi Kakizawa, Kenji
Shibasaki
BOOK OF AMOS - Alex Claude
THE CONFESSION - Charly Schmukler
OUR LIFE - Aleksandra Perović
SOMETIMES LOOK UP - Sinan Berksoz,
Thomas Robert
GOD'S BLOOD - Javier Umpierrez

EDITORS

TRUE GODS - Roland Gallois
THE MAN WHO STOLE A DUCK - Idê
Lacreta
GOD ROOM - Shimit Amin
SUFFERINGS - Nobuyuki Takahashi
BOOK OF AMOS - Isabelle Ingold
THE CONFESSION - Pablo Blanco
OUR LIFE - Svetolik Mića Zajc
SOMETIMES LOOK UP - Bahman Ghobadi,
Franziska Von Berlepsch
GOD'S BLOOD - Richard Chew

PRODUCTION DESIGNERS

TRUE GODS - Daran Fulham
THE MAN WHO STOLE A DUCK -
Cristina Camargo
GOD ROOM - Suzanne Caplan
Merwanji
BOOK OF AMOS - Miguel Markin
THE CONFESSION - José Arrizabalaga
"Arri", Arturo García "Biafra"
OUR LIFE - Nebojša Lipanović
GOD'S BLOOD - Rubén Bross,
Alejandro Martínez

MUSIC

Original Interstitial Music and Closing Credit Song

“Show Yourself”

Written and performed by Peter Gabriel

Published by Real World Music Ltd / EMI Music Publishing

(P) 2014 Peter Gabriel Ltd

Courtesy of petergabriel.com

"Show Yourself"

Vocals - Peter Gabriel

Keyboards and Samples - Peter Gabriel

Guitar - Skip McDonald

Bass - Tony Levin

String arrangements - John Metcalfe

Recorded by - Richard "Dickie" Chappell

Mixed - Tchad Blake

OPENING SEQUENCE

Concept by - Alex García
Lead Design and Animation - 19/36
Executive Creative Director - Maribel Martínez
Lead animator, Animation Direction and Compositing - Diego Huacuja Torrijos (Basa)

TRANSITIONS SEQUENCE

Creative Director - Luis Alfredo Cabrera Ruíz (DAD)
Lead Team Creative, Animation Direction, Animation and Compositing -
Jorge Agustín Enríquez Rivas
Production Manager - Carla Eugenia Gutiérrez López

ANIMATION AND COMPOSITING TEAM OPENING SEQUENCE

Animation and Compositing - Diego Huacuja Torrijos
3D Animation - Marcos Raúl González Bárcenas, Fernando Nájera, Heber García Rodríguez

TRANSITIONS SEQUENCE

Compositing and Leading Animation - Jorge Agustín Enríquez Rivas
Animation - Homero Ramírez Tena, María García Lumbreras, Francisco José Hernández Tapia, Naivé
Idalia García Márquez, Adán Argenis de la Cruz Hernández
Compositing and leading 3D Animation - Heber García Rodríguez
Animation - Christopher Olvera Vargas, Ana Elena Martínez Tejeda

BIOGRAPHIES

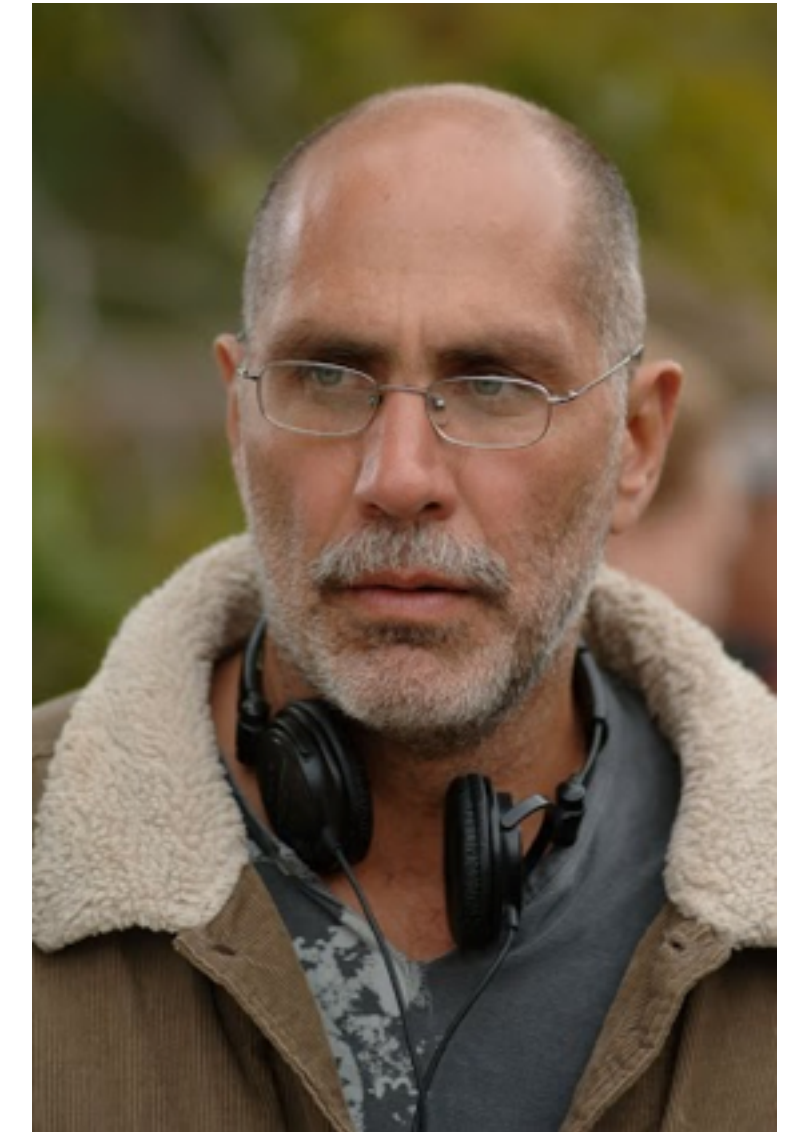
GUILLERMO ARRIAGA (PRODUCER & DIRECTOR)

