

UNA PELÍCULA DE OSCAR MOLINA

LA
CASA DE
MAMA
ICHA

EL AMOR POR LA TIERRA DE UNO
NUNCA SE OLVIDA



ACTOR INMATERIAL PRODUCCIONES presenta en coproducción con BRENDA J. STEINBECK SOTO | JORGE MARTÍN MOLINA ESCOBAR | THREE SPOONS PRODUCTION (CAGJE EBRAHIM) y LA TINA SONIDO
montaje GUSTAVO VASCO música original MANUEL J. GORDILLO postproducción de imagen CENTRO ATICO - PONIFICIA UNIVERSITARIO JAVERIANA diseño sonido ANDRÉS SILVA y DANIEL GIRALDO
mezcla de sonido CLAP STUDIOS diseño gráfico JUAN MANUEL BETANCOURT dirección y guión OSCAR MOLINA.

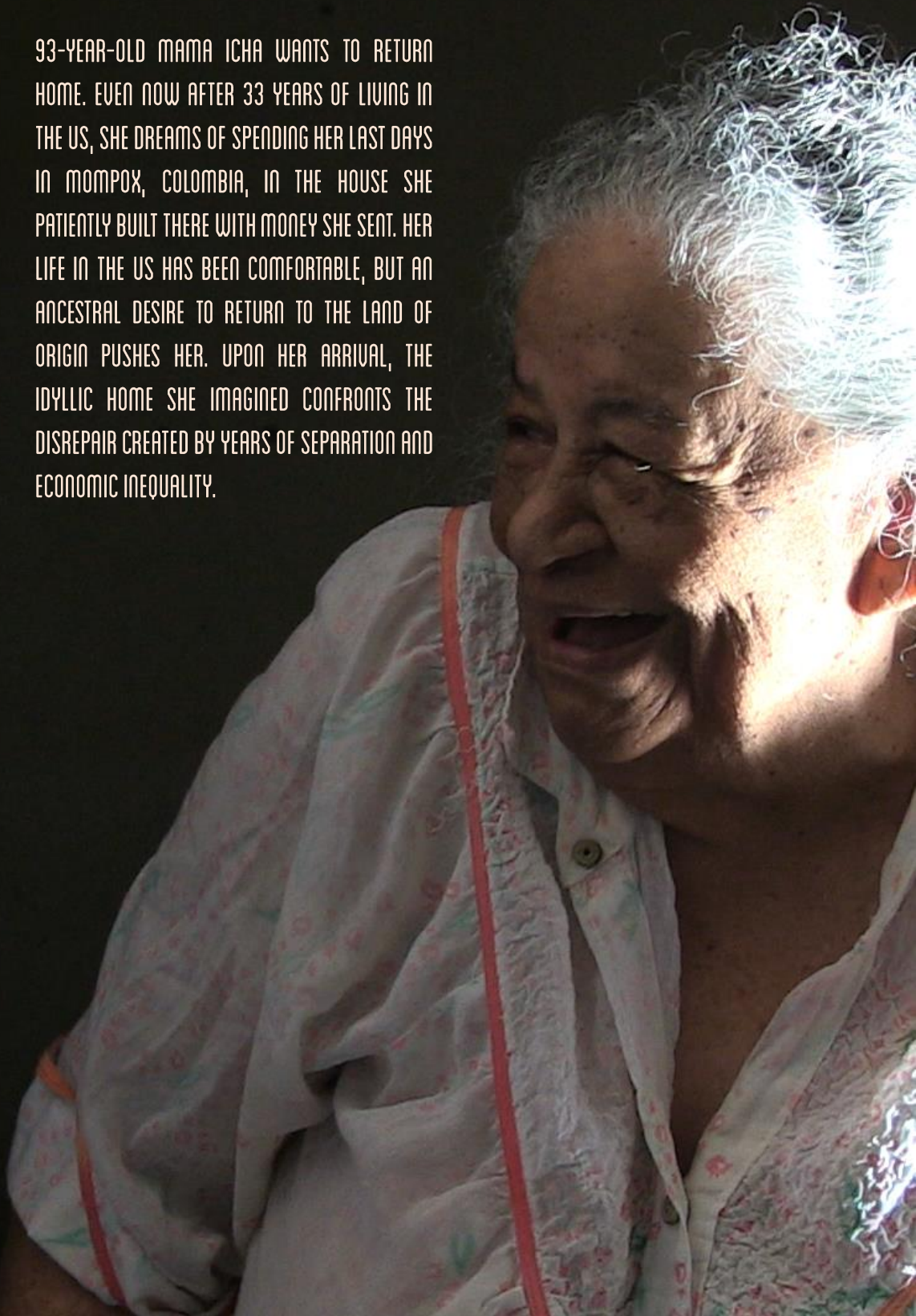


FUNDACION
ESPACIOARTE



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93-YEAR-OLD MAMA ICHA WANTS TO RETURN HOME. EVEN NOW AFTER 33 YEARS OF LIVING IN THE US, SHE DREAMS OF SPENDING HER LAST DAYS IN MOMPOX, COLOMBIA, IN THE HOUSE SHE PATIENTLY BUILT THERE WITH MONEY SHE SENT. HER LIFE IN THE US HAS BEEN COMFORTABLE, BUT AN ANCESTRAL DESIRE TO RETURN TO THE LAND OF ORIGIN PUSHES HER. UPON HER ARRIVAL, THE IDYLIC HOME SHE IMAGINED CONFRONTS THE DISREPAIR CREATED BY YEARS OF SEPARATION AND ECONOMIC INEQUALITY.



OVERVIEW

Genre: Documentary

Running Time: 85 minutes (director's cut); 82 minutes (POV cut).

Language: Spanish (with English subtitles).

Format: HD

Writer, Director, Cinematographer & Assistant Editor: Oscar Molina

Producers: Oscar Molina & Brenda I. Steinecke Soto

Co-Producers: Aggie Ebrahimi Bazaz, Jorge Martín Molina Escobar & La Tina Sonido

Executive Producers for POV: Justine Nagen & Chris White

Producing Company: Actor Inmaterial Producciones

