



SIN SENAS PARTICULARES
IDENTIFYING FEATURES

A FILM BY FERNANDA VALADEZ

CORPULENTA ^{CO-PRODUCED BY} FOPRODINE, ENAGIAS CINÉ, ZAPATA CAMERAS, AVANTI PICTURES AND NEPHILIM PRODUCCIONES

WRITTEN BY FERNANDA VALADEZ "IDENTIFYING FEATURES" "SIN SENAS PARTICULARES"

PRODUCED BY FERNANDA VALADEZ, ASTRID RONDERO AND SUSAN KRIBBA ^{WITH} DALIA REYER ^{EDITED BY} CLAUDIA BECERRIL BULOS ^{CASTING BY} CLARICE JENSEN

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS FERNANDA VALADEZ, JACK ZACHA, YOSSY ZAGHA ^{EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY} DIANA ARCEGA, CARLOS HERNANDEZ ^{EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY} ASTRID RONDERO

EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY ALPHA VIOLET

EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY FERNANDA VALADEZ AND ASTRID RONDERO ^{EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY} FERNANDA VALADEZ



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World Premiere
SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL 2020 -World Dramatic Competition



original title
[Sin Señas Particulares](#)

Mexico, Spain - 2020 - 97 min - HD - 1:2.35 - 5.1 - Spanish



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LOGLINE

Magdalena, a mother in search of her missing son, meets Miguel, recently deported from the US and looking for his mother. Together, they make their way through the desolate and unforgiving militia-ridden landscapes south of the border.

SYNOPSIS

Magdalena sets out on a journey in search of her son, who disappeared en route to the US border. Travelling through the desolate towns and landscapes of today's Mexico she meets Miguel, a young man recently deported from the United States who is making his way home. The two accompany one another: Magdalena looking for her son, and Miguel eager to see his mother again in a territory where victims and aggressors ramble together.

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CAST

| | |
|-----------|---------------------|
| Magdalena | Mercedes Hernández |
| Miguel | David Illescas |
| Jesús | Juan Jesús Varela |
| Olivia | Ana Laura Rodríguez |
| Chuya | Laura Elena Ibarra |
| Pedro | Xicoténcatl Ulloa |

CREW

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Director | Fernanda Valadez |
| Producers | Astrid Rondero, Fernanda Valadez, Jack Zagha, Yossy Zagha |
| Script | Fernanda Valadez, Astrid Rondero |
| Cinematography | Claudia Becerril |
| Art director | Dalia Reyes |
| Editing | Fernanda Valadez, Astrid Rondero, Susan Korda |
| Sound recordist | Misael Hernández |
| Sound Design | Omar Juárez |
| Original music | Clarice Jensen |

PRODUCTION COMPANIES: CORPULENTA/ FOPROCINE/ AVANTI PICTURES/
ENAGUAS CINE/NEPHILIM PRODUCCIONES

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DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Fernanda Valadez. Director and producer, Guanajuato, Mexico, 1981.

Graduate of Centro de Capacitación Cinematográfica (CCC). Her first short film "De este mundo", received the best short film award at the Guanajuato Film Festival. It was considered the best Mexican short of the year by the Mexican Chamber of Film Industry.

Her graduation short film, "400 bags", was selected for the Editing Studio of the Berlinale Talents and received different awards around the world. It was also nominated as Best Short by the Mexican Academy of Cinematic Arts (Ariel) in 2015 and was a finalist of the Student Academy Awards in that same year.

The script of her first feature "Sin señas particulares" was written with the grant Young Artists of the Mexican Fund for the Arts (FONCA). The project later received funds from FOPROCINE (Mexican Fund for the Production of Quality Cinema) and recently post production funds from EFICINE. The film received the work in progress award of the San Sebastián Film Festival.

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In 2018 Fernanda received a script writing grant from FONCA, with which she is writing her next feature, "Rambler".

