

cinéart

PERSMAP

LA LLORONA



A MOTHERLAND THAT WEEPS FOR HER
SACRIFICED, LOST, DROWNED, DEAD CHILDREN.

LA LLORONA

EEN FILM VAN JAYRO BUSTAMANTE



Drama/thriller - 2019 - Guatemala - 97 minuten

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Meer over de film: [Cineart.nl/films/la-llorona](https://www.cineart.nl/films/la-llorona)

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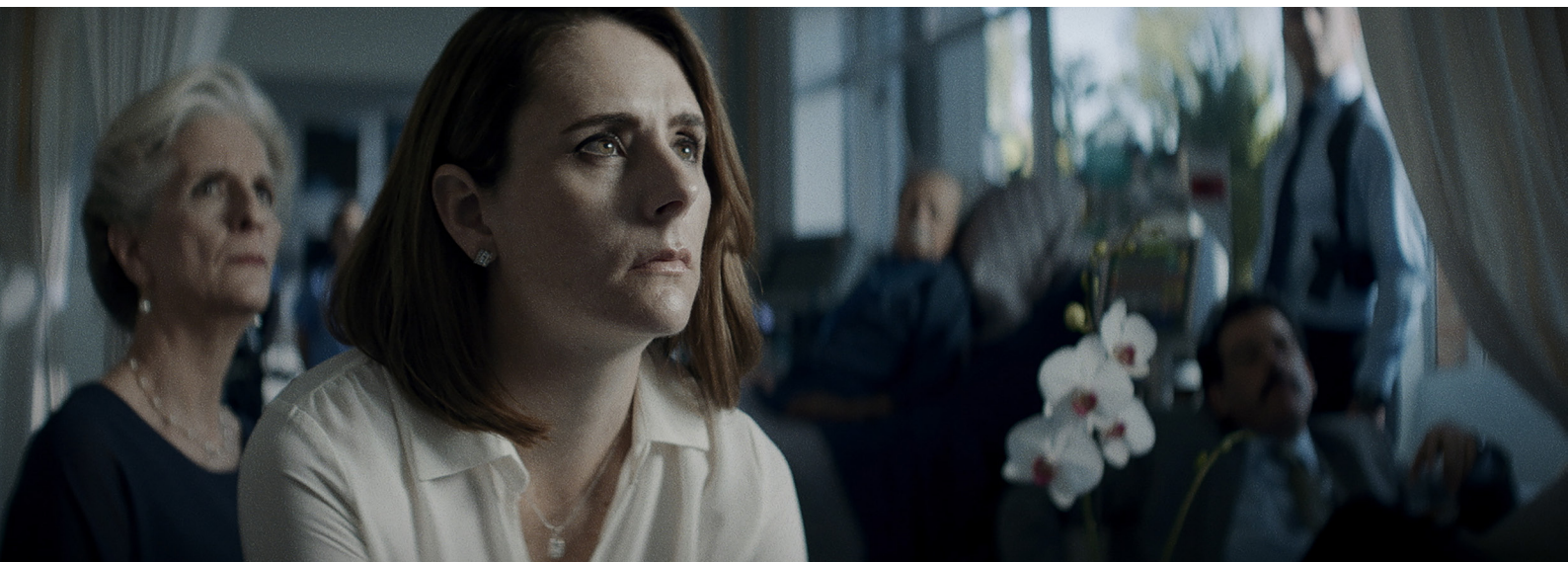
SYNOPSIS

LA LLORONA is de nieuwe film van de Guatemalteekse cineast Jayro Bustamante (IXCANUL, TEBLORES). Een magisch-realistisch en politiek drama, waarin een familie wordt achtervolgd door een duister verleden.

Dertig jaar na de burgeroorlog in Guatemala wordt oud-legeraanvoerder Enrique Monteverde schuldig bevonden voor zijn aandeel in de genocide, maar door een vormfout gaat de inmiddels bejaarde man vrijuit. Terwijl de protesten van de bevolking op straat steeds luider klinken, trekt hij zich met zijn familie en personeel terug in zijn luxueuze woning. Met de komst van de mysterieuze Alma, een nieuwe Indiaanse bediende, beginnen de gruweldaden uit het verleden de familie te teisteren.

