

El botón de nácar
The Pearl Button
Dir. Patricio Guzmán, 2015



The film explores familiar Guzmán themes such as memory and the historical past, particularly that of history's losers rather than victors, recording some of the last surviving members of the original Alacalufe and Yaghan tribes. The documentary does not focus solely on Chile's past under Augusto Pinochet, as the title was partly inspired by a shirt button discovered during a 2004 investigation by Chilean judge Juan Guzmán on a length of rail used to weigh the bodies of Pinochet's victims dumped in the sea and partly by the button after which the Yaghan native Jemmy Button was named when taken aboard HMS *Beagle* in 1830.

A meditation in vision and sound on the geography and history of Chile, structured around the water which permeates the country and gives life to its inhabitants, looking in particular at the fate of two persecuted groups: the indigenous people and the victims of Pinochet. Topics covered include: the far north of Chile, the most waterless place on earth, where radio telescopes in the desert discover more about the cosmos each day; a schoolfriend washed away by the sea; the genocide of the native tribes in the far south and how their way of life was destroyed; the story of Jemmy Button, taken from Tierra del Fuego to England; the efforts under Allende to rehabilitate the surviving tribespeople; the concentration camps set up under Pinochet; how inmates were tortured and how their bodies, weighted with lengths of rail, were dropped from helicopters into the Pacific; how one corpse was washed ashore; and finally how one of the lengths of rail recovered from the sea had a mother-of-pearl shirt button encrusted to it.

The filmmaker has described the work as part of a triptych with *Nostalgia for the Light* and potentially a third film focusing on the Andes.

PATRICIO GUZMAN

Patricio Guzmán Lozanes is a Chilean documentary film director. He is internationally renowned for films such as *The Battle of Chile* and *Salvador Allende*. Guzmán also teaches documentary

film classes in Europe and Latin America, and is the founder and director of the International Documentary Festival of Santiago.

**Preguntas de cinematográficas/ questions about cinematography. Prepared by
Tess Meddings**

1. Explique su interpretación del uso de sonidos diegéticos a lo largo de la película

Explain your interpretation of the use of diegetic sounds throughout the film.

2. Explique cómo el montaje (la yuxtaposición de imágenes, sonidos y diálogo= ayudan a crear la película y retrata, efectivamente o no, el mensaje del documental.

Explain how the editing (the juxtaposition of images, sound, and dialogue) creates the film and portrays, effectively or not effectively, the message of the documentary.

3. ¿Cómo se usa el color a lo largo de la película para representar las imágenes y el mensaje del documental?

How is the use of color used throughout the film in order to represent the images and message of the documentary?

4. Hay entrevistas con mucha gente a lo largo de la película. ¿Cómo es la inclusión de estas entrevistas usada para representar la idea principal del documental?

There are interviews with many people throughout the film. How is the inclusion of these interviews used to represent the main idea of the documentary?

5. Describe el uso de planos panorámicos y planos detalles de la naturaleza a lo largo del documental. Incluya ejemplos de la película.

Describe the use of panoramic and detailed shots of nature throughout the documentary. Provide examples.