

A young mother yearns to escape the unending hardships of a remote Cuban fishing village in search of a false and potentially fatal American Dream.



VOICES of the SEA



LABOR OF LOVE FILMS IN ASSOCIATION WITH DEFINING ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS A CO-PRODUCTION BY LABOR OF LOVE FILMS, DEFINING ENTERTAINMENT, INDEPENDENT TELEVISION SERVICE AND AMERICAN DOCUMENTARY | POV
A FILM BY KIM HOPKINS "VOICES OF THE SEA (VOCES DEL MAR)" EDITED BY LEAH MARINO, KIM HOPKINS CINEMATOGRAPHY BY KIM HOPKINS PRODUCED BY MARGARETA SZABO, CAPELLA TAHOMME, KIM HOPKINS
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS HERBERT LOCKWOOD, SALLY JO FIFER, JUSTINE NAGAN, CHRIS WHITE WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY KIM HOPKINS
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PRESENTS

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VOCES del MAR

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PRODUCED BY MARGARETA SZABO, CAPELLA FAHOOME, KIM HOPKINS

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

Revealing stark realities for the poorest of rural Cubans with unique access and empathy, this is the story of a 30-something mother of four longing for a better life. The tension between wife and aging husband - one desperate to leave, the other content to stay - builds into a high stakes family drama after her brother and the couple's neighbors escape.

SYNOPSIS

VOICES OF THE SEA takes place in a remote fishing village in Cuba. Mariela's (30's) first husband drowned trying to flee Cuba on a raft. Mariela's second husband is aging fisherman Orlando. Together with their four children they subsist, caught in a Cold War time warp of limitation, lacking even the basics, yet they're deeply in love. Whilst Mariela weighs leaving the family and risking her life escaping, Orlando devotes himself to fishing on the open sea, and passing on his craft to their teenage son; a craft integral to his own identity, his code of behavior and nature's order. Whereas Mariela represents the younger generation yearning for opportunity, Orlando accepts his mortality and place in the world with grace, wisdom and wit.

Mariela's unrest only increases after brother Roilan reaches the U.S. on a homemade boat. She is also undeterred by their neighbors' first failed escape attempt, and follows the debacle avidly after they reach an abandoned American lighthouse near Key West, Florida on their second escape attempt.

Orlando doesn't believe that the "illusionary" American dream would compensate the pain of family separation. But, the increasing number of American tourists is driving up prices as the island's limited resources are diverted into tourism. It's a heartbreaking dilemma. Will Mariela make her desperate plunge into the unknown?

VOICES OF THE SEA presents a balanced, empathic and distinctly lyrical portrait of contemporary Cuban realities, hopes and dreams in an age of political uncertainties, vying Chinese, Russian, and U.S. interests, and still constricted freedoms.



Director's Statement: Kim Hopkins 'Voices of the Sea'

I co-founded the documentary department at Escuela Internacional de Cine y Television, Cuba, in the late 90's. During my time at the film school I would accompany documentary students to various filming locations as we pushed, sometimes naively, at the envelope of what was, and what was not permitted to film in Cuba. The subject of cigars, rum, architecture, old American cars, dance, and Cuban music became the staple diet for these wannabe documentary filmmakers. Also, all things Ernest Hemingway was seen as a safe documentary proposition to get green-lighted by the tightly controlled film school.

During one of these student documentary scouts I visited Cajio Beach, a small rundown fishing village that was off the tourist track on the unfashionable south coast - where the beaches were covered in red mud rather than white sand, and the solitary hotel had long-ago been blown away by some typhoon. Here, dozens of lithe, weather-burnished fishermen would row tiny paint-peeled skiffs, each with an identifying number daubed on the bow, out into the bay of Batabano, only returning once the ice box was full of Cubana snapper. It was a scene Ernest Hemingway might have imagined when he penned 'The Old Man and the Sea' in 1952.

I first read Hemingway's novella aged 8. Its elegiac atmosphere and epic themes, I now realize, had stayed with me as I surveyed the scene here at Cajio Beach.

Fast forward to 2014 - a film about adoption I was working on had collapsed and I was looking for another subject to steal my heart, rob me of 5 years of my life, and leave me financially teetering. Like most things I do, they are never really planned, they just happen. It was then that my Cuban translator's name popped up on my Skype window. We hadn't spoken for years and we reminisced about my time at the Cuban film school and our days fishing in Cuba. I've always been a keen fisherwoman.