Guillermo Arriaga was born in Mexico City on March 13th, 1958. He is a novelist, screenwriter, director and producer.

Arriaga gained widespread attention for his multi-narrative screenplay *Amores Perros* (2000), which was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film in 2000. He followed this with scripts *21 Grams* (2003), the Oscar nominated *Babel* (2006) and *The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada* (2005), which won Best Screenplay at the Cannes Film Festival.

As a director, Arriaga has made the feature film *The Burning Plain* (2008) starring Charlize Theron, Kim Basinger and Jennifer Lawrence, as well as several other short films including *El Pozo* (2010), *Broken Night* (2013) and *Texas*, which was part of the *Rio, I Love You* (2014) anthology film.

He has also written the novels *The Guillotine Squad* (1991), *A Sweet Scent of Death* (1994), *Night Buffalo* (1999) and the book of short stories *Retorno 201* (2006). His novels have been translated into 18 languages.



HÉCTOR BABENCO (DIRECTOR)

Filmmaker Héctor Babenco (born in Buenos Aires, Argentina on February 7th, 1946) is an internationally acclaimed director known for his socially conscious films about people that live on the fringes of society.

In 1978 Babenco's drama *Lucio Flavio* became the fourth highest grossing film in Brazil and helped revitalize the country's struggling film industry. On an international scale Babenco's breakthrough was *Pixote* (1981), a film that chronicled the daily misery faced by Brazil's increasing population of street children.

Babenco received a Best Director Oscar nomination for his first U.S. feature film, *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (1985). The film won William Hurt an Oscar for Best Actor and was nominated for the Palme d'Or in Cannes. Following this Babenco made *Ironweed* (1987) starring Jack Nicholson and Meryl Streep who were both nominated for Oscars. His films *Foolish Heart* (1996) and *Carandiru* (2003) were also both nominated for the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.



ÁLEX DE LA IGLESIA (DIRECTOR)

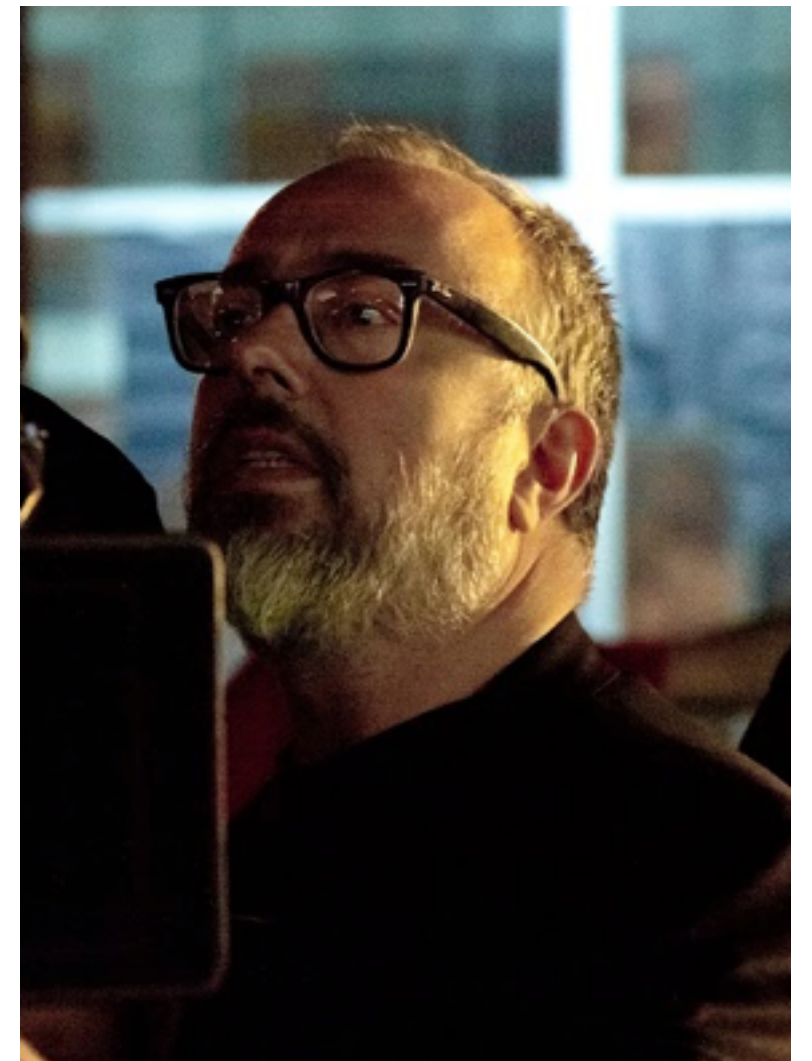
Álex de la Iglesia was born in Bilbao, Spain on December 4th, 1965. He is a director, screenwriter, producer, production designer and formerly a comic book artist.