LA LLORONA is onderdeel van een drieluik, waarmee regisseur Jayro Bustamante de problemen in zijn thuisland Guatemala aankaart. In zijn Zilveren Beer-winnende film IXCANUL (2015) ging het over de achtergestelde positie van de Maya's, en met TEBLORES (2019) richtte hij zijn pijlen op de discriminatie van homoseksuelen. Met LA LLORONA legt Bustamante een pijnlijk stukje geschiedenis bloot: de burgeroorlog in de jaren '80.

LA LLORONA ging in première op het Filmfestival van Venetië, waar Bustamante de prijs won voor Beste Film in de sectie Venice Days.



JAYRO BUSTAMANTE

Director/writer

Jayro was born in 1977 in Guatemala within a community mostly of Mayan descent, on the shores of Lago Atitlan. His professional endeavors as a director began in advertising, working for Ogilvy & Mather. He later moved to Paris to continue his studies in Film Direction at the CLCF (Conservatoire Libre de Cinéma Français). Later, he continued his studies on screenwriting in Rome, at the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia.

Upon returning to Guatemala, he created his own production company: La Casa de Producción. With it, he produced his short films and opera prima, IXCANUL. In 2015, IXCANUL crowned him as director after winning a Silver Bear at the Berlinale, and more than sixty awards at international festivals. Later in 2016, he created a cinema d'auteur distribution department as well as one dedicated to artistic representation within La casa de Produccion, which are activities that were not present in Guatemalan industry. Jayro obtained acting contracts in Hollywood and Mexican films for IXCANUL's main actress Maria Mercedes Coroy, boosting her career.

In April 2017, Jayro created La Sala de Cine, the first cinema theater dedicated to independent films in Guatemala. He later produced and directed his second film: TEMBLORES, to be released in 2019. He is currently working on his third film, LA LLORONA, as well as producing various projects by other Guatemalan directors. He has been part of the jury at Berlinale 2016, Brussels Film Festival 2018, Biarritz Festival 2018, Platino and Fenix Awards, and Los Cabos Film Festival.

Jayro Bustamante is Fondation Gan pour le Cinéma laureate.

FILMOGRAPHY

- 2019 LA LLORONA
- 2019 TEMBLORES
- 2015 IXCANUL
- 2012 CUANDO SEA GRANDE (SHORT)
- 2006 TOUT EST QUESTION DE FRINGUES (VIDEO SHORT)



INTENTION OF THE FILM

The intention of this film is to contribute to the dialogue about the unconcluded process of reconciliation in Guatemala and thus free us from weeping for our dead children for all eternity.

“The problem in Guatemala is that, unlike other Latin American countries, the army has not yet recognized the big crimes committed and, at the same time, it holds on to an incredible level of control over civil society, including its judicial apparatus.”

Andrea Rizzi (El País, 2005)

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

JAYRO BUSTAMANTE

When I was a boy, the idea of hearing the cry of La Llorona during the night terrified me. I pictured her to be a demonic soul who, because of her sins, was condemned to lament and wander the world. I was told that hearing her was a sign that she knew I too deserved punishment. What surprises me now is the power that she still has in Guatemala and in other Latin American countries. Despite knowing it is nothing more than a moralist myth for mandating the behavior of women, a large part of the population believes in her existence. The cry of guilt, of moralism and of a chauvinist society still echoes in our ears.

Creating a new version of La Llorona is the perfect opportunity to try to change those stigmas that are etched into our cultural inheritance. At the same time, the psychological suspense that goes along with the character allows me to recount Guatemala's recent, dark history to a national audience that is generally more interested in purely commercial entertainment movies. Like in all beginnings, films that address true events of a painful history are classified as bad publicity for a country.

Taking a land—or a people like the Guatemalan one that has lamented so much—and comparing it to this myth seems more than natural to me. It was thus also easy for me to justify using the horror genre to talk about the bloodiest former dictator of Latin America.

This film mixes together the story of the killings during the armed conflict in Guatemala, former president Efraím Ríos Montt being condemned for genocide and seeing it annulled, the Sepur Zarco case of crimes against humanity, the domestic and sexual slavery of native women, misogyny, classism, religiosity, mysticism and magic realism. All these ingredients create an amalgamation of suspense and terror that surpass the legend itself.

