



09/05/1982

Una película de Jorge Caballero y Camilo Restrepo

Producida por Artefacto Fílmico - Anna Giralts Gris

2025



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Producida en el marco del Programa de comisionado de cine de vanguardia, Umbral 0 de El FICUNAM

Synopsis

A deteriorated film, shot in 1982 in a Latin American country, presents a succession of everyday images, among which a few stand out that testify to the violent events that took place on May 9 of that year. Interspersed between the images, a man's voice presents the official version of the events. Beneath its apparent banality, the film raises suspicion that what really happened was covered up.

Note on the production

The images in this film were generated by Jorge Caballero and Camilo Restrepo using artificial intelligence technologies in order to explore the increasingly blurred boundaries between the photographic archive and the synthetic image.

Director's Note Jorge Caballero

My work as a filmmaker and researcher has been marked by a constant tension between the documentary and the speculative, between capturing the present and simulating the past. For years, I have been interested in understanding how algorithmic tools can process, manipulate, or reconstitute fragments of reality. Along this path, I have explored themes such as control, surveillance, and sub-jectivity through a critical and technological lens.

09/05/1982 emerges from the meeting of two seemingly opposing worlds: the physical, material cinema linked to the artisanal gesture of Camilo Restrepo, and my own practice, more closely connected to generative systems, parameters, and synthetic models. This collaboration is born from a shared question: what happens when artificial intelligence tools are no longer used to represent the past, but to fabricate it?

I am particularly interested in how this film challenges the concept of the archive. If classical documentary aimed to reconstruct facts through evidence, *09/05/1982* operates from suspicion. Rather than seeking testimony, it produces a false artifact that nonetheless can activate genuine reflection. In this sense, the fake archive is less a trap than a provocation: do we still believe what we see? Is the veracity of an image more important, or its capacity to generate meaning?

This film also dialogues with a recurring concern in my work: the power of computational languages to parameterize human experience. What happens when the past becomes a variable within a generative system? What is gained and what is lost in this algorithmic compression of the world?

09/05/1982 proposes an exercise in critical imagination. It invites us to question the visual certainties that shaped history in the twentieth century and to confront the fragility of the present, where the boundaries between fiction, memory, and propaganda blur with disturbing ease.

Director's note Camilo Restrepo

In 2010, a chance discovery on the Internet revealed to me a collection of filmed images of an extremely isolated region of Colombia. These rare audiovisual documents depicted the periodic return of colonising expeditions led by explorers, armed groups, missionaries and industrialists. By combining certain sequences from these archives with images that I shot myself in the region, I wanted to show that the sources I found were created with the aim of justifying undertakings of domination in the service of economic, political and religious powers. In making what was my first short film, I laid the foundations for my subsequent films, each of which gave visual form to my concern about the use of images.

With *09/05/1982*, I engaged in a reflective dialogue with Jorge Caballero on the potential of computer tools to create images that reinterpret historical events in accordance with contemporary revisionist discourses. This reflection is part of an unparalleled societal discourse on what might be called the 'destiny of the past' in the age of artificial intelligence. This theme is central to numerous debates concerning the remarkable technical evolution of practices aimed at erasing or altering visual archives. These practices, which were extensively used in authoritarian regimes of the past century, offer a plethora of examples illustrating how the manipulation of history can be employed to legitimise actions that infringe upon fundamental freedoms, or even to justify human rights violations.

09/05/1982 fits into this theoretical framework as an example of what we wanted to call a 'synthetic footage film', in reference to the more traditional 'found footage' films (such as my first short film). Entirely generated using AI, *09/05/1982* is an imitation of a celluloid film partially damaged by wear and tear and poor preservation, presented as if it were a never-before-seen record of the tragic day of 9 May 1982.

The aim of creating this fake archive is to help us think about the way in which new technologies have radically broken the link between images and facts that was once forged by the invention of photography. The concept of the realistic image has undergone a significant transformation in recent times, leaving behind the paradigm of its creation through the impression of light using a camera. In the current context, the veracity of images seems less important than their verisimilitude, that is, their ability to make us believe that what they show is a reflection of reality. The result is a confusion between seeing and believing generated by the constant suspicion that images no longer relate to any reality.

Jorge Caballero

Jorge Caballero is a filmmaker, researcher, and author specialized in AI-driven storytelling. He holds a PhD *cum laude* from UPF and co-directs the postgraduate program in Film and Algorithms at UAB. He has led projects supported by institutions such as Sundance FI, Tribeca FI, and the United Nations.

His films have won Colombia's National Documentary Award and have been showcased and awarded at festivals like Rotterdam, IDFA, SXSW, Visions du Réel, and HotDocs, among others, and co-produced and broadcast by platforms and networks including ARTE, YLE, TV3, RTS, and Discovery.

His latest book, *Artificial Imagination*, explores the future of cinema in the algorithmic age.

Camilo Restrepo

Born in Medellín (Colombia) in 1975 he lives and works in France. After studying visual arts at the École des Beaux- Arts in Paris, he turned to cinema. He is a member of L'Abominable, an artist-run film laboratory.

His films have been selected in major festivals such as Director's Fortnight in Cannes, Toronto, Locarno, Rotterdam and New York. He has twice won the Pardino d'Argento at Locarno, with the short films *Impression of a War* and *Cilaos. Los Conductos* won the Best First Feature Award at the Berlinale 2020.

Technical information

Original and International title: *09/05/1982*

Directors: Jorge Caballero & Camilo Restrepo

Producer: Anna Giralt Gris

Country of Production: Mexico & Spain

Production in Mexico: El FICUNAM - Programa de comisionado de cine de vanguardia, Umbral 0

Production in Spain: Artefacto Fílmico

Running Time: 10 minutes 45 Seconds

Year of Production: 2025

Color

Image ratio: 1920 x 1080

Im/s: 25

Sound: 5.1 Dolby & Stereo

Original language: Spanish

Subtitles available: French & English

Screening files: DCP, H264

Contact information

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