

Mediendossier trigon-film

## THE HOUSE OF SAND

von Andrucha Waddington, Brasilien 2005



### VERLEIH

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## MITWIRKENDE

Regie:	Andrucha Waddington
Buch:	Elena Soárez, Andrucha Waddington
Idee:	Luiz Carlos Barreto
Kamera:	Ricardo Della Rosa
Schnitt:	Sérgio Mekler
Ton:	Jorge Saldanha
Musik:	Carlo Bartolini, João Barone
Ausstattung:	Tulé Peake
Produktion:	Conspiração Filmes, Rio
Sprachen:	Brasilianisch/d/f
Dauer / Format:	114 Minuten / Cinemascope

## DARSTELLENDENDE / ROLLEN

Fernanda Montenegro	Áurea / Maria
Fernanda Torres	Áurea / Maria (jung)
João Acaiabe	Massus Vater
Haroldo Costa	Arbeiter
Enrique Diaz	Luiz (jung)
Camilla Facundes	Maria (Kind)
Stênio Garcia	Luiz
Ruy Guerra	Vasco de Sá
Seu Jorge	Massu (jung)
Luiz Melodia	Massu
Emiliano Queiroz	Salzkind

## FESTIVALS

Alfred P. Sloan Feature Film Prize, Sundance  
Winner Best Actress Award, Guadalajara  
World Cinema, Toronto  
Panorama, Berlin

## INHALT

1910 gelangen Dona Áurea und ihre Mutter Maria nach Maranhão, an einen gottverlassenen Flecken inmitten einer Sandwüste im Norden Brasiliens. Áureas Ehemann Vasco hängt dem verrückten Glauben an, er könne das trostlose Land fruchtbar machen - ein Irrtum, den er teuer bezahlt. Als er ums Leben kommt, ist Áurea schwanger; mit ihrer Mutter und der Neugeborenen, die den Namen Maria erhält, lebt sie fortan in dem Haus auf der Düne. Zu ihrem einzigen Vertrauten wird Massu, der in einer nahen Siedlung fortgelaufener Sklaven lebt. Von ihm lernen die Frauen, durch Tausch und Handel ihren Lebensunterhalt zu bestreiten. Ihre Hoffnung, die Gegend mit dem reisenden Salzhändler Chico verlassen zu können, bleibt unerfüllt. Einigen Trost findet Áurea in den Armen des Leutnants Luís, der hier 1919 mit einer Gruppe von Wissenschaftlern eine Sonnenfinsternis beobachtet. Ihre Sehnsucht nach der weiten Welt überlebt in der Tochter. Die jüngere Maria wird mit einem wilden, ja ausschweifenden Lebenswandel gegen die Einöde aufbegehren.



## DER REGISSEUR

Andrucha Waddington gehört mit seinen 35 Jahren zu den grossen Talenten der neuen Generation von Brasiliens Filmschaffenden. Erste Erfahrungen hat er bei grossen Namen des brasilianischen Kinos gesammelt und etwa bei Cacá Diegues (Dias Melhores Virão), Hector Babenco (At Play in the Fields of the Lord) und Walter Salles (A Grande Arte) assistiert. Seit 1995 ist er Partner von Conspiração Filmes.

## FILMOGRAFIE

2005 *The House of Sand* (Casa de areia)

2002 *Viva São João* (Dokumentarfilm)

2000 *Eu, tu, eles*

1999 *Gêmeas*

## DER DREHORT

Im Nordosten des Bundesstaates Maranhão, in den Bezirken Barreirinhas, Primeira Cruz und Santo Amaro, liegt der rund 155 ha Land umfassende Nationalpark der Lençóis Maranhenses (*Bettlaken von Maranhão*). Sanddünen mit eingelagerten kleinen Seen erstrecken sich auf einem Küstenstreifen von ca. 70 km Länge und reichen bis zu 50 km ins Landesinnere.