Iglesia's first feature film was the black comedy *Acción Mutante*, produced by Pedro Almodovar in 1993. The film won three Goya awards. His second film *El día de la Bestia* (1995) won a staggering six Goya Awards and established de la Iglesia as one of Spain's leading directors.

Iglesia has made a wide variety of films, often straddling ambitious productions for an international public, as well as films more attached to Spanish tradition with hints of grotesque and black humor. He directed crime films and comedies including *Perdita Durango* (1997), *Muertos de Risa* (1999), *La Comunidad* (2000), *800 Balas* (2002), *Crimen Ferpecto* (2004) and the English language thriller *The Oxford Murders* (2007).

In 2010 he released *Balada Triste de Trompeta*, winning 2 awards in the 67th Mostra de Venecia for best script and a Silver Lion for best director. In September 2013 he released *Las Brujas de Zugarramurdi*, winning 8 Goyas and two Fotogramas de Plata awards including best Spanish Film.

Recently he completed the documentary film *Messi*, about Argentine football player Lionel Messi. The film will close the Venice Days section at the 2014 Venice Film Festival.



BAHMAN GHOBADI (DIRECTOR)

Bahman Ghobadi (born on February 1st, 1969 in Baneh, Iran) is an Iranian Film Director of Kurdish ethnicity and part of the third generation of the Iranian New Wave of cinema.

Ghobadi began teaching himself to make films using 8mm and worked as the assistant director on Abbas Kiarostami's *The Wind Will Carry Us*, before beginning to direct his own documentaries and features. His first major success was *Life in a Fog* (1999), one of the most acclaimed short films made in Iran.

For his first long feature Ghobadi made *A Time For Drunken Horses* (2000), the first feature length Kurdish film in the history of Iran. The film won the Camera d'Or in Cannes and established Ghobadi as a pioneer of Kurdish cinema.

With his company Mij Film, Ghobadi has made films including *Marooned In Iraq* (2002) which won the François Chalais Award in Cannes, *Turtles Can Fly* (2004) which won the Berlinale Glass Bear for Best Feature, *Half Moon* (2006) and *No One Knows About Persia Cats* (2009), which won the Special Jury Prize Ex-aequo in Cannes Un Certain Regard.

In recent years Ghobadi decided to live in self-imposed exile outside of Iran. His decision was due to the increasing challenge of working in the country and the censorship under which filmmakers there now find themselves struggling to work. He largely filmed *Rhino Season* (2012) in Turkey.



AMOS GITAI (DIRECTOR)

A former architecture student who turned to super-8 filmmaking during the Yom Kippur War, Amos Gitai (born in Haifa, Israel, October 11th, 1950) entered the world of film as a documentarian and gradually gravitated toward more fictional celluloid subjects.

Based in Israel, the United States and France, Gitai has produced an extraordinary, wide-ranging, and deeply personal body of work. After directing the documentaries *House* (1980) and *Field Diary* (1982) Gitai moved to Paris in 1983, where he was based for ten years. He travelled widely and made the documentaries *Pineapple* (1983) and *Brand New Day* (1987) about Eurythmics. He also explored life in exile in fictional works like *Berlin Jerusalem* (1989), which won the critic's prize at the Venice Film Festival that year.

In the mid-90's Gitai moved to Haifa and began a hugely productive period of his career. *Devarim* (1995) marked the return to his country. This was followed by *Yom Yom* (1998) and *Kadosh* (1999), which was nominated for the Palme d'Or in Cannes.

In 2000 Gitai directed *Kippur*, a film that takes place in 1973 during the Yom Kippur War and earned the director a Palme d'Or nomination. He made *Eden* (2001) for which he received a Golden Lion nomination in 2001. He then made the Border Trilogy, composed of *Promised Land* (2004), the Palme d'Or nominated *Free Zone* (2005) and *Disengagement* (2007).

In recent years he has made *Carmel* (2009), *Lullaby to my Father* (2012) and the Golden Lion nominated *Ana Arabia* (2013). His latest film *Tsili* premieres at the 2014 Venice Film Festival.



EMIR KUSTURICA (DIRECTOR)

Emir Kusturica was born on November 24th, 1954 in Sarajevo. He is an acclaimed Serbian director, writer, actor, composer, musician and producer.

