Earthly and Celestial Quests Meld in Chile’s Remote Atacama Desert in POV’s ‘Nostalgia for the Light,’ Premiering Thursday, Oct. 25, 2012 on PBS

A Poetic, Deeply Personal Meditation on Astronomy, Archaeology and 20th-Century Politics
From Celebrated Filmmaker Patricio Guzmán

A Co-presentation with Latino Public Broadcasting

“Rates as the filmmaker’s masterpiece, an exquisitely filmed, poetically written meditation on how past and present fuse in humanity’s most unresolved questions.”—Ann Hornaday, The Washington Post

MEDIA ALERT – FACT SHEET


POV concludes the season with fall and winter specials (dates to be announced). American television’s longest-running independent documentary series, POV is the winner of a Special Emmy for Excellence in Television Documentary Filmmaking, two IDA Awards for Best Continuing Series and the National Association of Latino Independent Producers Corporate Commitment to Diversity Award.

The Film: Patricio Guzmán’s Nostalgia for the Light is a remarkable meditation on memory, history and eternity. Chile’s remote Atacama Desert, 10,000 feet above sea level, provides stunningly clear views of the heavens. But it also holds secrets from the past in its arid soil: human remains, from pre-Columbian mummies to the bones of political prisoners “disappeared” during the Pinochet dictatorship. In this otherworldly place, earthly and celestial quests meld: Archaeologists dig for ancient civilizations, women search for their loved ones and astronomers scan the skies for new galaxies. An Official Selection of the 2010 Cannes Film Festival. Winner, 2011 International Documentary Association Award for Best Feature. A co-presentation with Latino Public Broadcasting (LPB).

The Atacama Desert is also the driest place on earth, with zero percent humidity, giving it some of the clearest skies on the planet. Astronomers come from all over the globe to peer through the world’s biggest telescopes, hoping to discover the secrets of the cosmos. Underfoot, the desert’s dry soil has preserved layers of human remains, from pre-Columbian mummies to the bones of 19th-century explorers to the corpses of political prisoners taken by Chilean army under General Augusto Pinochet after the military coup of September 1973,
never to be seen again. Guzmán explores the deep motivations the astronomers, archeologists and prisoners’ relatives and the surprising ways their searches overlap.

**Nostalgia for the Light** is an Icarus Films release. It is a co-production of Atacama Productions S.A.R.L. (France), Blinker Filmproduktion GmbH and WDR (Germany) Cronomedia Ltda. (Chile). The film is a co-presentation with Latino Public Broadcasting.

Embed a trailer, download press materials and learn more at [www.pbs.org/pressroom](http://www.pbs.org/pressroom).

**Online:** [http://www.pbs.org/pov/nostalgiaforthelight/](http://www.pbs.org/pov/nostalgiaforthelight/) - POV’s Webby Award-winning website offers a broad range of exclusive online content to enhance the broadcast of **Nostalgia for the Light**. Watch the full film online for free for a limited time following the broadcast (Oct. 26 – Nov. 21, 2012), view a video interview with the director and download a discussion guide and other viewing resources.

**Outreach:** POV works with educators, public television stations and national and community groups across the country to foster dialogue around the issues presented in our films. For a list of upcoming screening events, go to [www.pbs.org/pov/outreach](http://www.pbs.org/pov/outreach). POV and nationally recognized media educator Dr. Faith Rogow develop discussion guides with background information to help event organizers facilitate conversations. The **Nostalgia for the Light** discussion guide includes background information on observatories in the Atacama Desert, Chile during the Pinochet era and today, as well as a list of further educational resources. Cari Ladd, M. Ed., has developed a lesson plan for grades 6-10 to accompany the film. Event organizers may email POV at [events@pov.org](mailto:events@pov.org) to request a free loaned DVD to screen at their event.

**Filmmaker’s Statement:** “For four years, I struggled to make this project happen,” says Guzmán. “There were times I felt discouraged, but the subject was so powerful that I had to follow it through. The film has many angles: mystical, spiritual, astronomical, ethnographic and political. They were a tangle of questions gnawing at me. How to explain that the calcium that makes up our skeletons is the same calcium in the stars? How to explain that Chile is the world’s leading hub for astronomical investigation even as 60 percent of the assassinations committed by the dictatorship remain unsolved? How to show that the labor of a woman who rummages through the earth with her bare hands resembles that of an astronomer?”

**Filmmaker Bios:** *Patricio Guzmán (Director/Cinematographer)*

Patricio Guzmán was born in 1941 in Santiago, Chile. In 1971 he directed his first documentary, *The First Year*, which covered the first 12 months of Salvador Allende’s government. Filmmaker Chris Marker, who was passing through Chile at the time, saw the film and assisted in having it screened in France. Two years later, Marker donated the raw stock needed to begin filming *The Battle of Chile*, Guzmán’s four-hour documentary trilogy chronicling Allende’s final year. Filming lasted until the very day of the coup d’état on Sept. 11, 1973, when Guzmán and thousands of others were imprisoned in Chile’s National Stadium.


Guzmán’s recent films include the award-winning *Salvador Allende* (2006). Guzmán currently chairs FIDOCs, the international documentary film festival in Santiago that he founded in 1997. He lives in Paris with Renate Sachse, who collaborates on the scripts for his films and produced *Nostalgia for the Light*. His two daughters, Andrea and Camila, are also filmmakers and frequently collaborate on his projects.


Credits: Director/Writer: Patricio Guzmán
Producer: Renate Sachse
Cinematographer: Katell Djian
Editors: Patricio Guzmán, Emmanuelle Joly
Sound Recording: Freddy González
Original Music: Miranda y Tobar
Running Time: 86:46

**POV Series Credits:**
Executive Producer: Simon Kilmurry
Co-Executive Producer: Cynthia López
VP, Production and Programming: Chris White
Series Producer: Yance Ford
Coordinating Producer: Andrew Catauro
Awards/Festivals:

Winner, IDA Award, Best Feature, 2011
Winner, Fund for Social Justice and Nuevo Vision Awards, Santa Barbara International Film Festival, 2011
Special Mention, Prix François Chalais, Cannes Film Festival, 2010
Winner, Best Documentary, European Film Awards, 2010
Winner, Best Documentary, Abu Dhabi Film Festival, 2010
Official Selection, San Francisco International Film Festival, 2011
Official Selection, Miami International Film Festival, 2011
Official Selection, Toronto International Film Festival, 2010

Pressroom:


POV:

Produced by American Documentary, Inc. and celebrating its 25th season on PBS in 2012, the award-winning POV is the longest-running showcase on American television to feature the work of today’s best independent documentary filmmakers. POV has brought more than 325 acclaimed documentaries to millions nationwide and has a Webby Award-winning online series, POV’s Borders. Since 1988, POV has pioneered the art of presentation and outreach using independent nonfiction media to build new communities in conversation about today’s most pressing social issues. Visit www.pbs.org/pov.

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