

CELESTIAL ATTRACTION

A 3-CHANNEL DOCUMENTARY BY AGATHE SIMON

2026

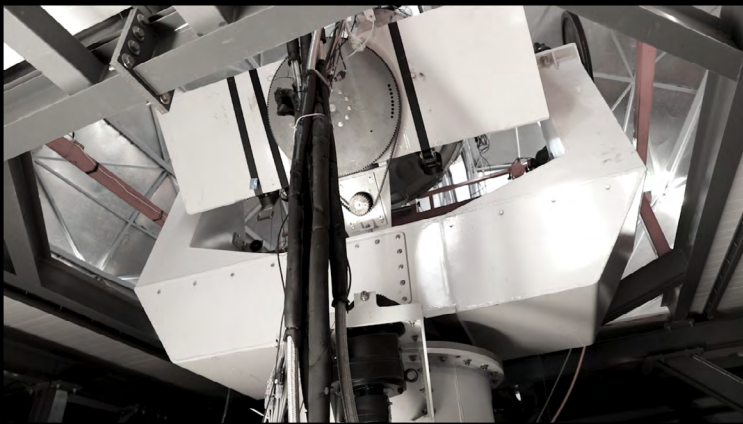


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FILM FACT SHEET

- **Title:** *Celestial Attraction*
- **Genre:** 3-channel documentary
- **Date:** 2026
- **Duration:** 14'59
- **Images:** single-channel 4K (projection on a single screen) or three synchronized HD screens (for an immersive installation)
- **Sound:** stereo version or 5.1 version
- **Languages:** spanish subtitled in English
- **Director:** Agathe Simon
- **Producer:** The Group
- **ISAN:** 0000-0007-180D-0000-8-0000-0000-D

PRESS & PUBLICATIONS

“The work [...] embraces the beauty of the unknown.”

Maxime Delcourt | *FishEye Magazine* | 25 June, 2026

([read the full article](#))



“A body of work that sought not only to take visitors on a journey but also to question the very nature of their perception and their relationship to the world.”

DRAC Normandie | French Ministry of Culture | 7 July, 2026

([read the full article](#))



VIEWING LINK

To receive a viewing link,
please [contact us](#) to request accreditation.



PARTNERS

SUPPORT & FUNDING

This project received support from the French National Centre for Cinema and the Moving Image (CNC), ADAGP, and the Île-de-France Regional Directorate for Cultural Affairs (DRAC) – Ministry of Culture. It also received support from the Splash initiative, led by RN13BIS – Contemporary Art in Normandy, thanks to funding from the DRAC Normandy and the Normandy Region. It was developed as part of the 2022 Documentary Workshop at La Fémis (National School of Image and Sound Professions).

SCIENTIFIC PARTNERS

Celestial Attraction was developed in partnership with the Astroparticle & Cosmology Laboratory (APC) led by the University of Paris, the CNRS, the DIM-Origines of the Île-de-France region, and the ANR. It was also developed in partnership with the INFN in Italy and the Institute of Detection and Astroparticle Technology (ITeDA) in Argentina, led by the National Atomic Energy Commission (CNEA), the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET), the University of San Martín (UNSAM) and the UTN Mendoza.



SYNOPSIS

LOGLINE

At an altitude of 5,000 meters (16,400 feet), in an Argentine desert where a new telescope rises, a cosmologist and a llama herder embody two contrasting visions of the creation of the universe.

SYNOPSIS

In northwestern Argentina, a revolutionary telescope called QUBIC has just been inaugurated. Its mission: to probe the very first moments of the universe. These high plateaus are also home to the Kollas, an Amerindian people with an ancestral cosmogony.

Yolanda, a llama herder, lives with her family on this arid land. Beatriz, a cosmologist, leads the Argentine scientific team operating the telescope. Each woman is responsible for a small community and develops a singular vision of the origin of the universe.

The 3-channel documentary *Celestial Attraction* follows Yolanda and Beatriz in their daily actions, their words, and their silences. It juxtaposes these two narratives—the scientific and the ritual. It allows the irreconcilable tension between them to emerge, culminating in the two women's encounter at the foot of the telescope during a Pachamama ceremony.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The grandmother hands me a plate: tripe and three boiled potatoes. The grandfather has just slaughtered a goat in tribute to my stay with them. In the small kitchen with its packed-earth floor, the six of us are pressed together—Yolanda, her parents, her two sons, and myself. Plastic bags hang from nails. The doorway cuts out a blinding rectangle: outside, a high-altitude desert, swept by icy winds. We eat in silence.

At the end of the meal, the grandmother tells me she likes me: I honored their food, I did not act like a «*delicada*». One must pass through the goat's tripe to reach the stars.

I arrived in this remote corner of the world, at an altitude of 5,000 meters and 11,000 kilometers from France, driven by a long-held desire. After experiences in Antarctica, the Amazon, and Central Africa, this region emerged as a new frontier for exploration—both geographical and metaphysical. For the love of the unknown runs through my entire life and my artistic projects: I have named it “philagnosty.”