Email: actorinmaterial@gmail.com

Distribution (Theatrical for Colombia): Cine Colombia

Distribution (Educational Market): Actor Inmaterial Producciones

Production Countries: Colombia & United States

Year of completion: 2020

Produced in association with American Documentary | POV



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SELECTION

- Official Selection of POV's 2021 season on PBS, The United States
- Official Selection Cartagena International Film Festival 2020

THEATRICAL RELEASE

- In Colombia: Fall 2021 (tbc).

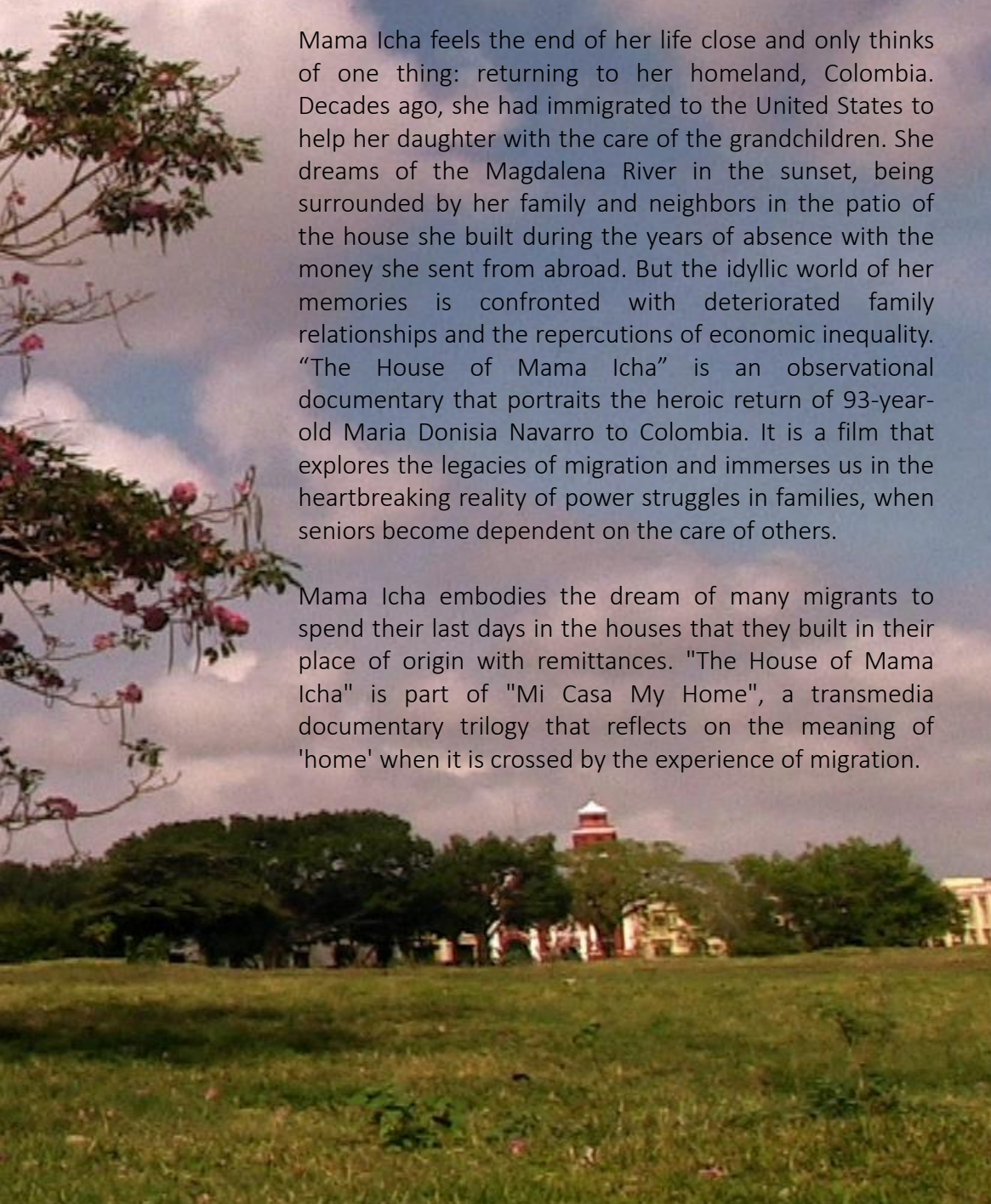
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- ChileDoc, CONECTA con el impacto, Santiago de Chile, 2019
- Special Mention, BAM Screenings, Bogotá Audiovisual Market, Bogotá, Colombia, 2019
- Selection at Residencias Walden, Medellín, Colombia, 2018
- Postproduction Grant by Comisión Fílmica de Medellín, Colombia, 2017
- Artist Residency, Fundación Espacio Arte, Medellín, Colombia, 2017
- Postproduction Grant by Centro Ático – Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia, 2016
- Selection at DocuLab.8, Festival Internacional de Cine de Guadalajara, México, 2016
- Selection at Documentary Workshop, Festival Internacional de Cine de Cartagena, Colombia, 2016
- Selection at Spotlight on Documentaries - Independent Film Program Week, IFP, New York, United States, 2015
- Selection at development workshop, DocsBarcelona+Medellín, Colombia, 2014
- Production Grant for a short documentary by the Colombian Film Fund, FDC-Proimágenes, Colombia, 2014

