



DOCUMENTARY FILM \* HD \* DOLBY 5.1 \* 70 MINUTES \* CUBA \* 2017  
COPRODUCTION \* CUBA, ANGOLA AND BRAZIL

What seemed to be a return trip to my country at a time of changes, ends as a trip into myself between contradictions and questionings about my identity as a Cuban.



(THE LAST COUNTRY)

# EL ÚLTIMO PAÍS

**Writer and Director**  
Gretel Marín

**Executive Producers**  
Gretel Marín Palacio  
Jorge Cohen  
Belém de Oliveira

**Director of Photography**  
Charles Alexander Ucha Juncal

**Editor**  
Gretel Marín Palacio

**Original Soundtrack**  
Rogério Sobreira

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## THE STORY

One day I came back to Cuba after some time, bringing questions latent inside me. **Where is my Island going to? What has really changed?** At home, in the streets, with my friends, I go deep into questioning myself about a country's hope, a country that has stopped being what it was. I also expect to find a space for me in this place. But changes in the Island are no more than appearances, a pretext to wait. **Everything moves imperceptibly.**

I start looking into myself, wondering how I came here, especially in a moment when we stop asking questions to ourselves. I need to start thinking again about the patriotism I was taught, about what is left of it. **The dialogue becomes a generational issue, between my grandparents, my parents, me and the people from my generation. There is an understanding in the final farewell, a need for reconciliation with the beloved homeland.** The one that is found beyond any physical territory, or political situation.

## TRAVELLING TO MY ISLAND

*El Último País* is a cathartic film.

Leaving outside Cuba didn't seem to be dramatic until I started to understand that the country was about to change and that I wouldn't be there to see it. I knew we needed to open to the world, to renovate, but **I was afraid that the best traits of a system full of contradictions and utopian ideas would also disappear with this renovation.** I wanted to film that change, I wanted to find Cubans, talk to them, and be one of them again. Things are seen in a different way from outside; you have the opportunity to look at them from different points of view. **But coming back to Cuba worried about the changes, instead of making me feel part of the Island's social life, made me feel more distant, more unfamiliar.**

Why should I become interested about things not even Cubans question? Why questioning precisely about this passiveness with which we learnt to wait for others decide for ourselves? Why feeling absurd when worried about my country?

**I had to go beyond and start questioning myself.** It was a painful journey, with few answers. My grandfather wanted me to return to Cuba. **But how could I face the frustration of a whole generation, the feeling of being isolated from the rest of the world?** During that trip I found out that belonging somewhere, beyond any national feeling learnt at school, means to reconcile myself to the Island, to the people, to me.

*El Último País, even from melancholy, is a love song to my land.*

## A FILM TOLD IN FIRST PERSON

I wanted to talk about Cuban identity through my personal story. *El Último País* is a very private film. That's why, I decided to film in a subjective way, without the use of a tripod and with a hand-held camera, filming the immediacy almost all the time, as if it were a homemade film. **It's a film looking for something constantly, a film that discovers. It travels.** From the distant glance of almost a tourist, and at the same time, with all the affection from someone who feels nostalgic about their country.

**I decided to stop in order to observe and question everything that I already knew, sharing my thoughts and my deductions about the filmed images.** People who appear in the images are part of my journey, including both, those who I meet in the streets and those who are close to me. They help me to continue, they sometimes clear things up for me, but most of the time they increase my doubts. **From one person to another, I end up finding myself, in the observation of a reality that disturbs me.**

## THE DIRECTOR

Graduated in Film Making at the Higher Institute of Arts in Havana and with a Master's Degree in Documentary Film Making II at Paris Diderot VII University, I chose the documentary film as a means of expression because it allows me to observe deeply, to deconstruct realities. During the production stage of *El Último País*, I was inspired by films such as *Metal and Melancholy* by Heddy Honigmann, *Juventude em marcha* by Pedro Costa, *Face Value* by Johan van der Keuken and the documentaries by Eduardo Coutinho.

production



postproduction



grants



support



Visual Thinker: Sophia Pinheiro

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production

GERAÇÃO  
80



postproduction



grants



support



# EL ÚLTIMO PAÍS (O Último País)

Documentário \* 70 minutos \* Cuba \* 2017  
Co-produção Cuba, Brasil, Angola



*O que parecia ser uma viagem de regresso ao meu país num momento de mudanças, acaba por ser uma viagem de caminho a mim própria, entre contradições e questionamentos sobre a minha identidade como cubana.*

## A História

Volto a Cuba depois de algum tempo fora, trazendo perguntas latentes dentro de mim: para onde vai a minha Ilha? O que é que realmente mudou? Em casa, nas ruas, com os meus amigos, questiono-me profundamente sobre a esperança de um país que deixou de ser o que era. Pelo caminho espero encontrar nele um espaço para mim, mas as mudanças na Ilha não são mais do que aparentes pretextos para aguardar. Tudo se move imperceptivelmente.

Começo a olhar cada vez mais para mim própria, perguntando-me como cheguei até aqui - a um momento em que deixamos de nos questionar. Preciso voltar a pensar no patriotismo que me foi ensinado, sobre o que resta dele. O diálogo resultante torna-se uma questão geracional: entre mim e os meus avós, os meus pais e as pessoas da minha idade.

Há, na despedida final, um entendimento mútuo, uma reconciliação necessária com a pátria amada - aquela que é encontrada para além de qualquer território físico, de qualquer conjuntura política.

## Uma Viagem até à Minha Ilha

*O Último País* é um filme-catarse.