Fernanda is founding partner of the production companies ENAGUAS CINE and CORPUENTA with which she has produced the films "Plastic" (by Ricardo Soto, 2015, developed in Locarno's filmmakers Academy) and "The darkest days of us" (by Astrid Rondero, 2017, supported by Tribeca's Latin America Fund and Berlinale Talents Script Station, Nominated as best first feature and best actress by the Mexican Academy of Cinematic Arts 2019). She is also the producer of the documentary "Dear Ana", currently in post production, by renowned director Alejandra Sánchez.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

"Identifying features" tells the story of Magdalena, a woman making a journey to find her son, gone missing on his way to the border with the US. This film is an exploration of the the horrors and contradictions of today's Mexico, of a whirlwind of violence that doesn't seem to end, and of the unfortunate path of the migrants. But it is also a story of resistance, of our capacity to give meaning to a fractured existence, even if the meaning is endurance itself.

"Identifying features" is my first feature film as a director. It represents a long journey that began around 2012. Back then, we began to receive news that expressed a deep social and humanitarian crisis in Mexico: disappearance and killings of activists and journalists; massive violence against migrants, women and minorities; emergence of dozens of clandestine mass graves; increasing numbers of internally displaced people; populated settlements changing into ghost towns. The perception of my surroundings changed irreversibly, and after shaking off the confort of Mexico City, where I've been living for over 15 years, I went back to my hometown, where violence has flourished.

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I found the story I wanted to tell in the travelers and immigrants vanishing by the day, and in the families that look for them in the mass graves where corpses appear by the hundreds. I also found that fiction was the tool I needed to recover those voices and translate them into a group of characters and their journeys, journeys that might seem like a descent to hell.

I tried to structure "Identifying features" as a road movie, more lyrical than naturalistic, looking for the sensation of a thriller. I figured this mixture of elements would help me express a human phenomenon that left me without words. I wanted to open questions about the cycles of violence and about our capacity to transit the boundaries that divides victims and perpetrators, a thin border that lives within ourselves.

I don't yet know how much of what I wanted to tell communicates through the film. But I feel fortunate that I got to shoot it. I'm certain that when time passes, I will look back and find more mature stories that better portray this moment. I can only say that I felt a deep urge to tell this one now.



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LEADING ACTRESS: MERCEDES HERNÁNDEZ

Respected Mexican Actress, producer and story teller. Mercedes Hernández has performed in more than 25 theater plays. She is also into performative story telling and has performed internationally . For this work she received a FONCA grant as a performer. Her first film credit as an actress was in Cannes' Certain Regard selected "THE VIOLIN" in 2005. Later, she went to participate with renown Mexican director Carlos Carrera's "Of Childhood" (2010). Among other films it stands out Jorge Pérez Solano "La Tirisia" for which she received a BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS NOMINATION by the Mexican Academy of Arts and Sciences (Ariel) in 2015. In 2020 she will premiere her first Leading acting credit, under director Fernanda Valadez, in her debut film "Identifying Features" to be screened at Sundance 2020.

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WRITER-PRODUCER: ASTRID RONDERO

Astrid Rondero has received grants and support from Tribeca Film Institute, Berlinale Talents (Script Station 2014, Editing Studio 2010), Women in Film Finishing Fund, Gabriel Figueroa Film Fund among others. Her first feature, THE DARKEST DAYS OF US, obtained 7 international awards as Best Feature in the US, France, Colombia, Santo Domingo and Mexico and was nominated as Best First Feature Film and Best Actress by the Mexican Academy of Arts and Sciences (Arieles 2019). Astrid is founding partner of the production companies ENAGUAS CINE and CORPULENTA.

She is the producer of Sin Señas Particulares (Identifying Features), directed by Fernanda Valadez, winner at San Sebastian Work in progress and to be premiered at SUNDANCE 2020. She is post producing an exciting Documentary Film "La Colonial" by young Mexican director David Buitron. She is currently financing her second feature, "Sujo". Her new film script was written with a Grant for Young Artists of the Mexican Fund for the Arts (FONCA 2019) and was invited to the Sundance Story Lab held in Morelia, Mexico, in October 2019.

