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Amella Lopes O'Neill (Valéria Sarmiento; Chile/France/Spain). Sarmiento's first feature in six years, cowritten with husband Raul Ruiz and shot in their native Chile, is a wonderfully perverse romance in which an impoverished, virginal "woman of fashion" sells herself ~~once—and forever—to~~ a handsome, married doctor.

As previously, Sarmiento presents the convoluted codes of Latin sexual honor with uninflected directness. The film is filled with throwaway ironies; although characterized by a kindred sense of humor, it's less a baroque Ruizian fiction than a critical gothic in the tradition of Buñuel's *That Obscure Object of Desire*. Chilean politics are the structuring absence and there are also ghostly intimations of *Vertigo* (albeit from female point of view), arising in part from Valparaiso's physical resemblance to San Francisco, in part from Laura Del Sol's impassive Amelia, and in part from the pervasive sense of necrophiliac obsession. No American distributor; highly recommended. September 21 and 22. —J.H.