

CASSETTE FOR TIMESCAPES PRESENTS

FLOATING WITH SPIRITS

A VR experience by
Juanita Onzaga



MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE
D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA 2023
Venice Immersive





World premiere

Venice Immersive Competition
80th Mostra Internazionale d'Arte Cinematografica

Trailer


<https://vimeo.com/856721676>

Stills

<https://mab.to/WDjxpQMW2l8Mr/eul>

Website

www.floatingwithspirits.com

The background is a dark, atmospheric landscape. On the right side, a large, glowing sphere, possibly a moon or planet, is partially visible against a dark blue sky. The foreground and middle ground are filled with dark, intricate, and somewhat ethereal patterns that resemble dense, tangled branches or a complex network of lines, possibly representing a forest or a digital landscape. The overall mood is mysterious and ancient.

Two little sisters prepare for the Day of the Dead in the mystic mountains of Mexico,
remembering the stories their shaman granny used to tell.

A portal opens as the Mazatec community celebrates and
we enter the interactive universe of their ancestors and the spirits of nature,
each keeping a secret world to be unveiled.

Synopsis

In this cinematic virtual reality, magical stories are told by 2 young Mazatec, indigenous sisters, Jocelyne and Jaquelyne, who recall the ancestral knowledge and mystical cosmogony that their shaman grandmother used to share with them, in the misty mountains of Oaxaca, Mexico.

Their village lies amidst giant Ceiba trees and rivers full of life. Nature breathes and within, preserves the memories of this community. The landscape that surrounds them is full of knowledge.

As the sisters wander through the nature that surrounds them and while preparing for the Day of the Dead, they share the stories of their ancestors. During these special days, the spirits of their loved ones descend into the world of the living, guided by the light of the candles and the glow of the Cempasuchil flowers on the altars, following the sweet smell of their favorite meals, to share a beautiful moment with the living.

The girl's imagination transports us into the world of the spirits of their ancestors and the spirits of nature. A shamanic dance ritual opens a portal through which we can discover the secret worlds of 4 spirits of nature. Each spirit has its own secret that it will share with us to enable us to make a new connection with the ancestral Mazatec knowledge. Their vision of the world is beautiful, deep and urgent to be shared in a moment where our society needs to rewire its ways of viewing and interacting with nature.

Behind each mountain, there is a sea of knowledge.

Intention director

Who says what is real and what is not? How are we able to see and feel the invisible worlds?
How can we communicate with the forces and spirits that live within our lands?

