



Bibi

a film by
Victor M. Dueñas

written by J.M. Longoria & Victor M. Dueñas

Logline

A young man begrudgingly returns to his small hometown to handle the final arrangements for his estranged father's passing. Just when he's lost all hope of finding closure, he finds one last letter from his dad.

Year: 2019

Runtime: 18 Mins

Aspect Ratio: 16:9

Genre: Drama

Country: USA

Languages: English and Spanish

Shooting Format: 4K

Camera: Alexa Mini

Exhibition Formats: DCP, MPEG4, and MOV

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A man in a grey t-shirt sits on the edge of a bed, his hand resting on the head of a woman lying down. The woman is wearing a red and white striped shirt. The room is dimly lit, with a Christmas tree visible in the background, decorated with lights and ornaments. A bulletin board with various papers is on the wall behind the man.

Synopsis

After receiving the unexpected news of his father Ernesto's death, Ben Solis is forced to return to the Texas countryside he used to call home. On his way there, he discovers a stack of old letters from correspondence he shared with his dad. The memories triggered by these letters are both good and bad. They help explain the chasm between them, a chasm created after Ben comes out to Ernesto. Just when he's lost all hope of finding closure, Ben finds one last letter left by his dad. The mysterious letter explains why his father became distant. He also offers a powerful way of making amends as long as Ben is willing to forgive.

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Social Background

Inspired by a true story. This film is inspired by the true story between our lead actor/co-writer J.M. Longoria and his father. As a child, J.M. had trouble expressing himself. So his dad would say, “if you can’t speak it, write it.” As a result, they began communicating via letters for many years. They discussed things that were difficult to talk about as a father and son such as puberty, school shootings, and sexual orientation. And it became their own little tradition.

Why South Texas? Our film is set in J.M.’s hometown of Rio Grande City, Texas. From the strong Catholic presence and traditional “machismo” mentality to the idea that family comes first and the progressive view of “live and let live”, the Rio Grande Valley is rife with contradictions. We felt it was necessary to set BIBI here to capture the authenticity of our story and show the various cultural layers of this unique community that straddles two countries.

Fun facts. BIBI is proudly comprised of a 90% Latinx and LGBTQ cast and crew. J.M.’s childhood home was also used in the last scene of the film. And many of the child background actors in the soccer scenes were our director Víctor Dueñas’s former students from his teaching days.

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Director's Statement

BIBI began when my partner J.M. Longoria told me about the special relationship he had with his father growing up. This tradition of writing letters to each other, while living under the same roof, seemed like such a unique story to me. And after reading some of these letters full of honesty, love, humor, and often times pain, I knew this story had to be told.

Among the many lessons J.M. learnt from these letters was the idea that it was okay for a man to open up to another man – a lesson that many men to this day have yet to embrace. This gave him the courage to come out to his dad at the age of fourteen. Initially, J.M.'s dad was concerned for his future as a gay, Latino man in conservative Texas. But as they continued writing each other, he knew he had taught his son well via their letters and would be able to weather the societal storms that came his way.

Using J.M.'s life as inspiration, this script was developed to highlight the importance of fathers communicating with their sons. I know from my own experience that this is greatly lacking in today's society. Having said that, I also know that this story can apply to mothers, daughters, and all other loved ones. BIBI is written from a Latino point of view but is universal in its message. BIBI is a movie of acceptance, hope, and forgiveness. And while this film begins with the news of death and loss, it's the belief in rebirth that I want audiences to leave with.



A handwritten signature in white ink, likely the director's name, positioned at the bottom left of the page.



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Victor M. Dueñas

Director

Victor is a Mexican-American director, writer, and producer based in Los Angeles. He attended Pomona College where he studied media and acting. Upon graduation, he continued his studies at Los Angeles Community College where he completed the school's well regarded film program. A few years later, he entered the educational world working as an elementary school teacher. After teaching for almost a decade, Victor had the great fortune of joining the writing team of the Emmy-nominated series "East Los High" as a Development Assistant. He used his experience as an educator to entertain audiences and give authenticity to the show's storylines. Victor has been part of GLAAD's screenwriting program, a fellow of the National Hispanic Media Coalition's TV Writers Program sponsored by ABC and NBC, and won a highly-coveted spot in Ron Howard and Brian Grazer's inaugural Imagine Impact Program. In 2019, he was selected as a Disney ABC Writing Program Finalist.

