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De l'Argentine
[(About Argentina)]
(FRENCH/BRITISH-COLOR-
16m)

A FR3/Out One production. Written, produced and directed by Werner Schroeter. Camera (color, 16m), Schroeter, Carlos Bernardo Wajzman; editor, Catherine Brasier, Claudio Martinez; sound, Albelardo Kuschnir. Reviewed at Rotterdam Film Festival, Jan. 28, 1986. Running time: **90 MINS.**

Rotterdam — “About Argentina” is another film about a regime of terror, but different from all others and more impressive than most because of the restraint which director Werner Schroeter exercised over his feelings.

There are no scenes of violence, but the film shows instruments of torture, clean, well-lit, as if they were exhibits in a gallery. Only the politicians shout grandiose phrases. The children, parents, grandmothers of the victims repeat routinely their tales of abduction, rape, mutilation and murder.

Schroeter adds poignancy to the narrative by a few bars from Mahler's “Kindertotenlieder” (songs for the dead children). Pic starts with an actress playing Galileo forced by the Inquisition to abjure the truth of his theories. He underlines the grotesque absurdity of historic events by staging scenes in which a film star (who played Eva Peron in successful movies) is shown with Evita's real life dress designer.

He adds vitality and wide-eyed innocence through the sequences with Gabriel, an orphan left over for profitable adoption when his parents were killed right after his birth. Schroeter quotes the governor of Buenos Aires: “First we kill the subversive elements, then the sympathizers, then their henchmen, and last of all the weak.” Gabriel survived because he was strong. So is the film.

Schroeter gives an artist's vision of a diabolical regime, but pic is never arty. It's sincere, emotional and never melodramatic.—*Wall.*