



ALBANO  
JERÓNIMO

MARIA JOÃO  
BASTOS

PAULO  
PIRES

AFONSO  
PIMENTEL

JOÃO PEDRO  
VAZ

MARCELLO  
URGEGHE

ADRIANO  
CARVALHO

PAULO BRANCO presents

# MEMORIES OF PRISON

A film by  
SÉRGIO GRACIANO

# SYNOPSIS

A fascinating and vivid portrait of Camilo Castelo Branco, based on one of the most remarkable episodes of his life, when the writer and Ana Plácido were imprisoned in Porto's court jail as a result of the famous adultery trial that shook nineteenth-century Portuguese society.

A collection of extraordinary stories of people with bitter existences – forgers, parricides, infanticides, and even a king – that Camilo heard and recounted there, with his inexhaustible creative genius, in the book *Memórias do Cárcere* (*Memories of Prison*), which the film adapts.

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

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Portugal, 2026

Running time: 167 min

Colour

Language: Portuguese

Genre: Period Drama

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# CAST

**Albano Jerónimo**

and

**Maria João Bastos**

**Paulo Pires**

**Afonso Pimentel**

**João Pedro Vaz**

**Marcello Urgeghe**

**Adriano Carvalho**

with special appearances by

**Soraia Chaves**

**Adriano Luz**

**Ricardo Pereira**

**Beatriz Brás**

**Bárbara Branco**

**Rui Morisson**

**Diogo Infante**

# INTERVIEW WITH SÉRGIO GRACIANO

BY INÊS N. LOURENÇO

**After *The Englishman's Papers*, Paulo Branco challenged you to take on another literary adaptation. Has the way you look at filmmaking changed since coming “under the influence” of this producer?**

I think Paulo opened up new perspectives for me. The way he challenges me pushed me a little further and, in that sense, made me try to find new paths for my films. That is something he worked on with me. And besides giving me the opportunity to work with scripts that are quite different from what I had done before, on the shoot itself he gave me *time* – something that is particularly important in cinema, because it allows you to approach the film differently, and it gives you room to make mistakes. I was able to make mistakes, go back and try again. Well, perhaps the easiest way to put it is this: Paulo changed my life by changing the way I make films today.

**Is there more of a craftsman's attention to detail?**

Yes, and again, it comes down to time. Time allowed me to do that kind of painstaking work - and I think you can see it in the films. And then Paulo is not a conventional producer. He gives me the right impulses at the beginning, and he is very involved at that stage, suggesting films for me to watch and things for me to read. But once we start shooting, he does not impose himself at all; he does not tell me how I should do this or that. We gradually built up a relationship of trust...and there was also a bit of luck involved: the first film I made with Paulo was shot in Angola, and because it was so far away, he could not come over...

**So you had to develop a certain degree of autonomy.**

And I had to develop a confidence that I would hardly have gained here. Over there, I had no choice but to make decisions.

**What interested you about the Camilo Castelo Branco of *Memories of Prison*, in other words, Camilo at that particular point in his life?**

*Memories of Prison* shows Camilo at a more fragile point in his life, and I think that is what makes the difference. I wanted to build the film around the character's vulnerability and humanity, because this is not the Camilo of Francisca [Manoel de Oliveira, 1981]. This is someone closer to us, someone who, at that moment, was more vulnerable and not in control of everything. That was the Camilo I was interested in, and we tried to find the right balance.

**But there is also Camilo's passion for literature, his compulsion to tell stories...**

At times, Camilo's own story is even told through the other characters... But ultimately, it is a very personal book, and I wanted to preserve that personal dimension in the film. He is the narrator of his own story, just as he is also very much seen *through the eyes of others*: this is a Camilo who feels jealousy, fear and love.



**Was it important for you to share some of Camilo's central role with Ana Plácido [Maria João Bastos], who was also a writer?**

Yes, Ana Plácido's presence brings both balance and imbalance: she is the woman he is completely in love with – in fact, Camilo gives himself up to the authorities so that he can be close to her in prison – but she is also someone who brings out a certain humanity in him. The fact that she is a writer, that he sees her as his equal in the world of literature, helps explain why he is willing to surrender himself to imprisonment in this way.