Celestial Attraction is part of this process. The film explores how humans conceive of and narrate the creation of the universe—an origin of which we have no direct experience and which, perhaps, does not exist.

In the high-altitude desert of Salta Province, this abstract question takes on a concrete form. A revolutionary telescope, QUBIC, was installed in 2022 to observe the very first moments of the cosmos. The Kollas, an Indigenous people with an ancestral cosmogony, live on this same land.

Two women who seem to be polar opposites embody this coexistence: Yolanda, a llama herder, and Beatriz, a cosmologist. The film follows their stories and rituals. While Beatriz hopes that a scientific image will bring about a revolution in our understanding of the world, Yolanda upholds a relationship with the cosmos rooted in the Catholic faith and the rites of Mother Earth.

Since 2019, I have been developing this project in close collaboration with Jean-Christophe Hamilton, a cosmologist and the Principal Investigator of the QUBIC telescope since 2008. This long-term collaboration has allowed me to gain insight into the project's scientific challenges while exploring the symbolic and imaginative significance of research aimed at observing the very first moments of the universe.

At the same time, I lived with Yolanda and her family, sharing their daily lives: sleeping six to a room where it freezes at night, preparing meals on a small wood-burning stove, and fetching water from the river. This prolonged presence was essential for the film to emerge from a relationship of trust and a situated gaze, rather than from a distant observation.

Celestial Attraction does not seek to resolve the tension between these two worldviews. On the contrary, the film reveals the irreconcilable gap they create, and makes this coexistence—complex, conflictual, and at times poetic—the very substance of the work.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

SUBJECT

During my philosophy studies, I was deeply struck by this question posed by Leibniz: “Why is there something rather than nothing?” Both simple and vertiginous, this question challenges all experience and lies at the root of our relationship to the world.

Today, this question takes shape on the Argentine high plateaus, at 5,000 meters above sea level, in a recent and unique situation: the installation of the QUBIC telescope in 2022. This installation has brought together two Argentine women—a cosmologist and a llama herder—who seem to have nothing in common.

With *Celestial Attraction*, I propose a cinematic form for this unknown, both hypothetical and obsessive. How can we render perceptible what we will never directly experience? How can we film what exceeds understanding and may not even exist? How do these vertiginous questions take shape in daily practices, narratives, and gestures?

IMAGES

Celestial Attraction is a triptych that uses desaturated images, fragmentary sequences, and an obsession with the color black, revealing the austerity of the landscape and the partial nature of human knowledge. Documents from the QUBIC telescope's scientific research

punctuate the film, not as illustrations, but as fragments of knowledge still under construction. By focusing on the daily lives of a cosmologist and a llama herder, this documentary triptych reveals a dialogue between science, tradition, and the quest for the unknown.

The three screens are designed to present, within a single segment, a situation from different points of view—a question at the heart of the project. Their purpose is also to create a fully immersive experience, reflecting both the subject (the cosmos) and the setting (a high-altitude desert) of this triptych. Thus, the screens interact through simultaneity and echoes, and at times, dissonance.

Finally, the film's narrative is conceived as the journey taken by these two women, who seem to be polar opposites—as evidenced by the first two sequences—until they come together at the foot of the telescope during a Pachamama ceremony.

SOUND

As a former student of the Paris Conservatory, I have experience as a composer, organist, and conductor. I composed the entire soundtrack for *Celestial Attraction* using sounds I recorded in the high-altitude desert.

In the Puna Salteña, the soundscape is minimal: the wind, two dogs, a crackling radio. So I manipulated natural elements (water, ice, sand, dried-up bushes) to create micro-sound events, which I then transformed, edited, and mixed. The

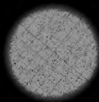
mix was done in both stereo and 5.1 surround sound to create a truly immersive experience, ensuring continuity between the sound and the multi-screen setup. Voice-overs are sparse, giving way to the desert's soundscape.

AUDIENCE RESPONSE TO THE WORK

With a runtime of 14'59, *Celestial Attraction* consists of eleven short segments. It can be screened in a movie theater. It can also be presented on a loop in an exhibition space.

METHOD

The film was made in close collaboration with Jean-Christophe Hamilton, a cosmologist and the Principal Investigator of the QUBIC telescope since 2008. It is based on long-term fieldwork conducted in parallel with the scientific community and Yolanda's family.



```
21: 0.00048524264601844176
22: 0.00049961133588571596
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45: 0.0001328809489847417
46: 0.0001338477659515857
47: 0.00015874366649788568
48: 0.0001157175061623881
```

```
In [34]: # Keeping only the sky region which has been significantly observed
# Pixels not seen enough are replaced by UNSEEN value
maxcov = np.max(cov)
unseen = cov < maxcov * 0.15
maps_convolved2[unseen, :] = hp.UNSEEN

In [37]: diff2 = maps_convolved2 - maps_convolved
diff2[unseen, :] = hp.UNSEEN

In [38]: rr = 14 # Resolution in arcmin
stokes = ['I', 'Q', 'U']
plt.figure(figsize=(15, 15))
for stokes in range(3):
```


TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Celestial Attraction can be presented in four formats:

1. single-channel version (a single 4K projection) & stereo
2. single-channel version (a single 4K projection) & 5.1 (surround sound)
3. three synchronized HD projections & stereo
4. three synchronized HD projections & 5.1 (surround sound)

Technical Specifications for the Single-Channel Versions

- Single projection (one video projector or one screen) of the three images
- Choice of stereo or 5.1 surround sound (speakers or headphones)
- Loop playback or single screening
- For an exhibition space, seating is ideal

These technical requirements can be adapted depending on the venue.

