



# White Elephant

Autumn  
Season  
2013

**Release:** 2013

**Cert (UK):** 15

**Runtime:** 100 mins

**Director:** Pablo Trapero

**Screenwriter:** Alejandro Fadel, Martín Mauregui, Santiago Mitre, Pablo Trapero

**Cast:** Ricardo Darín, Jérémie Renier, Martina Gusman



Inspired by the real-life case of Argentinean activist cleric Father Mugica, Pablo Trapero's film unfolds in a shanty town on the edges of Buenos Aires called Ciudad Oculta. The slum has a population approaching 30,000 and is convincingly brought to the screen by powerful cinematography.

Right in the middle of the slum there is an unfinished hospital. Building was

interrupted in 1955 when Juan Peron was overthrown and is known by the nickname that gives the film its title. The building is now a sanctuary for drug dealers, petty criminals and gang members.

The slum is also the workplace of an atheist community organiser (Martina Gusman) and two socially committed Catholic priests: the terminally ill Julian (Ricardo Darín) and his pragmatic colleague Nicolas (Jeremie Renier). This is a story about the courage and determination of two men who abandoned a comfortable life to dedicate themselves to the less fortunate, becoming exposed to different kinds of dangers. But how wounded have they themselves become through witnessing so much misery?

Trapero's desire to highlight Buenos Aires' numerous socio-political problems (a running theme throughout his directorial career) has culminated in a feature that is a fascinating Latin American drama, punctuated with scenes of genuine cultural significance and gripping action - climaxing, in typical fashion, with a powerful and shocking finale. Trapero's passion transfers seamlessly to the screen. With the help of two stand-out performances - from both Darín and Renier - White Elephant will engage and educate in a heartfelt, if noisy, manner!

