



 69<sup>th</sup> Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
Panorama

# LEMEBEL

A film by Joanna Reposi Garibaldi

## PRESS KIT

Chile/Colombia 2019  
96 min  
Documentary Feature



# SYNOPSIS

---

Writer, Visual Artist and pioneer of the Queer movement in Latin America, Pedro Lemebel shook up conservative Chilean society during Pinochet's dictatorship in the 1980s. Body, blood and fire were protagonists in his work that he attempted to perpetuate in the last eight years of his life in a film he was never able to see finished. In an intimate and politic journey through his risky performances dealing with homosexuality and Human Rights, "*Lemebel*" portrays a culmination of yearning immortality.







## ABOUT PEDRO LEMEBEL

---

Pedro Mardones (Santiago, Chile, 1952-2015) was a Writer, Activist and Visual Artist. Raised in poverty and in a gesture of rebellion he changed his paternal last name to his mother's, Lemebel. It was not only his first artistic act but also a symbol against patriarchy.

*The name Lemebel is a gesture of alliance with Feminism. To register a maternal last name is to recognize my "neglected" mother, from homosexual and transvestite illegality.*

Between 1973 and 1989, Chile endured the dictatorship of August Pinochet. It was at this time when Lemebel emerged in the underground scene resisting the censorship of the era. Together with artist Francisco Casas, they formed the artistic duo "Las Yeguas del Apocalipsis" (The Mares of the Apocalypse) and enacted close to fifteen fleeting and surprising performances in different areas of Santiago between 1986 and 1997. With these acts, that were soon transformed into urban myths, they repudiated the violation of human rights, discrimination and the lack of liberty of expression.

*The performances of those times had an unrepeatable quality, they were extreme actions like jumping into the abyss, one never knew what would happen when the action took place, that door was left open for the unknown, even if it was suicidal.*

After the "Mares of the Apocalypses", Lemebel embarked on a solitary path of provocative interventions that used his body as a vehicle of expression fueled by fire, neoprene, blood and pain. His sharp denouncement transgressed the established limits and transformed him gradually into a countercultural icon. From marginality he fought for gender equality as one of the pioneers of the revindication of LGTBQ rights in Latin America. His critical vision generated tension and debates in the cultural environment in Chile surrounding and in sexual diversity.

*I don't like the word "gay", I think it's insulting, it's inadequate for a poor fag in Chile.*

Some of his most emblematic performances were: "El Manifiesto" -The Manifesto- (1990), "La Frida en solitario" - Frida in solitary - (1990), "Abecedario" - ABCs - (2014), and "Desnudo bajando la escalera" - Naked walking down the stairs - (2014).

Lemebel's battle was also fought through his writing with incursions in poetry and journalism in a series of caustic urban chronicles. In his texts he dealt with the marginalization in Chilean society and often combined fiction and reality with autobiographical references. His writings are sarcastic and combative and use resentment as a weapon in his constant rejection to the Chilean Right and groups in power.







*I'm not tolerant, I don't tolerate Fascism for instance. I don't want them to accept me or to comprehend me. Tolerance is not a commandment to follow. I want to allow myself rage and negation, and the bad blood I have marks territories in these overall discourses.*

Pedro Lemebel is considered one of the most prolific and vanguardist writers in Latin America. His texts are required material in Hispano-American literary studies and have been translated in more than five languages. His most renowned works are: "La esquina es mi corazón" (Ed. Cuarto propio, 1995), "Loco afán, Crónicas de sidario" (Ed. LOM, 1996; Ed. Anagrama, 2000), "De perlas y cicatrices" (Ed. LOM, 1998), "Tengo miedo Torero" (Ed. Seix Barral, 2001, Ed. Anagrama, 2001) y "Adiós mariquita linda" (Ed. Sudamericana, 2004).

*Here in Chile poverty is gray, opaque, dirty, and stinky. In my stories I paint it, I add lace and sequins to it, in order to say that it is dignified in some way, that I don't believe that all poor people are promiscuous and have missing teeth, that they're dirty and black like they are portrayed in Chilean humor.*

His work in the visual arts is part of a permanent collection in the MOMA in New York and the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid. His work has also been exhibited in a number of Art spaces such as the Sao Paulo Art Biennial and MALBA in Buenos Aires.

Pedro Lemebel died in January 2015 after an arduous battle with throat cancer. He continued writing and performing until his final days and the struggle that he started 30 years before in defense of Human Rights is more present than ever.

# DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

---

I met Pedro in 1999 when I was working on a video art piece dealing with "El Manifiesto", one of his most emblematic texts. Since that project we formed a friendship based on the respect we both shared for our respective work.