**How did you imagine Camilo as a character, beyond any of the usual trappings of a period film?**

My intention was for him to be a man, not a superhero. Albano's Camilo is one of us, a figure far removed from that familiar image of someone who sees himself as "above other people". He is a 19th-century Portuguese man, yes, who also happens to be a thinker: he is constantly questioning himself and listening to his own thoughts. And, of course, there is something modern about him too, just as there is about Ana Plácido, an emancipated woman.

**And how did you shape the character together with the actor playing him, Albano Jerónimo?**

Besides being an incredible actor, Albano is someone I'm very close to. But there was another secret behind this character: we practically lived together during the shoot of *Memories of Prison*. We stayed in the same house, along with the director of photography, João Ribeiro. That changed everything, because instead of talking about the character while we were working, we talked much more in those little moments in between – when we were having a bite to eat, for instance... At a certain point, the character simply came naturally to him. And Albano is not the kind of actor who arrives on set with absolute certainties; he is always ready to listen. The character was built through this exchange of ideas, which came from sharing a house, meals and, almost, even sleep!

**You mentioned the director of photography, and one of the things that immediately stands out in *Memories of Prison* is the care devoted to every single shot. Where did that come from?**

When it comes to living and working together, João Ribeiro's case was not very different from Albano's. We did a great deal of work in pre-production, we had thought through all the shots, and we visited the locations several times. We realised we didn't want to create picturesque postcards; we wanted the images to have a soul. João did a lot of work with acetate sheets in front of the lens, with glass, mirrors... We wanted to make a new film that somehow felt slightly old, and that became something very special, because this search for perfection – or for the right shot, not in any academic sense – turned into an entire exercise in precision and detail. The *mise-en-scène* was quite extraordinary.

**The screenplay, being by Carlos Saboga [1936-2026], also seems to have a story behind it, since three other names appear in the credits...**

Yes, there was a first version by three Brazilian writers [Luca Paiva Mello, André Catarinacho and Bruna Skrzypek], which was different, perhaps a little less cinematic. And as soon





as Carlos Saboga came on board, everything changed! He knew Camilo's work extremely well, and he had this remarkable ability to take the writer's words and put them into the actors' mouths. That was essentially what the first version had been missing.

**And the absence of "dramatic music" – was that a decision from the outset, or did it come later?**

That was a decision we made towards the end. We realised that the film has a muted musicality of its own, one that enhances Albano's performance. He doesn't need that kind of "accessory". And we didn't want to drift into melodrama either... Paulo's vision was decisive in that respect.

**There is an irresistible character in this film who must surely have required some special attention: Coutinho's dog [João Pedro Vaz]. How did you manage to make it seem so completely at ease inside the prison?**

(laughs) Once again, having time helps enormously. We had time to build a bond with the animal – in this case, a female dog – and Albano loves dogs, as do I, which perhaps made the whole dynamic easier: she was with us throughout the shoot. We had *time*.



# SÉRGIO GRACIANO

Sérgio Graciano is a Portuguese filmmaker. He made his feature-film debut with *So So* (2012), followed by films including *Nzinga, Queen of Angola* (2013), *O Som que Desce na Terra* (2021) and *Salgueiro Maia: The Implicated* (2022).

*The Englishman's Papers* (2024), an adaptation of Ruy Duarte de Carvalho's trilogy *Os Filhos de Próspero*, with a screenplay by José Eduardo Agualusa, was selected for the Official Competition of the Tokyo International Film Festival, received the Audience Award at FESTin and won two Sophia Awards. He went on to direct *Comrade Cunhal* (2025) and *Playback* (2026).