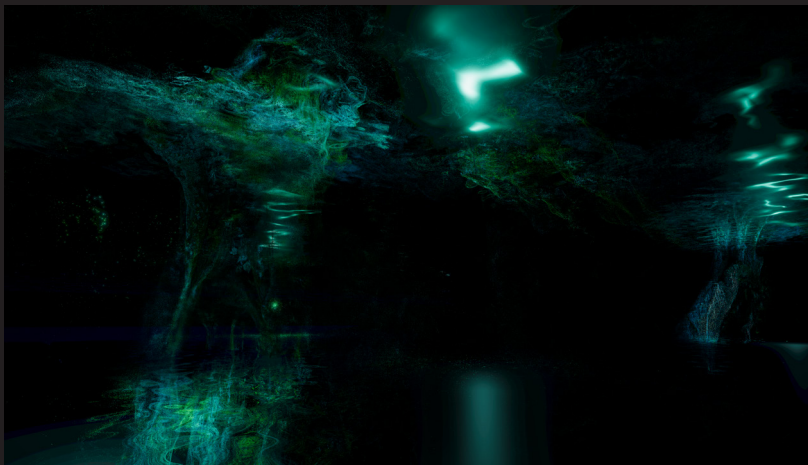
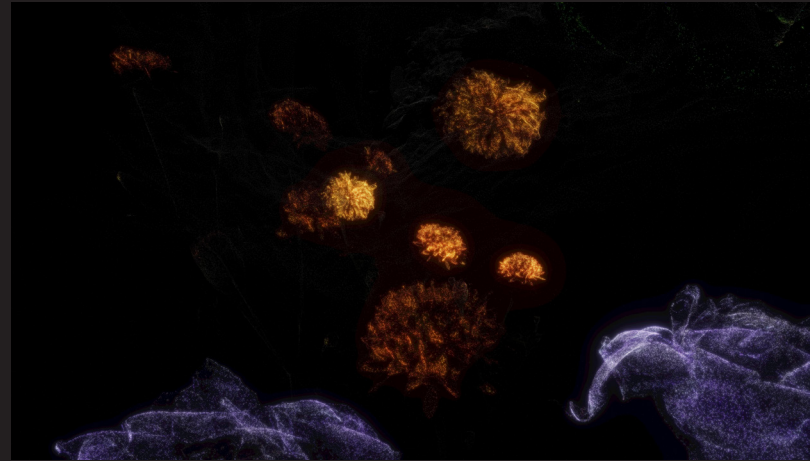
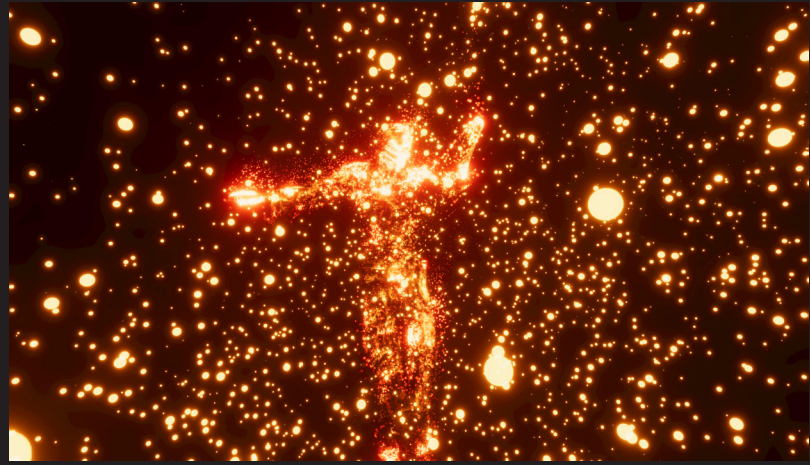
I spent years getting to know the sabedoras (knowledge people) from Mazatec indigenous communities in Oaxaca, México, listening, learning and sharing about their cosmogony and world vision. It connects deeply with my own background and questions around the afterlife, the connections between the human and non-human and the portals between the visible and the invisible.

Inspired in their cosmogony, we built this sensorial and poetic ancestral futurism VR experience, to shake our perception of the real, to rewire the ways we connect with nature and the afterlife.

Juanita Onzaga



©Alexandra Colmenares Cossio



FACTS

Running time: 31 minutes

Genre: 6 DoF, interactive, cinematic VR

Production countries: Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands

Language versions: English, Spanish

Shooting locations: Mexico, Luxembourg

Selected markets: IFFR Pro X VR Days 2019, IFFR Pro CineMart 2020, NewImages XR Market 2020, IFFR WIP Darkroom 2022

Selected festivals: Venice International Film Festival (IT, world premiere), Film Fest Gent (BE), Stereopsia (BE), IDFA Doclab (NL), Leuven Int. Short Film Festival (BE), Immersive Tech Week (NL), Fipadoc (FR), Luxembourg City Film Festival (LUX), One World Human Rights festival (CZ), Docville (BE), FICCI Cartagena International Film Festival(CO), Millennium Docs Against Gravity Film Festival (PL), Athens Digital Arts festival (GR), Green Visions Potsdam(DE), Ficunam International Film Festival(MX), Guanajuato International Film Festival (MX), SANFIC XR(CL), Bucharest International Dance Film Festival(RO), The Portal XR (DE), Nederlands Film Festival(NL), Dokumentale(-DE), FIVARS(CA).

Awards: Best Visual Experience at Guanajuato International Film Festival.