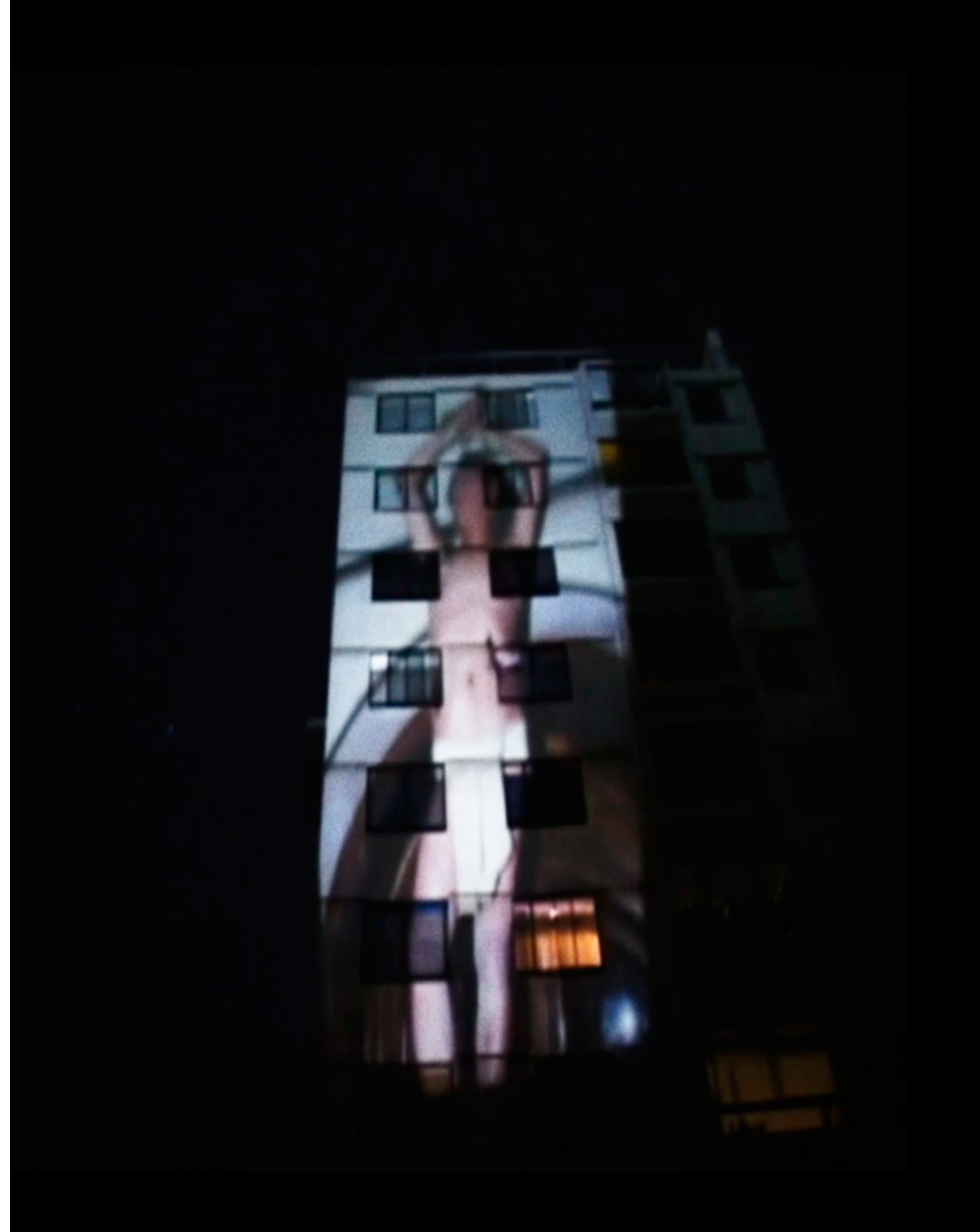
In 2007, we decided to make a film together and I began filming him in personal spaces. That closeness also permitted me to film his final days when he was fighting throat cancer, ultimately causing him to lose his voice and finally his life.

When we thought about the film the hours would fly by speaking about our lives or what we were passionate about at that moment, always over beers and with music in the background. I was moved by his many facets, especially his humor and lucidity.

Being with him was to share in the warmth he transmitted to his intimate friends, as well as the vertigo of totally unpredictable encounters.

Pedro's aesthetic incited me to reinterpret the archives of his life and to create a series of urban interventions in pursuit of a cinematographic harmony in tone with his work.

Among the various projects that he left incomplete was this very film. To finish it was to conclude a process that we started together and that always sought to amplify his voice.







## **BIOGRAPHY: JOANNA REPOSI GARIBALDI**

---

**Joanna Reposi Garibaldi** (Santiago de Chile 1971). Chilean Filmmaker and Visual Artist. Master of Arts at Goldsmiths College, University of London. Her short film, "Sam & Dave" (2002) was premiered at the Institute of Contemporary Art in London and selected at the 9th Sheffield Int'l Documentary Film Festival (UK). Her first feature film "Locos del Alma" - *Soul Madness* - (2003), received a Jury Special Mention in FIDOCs (Chile) and was selected in Créteil Int'l Women Film Festival (France), among others. In 2017, she made the short film "Matriz" (2017) which was exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Santiago, Chile and in the Biennial of Image and Movement of Buenos Aires (2018). Her second documentary "Lemebel" was the winner of the Docs in Progress at Visions du Réel (2018) and will have its World Premiere at the Berlinale (2019). She is currently developing her next film.

# CAST & CREDITS

---

## SCREENWRITER

Joanna Reposi Garibaldi

## EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Joanna Reposi Garibaldi

## PRODUCER

Paula Sáenz-Laguna

## CO-PRODUCER

Señal Colombia

## ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Lisette Orozco

## DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Niles Atallah

## SOUND

Roberto Espinoza

## EDITING

Titi Viera-Gallo Chadwick

## ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK

Camilo Salinas

## ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

Matías Valdivia

## TEXTS

Manuel Maira

## SALES AGENT

Paulina Portela / *Compañía de Cine*

## FESTIVAL STRATEGY & DISTRIBUTION

María Vera / *Kino Rebelde*

# CONTACT

---

## SALES AGENT

### COMPAÑÍA DE CINE

Paulina Portela

paulina@companiadecine.com

info@companiadecine.com

+54 911 3400 2718

[www.companiadecine.com](http://www.companiadecine.com)

## FESTIVAL STRATEGY & DISTRIBUTION

### KINO REBELDE

María Vera

distribution@kinorebelde.com

vera@kinorebelde.com

+351 910 551 325

[www.kinorebelde.com](http://www.kinorebelde.com)

## PRESS AGENT

Juan Riumalló

jfriumallo@hotmail.com

+4917 6375 9439

 Lemebel Film

 @lemebel\_film