Lençóis Maranhenses ist eine der schönsten Regionen Brasiliens. Die Dünen werden von vom Meer kommenden, starken Winden geformt. Aus diesem Grund handelt es sich hier um Wanderdünen, wobei sich die Landschaft der Lençóis Maranhenses jeden Tag ändert. Die Seen entstehen während der Regenzeit, da der Grundwasserspiegel steigt. Obwohl die Region eher eine Wüste ist, regnet es von Januar bis Juli. Während der Regenzeit im Winter, bilden sich Tausende von Seen. In der Sommerzeit, von August bis Dezember, gibt es allerdings nur drei Seen - "Lagoa da Esperança", "Bonita" und "Azul" - die mit Wasser gefüllt bleiben.



## GEDANKEN ZUM FILM

Mit seinem Spielfilmerstling *Eu, tu, eles* hatte der Brasilianer Andrucha Waddington von sich reden gemacht. Die in die trockene Landschaft hinein inszenierte Geschichte von einer Frau, die sich drei Männer für verschiedene Zwecke hält, stand in einem erfrischenden Sinn quer zu dem, was man sonst zu sehen bekommt. Auch in seinem neuen Film *Casa de Areia* (The House of Sand) prägt die Landschaft die Menschen und das da Sein. Eine Hauptrolle spielt die Wüstenlandschaft im Norden Brasiliens, in die hinein die Handlung über Sein und Zeit choreografiert ist. Atemberaubend sind die Bilder der Gegend, meditativ ist die Reise durch sechzig Jahre am Rand der zivilisierten Welt.

Am Anfang war die Landschaft. Ein Flug, ganz langsam, sanft fast, über astrein wirkende Sanddünen hinweg, Dünen, die wie Schallwellen sich ausbreiten, im Ohr, so will es scheinen, das Rauschen eines Meeres, das nicht weit sein kann – oder ist es doch der Wind, der über die Dünen weht? Dann nimmt die Kamera einen einzelnen Dünenzug ins Blickfeld, mit grosser Geste in die Landschaft hineingeworfen. Auf ihm zieht ein Mann mit Tieren einher, gefolgt von einem anderen, von weiteren Tieren und weiteren Menschen. Was nur machen die da? Wo wollen sie wohl hin? Die Wüste durchqueren, um an eine frucht-bare Stelle zu gelangen am anderen Ende? Wenn es da überhaupt ein anderes Ende gibt. Wohin bloss zieht es sie?

Die Regie lässt sich Zeit, jene Zeit, die eine Einstellung braucht, will sie etwas von der Beschwerlichkeit des Gangs zeigen, dem die Figuren im Bild sich aussetzen. Zeit fassbar machen, die sie brauchen, um nur schon vom einen Ende des Dünenbogens zum anderen zu gelangen. Wir befinden uns im Bezirk Maranhão, am nördlichen Ende von Brasilien. Man schreibt das Jahr 1910. Das wird zur Situierung des Beginns der Handlung eingeblendet – die Zeit also in einer anderen Dimension noch, in einer historischen. Und jetzt erst der Schnitt in die Nähe, hart kadriert auf zwei Frauengesichter, die sich durch ebendiese immense Landschaft schleppen, ausser Atem, das Bewusstsein ausgeschaltet, mit letzter Kraft.

Es sind nur wenige Einstellungen in genussvoll ausgekostetem Cinemascopeformat, die Andrucha Waddington benötigt, um uns einzunehmen für einen Ort, an den er uns entführen will und an dem kaum jemand von uns sein Leben fristen möchte. So faszinierend die Landschaft, so abseitig ist sie. Waddington selber sagt, dass er von einem befreundeten Produzenten auf die Region im Norden Brasiliens aufmerksam gemacht worden sei. Dieser habe, nachdem er seinen Film *Eu, tu, eles* gesehen hatte, gemeint: «Dort musst du mal einen Film drehen.» Diese Landschaft ist eine Bühne, auf die er eine Geschichte inszenieren wollte. Es musste eine Geschichte mit archaischen Zügen sein, eine Geschichte, in der es ums Lebendige geht, um das, was uns allen bleibt, wenn es nichts mehr gibt ausser unseren Körper, die Landschaft und: die Zeit.