SYNOPSIS

Mama Icha feels the end of her life close and only thinks of one thing: returning to her homeland, Colombia. Decades ago, she had immigrated to the United States to help her daughter with the care of the grandchildren. She dreams of the Magdalena River in the sunset, being surrounded by her family and neighbors in the patio of the house she built during the years of absence with the money she sent from abroad. But the idyllic world of her memories is confronted with deteriorated family relationships and the repercussions of economic inequality. "The House of Mama Icha" is an observational documentary that portrays the heroic return of 93-year-old Maria Donisia Navarro to Colombia. It is a film that explores the legacies of migration and immerses us in the heartbreaking reality of power struggles in families, when seniors become dependent on the care of others.

Mama Icha embodies the dream of many migrants to spend their last days in the houses that they built in their place of origin with remittances. "The House of Mama Icha" is part of "Mi Casa My Home", a transmedia documentary trilogy that reflects on the meaning of 'home' when it is crossed by the experience of migration.





DIRECTOR OSCAR MOLINA

"La casa de Mama Icha" is a declaration of love to one's land. In a time of great displacements, of fragmentation of the bonds of belongingness, of preponderance of certain hegemonic cultural values, Mama Icha with her story resignifies the relevance that has the sense of rootedness. She, heroically and with the strength of an ancestral thought, faces great obstacles to meet the goal of living her last days and die in the land of origin. "La casa de Mama Icha" also mirrors family conflicts and how confronting they are, specially when the elders approach the end of their days. Altogether, this story brings us to think about the multiple meanings of the experience of "home".

Nearly twenty years ago, I faced the realization that the land of my birth, Colombia, could not sustain my career. And so, I left. At several moments in my life, I have lived, worked, and studied in different countries. In each new place, I would inevitably meet a compatriot who had arrived at a similar realization. In a country so resplendent in natural and cultural resources, I wondered, why are people compelled to leave?

When Icha was boarding her final flight to Colombia, I was the only person among her friends and family that could join her. Together, we made the return trip home. And together, we would discover the chasm between the homeland we'd imagined and the one that we found. My travels back to Colombia with Icha were also my travels back to Colombia.