TECHNIQUES

Live action , stereoscopic 360° footage shot with the Mazatec community

Depthkit for volumetric capture of the spirits

Photogrammetry to create 3D models of the sacred landscapes


PLATFORMS

PCVR version for HTC Vive Pro 2 or Quest 3 headset

Standalone version (360° video) for Quest 2 or Quest 3 headset

Soon to be released on Steam



The background is a dark, atmospheric scene. It features glowing green foliage, possibly a tree or a wall of leaves, on the right side. A bright, golden trail of stardust or light particles curves across the middle of the frame. In the lower foreground, there are several glowing orange-red spheres, possibly representing planets or stars, set against a dark, starry background.

“a whispered paean to the nature gods sustained by seductive visuals,
variously sitting the user in misty woodlands and mountain villages
before lifting us out to the cosmos to ogle the stardust.”

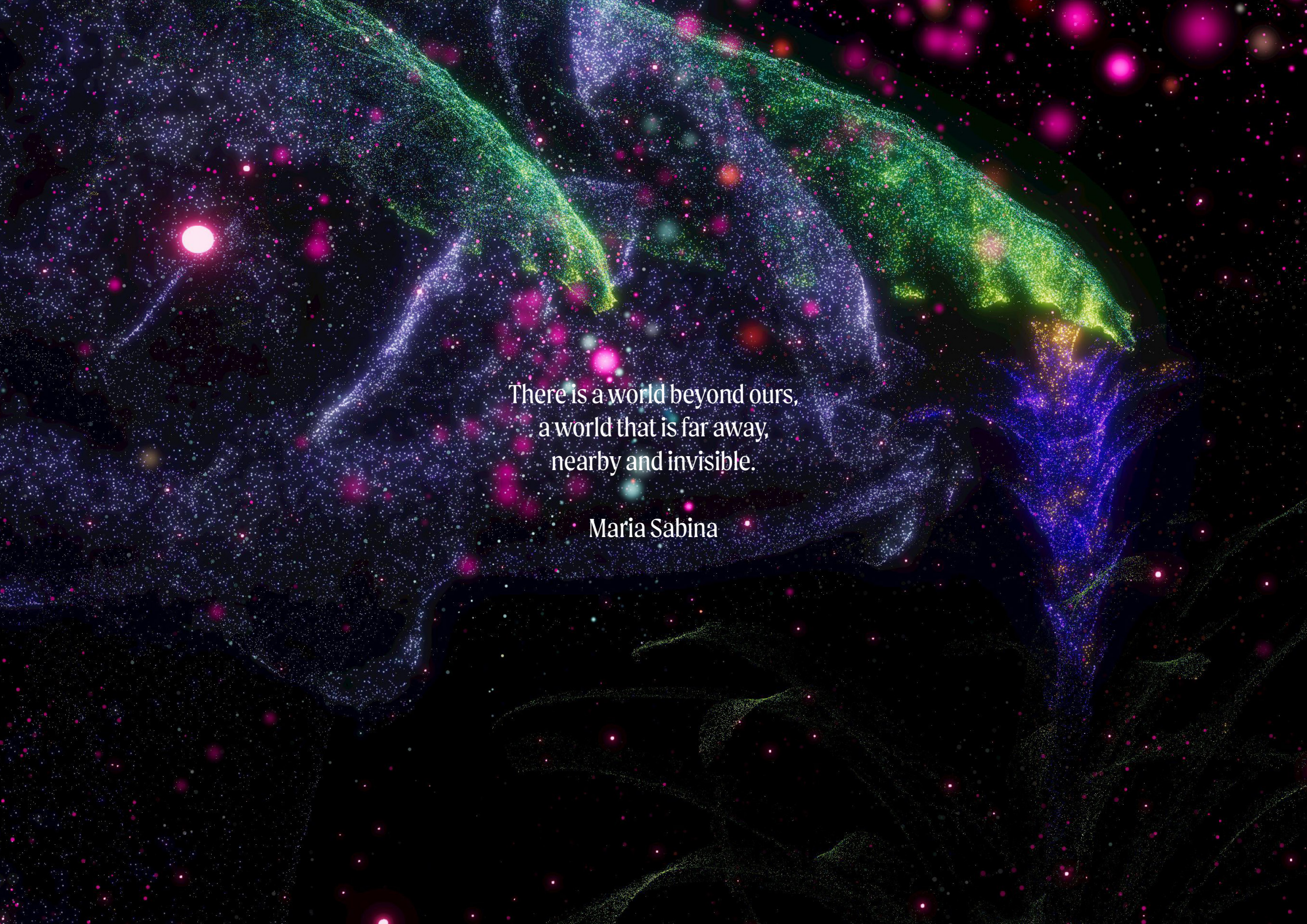
The Guardian

“ a VR experience that makes you whole for a moment.
A half-hour of eternity.”

De Standaard

CAST & CREW

WRITER AND DIRECTOR	Juanita Onzaga
INSPIRED BY THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SABEDORAS AND SABEDORES	Ofelia Allende, Sofía Gonzalez, Elodia Pineda, Leonardo Moreno and the Mazatec family Josefina Cuevas Perez, Celeste Kristal Flores, Tania Flores
CAST	Jocelyne Gallardo García, Jaquelyne Gallardo García, Florencia García, Rosalia Gallardo Alvarado, Guadalupe García Allende, Grupo de Huehuentones “Chajma ndle jaá”
CHOREOGRAPHER	Diego Vega
DANCERS	Benoit Couchot, Astrid Sweeney, ‘Nunoy’ Johannes van den Burgh, Annick Schadeck
DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY	Juanita Onzaga, Pierre Friquet
VOLCAP & PHOTOGRAMMETRY	Dajo Brinkman
TECHNICAL ART DIRECTION	Lillian Souwer for Game Architect Studio
ART DIRECTION	Aron Fels
EDITORS	Pia Dumont, Juanita Onzaga
EDITING ADVISOR	Lawrence Paul Foley
ORIGINAL MUSIC	Jérémy Bocquet