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A close-up portrait of actor J.M. Longoria, smiling slightly, wearing a light-colored striped shirt. The background is dark and out of focus.

J.M. Longoria
as Ben Solis

J.M. is an Imagen Award-nominated actor, writer, and producer known for his supporting role in the successful Sony Pictures feature film “Miracles From Heaven”, starring Jennifer Garner, Queen Latifah, Eugenio Derbez and directed by Patricia Riggen. He is also recognized for his leading role as Enrique Salazar in the award-winning telenovela web series, “Sin Vergüenza”. Some of J.M.’s other notable credits include co-starring roles in the ABC shows “The Fix”, “General Hospital”, “The Real O’Neals”, “Don’t Trust The B— in Apartment 23”, and in the FOX sitcom, “Mulaney”. As a producer, he has worked on various international projects including “Bushido Battleground”, a mixed martial arts docu-series, which premiered in 2017 on Robert Rodriguez’s El Rey Network.


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Omar Leyva
as Ernesto Solis

Omar is a bilingual Mexican American actor based in Los Angeles. He was born in Mexico City and was raised by his grandmother in a small village in the state of Puebla until moving to Los Angeles at the age of 8. He discovered poetry as a teen and then acting during his last years at Santa Monica High School. Omar would later pay his dues in college and community stages while taking on roles like Shakespeare's "Othello", various musical theater parts, and bilingual plays. In 2006, he began his professional acting career and has appeared on shows like "Ray Donovan", "Community", "The Mentalist", "Hart of Dixie", "Criminal Minds", "24", "Entourage", "Heroes", "CSI", "Grey's Anatomy" and many more. Some of Omar's film credits include "McFarland USA", "Mosquita Y Mari", "Go For Sisters", "Weather Girl", "Illegal", "Beverly Hills Chihuahua" and most recently HBO's "Icebox".

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Academy Award Nominee

Adriana Barraza
as Licha Mendoza

Adriana is a Mexican actress, acting teacher, and director. In 1999, director Alejandro González Iñárritu cast her as the mother of Gael García Bernal's character in "Amores Perros", which was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. She has also been nominated for a Golden Globe, two Screen Actors Guild Awards, a Broadcast Film Critics Association and an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress for "Babel" (also directed by Iñárritu). She is a veteran actress of Televisa telenovelas. Adriana is the third Mexican actress to be nominated for an Academy Award. Most recently, she has starred in the films "Dora the Lost City of Gold", "Rambo V: Last Blood", and "Coyote Lake". She was also cast as the lead in Showtime's "Penny Dreadful: City of Angels".

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Additional Cast



Jake Ferree

as Steve Hill

- "True Detective" (TV Series)
- "Murder Book" (TV Series Documentary)
- "They're Inside" (Feature Film)



Introducing

Cash Kingston Herrera
as Young Ben



Introducing

Diego Barrajas
as Teen Ben



Nelson Estevez

as Ariel Saenz

- "Acrimony" (Feature Film)
- "Too Close to Home" (TV Series)
- "Slated" (TV Series)



Introducing

Paul Martin
as Jorge

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Edward Enriquez-Cohen

Producer/Executive Producer



Edward is a Producer/Publicist/Actor and CEO of his own production and publicity company, Olive Productions and Publicity. He co-produced the feature film "50 Pills" which starred Michael Peña, Jane Lynch, and Kristen Bell. His body of work also consists of ten short films including "Suripanta" which was nominated for an Imagen Award for Best Short Film in 2008. Additionally, he produced "Take My Wife" which screened at the Cannes Film Festival and "Existes" which was featured at the Berlin International Film Festival, the Toronto Film Festival, and the Palm Springs Shorts International Film Festival. As a publicist, Edward represents high-profile actors, directors, musicians, and public figures. Among his clients are famed Mexican director Patricia Riggen ("La Misma Luna", "Miracles from Heaven", "The 33"), Rob Schneider and his producing partner and wife Patricia Maya ("Real Rob"), Imagen Award nominated actor J.M. Longoria ("Sin Vergüenza", "Miracles from Heaven"), civil rights pioneer Dolores Huerta, and ten time Latin Grammy Award winning producer and composer Julio Reyes Copello.