Educated at the distinguished FAMU Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, he began directing Yugoslavian television, before making his feature debut with *Do You Remember Dolly Bell?* (1981), which won the Golden Lion at that year's Venice Film Festival. His sophomore film, *When Father Was Away on Business* (1985), earned him the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival, won five Yugoslavian Oscars, and was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Foreign Film. In 1989, he earned more accolades for *Time of the Gypsies*, a powerful, magical look into gypsy culture.

Kusturica continued to make highly regarded films into the next decade, including his American debut *Arizona Dream* (1993), which won the Special Jury Prize at the Berlinale and the Palme d'Or winning black comedy *Underground* (1995). In 1998, he won the Venice Film Festival's Silver Lion for Best Direction for *Black Cat, White Cat*, an outrageous, farcical comedy set in a gypsy settlement on the banks of the Danube. In 2008 he made the documentary *Maradona by Kusturica* about footballer Diego Maradona.

As an actor Kusturica has appeared in several of his own films, as well as those by other directors. As a musician he tours extensively with his band The No Smoking Orchestra. Presently he is directing *On The Milky Road* in which he stars alongside Monica Bellucci.



MIRA NAIR (DIRECTOR)

Indian-born, internationally acclaimed director Mira Nair (born October 15th, 1957, Odisha, India) earned critical buzz for her early documentary films, but her first feature film, *Salaam Bombay!* (1988), catapulted her into the international spotlight with Academy Award and Golden Globe nominations, as well as the Camera d'Or prize in Cannes.

She followed that success with the Golden Lion nominated interracial romance *Mississippi Masala* (1991) which was made in the United States. She then directed the American comedy *The Perez Family* (1995). Nair returned to India to film *Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love* (1996) and the Golden Globe nominated and Venice Golden Lion winning comedy, *Monsoon Wedding* (2001), which became one of the highest grossing foreign language films of the decade.

Next Nair directed the Golden Globe winning *Hysterical Blindness* (2002) and the Golden Lion nominated *Vanity Fair* (2004), as well as *The Nakesake* (2006) and *Amelia* (2009). She has also made numerous short films, including contributions to the anthology films *September 11* (2002), *New York, I Love You* (2008) and *8* (2008).

Her latest film, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, is a thriller based on the best-selling novel by Mohsin Hamid. It opened the 2012 Venice Film Festival to critical acclaim, and was released worldwide in early 2013.



HIDEO NAKATA (DIRECTOR)

Born on July 19th, 1961 in Okayama, Japan, Hideo Nakata is a director who initially attracted widespread international attention for his chilling contemporary horror films.

He made his feature film debut in 1996 with *Ghost Actress*, which contained many of the supernatural elements for which he would soon become best known. He directed the incredibly successful Japanese horror films *Ring* (1998), *Ring 2* (1999) and *Dark Water* all of which were soon optioned and remade in the US, with *The Ring* (2002) growing into a three picture franchise. Nakata wrote and directed the English-language sequel adaptation, *The Ring 2* (2005).

In addition to horror films, Nakata has made films in a variety of genres including psychological thrillers *Chaos* (2000), *The Incite Mill* (2010) and *Monsterz* (2014), as well as traditional Japanese ghost stories such as *Kaidan* (2007). In 2010 Nakata was nominated for the Cannes Un Certain Regard Award for the internet age drama *Chatroom* (2010).

In 2011 Nakata began shooting the documentary *Life After 3.11* (2013), about the tsunami of March 2011 and its impact on the lives of Japanese people. This documentary provided the inspiration for Nakata's dramatic contribution to *Words with Gods*.



WARWICK THORNTON (DIRECTOR)

Warwick Thornton was born in Alice Springs, Australia in 23 July, 1970. He is one of Australia's most promising contemporary filmmakers, having won numerous domestic and international awards as a cinematographer, writer and director.

A powerful representative voice for indigenous themes, Thornton's camera is insightful, resilient and spirited. He has written and directed several short films, including *Nana* (2007), winner of the Crystal Bear at the 2008 Berlinale. His early short *Green Bush* (2005) premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, and was featured at the 2005 Berlin International Film Festival, winning the Panorama Section's Best Short Film Award. Recently he has also made *Stranded* (2011) and *Big World: a sequence from The Turning* (2013)

His debut feature film *Samson & Delilah* (2009) won the Camera d'Or at Cannes, awards at Palm Springs and Dublin International Film Festivals and received four awards from the Australian Film Institute. Most recently his documentary *The Darkside* had its international premier at the 2014 Berlin International Film Festival.



