

## CHELMSFORD FILM CLUB

An Independent film society based in Chelmsford

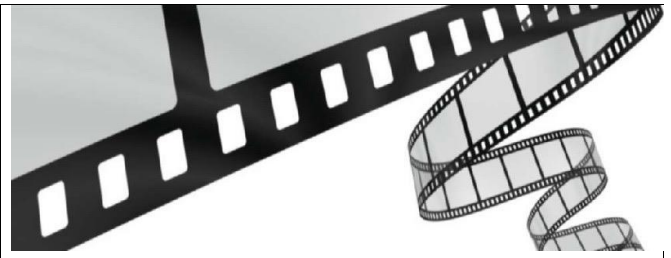
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## SUMMER OF 93

**Spain 2017 97 mins Language - Catalan**

<b>Director/writer</b>	<b>Carla Simon</b>
<b>Frida</b>	<b>Laia Artigas</b>
<b>Anna</b>	<b>Paula Robles</b>
<b>Marga</b>	<b>Bruna Cusi</b>
<b>Estever</b>	<b>David Verdaguer</b>

Summer of 93 is the first full length feature written and directed by Carla Simon. She trained in film in both Barcelona and London and had previously made and exhibited at various festivals two short films; Born Positive (documentary) and Lipstick (fiction).

The film describes a summer as spent by a 6 year old orphan whose parents have died of AIDS and who has moved from Barcelona to her new home with her aunt, uncle and their own younger daughter in the Catalan countryside. The circumstances parallel Simon's own experience as she too was orphaned at 6 after her own parents had died of AIDS.

The AIDS epidemic in Spain was drug fuelled. After the honeymoon period post Franco, a more hedonistic lifestyle took over and the drugs poured into Spain with little government intervention. Spain was the European country with the most deaths from AIDS, so Simon's story was not unique.

This not however an autobiographical film as such, as Simon used her own memories, retold memories and childhood photographs to fashion the script, but there are invented scenes and Frida, the main character is not Simon. Directing the 2 main leads Frida and Anna, who were 6 and 4 years old respectively, meant of course that they could not be expected to read and work from a written script. Simon would get them to repeat certain sentences but the dialogue and conversations became adapted as they went along, but the storyline of the script was adhered to.

Simon has said that "You have to forget the fact that it is your story," and block out the emotions. The film however is emotionally accurate in that Frida exhibits the way a child may react to death in a completely different way to a teenager or adult and doesn't stop playing, laughing and having a nice summer. The common aspects of childhood everywhere are captured in the games and the fact that at her age Frida is more talked about than talked to.

Over the summer Frida learns to adapt to her new life and her new family. The country is a challenge to her and she finds nature both mysterious and estranging. She now also has a little sister and has to absorb this new responsibility and "sibling" rivalry, whilst the aunt and uncle have to also learn to love Frida as their own daughter. Both parties go through gamut of emotions to achieve a new fragile balance with the fact that Frida is there for ever.

Another element that Simon wanted to portray was the generational aspects of family life: the grandparents from the Catholic Franco era, their leftist children and then the next generation that would be a mixture of them both.

It is a portrait that captures both innocence and worldly experience. The film was a big success in Catalonia and also at the London Film Festival.

***This is our last film of the 2018-19 season, hopefully an enjoyable and memorable one for our members and guests. The films for the next season are on the CFC website: they have yet to be matched to dates. Have a pleasant summer, and see you all in September.***