I am committed to exposing the socioeconomic factors underlying Icha's journey. "La Casa de Mama Icha" is part of a trilogy of projects related to remittance homes around the world. My next feature, "Absentee's House" (currently in post-production) will take us into remittance homes across the Mexican countryside, many of which are left empty for years. We are also in research and development for a web-based documentary, Mi Casa My Home, in which we will archive users' stories of their remittance homes alongside analytical frameworks for understanding this phenomenon as part of a larger story of global capital and its displacements.

I first met Mama Icha and the Ortiz family in 2012 as Icha's urgency to return home was escalating, and so too, my own. I began to document Icha's journey with a vérité approach. But in my long, quiet observations, I saw something of myself. I saw in this proud, resilient mother, the hearts of countless others like myself who carry dreams of return.



Mi Casa My Home

What is home after migration?

Mi Casa My Home is a transmedia documentary trilogy that invites us to think about the meanings of home in the current circumstances of migration and imbalance in the opportunities for reaching prosperity. This trilogy focuses on stories of migrants who, from their host countries and financed with remittances, build the houses they have always dreamed of in their countries of origin. Over time, many migrants, after investing years of savings and with a great transnational effort, repeatedly postpone their return. Many of the houses remain incomplete, others are abandoned or remain uninhabited for years: large-scale containers of that deferred dream of returning to the land of origin and a visual testimony of an illusory economic viability.

Mi Casa My Home seeks to capture the enormous breadth of this phenomenon in the world through two feature-length documentaries, *La Casa de Mama Icha* (in distribution) and *La Casa de los ausentes* (in postproduction); and through an interactive web platform (in research & development) to connect and reflect on the stories of families living with a divided sense of home.

Mi Casa My Home asks: What is the meaning of these buildings? How is the very definition of "home" altered by the experience of migration? How do these houses respond to or bear witness to the different political and economic conditions between countries? How do these remittance houses become part of the global market while their owners cannot move freely? Is it ever possible for a migrant to fulfill the dream of returning home?

OTHER VOICES

“I am grateful to Oscar Molina for this work that captures the reality and beauty of my grandmother's life and her connection to her land and her home. I honor my grandmother in my every action and carry her strength with me. This film is a piece of her heart that I can now share with others, so that we can all heal and appreciate the land we came from.”



La Madre, La Hija y El Espíritu buscando. Painting by Michelle Ángela Ortiz

Michelle Ángela Ortiz, Mama Icha's Granddaughter, Latino Artist and Activist: <https://www.michelleangela.com>

“Shot with extraordinary intimacy, this narrative documentary is not only a tale told through a powerful set of portraits of complex loving characters, it also is a rarely seen window into the thinking and decisions of immigrant families in the US. It is new to see/hear stories of immigrant families where decisions and actions are presented with the complexity and agency of those who have made the journey. This is not a cold sociological study, but the story of a warm complex family.”

Louis J. Messiah, Filmmaker and Director, Scribe Video Center



“Mama Icha does not want to return to Colombia because of the complicated situation in the country where she is, but because of an intuitive urgency, as if every day that passes takes her further away from the possibility of dying in her homeland. That is why, when Mama Icha finally arrives in Mompox, the spectator already knows that her real journey has just begun.”

Estefanía Palacios Araújo, *Semana Magazine*:
<https://bit.ly/2OsKhwf>

“ I was very excited after seeing the movie. What I liked most were the gestures of humanity. The unspoken things, the hugs, the ways of looking. Mama Icha sticks in your head. She's a wonderful heroine.”

Víctor Gaviria,
Colombian Film Director



MEDIA - TRAILER

VIMEO: <https://vimeo.com/395320569>

Embedded code (copy & paste):

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fullscreen; picture-in-picture"  
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casa de Mama Icha / The House of Mama  
Icha - Official Trailer English Subtitles</a>  
from <a  
href="https://vimeo.com/oscarjmolina">Os  
car Molina</a> on <a  
href="https://vimeo.com">Vimeo</a>.</p>
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MEDIA PHOTOS

High resolution promotional images can be downloaded at this link:
<https://micasamyhomefilm.weebly.com/la-casa-de-mama-icha-press-kit.html>



TEAM



OSCAR MOLINA

WRITER, DIRECTOR, PRODUCER, ASSISTANT EDITOR & CINEMATOGRAPHER

Colombian film director and producer with studies in journalism and visual arts in Colombia and with MFA in Film and Media Arts at Temple University (US). His recent film work has been focused in the relationship between economy, migration and home. In 2004 he received the Colombian National Journalist Prize for the documentary 'The enchanted Kingdom'. Also, he has served in several positions developing audiences for film in his country such as film programmer at art cinema houses and film festivals. Since 2011 he has been working on research, development and production of *Mi Casa My Home* documentary trilogy. His film work has been broadcasted in national television and exhibited in film festivals in Havana, Cuba; Rosario, Argentina; FIPATEL-Biarritz, France; Bogota and Cartagena, Colombia; Mexican Human Rights Film Festival; and in dance film festivals in US, Spain and Colombia. He is a co-leader of El Salon Documental Medellin, a film event to promote the development and professionalization of documentary production in his city and country.