I needed to captivate interest internationally, but above all that of my people, and so I began this journey by going back to my childhood fears, to my new fears as an adult and my interest in storytelling. A cinematographic way of denouncing, all under the guise of entertainment, without ever losing sight of universally recognized auteur cinema.

Jayro Bustamante

THE LEGEND

La Llorona is one of the most widely known horror legends in Latin America. It tells the story of the sorrow, desperation, mourning and consequences of one woman's erratic decision.

An indigenous woman abandoned by her husband moves on with her life and has two sons outside of marriage. The unexpected announcement of her husband's return forces her to take measures in order to redeem her status as a married woman. She drowns her children, only to commit suicide when she regrets it. God then punishes her to wander the world as a lost soul, weeping and searching for her two sons. Her wailing terrifies all who hear it.

Unlike the legend, our Llorona is placed in today's world. She weeps for her children who died during Guatemala's armed internal conflict. Far from being a victim of social morality, she is a woman seeking revenge.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

It is estimated that the 36-year Guatemalan civil war left 250,000 dead, over 40,000 missing and some 100,000 displaced.

The great majority of these victims were civilians. The most violent period was from 1981 to 1983. During that time, the national army had up to 51,600 active service members, supported by paramilitary groups and almost 500,000 peasants organized into armed cells. Meanwhile, the rebel armies of the left never reached more than 6,000 members.

The bloodiest period was under the rule of Efraín Ríos Montt, from 1981 to 1983. It is estimated that during each month of his 18 in office, 3,000 people were murdered or made to disappear. Half of the war's total victim count was generated then. Strategically, the evangelical religion was fostered in the country in order to counteract the work of Catholic priests who practiced Liberation Theology, which made Guatemalan farmers aware of their rights and social injustice. In Guatemala, the debate about the genocide never concluded. It is ongoing, still polarizing society.

It's a country where having ideals about social justice is still considered dangerous and communist, where there's no room for intermediate nuances, where "communist" is an insult. The word genocide has managed to deflect the attention from the human rights abuses committed by both sides during the war, to a greater or lesser degree. Above all, the root motivations that dragged the war out are still alive and well, in the shadow of the debate.

On the other hand, the left has managed to integrate itself within the political sphere, where they have been laying on heavy pressure to get the crimes against humanity committed by the army processed, while the right accuses them for biasing justice.

CAST

Alma MARÍA MERCEDES COROY (IXCANUL)
Carmen MARGARITA KÉNEFIC
Natalia SABRINA DE LA HOZ
Enrique JULIO DÍAZ

CREW

A LA CASA DE PRODUCCIÓN and
LES FILMS DU VOLCAN production

Written and directed by JAYRO BUSTAMANTE
Screenplay by JAYRO BUSTAMANTE and LI SANDRO SANCHEZ
Director of photography NICOLAS WONG DÍAZ
Art director SEBASTIÁN MUÑOZ
Costume Designer SOFÍA LANTÁN and BEATRÍZ LANTÁN
Make up and hair by AIKO SATO

Edited by GUSTAVO MATHEU
JAYRO BUSTAMANTE

Sound EDUARDO CÁCERES
Music supervisor HERMINIO GUTIÉRREZ

Associate producers ALEJANDRA COLOM
DIDIER DEVERS
SOPHIE JOOS
HERMINIO GUTIÉRREZ

Executive producer GUSTAVO MATHEU

Producers JAYRO BUSTAMANTE
GUSTAVO MATHEU
GEORGES RENAND
MARINA PERALTA



LA CASA DE PRODUCCIÓN

Founded in 2009, La Casa de Producción began its endeavors at a time when filmmaking was just emerging in Guatemala, a country where stories were piling up in silence and new talent was looking for a space to express itself.

Early on, it produced three short films that garnered awards at international festivals and were broadcast on European television stations. It produced two documentaries: *AU DÉTOUR DES MURS*, *LES VISAGES D'UNE CITÉ* (2011) and *TERRITORIO LIBERADO* (2015). In feature fiction, La Casa de Producción has produced *IXCANUL* (2015), *1991* (2018) and *TREMORS* (2019).

Our base became solid with independent film. Our structure is committed to new projects that need a roof over their edifice and to voices that don't accept censure.

IXCANUL garnered a Golden Bear at the Berlin Film Festival, as well as over 50 other awards at international festivals. In 2015, it became the first film to represent Guatemala for a nomination at the Oscars and the Golden Globes.