VOCALISTS	Jana Bahrich, Sarah Kertz, Edmon Pires Domingo, John Wolter
MIXER	Cedric Fischer
SOUND DESIGNER	Oliver Lang
MUSICAL SOUND DESIGNER	Jérémy Bocquet
LEAD DEVELOPER	Guido Boogaard for Wikkl
PRODUCERS	Emmy Oost & An Oost for Cassette for timescapes, Donato Rotunno for Tarantula, Corine Meijers for Studio Biarritz
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS	Daniel Loustaunau for Colectivo Colmena, Fernand de Amarin for Tarantula
WITH THE SUPPORT OF	Film Fund Luxembourg, Flanders Audiovisual Fund (VAF), The Corona Emergency Fund of the Flanders Government, Netherlands Film Fund, Creative Europe MEDIA of the European Union and Vocatio Fund



There is a world beyond ours,
a world that is far away,
nearby and invisible.

• Maria Sabina

Bio director – Juanita Onzaga

Juanita Onzaga (1991) is a film director and artist born in Colombia, based between Brussels, Bogotá & México. Her work combines fiction and non-fiction elements, touching the importance of mysticism, memory, death and imagination, creating poetic tales that reflect different ways of perceiving reality within strong political contexts.

Her short films have been presented at Cannes Directors Fortnight, Berlinale Generation, IFFR Tiger competition, the MoMA of New York, the Museum of Modern Art of Paris and many more festivals, museums and venues, while being awarded internationally.

She is currently in financing stage of her first fiction feature film THE LANDSCAPES THAT YOU SEEK, in development of a documentary and creating a series of installations about ancestral futurism.

www.juanitaonzaga.com

Bio's producers

Emmy Oost & An Oost for Cassette for timescapes (BE)



Cassette for timescapes produces films and XR projects that combine innovative vision and social or political engagement. It is one of the leading production companies for documentary and VR in Belgium. It has successfully co-produced with the US, UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands and aims at distributing its films worldwide.