Vanessa Perez

Producer

Vanessa began her career working in Talent Management at ICM. After leaving ICM, her goal was to create multicultural content that resonated globally. She found this at CANANA Films (Pablo Cruz, Diego Luna and Gael Garcia Bernal). Vanessa was the executive in charge of production on "Miss Bala", that made waves at the Cannes Film Festival. "Miss Bala" was the first CANANA production picked up for distribution in the U.S. through Fox International Productions. After "Miss Bala", Vanessa executive produced "Paraiso" which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2014 and had financial success throughout Mexico. Vanessa was also an Associate Producer on the feature film "Cesar Chavez" starring Michael Peña, America Ferrera and Rosario Dawson and she executive produced "Back Home" for Fusion Network, a joint venture between ABC and UNIVISION. Through her work, Vanessa has been able to offering audiences thought provoking multicultural stories.



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Mónica Ramírez

Executive Producer

Mónica Ramírez is a long-time advocate, organizer, social entrepreneur and attorney fighting to eliminate gender-based violence and secure gender equity. For over two decades, she has fought for the civil and human rights of women, children, workers, Latinos/as and immigrants. In 2003, Mónica created the first legal project in the United States dedicated to addressing gender discrimination against farmworker women, which she scaled to create Esperanza: The Immigrant Women's Legal Initiative of the Southern Poverty Law Center. She has founded and co-founded several other major initiatives, including Justice for Migrant Women, the Latina Impact Fund, ReflectUS and Alianza Nacional de Campesinas. Mónica wrote the letter on behalf of Alianza that was published in TIME magazine from farmworker women to women in the entertainment industry that sparked the creation of the TIME'S UP movement. Mónica has received numerous awards for her leadership, including Harvard Kennedy School's first Gender Equity Changemaker Award, Feminist Majority's Global Women's Rights Award, the Smithsonian's Ingenuity Award and Forbes Mexico named her among the 100 Most Powerful Women in 2018.



Southern Poverty Law Center

Executive Producer

Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) is an American nonprofit legal advocacy organization specializing in civil rights and public interest litigation. Based in Montgomery, Alabama, it is known for its successful legal cases against white supremacist groups, its classification of hate groups and other extremist organizations, and for promoting tolerance education programs. Their "Teaching Tolerance" program produces and distributes – free of charge – anti-bias short films, books, lesson plans and other materials that reduce prejudice and promote educational equity in our nation's schools. BIBI will be distributed to over 500,000 educators across America as part of SPLC's "Teaching Tolerance" Program in 2020. In addition, they will create curriculum around BIBI for middle school and high school students and their parents. SPLC has also won Academy Awards for the documentaries "A Time for Justice" and "Mighty Times: The Children's March".

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Carmen Cabana
Director of Photography

Carmen is a cinematographer of Afro-Hispanic descent. Her years of experience and ability to visually capture the emotions of any story, has catapulted her towards the top choices for female cinematographers among filmmakers. She has shot over 20 features around the world, with many name talents and screenings at many renowned festivals. Carmen was listed in the magazine American Cinematographer under the Rising Stars of Cinematography article (February 2017 issue) and was also listed in Variety's 2016 Below the Line report "Up Next" as one of the most promising filmmakers. Carmen is a Film Independent Project Involve Fellow (2010), A Sundance Director's Lab Crew Participant (2008) and a member of the Friends of the ASC educational program. She is fresh off a DP seat on Starz TV show "Vida" and Netflix's show "Narcos Season 2".