Viver longe de Cuba não me parecia dramático até começar a entender que o país iria mudar e que não estaria lá para o testemunhar. Sabia que precisávamos de nos abrir ao mundo e de nos renovar, mas temia que com essa renovação também desaparecesse o melhor de um sistema cheio de contradições e utopias. Queria filmar essa mudança, queria encontrar-me com cubanos, conversar com eles, voltar a pertencer. De fora as coisas vêem-se de outra maneira, a partir de outros pontos de vista. Mas voltar a Cuba preocupada com as mudanças fez-me sentir mais distante e estranha, ao invés de restituir o sentimento de pertença.

Porquê que me interessam coisas que não interessam à maioria dos cubanos? Porquê questionar precisamente essa passividade com que aprendemos a esperar que decidam por nós? Porquê que me sentia cada vez mais ridícula quanto mais preocupada ficava com o futuro do meu próprio país?

Precisava ir mais além. Precisava de me questionar a mim mesma. Foi uma viagem dolorosa e sem muitas respostas. O meu avô queria que voltasse para Cuba. Mas como ultrapassar a frustração de toda uma geração que sente que vive desligada do resto do mundo? Durante essa viagem descobri que o sentimento de pertença - além do aspecto nacionalista aprendido na escola - significava fazer as pazes com a minha Ilha, com as pessoas que lá vivem. E finalmente reconciliar-me comigo mesma.

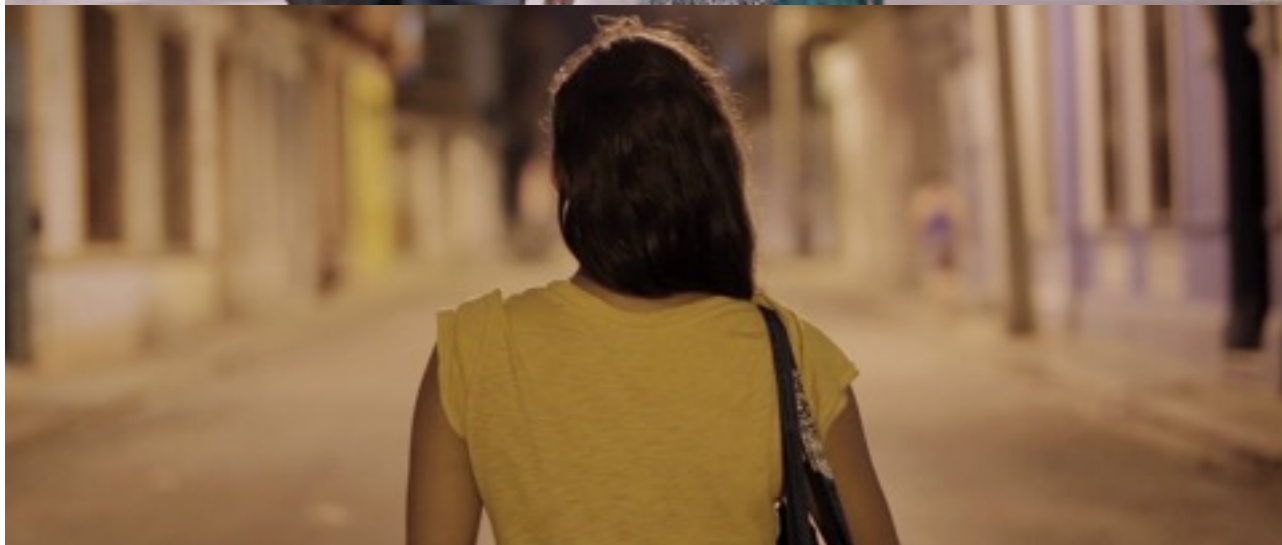
*O Último País*, mesmo assente em melancolia, é um canto de amor pela minha terra.

## Um filme contado na primeira pessoa

*O Último País* é um filme muito íntimo. Queria abordar a questão da identidade cubana através da minha própria história pessoal. Por isso mesmo escolhi filmar de maneira "subjectiva", com câmara na mão, sem tripé, e captando o imediato - como se de um filme caseiro se tratasse. Trata-se de um documentário que

procura constantemente e que descobre. Viaja. A partir do olhar distante de uma “quase-turista” e, ao mesmo tempo, com todo o carinho de alguém que sente saudades do seu país.

Decidi observar e questionar aquilo que conhecia, acompanhando as imagens com o meu pensamento e as minhas deduções sobre aquilo que via. As pessoas que aparecem no documentário - das que encontro pelas ruas até às que me são mais íntimas - fazem parte da minha viagem. Elas ajudam-me a avançar, esclarecem-me dúvidas algumas vezes, mas quase sempre as aumentam. De pessoa em pessoa, termino por me encontrar a mim própria, na observação de uma realidade que me inquieta.



### A Realizadora

Licenciada em Realização de Cinema do Instituto Superior de Arte de Havana e com um Mestrado em Realização de Documentários da Universidade Paris VII Diderot, Gretel Marin escolhe o documentário como meio de expressão, por este lhe permitir a observação e desconstrução profunda de realidades.

Durante a realização de *O Último País* serviram de inspiração filmes como *Metal* y *Melancolía* de Heddy Honigmann, *Juventude Em Marcha* de Pedro Costa, *Face Value* de Johan van der Keuken e os documentários de Eduardo Coutinho.



**GUIÃO E REALIZAÇÃO**

Gretel Marín

**PRODUÇÃO EXECUTIVA**

Gretel Marín Palacio

Jorge Cohen

Belém de Oliveira

**DIRECÇÃO DE FOTOGRAFIA**

Charles Alexander Ucha Juncal

**MONTAGEM**

Gretel Marín Palacio

**MÚSICA ORIGINAL**

Rogério Sobreira

**DESENHO SONORO**

Belém de Oliveira

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