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# 'The Cannibal Club' ('O clube dos canibais'): Film Review | Rotterdam 2018


10:42 AM PST 2/5/2018 by Neil Young



International Film Festival Rotterdam

Ana Luiza Rios and Bruno Prata in 'The Cannibal Club.'

## THE BOTTOM LINE

*Plenty to chew on.* 

Ana Luiza Rios and Tavinho Teixeira play a carnivorous couple in Guto Parente's Brazilian satire, premiering in a cult-flavored sidebar at the Netherlands event.

Satire bites deep in *The Cannibal Club* (*O clube dos canibais*), a nicely nasty caricature of Brazil's ultra-decadent, ultra-wealthy from noteworthy up-and-comer Guto Parente. One of two films from the writer-director bowing at Rotterdam this year, it's in nearly every regard a world away from his tenderly scuzzy chronicle of cash-strapped low-lives co-directed with Pedro Diogenes, *My Own Private Hell*.

A slickly mounted widescreen affair that looks and sounds suitably opulent throughout, *The Cannibal Club* seems designed not only to titillate programmers and aficionados of horror/cult-oriented festivals but also to snag possible Hollywood attention. Indeed, it's easy to imagine a Stateside or European remake, given that craven callousness among the "1 percent" is anything but a parochially Brazilian affair.

Ana Luiza Rios and Tavinho Teixeira exude enjoyably hissable decadence as Gilda and Octavio, who inhabit a kind of golden bubble of prosperity in the northeastern city of Fortaleza on the Atlantic coast. Holed up in their sprawling seaside mansion — complete with private beach — the childless pair spice up their sex lives with lashings of homicide and anthropophagy, regularly feasting on the cooked flesh of their hapless servants (of which there's always a fresh supply from the area's poverty-stricken masses).

Octavio, who runs a successful private security company in this crime-ridden city, is a long-standing member of the clandestine society of the film's title. This is an all-male group of eminent citizens who rendezvous regularly to speechify about "family, faith and work," and indulge their vile proclivities via cruel spectacles that wouldn't look out of place in Pasolini's *Salò*.

Parente's script deliberately eschews subtlety, but his stylish direction — making particularly effective use of Fernando Catatau's sleazy, jazzy score — sugars the tartness of the medicine with a superficially sophisticated but essentially vulgar glaze. Carnal desires are all that matter here in an adults-only picture which delivers bursts of grand-guignol gore from the opening reel onward — often in tandem with sweaty, graphic sex — although much grisliness takes place offscreen.

Teixeira's Octavio is an especially memorable incarnation of banal evil, a loathsome creep whose sociopathic tendencies are exaggerated to a highly amusing degree. His apt fate is delivered in a finale of jarring abruptness that concludes the action in satisfying fashion on the 75-minute mark (six minutes of slow-crawling credits ensue).

Credit for this must of course be shared with editors Luiz and Ricardo Pretti, the former having previously been responsible for cutting another Brazilian production which was the five-star highlight of Rotterdam's 2017 edition: *Araby*, by Joao Dumans and Affonso Uchoa. It's a feather in the cap of the nation's current cinema scene that such a wide spectrum of politically charged films

are currently being produced, including semi-fantastical provocations such as the one Parente has gleefully carved out here. He reminds us, while there are certain junctures in history when satire may slice scalpel-sharp, sometimes only an ax will suffice.

*Production companies: Tardo Filmes*

*Cast: Ana Luiza Rios, Tavinho Teixeira, Zé Maria, Pedro Domingues, Rodrigo Fernandes*

*Director / Screenwriter: Guto Parente*

*Producer: Ticiano Augusto Lima*

*Cinematographer: Lucas Barbi*

*Production designer / Costume designer: Lia Damasceno*

*Editors: Luiz Pretti, Ricardo Pretti*

*Composer: Fernando Catatau*

*Casting director: Bruno Baptista*

*Venue: International Film Festival Rotterdam (Rotterdammerung)*

*Sales: m-appeal, Berlin*

*In Portuguese*

*No Rating, 81 minutes*

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## 'The Candidate': THR's 1972 Review

7:08 AM PDT 6/29/2018 by Arthur Knight