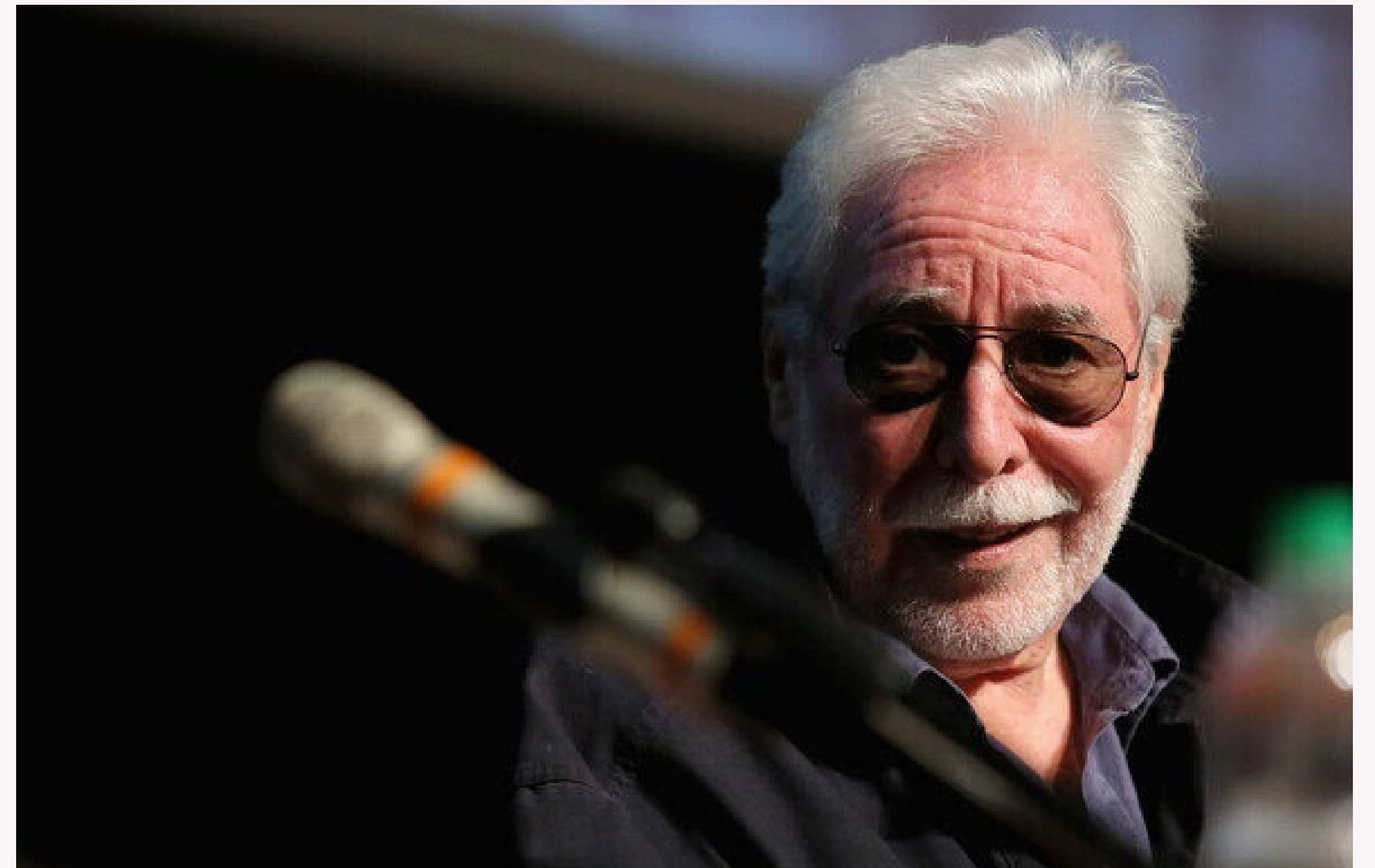
His most recent film is *Memories of Prison* (2026). He is currently preparing *The Goodbyes*, an adaptation of Juan Carlos Onetti.



