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DESPUES DE LA TORMENTA (AFTER THE STORM) (ARGENTINE)

A Killarney Films production in association with TVE. Produced by Edgardo Pallero. Directed by Tristan Bauer. Screenplay, Bauer, Ruben Alvarez, Graciela Maglie; camera (color), Richardo de Angelis; editor, Cesar D'Angiolillo; music, Rodolfo Mederos; sound, Abelardo Kuschnir; art direction, Abel Facello. Reviewed at Toronto Festival of Festivals, Sept. 12, 1990. (In Chicago Intl. Film Festival.) Running time: 120 MIN.

With: Lorenzo Quinteros, Patricio Contreras, Ana Maria Picchio, Eva Hernandez, Jofre Soares.

"After The Storm" is a sweeping tale of the deterioration of a laborer's family that, by extension, reps the declining economic and political climate of contempo Argentina. Pic's a natural for Latin American audiences, and it might also find success on pubroadcasting film series.

Factory worker Ramon Decima loses his job when his plant closes down. With a wife and two children to look after, he is desperate for work. He doesn't pass a physical for a new job, and is forced to move from his meager house to a slum on the outskirts of Buenos Aires.

Ramon is humiliated and disgraced by his bad luck. His wife Norita must go to work as a housemaid. His son Andres starts hanging out with local thieves and gets arrested for participating in a drug deal.

Hopeless at finding work in the city, Ramon goes back to the country where his brother and father are still living. Dad lost his memory; brother Santos recalls that their father took the profits from the harvest years back to buy a car, which now sits as a chicken nest in the garage.

Unfortunately Ramon brings bad fortune to the country, too. He and his brother are responsible for the death of the rich landowner's mare. Ramon's father finally dies while plowing in the field, and the sons are forced to tear wood from their shack on the farm to build his coffin.

Making a confident directorial debut, Tristan Bauer infuses the story with striking, magical images that touch on the reality of poverty and the loss of spirit in Argentina. Heavy mists sit over the festering garbage dump in Ramon's slum neighborhood, as local people pick through the scraps to find food to eat and metal to sell.

A solid cast is led by Lorenzo Quinteros and Ana Maria Picchio, who bring empathy and strength to their roles.

Bauer's \$400,000 budget is put to effective use in the rich camerawork and moving score. The director's docu experience shines in this indictment of his impoverished nation. — *Devo*.