



# ARCTIC

## FILM FESTIVAL

Film Review for

## VACANCY

Dir: Jean Aycicek, Anne Lauroz, Jean-Benoit L'Héritier

*Vacance* in French can be translated with two different words in English - *vacancy* or *vacation*. This French documentary follows the 'vacation' of a group of friends in beautiful Patagonia in Chile where they've come to repair a house and recuperate from life's woes for quite a bit. During a sequence in the film, the friends discuss whether their trip was actually a vacation or not and that's basically the essence of the whole documentary.

*Vacance* takes the audience to a community that is detached from the urban jungles that most of us dwell in. There, people live simple lives and do everything themselves. This is showcased mainly by sweeping shots of the landscape in contrast with the men talking about their lives back home. The cinematography really carries the film and gives it a sense of calmness.

However, as the documentary unfolds, we are slowly knocked out of our sense of peace in Patagonia to the dread that awaits the men back home. It reveals the truth that vacations end and that we all need to face our real lives when we eventually go home. In this sense, *Vacance* is both vacancy and vacation. The sense of nothingness (vacancy) could be rewarding and refreshing (vacation), but it eventually ends.

The narrative of the documentary is simple and easy to follow, the people involved easy to watch and relate to. The audience are able to share their interests and fascination with Patagonia and how remote and detached it is from the stresses of the modern world. It was beautifully shot and its simplicity is what makes it a worthwhile watch.