# CARLOS SABOGA

Carlos Saboga (1936-2026) was one of the leading figures in Portuguese screenwriting. He grew up under the Estado Novo regime and, in 1965, left Portugal clandestinely, accompanying a French film crew. He subsequently lived in France, Italy and Algeria before eventually settling in Paris. Before devoting himself primarily to writing for film and television, he also worked as an assistant director, journalist and film critic.

He worked in various capacities on films such as Claude Faraldo's *La Jeune Morte* (1965), Giuseppe Ferrara's *Secret Dossier of the Mafia* (1969) and Stelio Lorenzi's *Jacquou le Croquant* (1969). Over the course of his career, he wrote for filmmakers including José Fonseca e Costa, Luís Galvão Telles, Fernando Lopes, António-Pedro Vasconcelos, Mário Barroso, Raúl Ruiz and Valeria Sarmiento. Among his most significant screenplays are Raúl Ruiz's *Mysteries*



*of Lisbon* (2010), adapted from Camilo Castelo Branco's novel of the same name; *Lines of Wellington* (2012), for which he received the Sophia Award for Best Original Screenplay; and Valeria Sarmiento's *The Black Book* (2018), also adapted from a novel by Camilo Castelo Branco, *Livro Negro de Padre Dinis*; as well as António-Pedro Vasconcelos's *O Lugar do Morto* (1984) and *Jaime* (1994); and Mário Barroso's *The Miracle According to Salome* (2004), *Doomed Love* (2008), also based on a work by Camilo Castelo Branco, and *Moral Order* (2020), for which he received the Portuguese Society of Authors Award for Best Screenplay.

Several of these projects were produced by Paulo Branco, with whom Saboga shared a close friendship spanning more than five decades, after António-Pedro Vasconcelos introduced them at the Pesaro Film Festival in 1973. Saboga directed two feature films, both produced by Paulo Branco: *Photo* (2012),

which premiered in the Official Competition of the Rome Film Festival, and *A Uma Hora Incerta* (2015), which premiered at the Viennale and received the Jury Prize.

In 2023, the Portuguese Film Academy honoured Carlos Saboga with the Sophia Career Award, "for the immeasurable impact he had on Portuguese cinema since the 1980s."

His final screenplay for cinema was *Memoires of Prison* (2026), directed by Sérgio Graciano, a new adaptation of Camilo Castelo Branco, which he was still able to see before his death.

# ALBANO JERÓNIMO

Albano Jerónimo is one of Portugal's most acclaimed and award-winning actors today, recognised for his remarkable versatility both on stage and on screen. After graduating in Acting from the Lisbon Theatre and Film School, he began his artistic career in theatre, taking leading roles in works by authors as diverse as Shakespeare, Tennessee Williams, David Mamet and Martin McDonagh.

On television, he became a familiar face to a wide audience through appearances in highly successful



series and telenovelas such as *Vila Faia*, *Dancin' Days* and *O Presidente*, among others. It is in cinema, however, that he has developed some of the most significant work of his career, collaborating with filmmakers including Raúl Ruiz, Valeria Sarmiento, Tiago Guedes and Mário Barroso. Among his major roles are *Mysteries of Lisbon* (2010), *Lines of Wellington* (2012), *The Domain* (2019), *Moral Order* (2020), *Remains of The Wind* (2022), *The Worst Man In London* (2024), *First Person Plural* (2025) and *Aquí* (2026). His performances have received numerous distinctions, including the Sophia Award for Best Supporting Actor for *Lines of Wellington* and the Sophia Award for Best Actor for *Remains of The Wind* and *The Worst Man in London*, as well as the best actor award at the Dublin International Film Festival; and the Portuguese Golden Globe for Best Actor for his performances in *The Domain* and *The Worst Man In London*.

His most recent role is in Sérgio Graciano's *Memories of Prison* (2026), adapted from the book of the same name by Camilo Castelo Branco, in which he plays the writer opposite Maria João Bastos as Ana Plácido.

