

Behind the scenes, playing again

*“From the heart to the lips runs the yarn
that knits the secret of life.
Words cut the yarn,
but the secret speaks in silence”.*
Rumi

Cliff. Mountain. Lake. Desert. Wood. Sea. River. Star. Planet. Serpent. Dictionary. Once someone or many people synthesized reality in ideas (and then in words) and in that way gave birth to human reason, a system of “ordered” thinking that drove the language north and south. This language, man’s thinking was the synthesis of his perception of reality. ‘Dad, what’s this?’ ‘A mountain’. ‘And over there?’ ‘Can’t you see, son? It’s smaller than a mountain, it’s a hill. Enough, end of the natural science lesson.”

We decode the images we see, the sensations we feel and everything goes in the direction of an only code, the human being’s preset language. But, is that the truth? Couldn’t there have been a mistake when synthesizing everything? Do we know how a dog or a tiger feels? We say, ‘At certain times, the hippopotamus goes to the river to drink water.’ Is it always so?

Maybe children will teach us many things and we’ll be eventually able to sit along with them, listen to their uncountable questions and think about them knowing our answers won’t be enough, because as *Nicholas* says in HUNABKÚ, ‘They know there’s something else’

Some of these thoughts originated this film. It took two years since the writing of the first draft to its concretion. We spent the first year knowing the glacier and dialoguing with its signs without trying to understand but to feel them. Jerónimo Toubes wrote the script and my brother Mike César contributed from his producer role. This led to an intense two year work.

Filming was also special. We spent five weeks in direct contact with the glacier and its environment. The weather was constantly changing. In order to shoot the scenes inside the caves we spent eight hours inside one of them. We lost contact with external reality. Getting out of the cave took too long because the ice was slippery and we had to move very carefully carrying special equipment. We were a party of 36, including six mountain guides. So thirty of us were alien to the place and adaptation was not easy. From El Calafate, it took us about four hours everyday to get to the ice.

The moment in which *Lucas* lets himself into the icy water was not a simple one either. There were no digital tricks. The boy went dressed into the water with no special garments. Everything was ready to assist him, including scuba divers hidden behind the rocks to bring him immediately back to the surface. When Taniel Arévalo (*Lucas*) heard the word ‘Action!’, and approached the water, the glacier cracked loudly and let go a huge chunk of ice. We had to cut. Unfortunately none of the cameras was pointing at the glacier so we could not register anything. It took about half an hour until the waters calmed down after the collapse. Second take. Action. Taniel approaches the water and the glaciers cracked again without ice fall this time. We waited again. The third time we could shoot, but right when the boy was going into the water, the glacier cracked again. It had been silent during all day before that. Coincidence? Synchronicity? Let’s not think or at least not try to decode

it. Just feel. Feel that the glacier's bravery imprinted a book in me that cannot be written or translated. But for sure, I'll never forget this.

We human beings forget many things. We forget the past. We try to forget actually. We want to forget bad memories. We try not to know certain things that hurt. But our body's wisdom reminds us constantly there is something we are trying to leave behind. It is like when a pimple appears on our face and we get rid of it because we do not like it. Then the skin reacts and becomes red, swollen and very uncomfortable. In the end it is more apparent. We get sick when we try to hide emotions that need to show more than ever at certain times. We repress and try to forget. But something is true: we never forget anything; we just move the memory to a secret place in our conscience and try to ignore it. Later on, we will have a hard time trying to recover that moment, that sensation, to understand that the one who laughed or cried then is also the one we are today. We'll see a psychologist or a chaman to heal ourselves. One of them will try to reach the affected self, the other one will inhale 'yopo' or any other wonderful plant and will travel to reach the sleeping part of us to recover it forever.

We are permeable as sponges but the fear of feeling every single thing of life is so big that we are not aware of all the virtues that come along us in this particularly intense experience, our material existence.

The huge ice, main character of HUNABKÚ, the South Argentine glacier is abandoning that very solid condition. Maybe, little by little, things that have been hiding for hundreds of centuries will come to the surface. Some time ago, the glacier used to crack and collapse every three years; nowadays it is doing so every year and every day releases ice chunks into the water. Many people see this as a terrible thing. Instead of considering it a catastrophe maybe we should let ourselves be carried by our feelings and see what happens. At least once in a lifetime.

At least once, let's feel the Moon and the Sun. Let's feel the wind. Let us be carried away by the breeze and let's be a part of that wavy zigzag. Let's feel at least once, without decoding, without pre-established images in our inner cinema. Let ourselves be invaded by unknowingness and that the other wisdom may be impregnated in touch with water, wind, earth, fire, a smile, a smell, the contact of another person's hand, without looking into his eyes. Or let's us take a deep look at the one sitting next to us on a bus. Or let's look into the mirror, into our pupils, for a moment, without caring if we are clean or elegant and let's learn to look into our sight while giving a break to our thoughts.

Hunabkú starts with a take of a 'murga' in Buenos Aires city. 'Murgas' were banned during the dictatorships. Currently, 'murgas' are supported, though they are somewhat changed and bearing some contribution from the modern consumer. 'Murga' was created by African slaves who left their signature in it, as well as their deep compass music. Percussions, with a clear African signature.. Bam Bam.... Rumble that connects man and earth, maybe imitating the planet's heart vibration. Bam...bam... Later on, 'murgas' were taken over by local half-breed men, as no Africans were remaining. We invited people from Senegal and Cameroon living in Buenos Aires and maybe their presence in this scene can help us remember that in the beginning, things were different.

Murga proposes laughter and memories. The child laughs and cries. That child is there waiting for each one of us to invite him to play. That child is inside every one of us, as a light that wants to shine. It's our own child, living in a hidden place, well hidden by ourselves, by our fears. With that brilliant and wishful pupils', that look of game and laughter, he reminds us that we must never forget him again because so much oblivion brings illnesses that turn life into hell. And it would be a good idea to ask ourselves if hell really exists after all, or if it is all about oblivion.

Pablo César