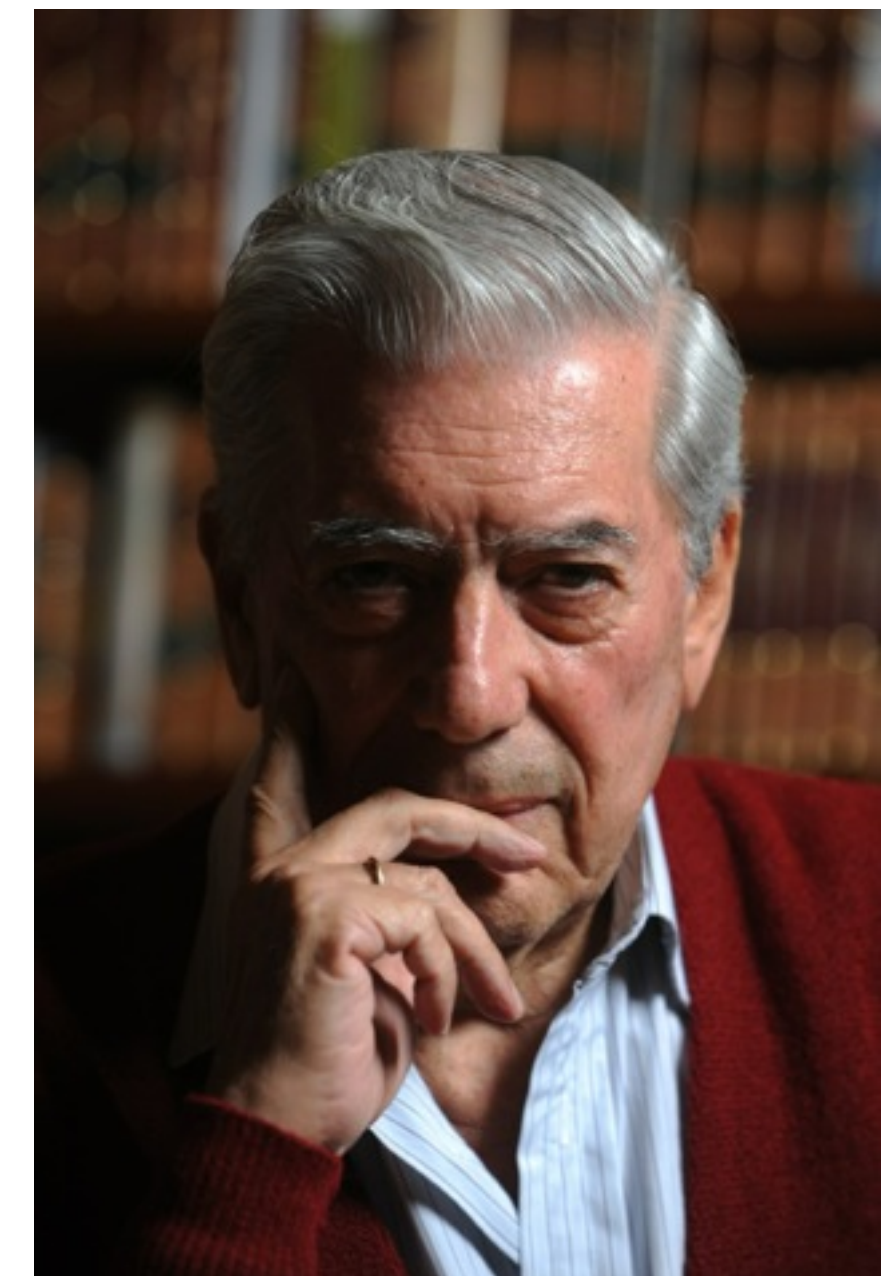
MARIO VARGAS LLOSA (CURATOR)

Nobel Prize laureate in Literature Mario Vargas Llosa is a Peruvian-Spanish writer, and is one of the most significant Latin American personalities of his generation. He is also a politician, journalist and essayist. Having written more than 30 non-fiction works in addition to plays and novels, Llosa's anti-totalitarian intellect covers a wide range of human experience.

His efforts to embark on a literary career started when he published his first work, a compilation of stories called *Los Jefes (The Chiefs)* in 1959, for which he received the Leopoldo Arias award. In the early 1980s Vargas Llosa hosted a TV show, later becoming the political leader of the Freedom Movement opposed to statist measures being taken by the president of Peru at the time.

Currently he is a collaborator with the newspaper *El País* in Madrid, Spain and the monthly cultural magazine *Letras Libres* published in Mexico and Spain. His career includes many awards and distinctions. In 1976 he was named the president of the International Pen, the worldwide association of writers and in 1994 he was designated a member of the Spanish Royal Academy. Vargas Llosa has been a visiting professor of numerous universities around the world including Cambridge, Columbia, Princeton, Harvard, Oxford and the distinguished Templeton Leadership Fellow for the Atlas Economic Research Foundation.

His vast literary works include novels, theatre plays, essays, editorials. Some of his books include *Los Jefes* (1959), *Conversación en la Catedral* (1969), *La Guerra del fin del Mundo* (1981), *Making Waves* (1996), *La Fiesta de Chivo* (2000) and his latest book *El Sueño del Celta* (2010.) The Nobel Prize in Literature 2010 was awarded to Mario Vargas Llosa "for his cartography of structures of power and his trenchant images of the individual's resistance, revolt and defeat." His works have been translated into more than 40 languages including French, Russian, Danish, Hindi, Malaysian and Hebrew among others.



PETER GABRIEL (COMPOSER)

Peter Gabriel is best known as a musician. He started his solo work in 1975 after leaving his old school group: Genesis. He has released eleven solo albums and written soundtracks for three films.

