



DIRECTOR'S INTENTION NOTE

I come from a family dominated by strong, independent women. As the eldest of three sisters, I felt compelled to assume a motherly role for my siblings while our single mother worked tirelessly in a mine, selling merchandise and cooking for the miners, to support us.

She often spent the entire week, sometimes even longer, away from home. Our mother's dedication and immense sacrifices had a profound impact on me. It instilled in me a deep sense of admiration and respect for her, as well as a profound understanding of the challenges faced by single working mothers in demanding and often dangerous environments.

These experiences shaped my perspective and fueled my passion for telling stories that reflect the reality of families like mine. Through my work as a filmmaker, I aim to shed light on children who, like me, found themselves shouldering adult responsibilities at a far too young age, as well as the strength, resilience, and determination of single mothers as portrayed through the eyes of their children.

This film presents a poignant tale of a mother and daughter in conflict, navigating their way through life by supporting and assisting each other, their roles reversed. The film delves into the profound impact of a child left alone and forced to take on adult responsibilities and offers a unique perspective on the challenges faced by single mothers, particularly in hostile environments like a Larimar mine, where traditional male dominance and machismo prevail.

Finally, **mystical undertones** permeate the action, displaying an escape from reality and a guide that helps the protagonists find a way out into the future, where it finally seems that mother and daughter can understand one another. The family bonds prevail, even after separation and the mistakes of the past.

The tobacco, a symbolic element, serves as a conduit that connects the mystical and imaginary realms, enhancing the bond between characters in conflict, the mother and daughter.

Resistencia internalizes much of her mother's dream, which is to leave the mines forever. The paper plane that Resistencia plays with symbolizes her deepest desire, briefly fulfilled when she wakes up holding her mother's hand at the end of the story. This evocative image symbolizes her longing for care and affection, a deep yearning to be nurtured and loved. However, Resistencia realizes soon that this moment of tenderness and care is ephemeral, destined to be short-lived.

Animals play a significant role in the narrative, serving as unwavering companions and both guardians and guides for the characters. Their presence symbolizes the deep connection between humans and nature, while also embodying elements of mysticism and imagination.



ARTISTIC CONCEPT : Resistencia lives in a hot climate where wooden and zinc houses coexist about four hours from the imposing beauty of the tropical rainforest. Within the forest are the unsafe larimar mines, where Marta, her mother, works, where sweaty bodies sway, living and laughing despite the hard work. The nights are dark, far away from modern electricity. Wild animals appear as both symbols of danger and guides within the dense rainforest. Where the sound of insects and the moonlight permeates this space.

Resistencia and her mother share a profound connection that transcends physical boundaries, symbolized by the elusive smoke of a cigar. This magical realism element manifests in the ashes of the tobacco, evoking sensations of intangible spirits and igniting Resistencia's vivid imagination. Much like the harsh and hostile environment of the mines, her imaginative world is strikingly realistic, intertwining with the fabric of her existence.

Throughout the film, and particularly when Resistencia is alone, the idea of the jaguar-woman materializes more and more before our eyes, through her presence and transformation of Resistencia. The film takes the child point of view, who is spontaneously led to see the world as more extraordinary and magical than the adult. The unsettling story of Resistencia will lead her to cling more and more to the tale of the Jaguar Woman.

CINEMATOGRAPHY: I propose a dynamic where the contrasting environments of the treacherous larimar mines where Marta works and the humble house where Resistencia resides coexist organically, illustrating the hostile environment unsuitable for children left alone. Many crucial elements of the plot take place mostly off-screen, such as **the inherent dangers, the unexpected sounds** that evoke a sense of peril. Additionally, **the presence of shadows and wild animals, both on and off the screen, serves to depict the intangible elements that challenge and disrupt the emptiness of understanding.** These visual and symbolic representations enhance the film's exploration of the complexities and uncertainties faced by the characters. These settings provide the necessary spaces for the characters to develop and express themselves in a world where the backdrop and sensory details play a crucial role.

Through the Jaguar-woman, the film appeals to the register of magic realism and oneirism. The magical realism goes beyond the antinomy between the real and the supernatural to propose a renewed, subjective apprehension of the world. The film unfolds this magical realism throughout.

Wide shots that literally immerse the viewer in the green tropical forest, to a dark and mystical forest, illuminated by the moon in almost supernatural lights, allowing them to feel its beauty as much as its mystery, that will set the tone at the beginning of the film. However, as Resistencia journeys back home, the frames will tighten to portray an intimate portrait and delve into her deepest emotions. The green will give away to gray and contrast colors, to them go into marron et sepia, where the dark and shadows will be present to allow the magical realism to appear. The jaguar-woman will materialize before our eyes as Resistencia transform herself spiritually and physically from kid to adolescent, and as she



imagines the inner power and reflect it in of the eyes of the jaguar, in the dark, with big, strong but sad yellow eyes, unable to speak.

When scratch marks appear on Resistencia's hand, one will wonder if there isn't a real irruption of the fantastic and supernatural in the film: could this be proof of the jaguar-woman's real existence, no longer just a dream in a harsh reality?

By following her movements and discovering actions from her perspective, space will remain for intangible and mysterious elements that exist beyond the screen. These tighter frames will ultimately reflect Resistencia's obstructed and constrained vision, thereby showcasing her courage even more effectively.

To align the film's atmosphere with that of this part of the Dominican Republic, the imagery will be raw, grainy, and contrasting.

THE SOUND AND MUSIC: It became very clear to me that I had to accompany Resistencia on an emotional level, with sound and music, as she is not only living in a tangible world but is also linked to the world of dreams. This is why I will give a spatial dimension for the sound design to find a way to blur the lines between ambient sounds and music, to allow the audience to imagine, always from Resistencia's point of view, how the place around her sound and how her universe sound.

The music will consist of original compositions for the magical realism scenes in the film. I will mix real ambient sound with animal sounds; the imposing presence of the roaring jaguar, the insistent hissing of the snake, the cawing of the owls and the squawking of the parrot that accompanies Resistance. Many of the crucial elements of intrigue, mystery and fantasy take place largely by sound off-screen. [Link to music example](#)

There will also be pre-existing music that the characters will listen to and dance to. This music is inspired by my scouting location of the mines, where I discovered that the songs my mother used to listen to while working had become classics among the miners.

[Link to pre-existing music example](#)

Regarding the **CASTING**, and in line with my previous work, I aim to collaborate with the local community. Drawing from my experience working with children facing the realities of adulthood, I intend to cast children from this region who embody the maturity and resilience required by the characters. This connection and understanding will enrich the film's authenticity.

I aim to create a film, a true cinematic journey, that transcends the boundaries between documentary and fiction, where spiritual magical realism intertwines with reality, and where gazes and bodies express as much as words. By prioritizing sensations, sensitivity, and spontaneity, I seek to craft an immersive experience that deeply resonates with the audience.

Yanillys Pérez
Director/Writer