



The hidden hand in this photo moved mountains, beat up giants, men, women, children, old men, old women and animals: killed, tickled, knocked down bulls and slapped, saved him from two attempted kidnappings and was tied up during a successful third attempt. It also caressed the men of all classes and ages, brandished with fire, squeezed, humiliated, destroyed, healed, sickened, smashed, wove, injected, profaned, blessed and waved farewell the way he wanted.

#### Technical Information

**Working Title:** Tierra en la lengua (Dust on the tongue)

**Director:** Rubén Mendoza

**Screenplay by:** Rubén Mendoza

**Nationality:** Colombia, Third World, Earth.

**Genre:** Fiction mixed with false and real documentary material

**Format:** Film (archive), HD. Color and B&W

**Length:** We don't know yet. We'll see.

**Shooting location:** Road between Sogamoso and Colombian Llanos Orientales (a plain land of savage flood savannas)

**Production Company:**

Día Fragma Fábrica de Películas  
<http://www.dia-fragma.com>

#### Director's Filmography

**Main previous works:**

Memory Pills (Documentary, 27', best school documentary),

The Fence (21', more than 8 awards and 25 festivals in official selection including Cannes/Cinefondation),

The Animal Kingdom (34', Best Short, Toulouse 2010),

The Heart of La Mancha (23', Official Selection Clermont-Ferrand, 2010),

The Stoplight Society (110', 2010)

**Main Awards:**

La sociedad del semáforo (LSD.S, The Stoplight Society) was selected by L'Atelier Cinefondation Cannes 2008, won the World Cinema Fund (DE), Fond Sud (FR), Visions Sud Est (CH), Ibermedia (ES), Amiens Fund (FR.), Mannheim Meetings, TYPA, and later has been rejected everywhere.

As film won Special Prize of the Jury and Best first feature at the 36th Festival de Huelva (ES, Nov '10), and City of Amiens Prize, for direction, in the 30th Amiens Film Festival (FR, Nov '10)

## TIERRA EN LA LENGUA (Dust on the Tongue)

a film by Rubén Mendoza



FESTIVAL DE CANNES

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#### Résidence du Festival

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Since 2000, the Festival Residence has provided each year accommodation and support to twelve selected young directors in order to help them prepare their first or second feature film. A jury presided by a film director sits twice a year, selecting these young filmmakers on the basis of their short films, or even first

feature film, and the merits of their feature film project.

During their 4-and-a-half-month stay in Paris, they work on the writing of their feature film project, have meetings with professionals and try, with the support of the Cannes Film Festival, to bring their project to co-production status.

# TIERRA EN LA LENGUA

Dust on the Tongue



**Question:** What would I do if my grandfather asked me to kill him?

**Answer:** A film.



cinefondation  
LA RÉSIDENCE



With the support of HP. Printed on an HP Indigo Digital Press.

## SYNOPSIS

If my grandpa had asked me to kill him, I would have done it gladly, even if he hadn't been so sick. Unfortunately, he died before I could get around to it. A wonderful legend and a hateful monster, not even his kidnapping at the end of the 90's could tame him. His power, madness and bitterness continue to seep into our family, myself included. This film is a hypothetical trip with him, in which he asks two of his grandchildren to kill him because he wants to die by the hand of someone who bears his own blood. But, during those days on the road, and at his farm in the middle of the apocalyptic and primitive beauty of Colombia's Eastern Plains, engulfed by the harsh landscapes and the old man's wildness, his grandchildren slowly discover his past and realize that to kill him would be to reward him, and prefer instead



## SYNOPSIS

Si mon grand-père m'avait demandé de le tuer, je l'aurais fait avec plaisir même s'il n'avait pas été aussi malade. Malheureusement, il est mort avant que je me décide. C'était une merveilleuse légende et un monstre odieux, que même un enlèvement à la fin des années 90 n'a pas réussi à dompter. Son pouvoir, sa folie et son amertume coulent toujours dans ma famille, et même en moi. Ce film relate un hypothétique voyage avec lui, pendant lequel il demande à deux de ses petits-enfants de le tuer, parce qu'il veut mourir de la main d'une personne de son sang. Mais pendant ces quelques jours sur la route et dans sa ferme au milieu des plaines de l'est de la Colombie à la beauté apocalyptique et primitive, ses petits enfants engloutis par ces paysages arides et la sauvagerie du vieil homme, découvrent progressivement son passé et réalisent que le tuer reviendrait à le récompenser. Ils préfèrent

to prolong his agony as long as they can; just like he did to us. The old man fights for his right to die on his own terms, while his grandchildren challenge him with all they are learning, and try to keep him from escaping the humiliating punishment of pain, but also to savor a little of our eternal gratitude for the bizarre nature of his mystery.

### NOTE OF INTENT

My grandfather will already be dead at the beginning of the film: wretched; tied to the hoof of a horse that runs wild across the region's harsh soil, in the arid heat of summer and hurtling from one rock to the next. The film is an exorcism for me. I enjoyed my grandpa but also suffered because of him. He was a powerful man who imposed his own rules, even

alors prolonger son agonie autant que possible, comme il l'a fait pour nous. Le vieil homme défend son droit de mourir selon son choix, tandis que ses petits-enfants lui jettent au visage tout ce qu'ils apprennent et tentent de l'empêcher d'échapper à l'humiliante punition de la douleur, tout en savourant cette gratitude éternelle pour son mystère étrange.

### NOTE D'INTENTION

Mon grand-père sera déjà mort quand je commencerais le film, misérable, attaché au sabot d'un cheval parcourant au galop le sol aride de la région, dans la chaleur de l'été, et rebondissant d'une pierre à une autre. Ce film est un exorcisme pour moi. J'ai subi et apprécié mon grand-père : un être puissant, imposant sa volonté, même à la nature qui l'entourait, qu'il aimait

on the ever-present Nature that surrounded him, and which he both loved and attacked. He lived several lives at once, in an eternally dark present, like thousands of fathers in my country who have allowed Colombia's bloody, amazing and cruel politics and history to get under their skin and into their home. The trip he takes to his farm with two of his hundreds of grandchildren, these two in their mid-twenties, is the central nerve for revealing the weakness of his body, his decadence and his proximity to death, while vividly looking into his life, his bright and terrible existence along with that of some of his accomplices and victims, using real and false "documentary" family archives, old home movies and audio recordings, invented and filmed material. While making this film I want to bring the war in my heart against my grandpa to an end, and understand that I can, quietly, love and hate him forever.

et détruisait à la fois. Il a vécu plusieurs vies, dans un présent toujours sombre, comme des milliers de pères dans mon pays, qui ont laissé la politique et l'histoire colombiennes, sanglantes, déroutantes, cruelles, entrer en eux et chez eux. Le voyage qu'il entreprend vers sa ferme accompagné de deux de ses petits-enfants parmi des centaines, qui ont une vingtaine d'années, est le point stratégique pour révéler la faiblesse de son corps, sa decadence, sa mort prochaine, tout en scrutant sa vie, son existence brillante et terrible, ainsi que la vie de certains de ses complices et de ses victimes, en utilisant de vrais et de faux documents de famille, de vieux films de famille, du matériel audio, inventé et filmé. En réalisant ce film, je veux mettre un terme à la guerre contre mon grand-père qui a lieu dans mon coeur, et comprendre que je peux l'aimer et le détester à jamais, tranquillement.