In 1980 he founded WOMAD (World of Music Arts and Dance), which has presented 150 festivals in over 40 countries. In 1992 he conceived of and co-founded Witness.org, pioneering the use of cameras and technology in Human Rights work and was co-founder with Richard Branson of the Elders.org, to bring together a small group of highly respected global elders, which Nelson Mandela launched in July 2007.

His other work interests have been in innovative technology, especially in digital media, music, audio and more recently a visual language.

Amongst awards received are the Man of Peace award, presented by the Nobel Peace Laureates in 2007, the ‘Chevalier dans l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres’ and the ‘Quadrige’ award. He has received various lifetime achievement awards including BT’s digital Music Pioneer Award, The Polar Music Prize, as well as five Grammy awards and an Oscar nomination. On April 10th this year he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.



MARIBEL MARTÍNEZ (ANIMATOR)

Maribel Martínez was born in Mexico City and is a creative director and producer working in animation.

Her work has won awards and has been been acknowledged by many international festivals such as New York Festivals, Promax World Gold, Promax Latino, Broadcast Design Association, Animacor in Spain, Circulo Creativo and Caracol de Plata Mexico.

Maribel founded 19+36,” an independent studio focused on title sequence design for films.



ALEX GARCÍA (PRODUCER)

Alex Garcia is one of the Mexican film industry's busiest players, having produced over thirty films across the globe. He has cultivated key partnerships with studios throughout the US and Latin America including *Ánima Estudios*, *Lemon Films*, *Costa Films*, *Nala Film Partners* and *Lionsgate Pictures*.

His films have screened at acclaimed festivals such as the Venice International Film Festival (*The Burning Plain*), the Berlin International Film Festival (*Elite Squad*), and the Tribeca Film Festival (*Amor, Dolor y Viceversa*). In 2008, *Elite Squad* won the Golden Bear, Berlinale's prestigious top prize, one of over 30 accolades the film received that year.

Regardless of theme, origin, and level of involvement Garcia's work has been driven by his passion for film and an ambition to reclaim the artistry and importance that the Latin American film industry once held.



LUCAS AKOSKIN (PRODUCER)

Lucas Akoskin has worked on both sides of the camera – acting and producing – for over two decades. In September 2012, Akoskin and Alex García launched BN Films. Working from a \$150 million production fund, the Mexico City and Santa Monica-based company aims for an annual slate of six to twelve feature-length motion pictures.

Akoskin's *Words with Gods* - the first installment in BN's groundbreaking *Heartbeat of the World* series - is co-produced with Alex Garcia and Guillermo Arriaga. Via BN Films he has also produced *The Jesuit*, written by Paul Schrader, with a cast that includes Tim Roth and Ron Perlman; *Nightingale* starring David Oyelowo; *The Automatic Hate* starring Ricky Jay, Joseph Cross, and Deborah Ann Woll; *Refugio*, the directorial debut of Demián Bichir starring Demián Bichir and Eva Longoria; and *Captive*, a gripping true-life thriller starring David Oyelowo, Kate Mara, Michael K. Williams, and Leonor Varela. BN is currently producing *Desierto*, a film by Jonas Cuarón starring Gael García Bernal and Jeffrey Dean Morgan. With Pinball London and Rasta International they are also co-producing, Palme d'Or winner Emir Kusturica's next feature *On the Milky Road*, starring Emir Kusturica and Monica Bellucci.



ABOUT WORDS WITH GODS

Religion has been an element fundamental to the creation of the social, political and cultural spaces of all peoples. Through their relation to God or Gods, men have determined certainties whose only support is faith, belief and imagination.

It is important to speak of religion in the context of the human conflicts of the present century. Religion, for millennia, has exceeded the private sphere and become a political, and public instrument. Even in a world increasingly secularized there are still states that are openly confessional and totalitarian. In this case, religion is not an option, but an obligation.

For creators, it is crucial to establish a critical and respectful dialogue on the meaning of religion and God or Gods. This film attempts to present several points of view about the significance of religion in contemporary history.

To do so we speak not only about different religions, but also about those opposed to the very idea of religion: atheists and agnostics. Not just traditional monotheistic religions, but also the world of polytheism and animism.

Our goal was to produce a feature film where different sections, each directed by a different filmmaker, integrate to form a cohesive whole. There is only one religion per section, and each director is committed religiously, socially, and culturally to the religion he or she chose. There are no ‘external’ versions. It was acceptable for a director not to be a believer, but he or she must have grown up under the norms and beliefs of the religion in question.

Again, we have tried to present a vision that is both critical and respectful of the religions in question. The concept of God/Gods is central. We didn't want “mannerist” shorts i.e. shorts merely interested in showing traditional religious celebrations. We wanted stories that speak of characters with an intimate relation to their God/Gods, who question, who inquire, who respond.

- Guillermo Arriaga

CURATORIAL STATEMENT BY MARIO VARGAS LLOSA

Religion has always been present in one way or another.

Religion has been very exclusionary and divisive.

Religion excludes and rejects.

