

MDOC Melgaço July 29th to August 04th

## National premieres in competition at Melgaço International Documentary Festival



Immigration, clandestinity, colonialism, human rights and the environment, these are some of the central themes addressed in the nine Portuguese films included in competition at the 10th edition of the MDOC, including the short animation film awarded at the Annecy Festival, “Percebes”, by Alexandra Ramires and Laura Gonçalves, and “Savanna and the Mountain” by Paulo Carneiro, presented in the directors' fortnight section in Cannes, and premiering nationally at the Alto Minho festival.

Between **July 29th and August 4th**, Melgaço once again becomes the center of international social and ethnographic documentary cinema. Of the nine films that make up the selection of Portuguese documentaries in competition, three are national premieres.

“**Savanna and the Mountain**”, the third feature-length film by **Paulo Carneiro**, is one of the eagerly awaited new features on the big screen. The film was presented at the Directors' Fortnight, a parallel exhibition at the 2024 Cannes Festival, and will be premiering nationally at MDOC. The film portrays the struggle of the inhabitants of Covas de Barroso (municipality of Boticas) against a British multinational – *Savannah Resources* – which intends to build the largest open-pit lithium mine in Europe just a few meters from the village's land and houses. A documentary of resistance that amplifies – with elements of the *western* genre and some fantasy – the struggle, creativity and resistance of the local community.



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Another new feature joining the ranks of national films competing at the Festival is **“Percebes”** by **Alexandra Ramires** and **Laura Gonçalves**. The watercolor and digital animated documentary, which won the Crystal Award for Best Short Film at the Annecy Animated Film Festival, France, portrays the life cycle and harvesting of this crustacean in the Algarve. The theme also serves as a critique of mass tourism, the mismanagement of the territory and the relationship of local inhabitants with the water and air.

In addition to these two films, there are also seven other documentaries running for the Jean-Loup Passek and D. Quixote awards (awarded by the International Federation of Film Clubs): **“Couto Mixto”**, by **João Gomes**, another national premiere, about the magic of a place, an independent state of hybrid Galician and Portuguese identity; **“So Small, looking all grown up”**, by **Tânia Dinis**, a fictional and documental account about several women who, between the 40s and 70s, came to the city of Porto to work as servants; **“A dip in cold water”**, by **Raquel Loureiro Marques**, yet another national premiere, based on images that shaped the director’s family imaginary.

Also in competition at MDOC are **“Fire in the Mud”** by **Catarina Laranjeiro** and **Daniel Barroca**, a film that portrays the colonial war experienced among the Balanta known as “those who resist” (people with a strong tradition of resistance to Portuguese colonialism); **“The Melusinas at the edge of the river”** by **Melanie Pereira**, a conversation/reflection with four women about their uncertain and fragmented identities – what it means to be an immigrant without being one, and being a Luxembourger without being one; **“Clandestina”** by **Maria Mire** is a dive into the past and the experience of Margarida Tengarrinha who goes clandestine in Portugal and becomes a forger for political militancy reasons; And **“Histories of Smugglers”** by **Agnes Meng**, a journey through the memories of the border village of Tourém where difficult lives, unforgettable adventures and stories about the “smugglers’ nest” were intersected.

The 2024 edition of MDOC includes the usual **X-RAYDOC** section, dedicated to the analysis of films *“whose importance is indisputable for a History of Documentary in which, the relationship with others, in context, is highlighted as a structuring element”*, with coordination by **Jorge Campos**, journalist, filmmaker and cultural programmer. He will be joined by Público journalist, **Sérgio C. Andrade**, for a conversation-debate around **“Adeus, Until Meu Regresso”** (Portugal, 1974, 70'), the documentary made for television in December 1974, by **António-Pedro Vasconcelos**. X-RAYDOC will take place on August 3rd, at 10am, at Casa da Cultura of Melgaço. In the same location and at the same time, but one day before, on August 2nd, there will be a **masterclass** on **Cinema as a battleground for memory** and its visual and audio potentialities, with **José Filipe Costa**, director of several short films and documentaries, including *Prazer, Camaradas!* (2019), *Linha Vermelha* (2011), *Entre Muros* (2002) and *Senhorinha* (1999).

**Additional information on MDOC:** <https://mdocfestival.pt/pt>

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