# MARIA JOÃO BASTOS

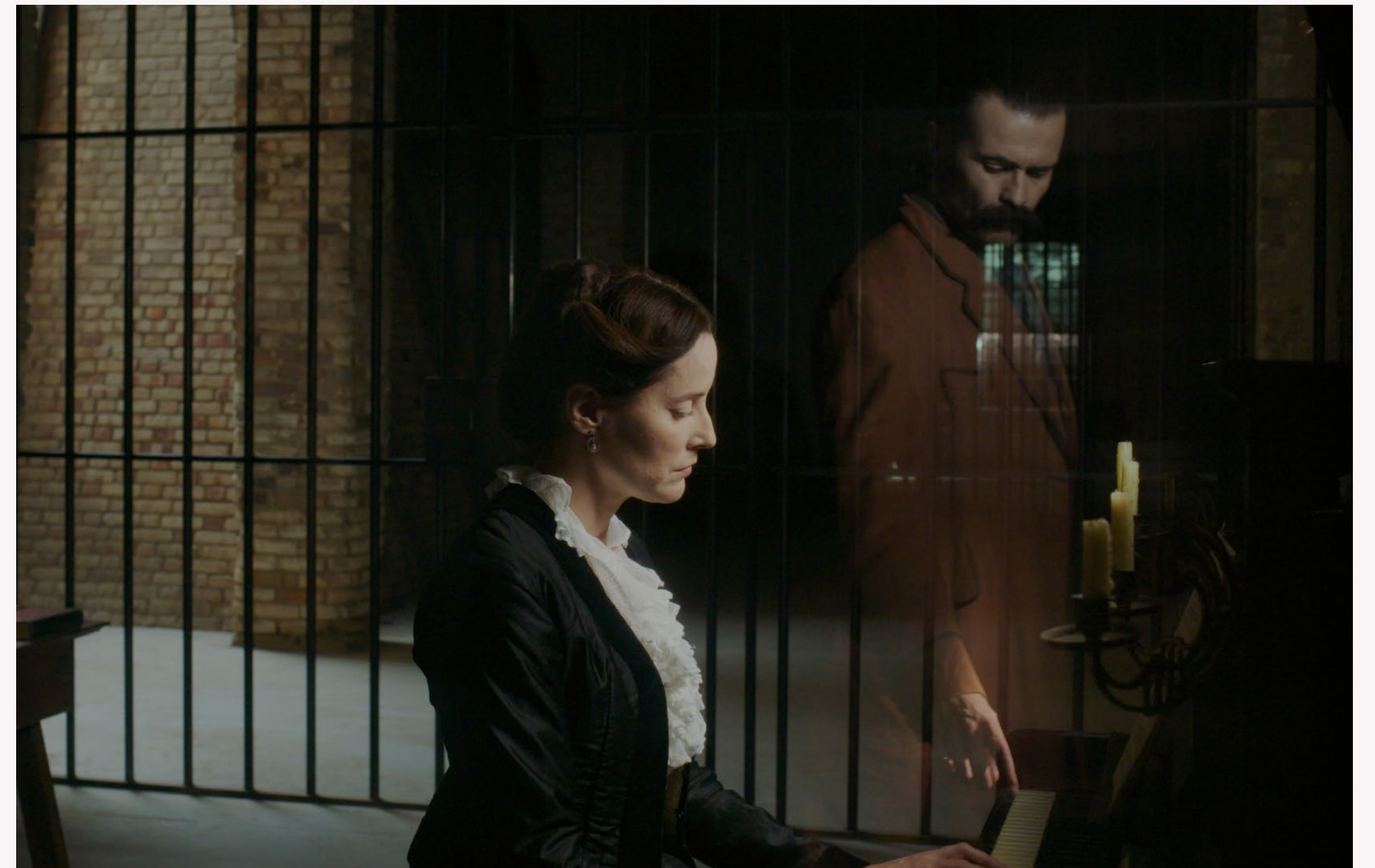
Maria João Bastos is one of the most acclaimed Portuguese actresses of her generation, with a career spanning Portugal and abroad across film, television and theatre. She holds a degree in Communication Sciences and completed her artistic training in New York and Madrid.

