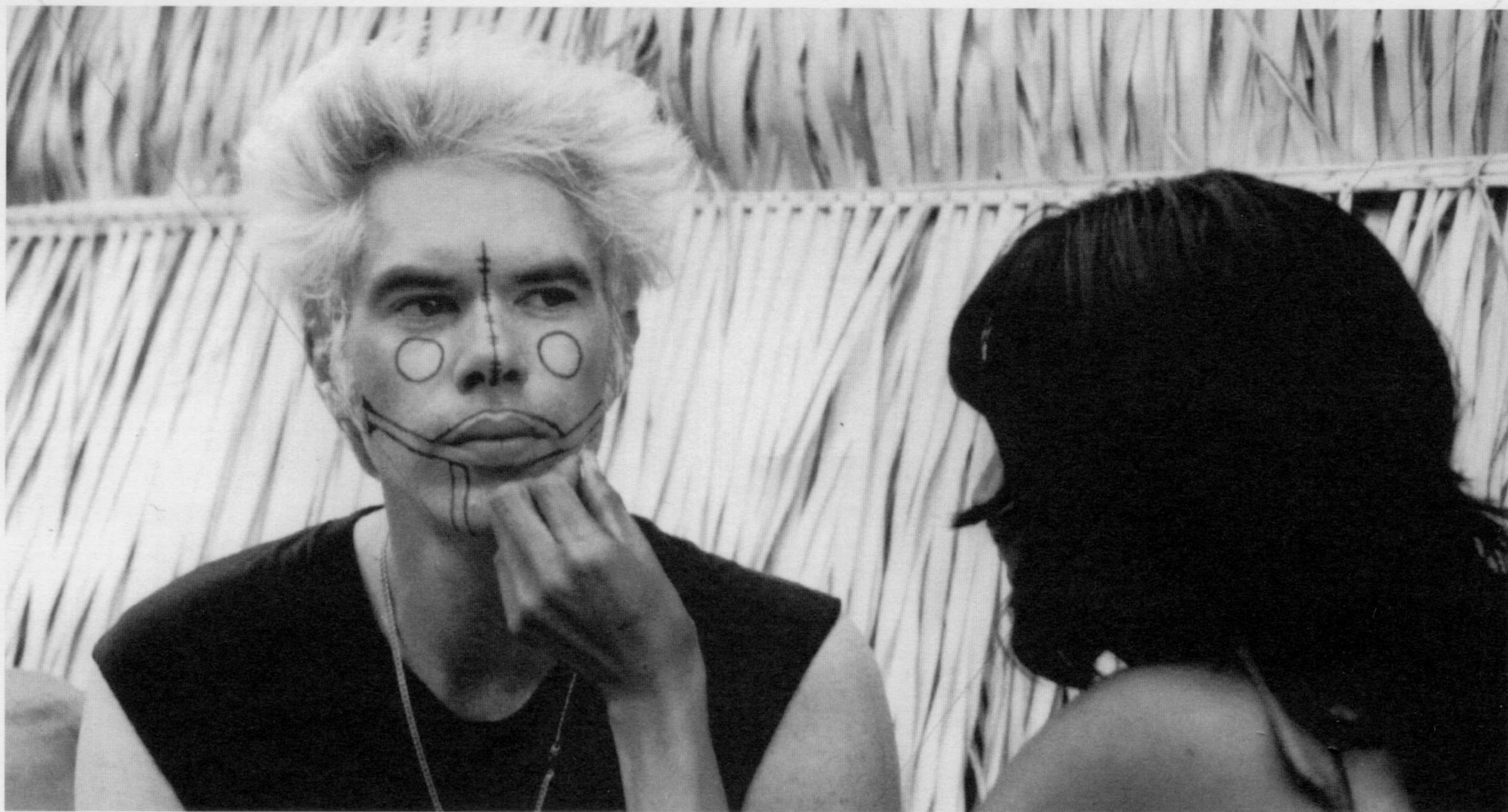


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Tigrero: A Film That Was Never Made

Mika Kaurismäki

FINLAND/GERMANY/BRAZIL, 1994

75 minutes ■ Colour/35mm
Production Company: **Marianna Films/Premiere/YLE-TV1/Sky Light/Mira Set/Lichtblick**
Producer: **Mika Kaurismäki, Bruno Stroppiana, Carl-Ludwig Rettinger**
Screenplay: **Mika Kaurismäki**
Cinematography: **Jacques Cheuiche**
Editor: **Mika Kaurismäki**
Music: **Nana Vasconcelos, Chuck Jonkey, the Karajá**
Principal Cast: **Samuel Fuller, Jim Jarmusch, the Karajá**

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In 1954 Twentieth Century Fox contracted Sam Fuller to make an adventure film starring John Wayne, Ava Gardner and Tyrone Power, to be shot in the deepest Amazon. Fuller went off to the rainforest to think up a story, taking with him two cases of vodka, 75 boxes of cigars and a 16mm Bolex fitted with an anamorphic lens specially made for him for the trip by its inventor. Back in Hollywood with a completed script, he found that Fox's insurance company had demanded such high premiums for the stars to shoot in such a dangerous location (\$7-9M for Wayne, \$5M for Power, \$3M for Gardner) that the project had been shelved. Darryl Zanuck told Fuller to forget it, so he did – although the script remained in the Fox archives.

Fuller used some of the footage in *Shock Corridor*, but that was the end of it until March 1992, when Fuller and his wife met Mika Kaurismäki in a Paris bar just after Kaurismäki had finished *Amazon*. Trading stories about their Amazon experiences was the beginning of *Tigrero: A Film That Was Never Made*, which sends Jim Jarmusch along to play interlocutor to the ever-irascible Fuller, now on the other side of eighty but still energetically stumping through the jungle, smoking cigars, and dominating the dialogue. Taking with them the original *Tigrero* script and the 40-year-old footage to show to the Karajá Indians, Jarmusch and Fuller act themselves to construct a feature about Fuller's film career and the Karajá

natives. Dissolving the boundaries of documentary and fiction, Kaurismäki makes a film that is half documentary, half set-up, and – when Fuller is in front of the camera – all entertainment.

■ **Kay Armatage**

Mika Kaurismäki was born in 1955. He began making films while studying at Hochschule für Fernsehen und Film in Munich in the late seventies. In 1981 Kaurismäki formed Villealfa Filmproductions with his younger brother, Aki. Through Villealfa, Kaurismäki has produced several films, including *Arvottomat* and *Jackpot 2*, and directed many more. Films include: *The Liar* (80), *The Clan Tale of the Frogs* (84), *Cha Cha Cha* (89), *Amazon* (90), *The Last Border* (93), and *Tigrero: A Film That Was Never Made* (94).

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