

The film by Emiliano Mazza de Luca seeks to portrait and expose the slaughter in Ciénaga Grande de Santa Marta; November, 2000

Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF) will be the venue for the US premiere of the documentary *Nueva Venecia*

***** Directed by Emiliano Mazza da Luca and produced by Martha Orozco, this documentary feature is one of the eight selected for the New Iberoamerican Section at the Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF).**

***** At a time when Colombian Government is negotiating peace with the FARC, *Nueva Venecia* is part of "La Revancha" (The Revange), social movement seeking to provide families of this small community a better quality of life through film, sports, education, and ecology.**

***** Along with the film, a request has been presented to the Colombian government to preserve the largest wetlands on the Caribbean area of the country and to prevent mangroves degradation, water pollution, and the drying out of rivers and swamps.**

***** The film was selected for the competition for Iberoamerican Documentary Feature and the Mezcal Award at the Guadalajara International Film Festival (FICG31) .**

As a candidate, *Nueva Venecia* documentary feature (Uruguay-México-Colombia, 2016), by Emiliano Mazza de Luca, portrays the everyday life of the inhabitants of a small village amidst the Santa Marta marsh, used to their lives on the water, making a living on fishing. Their lifestyle was changed drastically when a paramilitary group slaughtered 37 people and forced the others to move out on November 22, 2000.

In spite of the horror and the possibility of other acts of violence eventually the dwellers return as they rather face the hazards of new assaults than quit their way of living. Things did changed though, next to boat fishing memorials and ceremonies to honour the dead are part of the activities of the community, as well as their constant pleads for justice to the authorities. Something else keeps people together, soccer, played again at the field that remained a long time under water, also built by the locals on stilts.

Sport is not only leisure but also the only way out for many of the local youngsters who dream of both social and economic improvement. They dream to be "spotted" by some scout or club agent to become a new player for Colombia soccer like Falcao or James. The organization and opening of the local games is a significant event.

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The world premiere of the film actually happened in Nueva Venecia, as it tries to go beyond the cinema field and to become a means to the dissemination of the story and for people participation. It intends to be the launching pad of a social campaign to restore families of this small village their quality of life. Its outreach and engagement activities were named with a soccer motto "La Revancha" (The Revenge), using film as a bridge for football (soccer), education and ecology.

For instance, we addressed Manuel Vallejo López, Minister for Environment and Juan Manuel Santos, President of Colombia to encourage the government to take actions to prevent mangroves degradation, water pollution, and the drying out of rivers and swamps, as well to foster the overall preservation of the wetlands along the Caribbean coast of Colombia, selected Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO and internationally relevant wetland by the Ramsar Convention. It has already two thousand 363 signatures in the request platform Change.org.

Therefore the film becomes an ideal means to give voice to the victims and to find ways to make up for the endured violence, especially under the current circumstances when peace talks are held between the government of President Juan Manuel Santos and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), first in Oslo and now in Havana, Cuba.

"La Revancha" (The Revenge), has created a network of allies for its goal: artists, non-governmental organizations, along with Colombian government divisions. Some friends are; Unity for the Victims in Colombia, Colombia Itinerant, Ecocinema, NP Consultants, Goodpitch from Argentina, and the British Council. We also work with Fundación Juventud Lider and Systema Solar, and their producing companies Passaparola Films, Mart Films, MakingDocs and Señal Colombia.

The film's official synopsis, as selected for the competition for Iberoamerican Documentary Feature and the Mezcal Award at the FIG31, states "Nueva Venecia is a documentary about the life in a village on stilts in the midst of the Santa Marta Marsh and the passion leading its people to build a soccer field on the water. We will unveil their lifestyle, the stories embedded in their flesh and soul, their sense of belonging to a place that has no soil, no freshwater, no sanitation, and no health care, yet the place where they were born and are willing to die."

And its director Emiliano Mazza recalls: "it's been many years, back in 2015, I heard about this place lost in the Santa Marta large marsh, a small village that had built a football (soccer), field on the water. I was immediately attracted to the location, to the passion for football (soccer), and to the human creativity that urges people to do such cockeyed deeds. So, as I was in Colombia for vacations in 2010 I decided to go to Nueva Venecia. When I arrived to Tasajeras- on the road from Barranquilla to Santa Marta- the river was flooded and the village under water. I couldn't get there. At last, in 2012, we tried again; Martha Orozco was along, we spent some time in the village, getting to know people, finding characters and stories. That's how it all begins..."

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Emiliano Mazza De Luca was born in Montevideo, Uruguay, 1970. He attended the Workshop on Executive Production by Sandy Lieberman at the International School for Cinema and Television (EICTV) and the Berlinale Talent Campus. Since 1997, he has worked in advertisement as production director and executive producer. He created Passaparola Production Company in March, 2011; he has directed and produced features like: "*Nueva Venecia*" ("New Venice", 80min. 2016), "*Multitudes*" ("Crowds", 65, in. 2014) y "*Vida a Bordo*" ("Life on board" *in post-production*). He is developing a new documentary on the life of painter Joaquín Torres García.

Mexican producer Martha Orozco has a large experience in documentary and many of her Works have been selected and awarded in several international festivals. Her previous work *Allende mi abuelo Allende* (Chile-México, 2015), won the Goleen Eye to best Documentary at the LXVII Cannes Festival. Her works have been nominated in three years in a row for best documentary at the Ariel Awards of the Mexico Film Academy. She has twice won the Media Mundus Grant of the EURODOC (Programme for European Documentary Professionals) on specialization for producers in financing and European co-production in Croatia, France, and Budapest. She also took the documentary marketing and distribution at the Media Film Business School (MFBS) in Lubeck-Germany. She is currently the head of the Production department at the Internacional School for Cinema and Television (EICTV) in San Antonio de los Baños, Cuba. She was also a professor at the Madrid Film Institute, and coordinated the area for documentary at the Mexico Training Film Center (CCC). She has also collaborated as a tutor for Project development on the first feature at the CCC-CUEC.

***Nueva Venecia* (Uruguay-Mexico-Colombia, 2015). Director: Emiliano Mazza de Luca. Screenplay: Emiliano Mazza De Luca & Martha Orozco D.P: Ricardo Restrepo. Music: Cecilia Trajtenberg & Systema Solar. Direct Sound: Isabel Torres. Sound Design: Daniel Yafalián. Editing: Guillermo Madeiro, Lenz Claire, and Pablo Riera. Production: Martha Orozco. 80 minutes.**