Das Meeresrauschen wirkt in dieser Wüstenlandschaft wie eine Fata Morgana – eine akustische einfach, hier an diesem Ort, an den es Vasco de Sã mit Aurea und Dona Maria Aurea, ihrer Mutter,

verschlagen hat. Warum nur? Der alte Weisshaarige ist der Mann der Tochter, um mindestens zwei Generationen älter will er wirken, aber er hat sie gefreit und ist mit ihr, mit ihrer Mutter und einem ganzen Tross losgezogen, um ein Landstück zu suchen, das er gekauft hat, das er sein Eigen nennen darf. Eigentum, das zählt an einem derart weltabgeschiedenen Ort zwar nichts, aber diese Menschen kommen zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts aus einer Welt, in der das Eigentum alles ist. Auch wenn sie nicht eben viel davon haben.

Das höchste Gut in jener Zeit ist ein Stück Land. Eine sanfte Kamerafahrt hinter dem Rücken Vasco macht es deutlich. Von oben weitet sich sein und unser Blick hinab auf einen feuchten sandfreien Fleck Landschaft; das höchste Eigentum für diesen Mann ist ein Stück Land und eine Frau. Mit Vasco aber gibt

es keine Diskussion: Es gibt kein Zurück, hier wird geblieben, dieses Land ist sein Land. Sein Eigen. Was das mit dem Eigentum bedeutet, wird sich rasch zeigen, wenn Menschen, die hier leben, auftauchen. Es sind flüchtige Sklaven, die der Zivilisation, der so genannten, entflohen sind, weil sie es als unzivilisiert empfunden haben, Eigentum von anderen Menschen zu sein und wie Tiere gehalten zu werden. Sie zogen es vor, an diesem unwirtlichen Ort zu bleiben und sich mit dem Wenigen, was es da gibt, eine Existenz aufzubauen.

Eine Kraft des Filmes besteht darin, dass er uns die Endlichkeit in dieser Unendlichkeit spürbar macht, fassbarer werden lässt über das Bild, das er davon schafft. Tochter und Mutter in *The House of Sand* versuchen, ihrem Ort zu entrinnen. Aber ein Entrinnen gibt es nicht. Die einzige Chance, die die beiden mit dem noch ungeborenen Kind haben, ist hier zu bleiben, sich auf ein Leben hier einzustellen und zu hoffen, dass mal einer vorbeikommen möge, der sie mitnimmt und befreit aus ihrer Situation. Ist das womöglich etwas, was wir verloren haben, was bei uns verkümmert ist?

Die Zeit, sie zeigt sich in so vielen Facetten: In den Gesichtern zum Beispiel, in denen das Älterwerden seine Spuren hinterlässt, im Wiederkehrenden, wenn aus der Tochter eine Mutter wird und die Mutter bald einmal zur Grossmutter macht. Tochter und Mutter werden von zwei der bekanntesten Schauspielerinnen Brasiliens verkörpert, von Fernanda Montenegro und Fernanda Torres, die auch im wirklichen Leben Mutter und Tochter sind. Eine umso packendere Konstellation, als sie im Film ja mehrfach die Rollen tauschen und über die einhundert Jahre Einsamkeit hinweg mal Mutter sind mal Tochter, dann Mutter der Figur, die sie eben noch als Tochter verkörpert haben. Auch mit dieser Besetzung und diesem Wechselspiel lässt uns Andrucha Waddington über das Sein in der Zeit nachdenken. *The House of Sand* ist ein beeindruckender Film über den Fluss der Zeit, mitten im Sand, der still zu stehen scheint und sich doch bewegt. Ein Film, der uns aus unserer hektischen Gegenwart entführt an einen Ort, an dem die Zeit zerrinnt, ohne dass man sich dessen Gewahr wird, an einen Ort, an dem der Rest der Welt keine Rolle spielt und der Einzelne also bei sich sein kann.