David Murillo R.
Composer

David has contributed to more than 50 productions with artists and film-makers all around the globe. His love for music integrated within picture has allowed him to work with a diverse portfolio of collaborators. These short films, documentaries, and features have been developed in the U.S., the U.K., Egypt, Iran, Peru, Puerto Rico, and Colombia. David's recent projects include feature film "Between Sea and Land" (Multi-Award Winning Film at Sundance), T.V. show "Y Donde Es El Partido", documentary "Nefertiti's Daughters" (Multi-Award Winning Documentary including International Festivals), short film "Prime Contact" (Multi-Award Winning Film in the U.K.), and short documentary "Beneath Paradise" (Multi-Award Winning Documentary in the U.S.).



David Rodriguez Estrada
Editor

David is a filmmaker based in Los Angeles, CA. He attended film school at the Art Institute of Los Angeles. His 2 award-winning student short films "¿Existes?" and "Suripanta" have screened in prestigious film festivals including Berlin, Toronto, Palm Spings, Brazil, Mexico City, San Francisco, to name a few. After film school, David began a six year relationship with director Patricia Rigger ("Under the Same Moon") as her personal assistant. He worked on productions like "The 33" (Phoenix Pictures) and "Miracles from Heaven" (Sony Pictures). "Metástasis", David's third short film, premiered at the 5th Mexican Film Festival of Durango and was presented at the Cannes Short Film Corner. David is currently developing a TV series entitled "Trimmigrants".

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Company Credits

Directed by:
Victor M. Dueñas

Written by:
J.M. Longoria & Victor M. Dueñas

Produced by:
Edward Enriquez-Cohen, Vanessa Perez,
Victor M. Dueñas, and J.M. Longoria

Executive Producers:
Maureen Costello, Hoyt J. Phillips III,
and Seth Levi

Director of Photography:
Carmen Cabana

Edited by:
David Rodríguez Estrada

Original Music by:
David Murillo R.

Casting by:
Blanca Valdez

Production Designer:
Luie P. García

Costume Designer:
Jen Martin

Unit Production Manager:
Sirach Fortuna

First Assistant Director:
Star Victoria

Second Assistant Director:
Robert Eubanks

Production Coordinator:
Phoebe Stanton

Script Supervisors:
Gabriela Gomez and Ana Lorenz

Cast:
J.M. Longoria, Omar Leyva, Adriana Barraza,
Jake Ferree, Nelson Estevez, Cash Kingston Herrera,
Diego Barrajas, Paul Martin, Reko Moreno,
Xavier Mason Gandarilla, and Ariana Sanchez

First Assistant Camera:
Michael Chomieniec

Second Assistant Camera:
Wes Shafer

Gaffers:
Jeff Chassler and Dylan Melly

Swings:
David Duet, Daniel Short, and Tate Steinberg

BTS Photography:
David Rodríguez Estrada

Sound Mixers:
Adam D. Sperry, C.A.S., and Tyler Hutcherson

Makeup and Hair:
Iván R. Figueroa

Art Coordinator:
Diego Garcia

Set Dresser:
Eduardo Iván Muñoz

Post Production Services by:
MTI Film

Post Production Online Editor:
Kyle Gleisner

Post Production Producer:
Antoinette Perez

Post Production Colorists
Alex Chernoff, and Carmen Cabana

Audio Post Services Provided by:
Juniper Post Inc.

Sound Supervisor:
David Kitchens, M.P.S.E.

Supervising Sound Editor:
Ben Zarai

Sound Editor:
Buck Snow

Re-recording Mixer:
Buck Snow



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Film Festivals



STXIFF RGV AWARDS
BEST SHORT FILM
BEST DIRECTOR
BEST ACTOR

Bibi



Social Media



@bibishortfilm



@bibishortfilm

Press

“Barraza and Longoria Star in a Short Film About Inclusion”
Associated Press (Spanish Article)

“The Power of BIBI and RAMBO”
El Universal - Mexico’s Largest Newspaper (Spanish Article)

“BIBI Inspiring Short World Premiere, L.A. Shorts Intl Film”
Latin Heat Entertainment (English Article)

“Academy Award Nominee Adriana Barraza Discusses BIBI”
Ventaneando (Spanish Interview)

“BIBI Based on Jose Longoria’s Life”
Telemundo 40 (Spanish Interview)

Contact

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