

A young girl with dark hair is looking out of a window. She has a thoughtful expression. The window frame is green. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

in the name of the girl

a film by Tania Hermida





synopsis

Karl Marx's famous quotation "Religion is the opium of the people" is one of the 'odd' ideas nine-year-old Manuela confronts her ultra-catholic family with, while she tries to teach her little cousins the basic principles of communism...

It is the summer of 1976 in a valley of the Andes Mountains in Ecuador.

Manuela, educated according to the communist and atheistic ideals of her beloved father, believes her parents to be on a revolutionary mission in Colombia, while she and her five-year-old brother Camilo have to spend the summer at their grandparents' farmhouse.

Of course, in a catholic-conservative household a nine-year-old's Marxist world outlook will cause trouble. Manuela eagerly defends her father's political and philosophical ideas, unwilling to obey her grandmother's conservative rules.

The old lady, alarmed by the harmful influence Manuela has on the rest of the family's kids, threatens to send her back to her parents unless she accepts to be baptized. Manuela, who is determined not to interrupt her parents' very important mission, accepts the deal.

Following the family tradition according to which the eldest daughters and grand-daughters must carry the name of the Virgin of Dolores, her name is changed to 'Manuela de los Dolores' during the baptism ceremony. Outraged by this imposition, Manuela defies her grandparents' most severe rule and, together with her cousins, sets out to explore the forbidden library of the farmhouse, where they find schizophrenic Uncle Felipe, who has been kept hidden for years, devoted to 'setting words free from the constraints of dogmas'.

The encounter with her uncle's crazy wisdom provides Manuela the means to free herself from her own dogmas and changes her relationship with words – including her own name.



director's statement

As independent filmmaker I aspire to develop projects that propose new ways of understanding my country and culture, films that escape the conventions of so called Third World Cinema, which I believe is too often driven to the trivialization of social violence.

As writer-director I'm interested in exploring the process through which we humans manage to reinvent our identity and recreate the meaning of life when our truths and certainties have been menaced or dismantled. That's the key idea in the script of *En el Nombre de la hija* (*In the Name of the Girl*), as it was in my first feature film *Qué tan Lejos* (*How much further*).

En el Nombre de la hija is set in a farmhouse in the Andes Mountains, a place where colonial and patriarchal rules have prevailed for generations. The story takes place during the summer of 1976, a time when Catholic dogmas were deeply confronted by communist ideas in the heart of middle class families.

The plot evolves around the complex ways in which power operates within family relationships and, more specifically, on the role that symbols play in that process.

In a world that rests upon indisputable truths (communist and Catholic dogmas), symbols are considered sacred and thus used to oppress and control thoughts and emotions. When freed from the constraints of sacredness, however, those symbols can turn into subversive tools that lead our minds and feelings to the grounds of poetic meaning.

In the Name of the Girl suggests that every revolution starts with the profanation of sacred symbols and symbolic subversion can lead us to convey our uncertainties and embrace the mystery of life.

I'd like audiences to see my film as critical but not dogmatical, humorous but not evasive, very personal and thus capable of taking risks in its aim to achieve a transgressive poetic approach to film language.



tania hermida

Born in Cuenca, Ecuador. Studied Film Direction at the San Antonio de los Baños International Film and TV School (Cuba, 1991), where she directed her first short films, both documentary and fiction.

She obtained an MA in Cultural Studies at the Universidad del Azuay (2002) with a thesis on the different notions of time in fiction film narration. She combined her work as a filmmaker with teaching at the San Francisco de Quito University between 1996 and 2007.

Her first feature film as writer director, *Qué tan Lejos* (*How Much Further*), 2006, obtained important international awards including the Silver Zenith for feature films at the Montreal World film Festival and the Coral Award for first films at the Havana Film Festival. It was also a national box office record in Ecuador and was distributed successfully in Spain, France and Switzerland.

En el Nombre de la Hija (*In The Name of The Girl*) is her second feature film and it has obtained awards and support from the Ibermedia Program, Visions Sud Est, Hubert Bals Fund and the Ecuadorian Film Council.

In 2007-2008 Tania participated as representative in the Constituent Assembly that wrote the new Ecuadorian Constitution.

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a film by Tania Hermida

35mm / Color / 100 min.

original language: Spanish

production company: Ecuador para Largo

www.ecuadorparalargo.com

country of origin: Ecuador / 2011

www.enelnombredelahija.com

ecuador Ministerio de Cultura del Ecuador



writer - director: Tania Hermida
executive producers: Mary Palacios & Tania Hermida
production manager: Paula Parrini
art director: Juan Carlos Acevedo
cinematographer: Armando Salazar
editors: Juan Carlos Donoso, Vanessa Amores
sound designer: Juan José Luzuriaga
original music: Nelson García

main cast:

Eva Mayu Mecham ~ **Manuela**

Markus Mecham ~ **Camilo**

Martina León ~ **María Paz**

Sebastián Hormachea ~ **Andrés**

Francisco Jaramillo ~ **Emilio**

Paúl Curillo ~ **Pepe**

Dianneris Díaz ~ **Juanita**

Pancho Aguirre ~ **Uncle Felipe**

Juana Estrella ~ **Grandmother**

Felipe Vega De La Cuadra ~ **Grandfather**

Fabiola León ~ **Marianita**





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Balthasarstr. 79-81, 50670 Köln, Germany
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