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## “Aguirre, the Wrath of God” and the sustainable history of Peru

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More than forty years ago, the founder and CEO of the Inkaterra Group, José Koechlin, became the co-producer of a film that is now considered one of the greatest films of all time and a turning point in the development of tourism in Peru – *Aguirre, the Wrath of God*.

Both actors and crew were physically challenged, they climbed mountains, ran through dense jungle and rode on treacherous waters through the heart of the Peruvian Amazon, led by the legendary director Werner Herzog.

In May this year, Werner Herzog returns to Peru with 48 aspiring filmmakers. After a successful workshop in Cuba, “Filming in Peru with Werner Herzog” is the second filmmaking event organized by Black Factory Cinema in cooperation with Inkaterra.

### Filming in Peru with the legendary Werner Herzog

For a total of eleven days, from the 1st to the 11th of May 2018, every film enthusiast had the opportunity to create a short film about the dense Amazon rainforest under the expert and attentive eye of Werner Herzog. Locals were the protagonists and the filmmakers were guided through the content conception, scriptwriting, sound and even editing. Daily masterclasses were held to discuss the theory of filmmaking, the challenges facing modern filmmakers, working methods, style and technique. After this experience, Werner Herzog selected the best short films for international festivals.

One of the biggest challenges for the young filmmakers was to find a story they wanted to tell under these extreme conditions and in a new environment with a foreign culture and language.



Filming in Peru took place in the huge Tambopata Reserve on the banks of the Madre de Dios River.

### The filmmaker and the CEO of the Inkaterra Group

José Koechlin von Stein and Werner Herzog developed the idea for the master class on the basis of their own experiences of finding solutions to problems on a completely different level while shooting *Fitzcarraldo* in the middle of the Peruvian rainforest, which in turn produced very special films.

The filmmaker and the current CEO of the Inkaterra Group met in 1971 when Werner Herzog presented his first films at Champagnat High School in Lima. He had received a grant from a German television station to produce a film about Lope Aguirre, a maniacal conqueror and traitor to the Spanish royal crown. With a handshake, Werner Herzog and José Koechlin von Stein sealed their collaboration.

*Aguirre, the Wrath of God* was released just one year later and since then has contributed significantly to the development of tourism in Peru. Filming in the Peruvian jungle-inspired Koechlin to make another film, which he was able to convince Werner Herzog of in 1978. *Fitzcarraldo* has since become one of the most important ethnographic documentaries about local communities.

“I don’t think any other film has ever been produced under such circumstances,” says Koechlin von Stein and this extreme situation ensured a fast friendship. Koechlin von Stein is still fascinated by the filmmaker today: “Werner is one of the true artists of the 20th century: many years ago, Truffaut called him “the most important living film director”, and I think he still is.”

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Filming in the rainforest

Micah Van Hove was one of the participants of the Master Class with the topic “Fever dreams in the jungle” and was able to grow beyond himself during this experience as a filmmaker. He says that Werner Herzog’s passion for films infected everyone from the very first evening. They had 10 days to find a location, protagonists and an exciting story. To get to know the area and the people better, Macah Van Hove took part in a basketball game at a school, which was applauded by Werner Herzog, “Yes! That’s how you do it!”

A small and endearing anecdote was the break the team took so Werner Herzog could watch the Bayern game in the Champions League!



The last day of the Master Class was also the highlight: Right after breakfast, the group went to a satellite station of Inkaterra to build up a theatre where all films of the participants were shown and discussed. “And then there was Werner Herzog, who looked me in the eye and reviewed my film in front of my fellow filmmakers,” Micah Van Hove recalls fondly.

Even though Micah Van Hove did not win the “Werner Herzog Film Award”, he will never forget the farewell words and the sparkle in Werner Herzog’s eyes. “It’s your world now. Good luck.”

The 2018 Master Class was a fascinating experience. Not only for Werner Herzog and the participants but also for the Inkaterra family and the village of Madre de Dios.

In honor of the Master Class and Werner Herzog, Inkaterra now holds a digital film festival during May.

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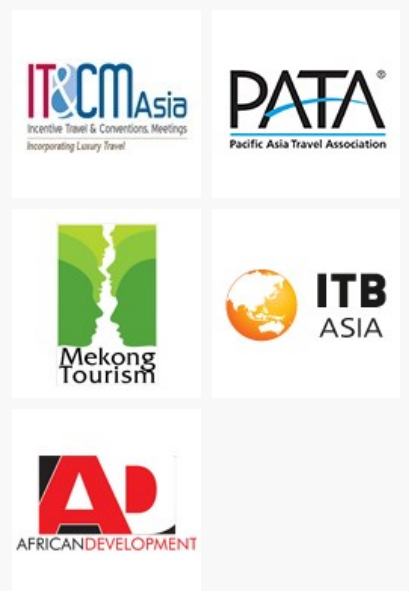
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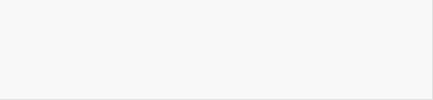




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