



FESTIVAL DE CANNES  
LA RÉSIDENCE

# THE DOG TRAINER

a film by FEDERICO LUIS

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### Technical Information

**Title:** The Dog Trainer  
**Screenplay:** Federico Luis,  
Matías F. Burzaco,  
Agustín Toscano

**Nationality:** Argentina-Chile  
**Production Company:** Planta  
**Producer:** Fernando Bascuñan

**Genre:** Drama  
**Duration:** 110 min

### Director's Information

Federico Luis was born in Buenos Aires in 1990. He holds a degree in Social Communication Sciences from UBA (University of Buenos Aires).

His first feature film, *Simón de la Montaña*, won the Grand Prix of La Semaine de la Critique in Cannes in 2024. In 2023, he received the Best Short Film award at IDFA in Amsterdam for *En El Mismísimo Momento*.

His short film *La Siesta* had its international premiere in the Official Competition at Cannes 2019, won Best Short Film at BAFICI, and received an honorable mention at TIFF.

His next feature, *The Dog Trainer*, was selected at the Film Academy of Spain, TorinoFilmLab, Oxbelly Retreat and is currently in development at La Résidence du Festival de Cannes.

### Federico Luis

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### Festival de Cannes, La Résidence

Since 2000, La Résidence du Festival de Cannes has provided each year accommodation and support to 12 selected young directors in order to help them prepare their first or second feature film. These young filmmakers are selected on the basis of their short films, or even first feature film, and the merits of their feature film project.

During their 4-and-a-half-month stay in Paris, they work on the writing of their feature film project, have meetings with professionals and try, with the support of the Festival de Cannes, to bring their project to co-production status.

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## Synopsis

Simón, a young soldier, accidentally loses a dangerous military working dog. Tasked with recovering it, he tracks the dog down to the remote home of its former breeder: Amado, a motionless and deformed man, who is the best trainer of Belgian Malinois shepherds in Argentina. From his stillness, this man has created a unique language with which he controls these dogs like no one else. He lives with Jean-Pierre, the nurse who has been serving him for many years, and twenty dogs trained to kill with a single bite to the jugular. The arrival of the young soldier destabilises the delicate balance of power that kept the house standing. Amado becomes obsessed with Simón and finds a way to manipulate him into staying at the house and becoming his new favorite nurse. This awakens Jean-Pierre's jealousy.

## Statement of Intent

The story portrays a character who finds meaning in life through caring for another person. And the reverse of that relationship: all the subtle methods by which patients can emotionally manipulate their caregivers. Unlike films that portray the sick or the disabled only under a positive light, we want to also reveal the darker dimensions that are a trait of the human being. I'm writing the script with Matías F. Burzaco, an Argentine writer who will also protagonize the film. I met him six years ago, after reading one of his books, in which he fiercely narrates life from inside a body similar to *The Elephant Man*, one of my favorite movies ever. *The Dog Trainer* will try to investigate the nature of care relationships and the power dynamics of desire. Maybe, what is truly monstrous is love.

## Synopsis

Simón, un jeune soldat, laisse accidentellement s'échapper un dangereux chien militaire. Chargé de le retrouver, il remonte sa piste jusqu'à la maison isolée de son ancien éleveur : Amado, un homme immobile et difforme, le meilleur dresseur de bergers malinois en Argentine. Depuis son immobilité, cet homme a créé un langage unique grâce auquel il contrôle ces chiens comme personne. Il vit avec Jean-Pierre, l'infirmier à son service depuis de nombreuses années, et ses vingt chiens dressés pour tuer d'un seul coup à la jugulaire. L'arrivée du jeune soldat déstabilise le délicat équilibre des pouvoirs de la maisonnée. Amado devient obsédé par Simón et le manipule pour qu'il reste comme son nouvel infirmier préféré. Mais cela éveille la jalousie de Jean-Pierre.

## Note d'intention

L'histoire dépeint un personnage qui trouve un sens à sa vie en prenant soin d'une autre personne. Et l'inverse de cette relation : toutes les méthodes subtiles par lesquelles les patients peuvent manipuler émotionnellement leurs soignants. Contrairement aux films qui représentent les handicapés seulement sous un jour positif, nous voulons révéler les dimensions plus sombres qui caractérisent l'être humain. J'écris le scénario avec Matías F. Burzaco, un écrivain argentin qui sera également le protagoniste du film. Je l'ai rencontré il y a six ans, après avoir lu l'un de ses livres, dans lequel il raconte avec férocité la vie vécue de l'intérieur d'un corps semblable à celui de *The Elephant Man*, l'un de mes films préférés. *The Dog Trainer* explore les relations de soins et la dynamique du pouvoir du désir. Peut-être que ce qui est vraiment monstrueux, c'est l'amour.