Walter Ruggle

## ABOUT THE MOVIE

### THE SCRIPT

The story of *The House of Sand* was developed from a photograph of an abandoned house buried in the dunes of the sandy plains of northeastern Brazil. It was Luiz Carlos Barreto, one of the film's co-producers, who thought up the story and encouraged Andrucha Waddington to embrace the project.

Following Luiz Carlos Barreto's original idea, the next step was to invite Elena Soárez to develop the story. During its conception, the screenwriter had to invent the saga practically from scratch. It took two years of work, with regular meetings between Elena, Andrucha, Barreto, his wife Lucy and producer Leonardo Monteiro de Barros, until the final version was completed.

Three generations of women are forced by destiny to live for years in the remote sandy plains of the north of Maranhão. In order to mark the changes in the phases of the film, Elena decided to resort to important events of the century. The problem lay in how to reveal such occurrences, considering the inaccessibility of the inhospitable desert.

"I asked myself: 'how would information reach a place which is practically impenetrable?' I arrived at the conclusion together with Andrucha that the news would come from the sky.

"From there we started extensive research about the principal facts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which had some connection to the sky. We discovered, for example, that in 1919 an English scientific expedition went to the northeast of Brazil in order to photograph a group of stars during a solar eclipse, thereby proving Albert Einstein's relativity theory. In the film, the sequence surrounding Áurea's meeting with the group of astronomers becomes an essential part of the narrative.

"We wanted three significant visits that would portray the century. The beginning has the impetus of science; in the middle the misery of war, and finally, the hippies as the means to represent the arrival of man on the moon," clarifies the writer.

Actress Fernanda Montenegro reaffirms the importance of this research:

"Elena Soárez brought a metaphysical plane to the script. She measured the story of these two women by placing the theory of relativity within the problems in their lives. Something very pure and qualified exists in the writer's vision, that not only makes a story but contributes to a non-realist structure, not humdrum, not simply the chronicle of a story. This meta-language in the script is what makes *The House of Sand* a saga. More than just a drama of manners, it is an epic story connected to this wheel, this universe, which in the end describes the story of all of us on planet earth."

Elena had to overcome some obstacles in the production of the script. According to her, one of the difficulties was to maintain the story engaging, due to the narrative structure of the film.



“It is difficult to create a drama when one has a long time span. When one extends the period for too long, one loses the tension. The ideal thing is to have something fundamental happen in the story every half an hour. When you open it up to a century, all urgency disappears. Besides this, the film is divided into three phases. For each new stage, a new story. I kept asking myself whether, at each beginning, the audience would be willing to start over.”

Elena decided to cut down on the amount of dialogue, thus enhancing the images and scenes.

“Dialogue is something dangerous because it is almost the opposite of cinema. One can fall into a trap. One tends to resolve everything through dialogue but cinema works with another peculiarity. It resolves itself with the image,” she comments.

## **THE CAST**

*The House of Sand* did not follow normal procedures of film production. Fernanda Montenegro's and Fernanda Torres's participation was guaranteed during the development period, before the characters even existed. “The story was truly written for them,” Andrucha reveals.

“What fascinated me about the movie was the fact that it is a mysterious and feminine narrative about time acting as an agent on mother and daughter, besides acting with “Nanda,” and being directed by a great talent like Andrucha,” says Fernanda Montenegro.

Although nervous about accepting the part in the movie because of its location, Fernanda Torres states that the place contributed to the character's composition.