Cassette for timescapes is a team of women. They are part of the Doc Society Impact Producers, EAVE, Eurodoc and ACE Producers Networks. Producer Emmy Oost received the Flanders Cultural Prize for Film in 2016. In 2019 she started Filmact, a field building organization that implements impact producing in Flanders. Specialised in digital storytelling and XR production, producer An Oost has taken projects to VR Days, NewImages XR Development Market, IFFR Pro CineMart, IFFR WIP DARKROOM and the Venice Gap Financing Market.

Selection of titles:

Why We Fight? by Alain Platel & Mirjam Devriendt (doc, 94', 2022) Broadcast on ZDF/arte, VRT, RTBF, RTP, ... Awards: Audience award Cinedans Netherlands, Best Documentary InShadow - Lisbon Screendance Festival, Best Feature Film On Art Film Festival Poland.

ALL-IN by Volkan Üce (doc, 80', 2021) World premieres at CPH:DOX & Hotdocs. Awards: Best Documentary Antalya FF, Winner Best Documentary Anatolian Film Awards. Selected for the European Film Awards. Sales: Cat&Docs

Barber Shop by Luc Vrydaghs (doc series, 6x26', 2017) Broadcast on VRT, ZDF/Arte, UR, Al Jazeera, SRF, RSI. Sales: First Hand Films

The Invisible City [Kakuma] by Lieven Corthouts (doc, 74', 2016) Over 230 impact screenings worldwide with the support of the Bertha Britdoc Connect Fund.

Double Take by Johan Grimonprez (doc, 89', 2009) Berlinale, Sundance FF. Awards: Black pearl Award in Abu Dhabi and more. Sales: UDI.

www.timescapes.be

Donato Rotunno for Tarantula (LUX)

Donato Rotunno was born in Luxembourg in 1966. He first went to a Luxembourgish school and then went on to complete his studies at the European School. In 1992, he graduated in cinema studies from the Institut des Arts de Diffusion in Louvain-La-Neuve (IAD), Belgium.

In 1995, Donato co-founded Tarantula Luxembourg and, one year later, helped set up Tarantula Belgium. Graduate of the EAVE producers training programme, member of EFA (European Film Academy) he has been selected in the program “Producers on the Move” in Cannes and regularly invited by “European Film Promotion” in order to develop his skills as an European producer. He has overseen over 35 feature films, including co-productions with most other European countries.

www.tarantula.lu



TARANTULA

Corine Meijers for Studio Biarritz (NL)

Founded by Corine Meijers in 2019, Studio Biarritz is now an established production house that specializes in audiovisual projects that cross borders. Studio Biarritz develops its own projects, but we also love collaborating with filmmakers, artists and partners from all over the world to produce stories with a lot of heart that are relevant for our trying times. We cross borders in 1) form, technology and subject matter, in 2) collaboration with filmmakers, artists & partners and 3) in audience reach, distributed on multiple platforms.

As a creative producer at Studio Biarritz, Corine Meijers is also involved as a (script) coach for several VR and immersive projects at the Flemish Audiovisual Fund as well as the Film Fund in The Netherlands. She is a mentor at the Playgrounds NEXT talent development program in Brabant (NL) and Head of Studies Immersive & Interactive I media training for scientists, at the Silbersalz Institute (DE).

Selection of titles:

Symbiosis, by Polymorf (a multi-user, multi-sensory VR Installation) by Marcel van Brakel and Mark Meeuwenoord.

Ik ben een bastaard, by Ahmet Polat (a 55 min. linear documentary), in coproduction with NTR/Het Uur van de Wolf (I am a bastard).

The Imaginary Friend (Interactive VR live action & animation) by Steye Hallema. In coproduction with timescapes (BE) and Submarine Channel (NL). In collaboration with 4DR Studios (NL), Demute, Wildvreemd, Apvis and Dat!school.

www.studiobiarritz.nl

studio
BiARRITZ

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