In cinema, she has worked with directors including Raúl Ruiz, Valeria Sarmiento, Fernando Lopes, Michael Sturminger and Fernando Vendrell. In Raúl Ruiz's *Mysteries of Lisbon* (2010), she played Ângela de Lima, a role that earned her the Golden Globe for Best Actress. Her subsequent



films include Fernando Lopes' *Em Câmara Lenta* (2012), Valeria Sarmiento's *Lines of Wellington* (2012), Michael Sturminger's *Casanova Variations* (2014), alongside John Malkovich, and Fernando Vendrell's *Clear Shadows* (2023). She also received the Authors' Award for Best Actress from the Portuguese Society of Authors for her performance in *Bairro*.

In Sérgio Graciano's *Memórias do Cárcere* (2026), her most recent film role, she plays Ana Plácido, opposite Albano Jerónimo as Camilo Castelo Branco.



# PAULO PIRES

Paulo Pires is one of the most recognised Portuguese actors of his generation, with a career spanning film, television and theatre, both in Portugal and abroad. After beginning his career as a model, he made his film acting debut in José Álvaro Morais' *Zefir* (1993) and José Fonseca e Costa's *Five Days, Five Nights* (1996).

His notable film roles include Mário Barroso's *The Miracle According to Salomé* (2004) and *Doomed Love* (2008); Valeria Sarmiento's *Lines of Wellington* (2012), which premiered in the Official Competition at the



Venice Film Festival; Joaquim Leitão's *Quarta Divisão* (2013), which earned him a nomination for the Golden Globe for Best Actor; Carlos Saboga's *At An Uncertain Hour* (2015), selected for the Official Programme of the Vienna International Film Festival; and Edgar Pêra's *Não Sou Nada - The Nothingness Club* (2023).

His most recent film is Sérgio Graciano's *Memories Of Prison* (2026), in which he plays Vieira de Castro, alongside Albano Jerónimo, Maria João Bastos, Marcello Urgeghe, João Pedro Vaz, Afonso Pimentel and Adriano Carvalho.



# MARCELLO URGEGHE

Marcello Urgeghe is one of the most established actors in Portuguese cinema, with an extensive career spanning film, theatre and television. Over more than three decades, he has worked with some of the most important Portuguese and international filmmakers, combining auteur cinema with a regular presence on stage and television.

In theatre, he has worked with directors including António Pires, Nuno Carinhas, Cédric Orain and Guilherme Gomes. On television and streaming platforms, he has appeared in productions such as *Conta-me Como Foi*, *Maison Close* and *Glória*.



His notable film roles include Margarida Cardoso's *The Murmuring Coast* (2004) and Margarida Gil's *Hands in the Fire* (2024); Raúl Ruiz's *Mysteries of Lisbon* (2010); João Canijo's *Blood of My Blood* (2011); Bruno de Almeida's *Operation Autumn* (2012); Rita Azevedo Gomes's *The Portuguese Woman* (2018); and Mário Barroso's *Moral Order* (2020). His performance in the latter earned him the Portuguese Society of Authors' Authors Award for Best Actor.

His most recent film is Sérgio Graciano's *Memoires of Prison* (2026), in which he plays Morgado, alongside Albano Jerónimo, Maria João Bastos, Paulo Pires, João Pedro Vaz, Afonso Pimentel and Adriano Carvalho, in an adaptation of the book of the same name by Camilo Castelo Branco.



# JOÃO PEDRO VAZ

João Pedro Vaz is a Portuguese actor whose career spans film, theatre and television. He began his career in university theatre with the Teatro Experimental da Universidade de Coimbra, later joining the Teatro Experimental do Porto, before making his film debut in Luís Filipe Rocha's *Night Passage* (2003).

