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By:

Cannes shocked by explicit sex scenes from "Battle in Heaven"

Cannes seems again reluctant to explicit sex scenes in competition films.

The second production of the Mexican director Carlos Reygadas (winner of a Cannes special mention prize for "Japan" in 2002) is considered a provocative and controversial film with scenes crossing the line between pornography and art cinema. "Batalla en el Cielo" ("Battle in Heaven") opens with a teenage girl performing fellatio on an overweight middle-aged driver. Ana, a young rich girl prostituting herself for pleasure has a bizzare relationship with Marcos, her father's chauffeur. Marcos confides Ana his darkest secret: together with his wife, he had kidnapped a friend's baby. The baby dies mysteriously, and eventually Marcos kills Ana. Reygadas concluded he did not want to cast professional actors, but normal people with no particular acting technique, for the aim of the film "was to capture the essence of the characters". Disturbed by the way many commercial films care to arrange bed sheets in a completely unrealistic way in order to conceal body parts during sex scenes, or use actors with perfect bodies, the Mexican director intended to present realistic sex scenes between normal people. Because "things happen when people make love. That's what this film is about. It's how we relate to it" stated Reygadas at the press conference. Marcos Hernandez, the one who impersonates Marcos is in fact a close friend of the director, and Anapola Mushkadiz is an art designer.