More: <https://vimeo.com/oscarjmolina>

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BRENDA I STEINECKE SOTO

PRODUCER & CO-WRITER

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(Colombia/Germany). Producer, cultural manager and choreographer. MA in philosophy and Literature from Hamburg University. After studying and working in Europe for 18 years, Brenda returned 2013 to her home land, Colombia, where she launched and is director of the Espacio Arte Foundation, a non profit organization based in the rural site of Medellín. Its approach relies on boosting dynamics of social transformation through multidisciplinary artistic projects, intertwining their work in a local and international context. As a film producer, Brenda concentrates in documentary and experimental projects in which she engages also as a conceptual advisor and researcher.



AGGIE EBRAHIMI BAZAZ - COPRODUCER

(US/Iran) Aggie Ebrahimi Bazaz is an award-winning, Iranian-American documentary artist, writer, and educator. Her community-engaged creative practices focus on diasporic identities, belonging, and Freirean praxis. Her work includes VR/360° documentary experiences, live participatory performances, installations, multi-platform collaborations—any form conducive to contributing nuance to interrogations of power and to the ongoing work of social justice.

Bazaz's films have been shown internationally at film festivals, including Slamdance, Encounters Film Festival, CAAMFest, Atlanta Film Festival, Indie Grits Film Festival, and her recent film, "How to Tell a True Immigrant Story" (2019) was the first-ever VR film to be programmed in the Pardi di Domani shorts competition at the Locarno International Film Festival. Among other honors, she has received support from the Wexner Center, MDOCS Summer Storytellers' Institute, Interlochen Arts Academy, Cal Humanities, the Center for Asian American Media and the Bay Area Video Coalition.

More: <https://aggiebazaz.com>



LA TINA SONIDO - COPRODUCER

La Tina Sonido is a sound design, audio post-production, and film scoring studio. We see sound as a fundamental and infinitely expressive medium for cinematic language. Our Portfolio contains films such as The Embrace of the Serpent (2015), nominated to the Academy Awards (2016), Violencia (2015), Siempre viva (2015), Estudio de Reflejos (2014) and El Cartel de los Sapos (2012), along with several other films, documentaries and sound installations in Colombia, USA, the UK, Spain, Chile, Iran and Finland.

More: <https://la-tina.co/>

JORGE MARTÍN MOLINA ESCOBAR — COPRODUCER



GUSTAVO VASCO —

EDITOR, CO-WRITER & ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

Film editor for documentaries and fictional movies such as “Todo Comenzó por el fin” (2016, dir: Luis Ospina, Macondo-Award winner for the best montage), “Pizarro” (2016, dir: Simón Hernández, India Catalina-Award winner for the best documentary for TV), “Somos Calentura” and “Tura” (2017 & 2018, dir: Jorge Navas), “Amazona” (2017, dir: Clare Weiskopf), “Suspensión” (2020, dir:

Simón Uribe); “Mateo” (2014, dir: María Gamboa), “Tierra en la lengua” and “Señorita María Luisa, la falda de la montaña” (2014 & 2017, dir: Rubén Mendoza) “Tierra en la lengua was award-winner for the best movie at Cartagena’s International Film Festival – FICCI - 2014. He also has worked as editor for several shorts: “Madre” (2016, dir: Simón mesa, Official Selection for Cannes 2016), “Se venden conejos” (2015, dir: Esteban Giraldo, award-winner for the best short movie at Cartagena’s International Film Festival – FICCI – 2015) and “Elefante” (2015, dir: Cesar Herediia, award-winner for the best Colombian short at the Berlinale). He studied anthropology at the Andes University, Bogotá, and editing at the La Femis, Paris. He also performs as a lecturer at diverse national and international universities.



MANUEL J. GORDILLO — ORIGINAL MUSIC

Composer and Film Sound Designer, graduated from Berklee College of Music's master's program Scoring for Film, TV and Video Games. Co-founder of MuCine (Colombian Association of Film Music Composers). Co-founder and Manager of La Tina Sonido, an original music and sound design company founded in 2010, where he has worked in all areas of sound postproduction.

THE
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SOCIAL MEDIA

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WELCOMETO
LA CASA DE MAMA ICHA