



## tabu

Spring  
Season  
2013

**Release:** 2012

**Cert (UK):**15

**Runtime:** 118 mins

**Director:** Miguel Gomes

**Language:** Portuguese with English subtitles

**Cast:** Teresa Madruga, Laura Soveral, Ana Moreira, Carloto Cotta



Aurora, an elderly Portuguese woman and her Cap Verdean housekeeper live next door to Pilar, who has made it her aim in life to do good. Not that she receives any gratitude for her efforts – and certainly not from the notoriously mistrustful Aurora, who prefers to spend her remaining years losing her meagre savings at Estoril casino. When the old lady dies, Pilar discovers among her belongings a letter addressed to an old lover. Pilar decides to post the letter, thus ushering in a flashback to the second

part of the film – an adventurous amour fou set in colonial Africa.

Making a film without referring to film history is unthinkable for director Miguel Gomes, and it's no coincidence that his film has the same title as Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau's *Tabu*. In his third feature film outing Gomes playfully interprets and rearranges historical events. Whilst the first part of his film is in black-and-white and portrays a society wallowing in nostalgia, the second part delivers everything they long for: stirring melodrama, slapstick, juxtaposition and passion. –Berlinale

Miguel Gomes (b. 1972) began first as a film critic before directing a series of refreshingly eccentric short films that revealed his innate talents as a sensual visual stylist interested in an intensely image based narrative in which music plays an equal role to dialogue. Gomes' early "musical comedies" offer important keys to his



feature films by revealing the important inspiration of both musical cinema and the silent film to his uniquely playful and imaginative approach to narrative. The unique energy and puckish charm of Gomes' little known debut, the Alice in Wonderland-meets-Jacque Rivette narrative puzzle, *The Face That You Deserve*, took the ludic tendencies of his cinema to a furthest extreme. The festival favorite *My Beloved Month of August* turned a new and important direction by responding to the "post-documentary" mode of innovative and unclassifiable non-fiction cinema championed by Costa and defined earlier by

pioneering works such as Oliveira's Rite of Spring.