Words with Gods (WWG) interested me because it is a most original and innovative film. It brings together filmmakers and believers of different religions and faiths in general as well as others who do not specifically identify with any dogma or doctrine at all. Each filmmaker freely and with great autonomy deeply explored the subject; and in it, I see a rich diversity in creative expressions, each in their own way sharing their concerns. Perspectives about the supernatural or the afterlife are explored with the intention of showing a common human denominator.

Within this creative endeavor, my contribution was to reflect and give the nine pieces a certain order. After talking with Guillermo Arriaga and our network of friends and filmmakers connected to WWG, we agreed on the idea of a chronological order – thus, the exposition of the 9 short films from the primitive to the most modern manifestations. WWG brings together different world experiences at varying stages of historical development to explore the past of many different cultures and civilizations – with truths and tales as told by the filmmakers that are anchored in reality but which are at the same time ephemeral. In its totality, the film WWG, comprised of the stories by nine distinguished auteur global filmmakers, is as vast as is its potential to address issues which concern our shared humanity: faith, culture and belief systems. As a whole, WWG is a very expansive and ambitious project showing different approximations, variations and meditations of what the world might be beyond death, in the afterlife.

WWG is intentionally neutral and tolerant with the stories it shares. At the same time, it serves as witness and testimony to the perspectives and the plights depicted therein through the knowledge and cultural experiences of the filmmakers' religion, geography, history and/or politics. In its present order, even the last film, representative of atheism, contains deeply rooted religious aspects - the desire for another form of life, the desire for continuity beyond death. Even more fascinating is how religion can express a certain culture, preserve tradition, and live as these are embodied in poetry and the arts. In short, religion provides people of the world a certain way of being, living and sharing.

- Mario Vargas Llosa

WARWICK THORNTON - TRUE GODS

True Gods director genesis:

When I started to look for a reason for being on the project *Words with Gods* I peeled back the folk tales, urban myths and legends. Deep into my dreams I looked for the great and worthy, the one who was first, the CREATOR. But there in the dark alone I found my mother, my sister, and my grand mother. This enlightenment filled me with joy. For I realized that I was surrounded by GODS, who every day created miracles. The miracle of birth. Someone who can gift life is a GOD to me.

- Warwick Thornton

HÉCTOR BABENCO - THE MAN WHO STOLE A DUCK

An ordinary man has for years suffered infinite sadness caused by having beaten, then lost his wife. Possessed by this sense of loss he had let his son, only a few months old, cry until he died. The man carries this pain as he wanders along the streets like a madman, whose speech is at times bawling and at times murmuring. One day destiny leads him to the side of a lake where he seduces, or is seduced by the singing of, a white duck which responds to what he is saying to it. On the back seat of a public bus he carries the duck, which he is taking to his son. That night, while on his way back from the cemetery, a man dressed in white stops his car. A child, also dressed in white, stares fixedly at him from inside the car. Our beggar follows the father and child, who continues to stare at him, to a locale where a cult meeting is taking place. A catharsis will occur and dialogue with God will transform him.

- Héctor Babenco

MIRA NAIR - GOD ROOM

In most devout Hindu family homes in India, there is a room set aside for God and prayer. Our film, *God Room*, is set in today's Mumbai, about a wealthy extended family moving into an expensive penthouse apartment overlooking slums and the sea. The symbol of a multigenerational family living together in harmony is gradually broken, by an escalating argument amongst the family members about where the God room should be. As the family reveal layers of their hypocrisy and prejudice, only the 8-year-old child in the family sees that God is everywhere...that God is in the eye of the beholder. The home for God is within us, not without.

- Mira Nair

HIDEO NAKATA - SUFFERINGS

Sufferings is based on a true story, about a fisherman who lost his entire family, including his little kids. People who live in the Thohoku district where the tsunami hit are still struggling to live. But I believe in their strength to keep going, with acceptance of reality and some kind of hope and joy, which they find in everyday life. I hope *Sufferings* can comfort them a bit. I would love them to watch *Words with Gods* in the near future.

- Hideo Nakata

AMOS GITAI - BOOK OF AMOS

But in the end the heart of Amos is softened and he says:

*And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel,
and they shall build the waste cities,
and inhabit them;
and they shall plant vineyards,
and drink the wine thereof,
they shall also make gardens,
and eat the fruit of them.
15 And I will plant them upon their land,
and they shall no more be pulled up out.*

Amos, 9, 14-16

At this point we are moving to the contemporary city of Haifa, a city of tolerance and coexistence.

The film includes references to the Book of Amos, from the Old Testament. Amos who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, in the days of Osaiah, king of Juda, and Jeroboam, king of Israel.

Amos presents to us a vision of divinity with a strong social dimension. Amos is preaching for social justice, using metaphors from his experience as a peasant and as a shepherd.

*Can two walk together, except they be agreed?
Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey?
Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing?
Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is for him?
Shall one take up a snare from the earth, and have taken nothing at all?*

*Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid?
Shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?
Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing,
but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.*

Amos, 1, 1-7

The film was shot as a series of short monologues including some of the main cast of Amos Gitai films (actors who participated in *Kadosh*, *Kippur* and *Kedma*) and they incarnate fragments of the prophecies of Amos.