CINEMATOGRAPHER: CLAUDA BECERRIL

Graduated with honors Cum Laude in the specialty of Cinematography at the CCC film school with the short films Primal Force (2017) and Oak Leaves (2016). She is the cinematographer of feature documentary films Bath of life (2016) and 45 days in Harbar (2018) , and feature films The silence is Welcome (2017) and Identifying features (2020) , selected in the 2020 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL. She has been awarded by Pantalla de Cristal as best cinematographer 2017 for Dalia Reyes' "Bath of Life".

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EDITOR: SUSAN KORDA

Korda studied filmmaking at CCNY and has worked as an editor for 20 years. With David Leitner, she directed and produced the 1989 award-winning documentary *Vienna Is Different*. She produced another award-winning documentary in 2000, *One of Us*. Her short narrative film *Salomea's Nose* won many international awards. Her editing credits include the 1989 Oscar®-nominated documentary *For All Mankind* and Sandi DuBowski's groundbreaking *Trembling Before G-d* (2001). She was a producer on Emily and Sarah Kunstler's *William Kunstler: Disturbing the Universe*, and story consultant on Alan Berliner's *The Sweetest Sound* and *First Cousin Once Removed*. Korda teaches at Columbia University and conducts editing and storytelling workshops in the U.S., Europe, Israel, and South Africa.

MUSIC COMPOSER: CLARICE JENSEN

Clarice Jensen is the artistic director of ACME, the American Contemporary Music Ensemble. A graduate of The Juilliard School, she studied with Joel Krosnick, Harvey Shapiro and has taken master classes with many composers such as Milton Babbitt, Elliott Carter and Roger Reynolds. Recording artists she has collaborated with include Jóhann Jóhannsson, Stars of the Lid, Owen Pallett, Max Richter, Tyondai Braxton and numerous others. Her most recent performances include concerts at The Kings Theatre, Elbphilharmonie (Hamburg), Disney Hall, Benaroya Hall, The Sydney Opera House, Big Ears Festival, Duke Performances, BAM, (le) Poisson Rouge, Roulette, and the Isamu Noguchi Museum. Recording collaborations have been released on Deutsche Grammophone, Kranky, Warp, Matador, Brassland, Domino, Merge, Jagjaguwar, Domino, New World, 4AD and many others.



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PRODUCTION NOTE

“Identifying features” has been a long term project. The social approach of the film (the story dealing with the enforced disappearances in the migrant route and the pilgrimage of those looking for their missing loved ones; the humanitarian crisis we live in Mexico) made the financing process long and complicated. So the film was shot with a reduced cash flow, complemented with in kind contributions. This formula made us change the original production plan for a smaller scheme, more portable and flexible, that allowed us to reinforce the bond with the communities where we shot, privileged the weather we needed and protected a generous shooting schedule. In this sense, we were able to shoot along nine weeks in the course of a year. Four of these weeks were shot with a really small crew, conformed of only the director, the cinematographer, the producer (who was also the sound recordist) and one of the actors. But the cash limitations did not translate into creative ones, because we had the opportunity to approach the project from a perspective that enriched the story and the characters, also letting us learn the beauty and challenges of the Mexican countryside, as well as the unfortunate path of the migrants.

“Identifying features” has another characteristic: it was shot mostly by women filmmakers. The cast was a mix of professional actors from Mexico City, and young performers from the communities where we worked, the last ones well versed in the motives to emigrate.

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CORPULENTA



Nephilim
PRODUCCIONES

CULTURA | **IMBI**

FONDO PARA LA PRODUCCIÓN CINEMATOGRÁFICA DE CALIDAD
(FOPROCINE - MÉXICO)

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