There I had it, my next project - fishing, Cuba, Hemingway and a reunited Cuban friend to fix it. My years working at the Cuban film school enabled me to wrangle unfettered access under the guise of a cultural exchange. That December, on the announcement of US President Obama's statement to the world that America and Cuba were restoring diplomatic relations, my Cuban fixer friend skipped the island closely followed by thousands of his country folk. Cuba was once again in flux. This was the trigger for us getting on the ground in Cuba as fast as we could, as we knew every documentary maker and their dog would converge on Havana.

Now, all these years later I was back at Cajio Beach. Tiny fishing skiffs bobbed in the cobalt blue bay. Nothing had changed. It was as if I'd drifted back into Ernest Hemingway's world, but this time with a camera. I met and befriended Orlando (Pita), an enigmatic Cuban fisherman, his much younger wife Mariela and their 4 children. I entered their simple, proud, pre-industrialized world that was bereft of technology, but rich in family values. On the horizon however, the specter of change loomed in the shape of the American illusion. Whereas Hemingway's 'old man' fought to hold onto a giant fish, Orlando's fight, I soon discovered, was to hold onto his values and loved ones.

Biography

Kim Hopkins - Director, Producer, DOP.

Born to an American father and a British mother, Kim currently resides in York, England. Kim helped form the Documentary Department at EICTV, Cuba. Kim is a graduate of the National Film and Television School, UK. Kim spent a decade making television before co-founding Labor of Love Films Ltd., a UK based independent production company specializing in feature documentaries. Kim's broadcast credits include: BBC1,2,4, World, C4, A+E, WDR, Discovery Channel, National Geographic, NRK1

Filmography

SCENIC (55 MIN/1996/NFTS), (IDFA, St. Petersburg)

MODERN SLAVERY (3 x 60' mins) (SPERANZA FILM, OSLO, for NRK1. TX 2009)

MAN IN THE SAND (120 MIN/1999/Union Productions), a feature documentary for BBC2.

WANTED (105 MIN/2002/Footprint Films), a feature documentary for WDR, funded by UK Film Council,

A&E, WDR and Soros Foundation. WANTED premiered at Locarno, BFI London Film Festival & Viennale.

HOTEL FOLLY-FOLIE A DEUX (2013/101min, Labor of Love Films) for BBC Storyville. HOTEL FOLLY premiered at IDFA.

VOICES OF THE SEA 2018, 98min (ITVS)(POV)(PBS)

Biography

Margareta Szabo – Producer

Margareta was born in Budapest to a Greek mother and Hungarian father. Margareta wears two hats as both producer and actress. After graduating out of the University of Theatre and Media Arts (Budapest), Margareta went on to study English literature and philosophy to Pazmany Peter Catholic University. Having worked on the other side of the lens and having read lots of proposals, plays, and scripts has given Margareta a great insight and understanding as to the process of filmmaking and what makes a compelling story and interesting character. In 2012, Margareta co-founded Labor of Love Films Ltd. Margareta is a Berlinale Talents, and a Future Producer School 2016 alumna.

Filmography

HOTEL FOLLY-FOLIE A DEUX, (2013/101min, Labor of Love Films) (BBC Storyville, IDFA, Cambridge, Vilnius)

VOICES OF THE SEA 2018, 98min (ITVS))(POV)(PBS)

Biography

Capella Fahoome – Producer

Capella Fahoome fell in love with filmmaking over 20 years ago with a mission of creating good and meaningful programming that document powerful stories of the human spirit. She has been extremely fortunate to do just that with films such as Lost In Woonsocket (SXSW, currently part of OWN's Super Soul Sundays). Don't Stop Believin': Everyman's Journey, a film about the iconic 80's band, Journey and their new lead singer (Tribeca, Silverdocs). Among the narratives Capella produced is I Do & I Don't, a comedy starring Jane Lynch ("Glee," "Talladega Nights"). She is an EP of Ramona Diaz's Motherland (Sundance, Berlinale) and her current projects include Voices of the Sea and NOTOWN, a film following 3 families in Michigan during the Emergency management crisis.

Filmography

RANDOM1 (60min series 10 episodes/2005-2006) for A&E

EUPHORIA (94min/2005)(Houston WorldFest) with a grant from the NIH.

LOST IN WOONSOCKET (81min/2007) (SXSW).

DON'T STOP BELIEVIN': EVERYMAN'S JOURNEY (105min/2012) The film premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival, was closing night of the San Francisco International Film Festival, and the opening night of Silverdocs, and won the audience awards at the Traverse City, Palm Springs, and New Hampshire Film. The film was nominated for Gotham Awards.