On television, he has appeared regularly in Portuguese series and fiction productions, including *Sol de Inverno* and *Turn of the Tide*. In cinema, his notable roles include Ivo M. Ferreira's *Letters from War* (2016), presented in Competition at the Berlin Film Festival, for which



he received the GDA Foundation Award for Best Supporting Actor; Teresa Villaverde's *Colo* (2017), also selected for the Official Competition at Berlin; and Sérgio Graciano's *The Englishman's Papers* (2024), in which he played the writer and filmmaker Ruy Duarte de Carvalho and which was selected for the Competition of the Tokyo International Film Festival.

His most recent film is Sérgio Graciano's *Memories of Prison* (2026), in which he plays Coutinho, alongside Albano Jerónimo, Maria João Bastos, Paulo Pires, Marcello Urgeghe, Afonso Pimentel and Adriano Cardoso, in an adaptation of the book of the same name by Camilo Castelo Branco.



# AFONSO PIMENTEL

Afonso Pimentel is a Portuguese actor with a career spanning film, television and theatre. He made his film debut at the age of 14 in Luís Filipe Rocha's *Goodbye, Father* (1996), a performance that earned him the Best Young Actor Award at the Moscow International Film Festival.

On television and streaming platforms, he has appeared in some of the most prominent Portuguese productions of recent years, including *Glória*, *Turn of the Tide* and *Dogpack*. For the last two, he received the Golden Globe for Best Television Actor in 2024.



In cinema, his notable roles include Tiago Guedes and Frederico Serra's *Blood Curse* (2006), for which he received the Golden Globe for Best Actor; Raúl Ruiz's *Mysteries of Lisbon* (2010); Valeria Sarmiento's *Lines of Wellington* (2012); *Bairro* (2013), for which he was nominated for the Sophia Award for Best Supporting Actor; and António-Pedro Vasconcelos' *Cats Don't Have Vertigo* (2014). As a director, he won the Sophia Award for Best Fiction Short Film for *Encontradouro* (2014).

His most recent film is Sérgio Graciano's *Memories of Prison* (2026), in which he plays Vieira Mendes, alongside Albano Jerónimo, Maria João Bastos, Paulo Pires, Marcello Urgeghe and João Pedro Vaz, in an adaptation of the book of the same name by Camilo Castelo Branco.



# ADRIANO CARVALHO

Adriano Carvalho is a Portuguese actor with an extensive career in film, television and theatre. Since the beginning of his career, he has distinguished himself through the intensity and strength of his performances, working regularly in both Portuguese and international productions.

On television and streaming platforms, he has appeared in productions including *Conta-me Como Foi*, *Os Filhos do Rock*, 1986, *Sul*, *A Espia*, *Glória*, *Causa Própria* and *Turn of the Tide*, establishing a regular presence in Portuguese television fiction.



In cinema, his notable roles include Bruno de Almeida's *Operation Autumn* (2012); Daniela Thomas' *Vazante* (2017), presented in the Panorama section of the Berlin Film Festival, for which he received the GDA Foundation Award for Best Actor and was nominated for the Sophia Award for Best Actor; Gonçalo Waddington's *Patrick* (2019); Tiago Guedes' *Remains of the Wind* (2022); José Filipe Costa's *Our Father - The Last Days of a Dictator* (2025); and Mário Patrocínio's *Maria Vitória* (2025).

His most recent film is Sérgio Graciano's *Memories of Prison* (2026), in which he plays Nascimento, alongside Albano Jerónimo, Maria João Bastos, Paulo Pires, Marcello Urgeghe, João Pedro Vaz and Afonso Pimentel, in an adaptation of the book of the same name by Camilo Castelo Branco.





# CREW

Screenplay **Carlos Saboga**  
based on the book of the same name  
by **Camilo Castelo Branco**  
and on the first version of the screenplay by **Luca  
Paiva Mello, André Catarinacho** and **Bruna Skrzypek**

Directed by **Sérgio Graciano**  
Director of Photography **João Ribeiro**  
Production Designer **Isabel Branco**  
Editor **Micael Espinha**  
Production Sound Mixer **Ricardo Leal**  
Sound Editor **Pedro Góis**  
1st Assistant Director **Nuno Casanovas**  
Produced by **Paulo Branco**  
A **Leopardo Filmes** production

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