



The Chicago International Film Festival

Cinema/Chicago and the Chicago International Film Festival
Education Outreach Program Screening: *Duck Season*
Director: Fernando Eimbcke
90 minutes, in Spanish with English subtitles

Please use the below synopsis, study ideas/questions and helpful websites to lead your students in preparation and post-screening discussion. Following the film, students are required to respond to the screening with a one-page essay. Essays (either all or select) must be sent to Cinema/Chicago.*

Synopsis: Flama and Moko are fourteen years old; they have been best friends since they were kids. They have everything they need to survive yet another boring Sunday: an apartment without parents, videogames, soft drinks and pizza delivery. The electricity company, Rita, the neighbor, Ulises, a pizza deliveryman, eleven seconds, the Real Madrid-Manchester game, some chocolate brownies and a horrible painting of ducks, all combine to break the harmony of what promised to be a placid Sunday, and reveal issues such as the parents' divorce, loneliness, the confusion between adolescent love and friendship, as well as frustration in adult life.

Recommended for: cultural studies, Spanish students, film/video students

Appropriate for: 10-12 grade, contains adult language and references to drugs

Study Ideas/Questions:

1. It is clear that the boys have no idea what to do with themselves when the power goes out. There is a lot of debate about how people don't know what to do with ourselves without our personal devices (phones, iPods, iPads, etc.). Do you agree that we are too connected to our electronics? Explain why or why not.
2. When the boys begin playing their video game, they make a reference to US political figures. Is this a commentary about how Mexico views US politics? Explain why or why not.
3. The boys do not seem to notice or care that there is a young, attractive girl in their apartment. Why do you think that might be?
4. In Ulises's memory of his time at the dog pound, what has the filmmaker done to draw you into that scene? Think about the use of sound, imagery, etc.

5. Even though Ulises is clearly a young adult, he seems to fit right in with this group of much younger teens. What purpose does his character serve in the story?
6. What is it about Ulises' character that keeps him from being an "adult" in the traditional sense? How do you define "adult"?
7. When Moko relates his story about kissing Rita, he changes the details to make it seem like he was the instigator. Why?
8. Why do you think Ulises takes the painting?
9. Before she leaves at the start of the film, we see the mother fretting obsessively before leaving the two boys alone for the day. Although we don't see her return that evening, how do you imagine she might have reacted?
10. This is a modern film (released in 2004), yet it is in black and white. Why do you think the director made that choice? What impact does it have on the story?

Useful Links and Resources:

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m68Q4WIUhG8>

Roger Ebert review of *Duck Season*: <http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/duck-season-2006>

Information about Cinema/Chicago's Education Outreach Program:
<http://cinemachicago.org/education/>

*Schools who do not send in essay requirement will not be allowed to attend future Education Outreach Screenings.