- Amos Gitai

ÁLEX DE LA IGLESIA - THE CONFESSION

When it was suggested that I make a *Words With Gods* episode, a ten-minute cinematographic piece was outlined, in which the dialogue with God should be established from a preeminent Catholic language; or in other words, to create a moral painting in which a Catholic is reflected, without being considered a simple caricature.

The essential religious ideas are in my view, defined in the conception of sin as something inherent to the essence of human beings, and in forgiveness through sincere repentance. The most evil man, if he repents will be closer to God than the most virtuous man.

There is no other religion more generous. Kindness is discovered in forgiveness. Evil is the sovereignty of the man of action. Virtue of the ones who don't do doesn't matter. We are attracted to the one who makes a mistake and repents - the one who reconstructs his personality tower with the bricks of its errors - the one who rises above others, after falling under the weight of his knees.

This is the grounds for *The Confession*: To narrate how the protagonist falls into destiny's hands and before dying, an old man gives him the chance to deny his life, and accept he is just a mistaken man, like others.

- Álex de la Iglesia

EMIR KUSTURICA - OUR LIFE

This film is about humanity, which has a God and it is the best idea that they have found. It is more than just speaking about Orthodox Christianity; it's about making an image of a man who is always sacrificing himself for his own good and for his well mental being.

- Emir Kusturica

BAHMAN GHOBADI - SOMETIMES LOOK UP

I live in an area in which each day I witness and hear of fratricide, due to differing religious ideologies. After years of staying in this region, I realized the acts carried out are not spiritual and heavenly, but the issue is religion manipulated by man. The religions are manipulated by man, to use against another man; all the while, we humans have forgotten the real story and the beauty of truth. Whether I believe in God or not, I believe in this.

- Bahman Ghobadi

GUILLERMO ARRIAGA - GOD'S BLOOD

I think that religion, any religion, has to bring out the best of each human being. History has shown us that when a religion is imposed, when any God becomes an excuse for intolerance and persecution and murder, then religion has lost its essence. True religion is an invitation to be better, to feel the company of a superior being who will watch and care for us.

I'm an atheist and I have been attacked several times because of it. Believers don't accept someone who doesn't believe. Many think that because we are atheist we lack values; or since we don't have a giant vigilant eye over us, we are out of control and we don't behave ourselves. Nothing is more far from the truth.

I think that an atheist becomes a humanist. Since we don't believe in something else, humans become the core of our life. We don't look up, we don't look down. We look straight into the eyes of the other human beings. That is important for me, acknowledging that every atheist - in the depth of his heart - is a humanist.

- Guillermo Arriaga

PETER GABRIEL - COMPOSER STATEMENT

Guillermo Arriaga was so busy writing, typing all the time, that he developed carpal tunnel syndrome in his arms and his doctor told him “You’ve got to do something else for a while”. So he decided to become a producer and invited different directors to join him directing some short films and of course, being Mexican, he chose easy subjects; Drugs, Sex and God.

This is from the God one and it’s called *Show Yourself*. It was arranged quite simply which I enjoyed. The song is about the search for God and like the film, it's looking for a fresh slant on spirituality, in this case with a high level of doubt.

- Peter Gabriel



WORDS WITH GODS - FOSTERING INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

Words with Gods' producers believe the film is a powerful artistic tool to frame discussions on religious pluralism. With this in mind they have come to develop a year-long program of audience outreach, with special events, on & off-line dialogue and original content to ensure that this film is both widely seen in order to advance social impact. For more info please contact impact@pinballonline.co.uk or paula@pinballonline.co.uk

Faith experiences: Aboriginal spirituality, Catholicism, Islam, Judaism, Shinto Buddhism, Orthodox Christianity, Umbanda, Hinduism, and Atheism.

Shooting Locations: Australia, Brazil, India, Israel, Japan, Spain, Serbia, Turkey.

Languages: English, Spanish, Farsi, Urdu, Portuguese, Spanish, Japanese, Hebrew, Serbian, Hindi



WORDS WITH GODS - INTERFAITH CAMPAIGN

We are working internationally to develop public programs exploring the intersection of art and faith and ways to advance global perspectives —and improved understanding—on spirituality and belief systems. We are creating partnerships and raising philanthropic support:

- To work with arts and culture institutions creating screenings and discussion events that go beyond tolerance to appreciation and acceptance of diverse faith experiences.
- To offer the film to faith-based and interfaith organizations as a tool to convene and catalyze engagement and action in their social justice work.
- To offer the film and viewers guide to community based media arts organizations, particularly those working with underserved urban youth.
- To work with college/university programs to create cross-disciplinary screening events with the film.
- To support a content-rich website and robust social media campaign to nurture diverse audiences for the film under the theme 'Radical Diversity.'
- To create a custom viewers guide providing deep explorations of the individual stories and the cultural and faith-based experiences portrayed.

For more info please contact impact@pinballonline.co.uk or paula@pinballonline.co.uk