“I was really afraid to be a part of this movie because it was in a very distant and inaccessible place. I wasn't sure how it was going to be, so I thought: ‘I'm going there in the same situation as the character did’. It is a physical movie, where the location helps build the part. Now I'm really happy, it was a wonderful experience.”

Fernanda Montenegro plays three characters: Áurea's mother, Dona Maria, Áurea herself (at the ages of 60 and 87) – the main character – and her daughter Maria (58); while Fernanda Torres plays Áurea (28-37) and Maria (31). Although the movie was filmed in chronological order, avoiding confusion among roles and time periods, acting so many characters was not an easy task.

“In just the one movie I used up five old women of my life. I played women with an age range of 60 to 90 years of age. I used to tell Andrucha: ‘I am making the effort of more than 20 years of old women.’ I emptied my trunk of old women in this movie,” Fernanda Montenegro jokes.

The rest of the cast, however, were chosen after the screenplay was finished. One can say Andrucha was daring in the casting of some of the actors. Luiz Melodia, for instance, a newcomer to the movie industry, was one of the biggest gambles. The singer plays Massu at 62 years of age, a character who, when young, is played by Seu Jorge.



## **THE PRODUCTION**

Making *The House of Sand* was an arduous operation. One year of planning and approximately three months of pre-production to transform the small precarious and bucolic Santo Amaro, a town bordering the Lençóis Maranhenses National Park, into a base ready to receive a film crew. And two years of research and numerous trips to the location to make the production viable.

“We visited Lençóis in all the seasons of the year, a total of 11 trips, to understand the road conditions, the climate, how to deal with the sets in the sand and what were the norms in the national park,” recalls the director.

Without the support and authorization of Ibama, Brazil’s Environmental Protection Agency, *The House of Sand* never would have been filmed at Lençóis. The agency permitted that filming take place only in the buffer zones of the park, not in the reserves under maximum protection. According to one of the producers, Pedro Buarque de Hollanda, the site choice was correct.

“We noticed that our efforts were worthwhile, in virtue of what the place offered. The film would not have been the same in another location. All the money and energy that we spent were compensated,” Hollanda analyses.

Making the film had positive effects both for the city and for the park.

“The entire infrastructure that we put together remains there. We helped Ibama build local headquarters, we promoted lectures on education and hygiene, and the economy of the place became more active. Today, the region is better prepared for quality tourism,” evaluates Buarque.

Some of the production team even lived up to six months in Lençóis. The director himself lived there for three months, not counting the other trips beforehand. Numerous measures had to be taken to make the stay in Santo Amaro more comfortable. The attention given to accommodation, transportation and food were all fundamental.

## **ABOUT PRODUCTION DESIGN**

The art design in *The House of Sand* is basically divided in two characteristics: the metropolitan objects of the time period, and the elements of regional culture of the Brazilian North. The first trip to the Lençóis Maranhenses, during pre-production was essential in the composition of the film sets.

“It was important for us to understand the local architecture. We noticed that the buildings had little colonial influence and much indigenous and African influence. The houses are made from primary resources found in the region: Carnaúba (wax drawn from the tree’s leaves), Buriti (palm tree) and clay,” recalls art director Tulé Peake. “On the other hand, there is the cultural cargo represented by the objects that they (the characters) brought from Rio de Janeiro. These objects ended up becoming extremely precious things. They cling to their world through these objects,” he adds.

Twelve houses were built, with the help of two set designers and one painter, in addition to locals, using the intrinsic engineering methods of local traditions.

“I didn’t want to use any of my methods, but rather those of the people from there. We almost didn’t use measuring tools. We measured everything in steps and palms, the same construction processes used by the locals,” says Tulé.

Some of the houses had to be reproduced in various versions to show the evolution of the characters, the different phases of the film and the geographical changes of the dunes.