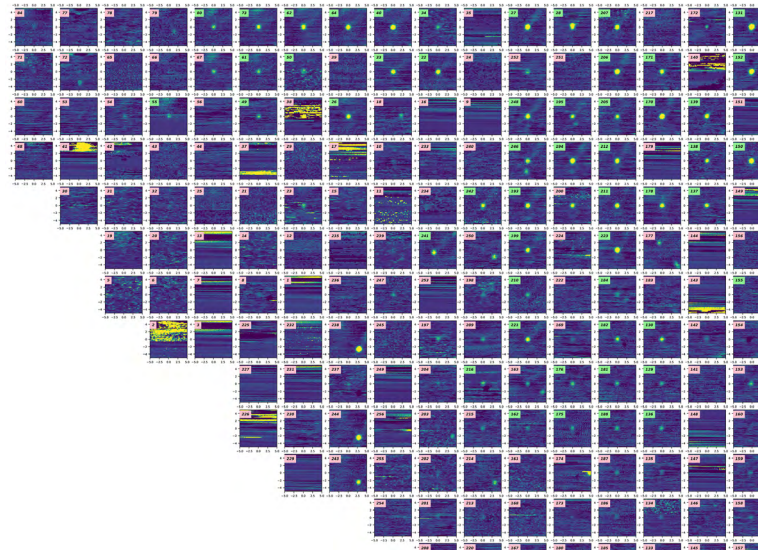
Technical specifications for the three synchronized screens

- 3 synchronized projectors
 - on three walls of a black box or white box
 - choice of stereo or 5.1 surround sound
 - ideally, seating should be provided
 - ideal space size: 25 m² or larger
 - loop duration: 14'59

These technical requirements can be adapted depending on the venue.

COMPANION EVENT

In addition to the film, we offer a 90-minute companion event designed to extend the audience's experience. *Imaging the Unknown* is a lecture-performance by artist-researcher Agathe Simon and cosmologist Jean-Christophe Hamilton. The event invites audiences to explore a question shared by art and science: How do we create images of the unknown?



For six years, the cosmologist and the artist-researcher collaborated on the creation of *Celestial Attraction*. Beginning with a screening of the film, their lecture-performance explores the processes through which images—both scientific and artistic—are created in an attempt to reveal the unknown, particularly the origin of the universe.

[Learn more online](#)

DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY



ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I am a transdisciplinary artist exploring the human condition through the staging of language. Inspired by my journeys in extreme environments, I developed the concept of Philagnosty — the love of the unknown —, which stands at the heart of my practice.

I create thematic cycles where video, performance, installation, sound, and text enter into dialogue. Through these hybrid narratives and immersive experiences, I invite audiences to encounter art as a space of memory, transformation, and freedom.

BIOGRAPHY

Agathe Simon is a French artist, researcher, and mentor, born in 1977. An explorer of extreme environments (Antarctica, Andes, Ayahuasca) and inventor of the concept of Philagnosty — the love of the unknown —, she develops a transdisciplinary practice in which the staging of language questions the creative act and the human experience.

Supported by key cultural organizations (CNC, DRAC, Swedish Arts Grants Committee), her projects have been presented in notable institutions and international events, including the Venice Architecture Biennale, Esch2022 European Capital of Culture (Luxembourg), Galerie Michel Journiac (Paris), Night of Ideas at Villa Albertine (United States), and the Maison de la Poésie (Paris). She has notably been an artist-in-residence at the Bogliasco Foundation (Italy), the Cité internationale des arts (Paris), and the Carlini Base (Antarctica).

Trained at the Documentary Workshop of La Fémis (France's national film school), she holds doctorates in French literature (Sorbonne University) and in music (Paris Conservatory, CNSMDP). She lives and creates between Normandy and Paris.

[Online CV](#)

CREDITS

- **Direction:** Agathe Simon
- **Production:** Anne Rannou-Gillot & Étienne Roussel | The Group
- **In association with:** Arielle Gillot-Rannou, Sébastien Lemaire, Viviane Monel-Villa
- **Cinematography & sound, original score, postproduction:** Agathe Simon
- **Additional Sound (Pachamama):** Mauricio Maori
- **Stereo & 5.1 Surround Mix:** Mireille Faure
- **Subtitles:** Denise Cobello
- **Scientific advisors:** Jean-Christophe Hamilton & Beatriz Garcia

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