MOTHERLAND (Executive Producer) (2017, 94min) (Commanding Vision Award Sundance, 2017)

VOICES OF THE SEA 2018, 98min (ITVS))(POV)(PBS)

Biography

Leah Marino – Editor

Leah's home is in Austin, TX. Recent work includes Deborah Esquenazi's *Southwest of Salem* (premiered Tribeca, 2016) Previously she worked on Robert Byington's *7 Chinese Brothers*, starring Jason Schwartzman, her first venture into fiction film editing (premiered SXSW, 2015). Marino edited *Above All Else*, about one man's struggle against the Keystone XL pipeline (premiered SXSW 2014). In 2013 she completed Ramona Diaz's *Don't Stop Believin': Everyman's Journey*. Additional editing projects with Diaz include *The Learning, Imelda* and recently completed *Motherland* (Sundance Commanding vision Award 2017). Leah enjoys helping each film to realize it's unique story and purpose in the larger world.

Filmography

VOICES OF THE SEA 2018, 98min (ITVS) POV)(PBS)

MOTHERLAND (2017, 94min) (Commanding Vision Award Sundance, 2017)

SOUTHWEST OF SALEM: THE STORY OF THE SAN ANTONIO FOUR (2016, 91min)

ABOVE ALL ELSE (2014, 95min)

DON'T STOP BELIEVIN': EVERYMAN'S JOURNEY (2012, 113min)

THE CREEK RUNS RED (2007)

LIGHT FROM THE EAST (2005, 55min)

IMELDA (2003, 103min)



Credits

Director	Kim Hopkins
Editors	Leah Marino Kim Hopkins
Cinematographer	Kim Hopkins
Producers	Margareta Szabo Kim Hopkins Capella Fahoome
Associate Producer	Leah Marino
Executive Producers	Herbert Lockwood Sally Jo Fifer Justine Nagan Chris White
Writer	Kim Hopkins
Editing Consultant	Margareta Szabo
Line Producers	Oriel Rodriguez Dominic Valero Melvin Rocco Oliva Vargas
Location Interpreter	Dominic Valero
Writing Consultant	Joanna Rabiger
Translators	Lara Polo Angelica Ramirez Maria Van Der Westen Julia Casado Almundena Castro Raquel Del Alamo Diez Alberto Martinez Andrea Garcia Cortes Noelia Roman Sanz
Advisors	Sandy Lieberson Simon Beaufoy
Colorist/Online Editor	Daniel Stuyck
Sound Editors	Justin Hennard Miles Foster-Greenwood Evan Dunivan Korey Pereira Madeleine Stevens
Re-Recording Mixer	Tom Hammond
Post-Production Sound Services	Sound Crafter, Austin
Post-Production Supervisor	Leah Marino
Supervising Producer for ITVS	Michael Kinomoto
Accounting Services	Minford Chartered Accountants
Bookkeeper	Kelley A Trotter
Insurance Services	Waltery Insurance Brokers
Legal services	Melorie Chilton Justine Jacob Paul Szynol
International Sales	CAT&Docs
Music Supervisor	Qiana Conley
Recording/Mixing Engineer	Justin Sherburn

MUSIC

"CAMINO PERDIDO"

Written by Guy Lukowski
Courtesy of APM Music

"EL TESTAMENT D' AMELIA"

(Traditional) Catalan
Performed by José Manuel Tejedo

"A TI TE CANTO DE CORAZÓN"

Written by José Manuel Tejedo
Performed by Jose Manuel Tejedo, Michael Longoria,
Hector Montesino, Kathelee Hernandez, Dylan Jones

"LOS ALTIPLANOS"

Written by Guy Lukowski
Courtesy of APM Music

"TRISTEZA"

Written by Guy Lukowski
Courtesy of APM Music

"ESTRELLITAS"

Written by Guy Lukowski
Courtesy of APM Music

"LA BELLA CUBANA"

Written by José White
Performed by Quinteto de cuerda Diapasón
Courtesy of Quinteto de cuerda Diapasón

"LAUD OL"

Written by Orlando Paz
Courtesy of APM Music

"LA CATEDRAL"

Written by Agustín Barrios-Mangoré
Performed by José Manuel Tejedo

"BRISAS DE MAR"

Written by José Manuel Tejedo
Performed by José Manuel Tejedo

"MI GUITARRA OL"

Written by Orlando Paz
Courtesy of APM Music

Featuring

Garcia family
Orlando
Mariela
Kevin
Karel
Cynthia
Orlandito
Davinson
Roilan
Esther
Michel
Estrella
the rafters, and the villagers of Playa Cajío

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