“From an artistic viewpoint, we had to build various houses according to the stage of adaptation of the women. The first house was an imposition of Vasco and doesn’t follow the typology of the place. The second is made by Massu and true to local culture. The last is a mixture of both cultures with walls made of stud and mud and a brick floor,” explains Tulé. “To show the geographic changes during the first phase of the film we had to build the same house in four different stages. The first at the dried lagoon, the second on the peninsula with the lagoon full; the third in another place being swallowed by the sand; and the fourth cut in half and with no front to give the impression that it was buried even further,” adds Andrucha.

Like in all the production departments of *The House of Sand*, the characteristics of the location were cause for concern.

“The transportation of people, objects, construction material and equipment was very complicated. The art objects were carried in two trucks from Rio de Janeiro as far as the dirt road that led to Santo Amaro. From there the material was taken to the town on tractors. The sand engulfed the set and buried the objects, which caused continuity problems for the film,” remembers Tulé. The script readings organized by the director were very useful for the conception of the film’s art direction. Tulé also highlights Andrucha’s working methods during filming.

“Andrucha has a really cool directing method. He is very generous, lets you work and provides things for the film from his soul. Despite being a film made on dunes, it was one of the projects in which I had most powers of intervention. The readings were determining factors for the composition of the art design. The participation of the “Fernandas” in this process was fundamental. As they constructed the characters, I crafted the art design,” he recalls.

## **ABOUT MAKEUP AND COSTUMES**

Since *The House of Sand* is a period film, or rather, a film which takes place over various periods, the characterization and costumes are fundamental aspects of the film. The passages of time were a challenge common to all departments. Headed up by Martin Trujillo, the makeup team had to be very thorough, especially in the characterization of the characters throughout the different phases.

“Because of the film’s nature, it was very important to prepare the characterization with delicacy and a

wealth of detail. Since we worked with various characters in distinct generations we needed to emphasize at least one different characteristic for each of them in each phase,” says the makeup artist. “We aged the clothes to show the passage of time and the phase changes were very subtle. We sewed and unraveled all day long,” recalls costume designer Cláudia Kopke.

The concept behind the costumes did not limit itself to historical publications. Creativity was essential in the realization of the costume design.

“I researched old books and magazines in order to compose the costumes, but the script pointed to something beyond this research, which was the lack of access to information. How did people adapt to this isolation? Wearing things that weren’t clothes. For example, we turned sheets and towels of that period in time, into costumes,” remarked Claudia Kopke.

Martin praises the contribution made by the “Fernandas” in the characterization process.

“Since I had just finished another film, I had little time to think about the physical composition of the characters. I arrived in Lençóis with four or five wigs under my arm. Both Fernanda and Nanda were very important in this process. We came up with all the ideas together and developed a train of thought. This partnership and the openness of these actresses was very important to me because the characterizations were complicated and demanded a lengthy execution time.”

According to Martin, one of the most difficult scenes for characterization was when Fernanda Montenegro plays two roles in the same scene, a younger and older version of herself.

“For this scene, which took two days to shoot, Fernanda had to wake up with me at 3:00am. I did all her makeup for the older version, a process that lasted approximately three hours and three more hours to make the younger character. For those accustomed to the big city, arriving in Santo Amaro was both a great physical and emotional shock. I brought products which wouldn’t stain, where sweat could fall freely on makeup without causing damage.”

Both the makeup artist and the costume designer shared the same opinion when asked if the project was the hardest of their lives.

“It was definitely the most complex film I’ve made, but the result was very gratifying,” confesses Cláudia. “When people ask me what was my best experience in Brazilian Cinema, I always answer *Eu Tu Eles*, with Andrucha. Now when they ask which was the most difficult, I answer *The House of Sand*”, says Martin.

#### **ABOUT THE DIRECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

The main concept behind the photography in *The House of Sand* was to transmit a panorama that reflected the drama lived by Áurea and Maria. The purpose was not to portray a beautiful landscape but rather an arid, hot and uninhabitable place.

