

MIRÍADE FILMES AND BIG BONSAI PRESENT

Leopoldina

A FILM BY BEATRIZ SEIGNER

"My friend, she should be him"

José Bonifácio, on the day that the Brazilian Declaration
of Independence was signed

WRITTEN BY NATALY CABANAS AND BEATRIZ SEIGNER



SYNOPSIS

When the Austrian princess, Leopoldina Habsburg, sets foot in Brazil at the end of 1817 to consolidate her geopolitical marriage with Prince Dom Pedro de Alcântara of Portugal, she was promised that she would soon be back in Europe, the center of Western civilization at the time.

She could not imagine that such a wild-natured land, full of ores, enchantments and gems to be discovered, would be the place where she gave birth to 6 children in the short term of 9 years and that she would be called the Mother of the Homeland and urged to get involved in the turbulent process of independence of the colony from its metropolis, thus becoming Empress of Brazil.

WHY TELL THIS STORY NOW?

"We know that official history has always tried to erase the importance of women, especially those involved in crucial political and scientific transformations. However, as Leopoldina was at the center of monarchical power and the privileges of that time, a complete erasure was not possible. So, what official history did was to move her to the margins, diminishing her influence and blanking out her leading role in Brazil's independence process. Her achievements were replaced by stereotypes and rumors, and various stigmas fell upon her, such as that of the betrayed and resigned wife.

As the 200th anniversary of Brazil's Independence draws near, we are presented with a unique opportunity to give visibility to this under-represented character in our History: a mineralogist who used her wedding dowry to finance the first scientific expeditions in Brazil, as well as to encourage the creation of the first universities, museums, theaters and a social structure with civil servants, a modern state for the time. And what better way to popularize a narrative and bring it closer to contemporary people and women, than an audiovisual production by women directors who are inspired by her and who carry on her legacy?"

REFERENCES



WHO ARE WE?



BEATRIZ SEIGNER is the director, screenwriter and producer of the acclaimed film *"Los Silencios"* (Brazil, Colombia, France), which premiered at the *Quinzaine des Realizateurs* at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival and has been distributed in more than 40 countries around the world, earning her numerous awards, including the CICA Award from European distributors, the Impact Award by Ai Weiwei at the Stockholm festival, the Best Director and Critics' Prizes at the Brasilia Festival 2018, Best Direction at the Cartagena de las Indias Film Festival, Best Artistic Contribution at the Havana Film Festival, Best Spanish Cooperation Film at the San Sebastian Film Festival, Best Film at the Nuremberg Film Festival, Best Screenplay and Direction at the Lima Film Festival, as well as an Honorable Mention from UNESCO, among others. She is also the director, screenwriter and producer of the films: *"Between Us, A Secret (2021)"*, a documentary filmed in Mali about storytellers and mediators of traditional conflicts in West Africa; the short film *"Olga's Family (2019)"*, which comprises the feature film *"Neighbours"* (China, Brazil, Russia, India, South Africa) and was produced by renowned Chinese filmmaker Jia Zhang-Ke; *"Bollywood Dream (2009)"*, a successful feature film that premiered in Brazilian cinemas in 2011, after receiving awards at more than 20 festivals around the world.

In addition to these films, which made Beatriz a prestigious international director, she has also worked as a screenwriter for Walter Salles, Daniela Thomas, Sérgio Machado, Vinicius Reis, Heloisa Passos, Katia Lund and Marília Rocha, as well as written series for HBO, GNT and SescTV, for which she received the TAL award for best series script in Latin America in 2013.

More information about her work can be found at:
www.miriadefilmes.com.br



BIGBONSAI is a production company that focus on international co-production, new talents and female narratives.

Its documentaries *"Dominginhos"* and *"O Barato de Iacanga"* have been shown at the world's most important documentary festivals - IDFA, DOK Leipzig, SXSW and *É Tudo Verdade* -, as well as on cable TV and streaming platforms such as Netflix and Prime Video.



Its feature film, *"The Book of Delights"*, a co-production with Rizoma Films (Argentina), won awards at film festivals such as BAFICI (Argentina), Cinecitta IFF (Holland), Vitória Festival and Vassouras (Brazil).

The production company has five series on TV: *"Minha Vida é um Circo"*, recorded in 8 countries (HBO); *"Palavras Permanecem"* (Curta!) and *"Tudo ou Nada: Seleção Brasileira"*, the first Amazon Originals series recorded in Brazil. It also produced the recently released talk show *"Olhares Brasileiros"* and *"CNN 200+ A evolução do Brasil"*, both for CNN Brazil. bigBonsai develops its portfolio of projects under the creative supervision of British filmmaker (and Oscar winner) Kevin Macdonald. In 2022, diversifying its field of activity, it launched its first podcast with Globoplay, *"Leila"*, a true crime story narrated by Leandra Leal, which became one of the most listened podcasts in Brazil in the week of its launch.

Currently (2023), bigBonsai is producing the second season of *"My Life is a Circus"*, now in 5 Asian countries, and the first season of the documentary series *"Turn on the Light"*, for GNT, scheduled to premiere in October this year.

www.bigbonsai.com.br