



IMELDA IS NOT ALONE

(Imelda No Está Sola)

Award-winning documentary film by Paula Heredia

ONE TEENAGER'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM
AND THE WOMEN WHO DEFEND HER

Available from Third World Newsreel for Educational and Public Screenings
www.twn.org



“This beautiful film not only addresses an extremely tragic and complex subject, but it shows us the power of what is possible when women unite and organize. We recognized the importance of this movie today not only for El Salvador and Latin America, but also here in the United States.”

Cine Las Americas Jury

IMELDA IS NOT ALONE, is the story of a teenager trapped in the legal system of El Salvador. After an obstetric emergency landed Imelda in a hospital, she was accused of having an abortion and arrested. A cautionary tale for countries where women’s rights are deteriorating, this film tells the real-life story of Imelda’s struggle for her freedom and the women who defended her following the rape and impregnation by her stepfather.

Genre: Documentary Short

Production year & release year: 2023

Running time: 31:26

Country of production: United States, El Salvador

Original languages: Spanish, English

Shooting format: HD+SD

Screening Format: HD File and Streaming

Aspect ratio: 16:9

Film sound: Stereo

Official Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/813185072>

TWN Film Catalog: <http://www.twn.org/film.aspx?rec=1550>

Assets:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/3nlsav7u508mhapoxmtbh/imelda-no-esta-sola-poster.jpg?rlkey=5fwu9c8l45etgtm781oixrqqa&dl=0>

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One sentence synopsis

A citizen's movement dares to defend women like Imelda Cortez, who are persecuted by the total ban on abortion in El Salvador.

Short paragraph synopsis

An abused teenager, Imelda Cortez, faces 20 years in prison after being accused of having an abortion. Her only hope at freedom is a local citizen's movement that dares to defend women who are persecuted under El Salvador's total ban on abortion.

Long synopsis

Imelda Cortez, aged 19, arrives at the hospital bleeding after giving birth in a latrine. She is handcuffed to the hospital bed, arrested on suspicion of abortion, and later charged with attempted and aggravated murder.

Imelda's only hope at freedom is a local citizen's movement that dares to defend women who are persecuted under El Salvador's total ban on abortion. The result is a shocking account of an ongoing human rights crisis and a moving portrait of those who fight for a better society.



Filmmaker's Statement

As a filmmaker, I like to explore stories about people who work together against daunting odds to change their societies and inspire others to act. I craft documentary stories that entertain, inspire, and educate audiences—that aspire to empower family and communities, one struggle at a time.

Local stories can explore issues that transcend nationality and culture, as does *IMELDA IS NOT ALONE*—a film about poverty, abortion, and women's rights in El Salvador. It is a deeply observational social drama that captures in every frame the culture, climate and texture of my native country, El Salvador. Carefully crafted in cinema verité fashion, the storytelling keeps a suspenseful tone as the lives of the characters, and the complex issues they face, unfold in front of our eyes.

Unlike other reportage-style projects on this topic of social importance, this film followed its stories over the course of nearly four years, offering firsthand access to the main character, and has a Salvadoran filmmaker in the director's chair.

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Awards

Matthew Curtis Audience Award for Best Documentary, Florida Film Festival, 2023
Best Documentary Short, Cine Las Americas, 2023
Silver Remy Awards, WorldFest Houston, 2023

Screenings

Cine Ícaro International Festival (Guatemala)
Cortocircuito Shortfest, 2023
LA Women in Film Festival, 2023
Portland Film Festival, 2023
Cine Invisible Bilbao, 2023
Central American Film Festival, Viena, 2023

Filmmaking Team

Paula Heredia (director and producer)

Paula Heredia is a Salvadoran director and editor from Suchitoto, El Salvador, who has been making documentary films for over 20 years. She has won numerous awards, including the Eddie Award® for editing Unzipped (1995) and an Emmy® for HBO's In Memoriam, NYC 9/11/01 (2002). For her film Africa Rising (2009), she received Best Woman Director at the Soria International Film Festival in Spain.

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Her work includes the Animal Planet documentary “Toucan Nation” (2016), The Alzheimer’s Project (2009), and “The Couple in the Cage” (1993), which was acquired for the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art of New York (MOMA).

Paula is a fervent promoter of the regional film industry in Central America. Since 1996, through the program "Digital Cinema" of Casa Clementina, a non-profit arts and education organization, she has influenced and provided technical, aesthetic, and executive development training to emerging filmmakers from El Salvador and Central America.

She is the co-founder of a Latin American-focused International Film Festival in Suchitoto, FICS. Now in its tenth edition, it is an innovative cultural and tourism offering that generates economic development, activates the participation of youth, and mobilizes the media in support of cultural projects that transform the image of the country internationally.

John Hoffman (producer)

John has decades of experience overseeing, developing, producing, and directing documentary films and series. He was part of HBO Documentary Films, and later served as Executive VP of Documentaries and Specials at Discovery Networks. He is also the founder of the non-profit The Public Good Projects, where he made the National Geographic documentary “Sleepless in America” (2014).

Projects he has been involved in as producer and director also include Discovery’s “Rancher, Farmer, Fisherman” (2017), and the four-part HBO series “The Weight of the Nation” (2012), and “Last Letters Home: Voices of American Troops From the Battlefields of Iraq” (2004). His work has received numerous awards, including five Prime Time Emmy® awards, a Peabody Award and two DuPont-Columbia awards.

Daniel Sznajderman (producer)

Originally from Caracas, Venezuela, Daniel has worked in film production in New York City, Mexico, and Central America. He was associate producer on Animal Planet’s documentary “Toucan Nation” (2016), and co-producer of the award-winning Mexican horror film “Los Parecidos” (2015).

He has also been an assistant editor in projects like ESPN's 30 for 30 series and documentaries like “The Invisible Extinction” (2022). Other credits include working on the production of docuseries like CNN’s "Morgan Spurlock: Inside Man" (2013), "The

African Americans" (2014) and "An Art That Nature Makes: The Work of Rosamond Purcell" (2015).

Larry Garvin (producer)

Larry has been an entrepreneur and financial management consultant for thirty years, serving diverse organizations, including social service agencies, education providers and media makers. He was the longtime CFO of the Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility in New York City. In Suchitoto, El Salvador, he oversees Fundación Casa Clementina, a non-profit focused on promoting and disseminating art, distributing scholarships for vocational and university studies, and giving young people access to communication and information technology resources.

His experience in media production includes being part of award-winning documentaries like "La Pajara Pinta" (2007), "Africa Rising" (2009), "Slavery and the Law" (2011) and "Alborada" (2015).

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Complete production credits

Heredia Pictures
In association with Caminante Films

Director / Producer
Paula Heredia

Produced by
Larry Garvin
John Hoffman
Daniel Sznajderman

Edited by
Paula Heredia
Dahlia Fischbein

Camera
Ricardo Ponce
Paula Heredia
Melvin Nerio
Nestor Viche

Additional Camera
Victor Villaran
Gracia Chavez
Enrique Pocasangre
Luis Alejandro del Cid

Production Coordinator
Abigail Iglesias

Production Team
Pablo Mancilla
Rafael Álvarez
Adalberto Rivera
Luis Carranza

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Postproduction Supervisors

Rob Burgos

Ahmed Barbary

Colorists

Sileny Gonzalez

Luz Zamora

Music Composer

Christian Solís

Sound Mixer

Cántico Producciones

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