“We didn’t want to show the location looking like paradise. The idea was to show a tough place, a place almost impossible to live in,” says director of photography, Ricardo Della Rosa.

Numerous tests were run, in locations and in laboratories, in order to choose the negatives, filters and hours to film.

“First, we did various tests over six months, in Arraial do Cabo. Afterwards, we worked with this material, carrying out diverse laboratory experiments. Then we took the camera to Lençóis and ran another series of tests there. We brought the material once again to the laboratory and Ricardo chose the negatives he wanted to use, the manner in which the light was filtered, we managed to have the sky always white,” recalls Andrucha.

“We also did some tests in São Paulo for the night scenes. We watched various films, however the main references ended up coming from painters like Caravaggio, George De La Tour and Portinari,” adds Della Rosa.

In order to favor the photography and spare the cast and crew from the midday heat, the director implemented a break of five hours during filming. If on the one hand the intermission relieved exposure to the sun, on the other, the day became much longer.

“We were very concerned about the sun. We filmed from 4:30am to 9:00am and then from 14:00 to nightfall. This allowed time for the team to rest and better lighting. The film’s two main characters are women, and working under the midday sun is arduous. The whole team worked in unison in favor of the photography and the actresses,” explains Andrucha.

According to Della Rosa, filming with celebrated actors like Fernanda Montenegro, Stênio Garcia and Fernanda Torres, made his job easier.

“Besides their exceptional acting, they have extraordinary positioning for the camera and lights, a privilege for any director of photography.”

## **ABOUT THE EDITING AND THE VISUAL EFFECTS**

While the team worked in Lençóis Maranhenses, editor Sergio Mekler started a parallel editing process in Rio de Janeiro. According to him, this was only possible because the shooting schedule followed the order of the script, which allowed for complete sequences to be sent.

“I was there during the first week, which was great in order to get the atmosphere of the place. Afterwards, as the scenes arrived in Rio, I made a first cut following exactly what was written. This was possible because he filmed with two cameras, allowed me various options. From there on in, we started experimenting.”

“Bangu I,” (one of Rio’s high security prisons), was the nickname given to the editing studio set up in

the director's house, which literally held them prisoner. Andrucha and Mekler remained confined trying all the possibilities; even the most improbable were welcome, because they opened up other doors. It was six months work, trying to resolve the sequences with the least amount of shots possible.

“Like Fernanda Montenegro said, *The House of Sand* is almost a theorem. At the beginning of the film *Áurea* is practically mute. So, one image is added to another, successively, generating a universe. Practically everything is comprehensible without the use of words. We wanted to find the language of cinema and discovered it together with the story, throughout editing,” explains Mekler. “There is nothing in the film that has an aspect I don't like. Sometimes a director insists that it has to be his way or no way, and that's the end of that. But with Andrucha this doesn't happen: we solved all problems together. It was great to do this work, I'm satisfied.”

The special effects in *The House of Sand*, although necessary, are simple. The main difficulty for the supervisor, Fábio Soares, was to prevent them from interfering in the film's simplicity.

“Andrucha called me to read the script and we soon saw that the effects would not be explicit. The concept of the effects was very conservative,” recalls Soares.

The special effects were applied, basically, on four occasions: the star-filled sky, the eclipse, the war planes, and when the two characters of Fernanda Montenegro are in the same scene. *The House of Sand* is the first Brazilian film to be finalized in 2K, a digital format that offers the best image resolution quality and the widest range of colors without compromising optical quality.

For the sake of comparison, the HD (high definition) model normally used in Brazilian productions, works at 1920 x 1080 pixels resolution, at 8 bits, while 2K works with 2048 x 1536 pixels resolution, at 10 bits. The film's post-production services were provided by co-producer TeleImage.

“It was a great challenge to finalize the film in 2K. This process places you in a post-production situation very different from the norm, allowing for all the possibilities of digital resources without losing optical quality. On the other hand, it is a slow process and the files are gigantic,” tells Soares.