



THE COLORS OF THE MOUNTAIN

A film by Carlos César Arbeláez

"Moving, funny, poignant and insightful... a powerful debut!"
- Mark Adams, *Screen International*

**"Breathtakingly scenic... nimbly captures the pleasures and pains of
childhood bonds." – Neil Young, *The Hollywood Reporter***



**Colombia | 2010 | Drama - Family | In Spanish with English Subtitles |
88 min. | 1:1.85 | Dolby Digital**

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FESTIVALS AND AWARDS

WINNER New Directors Award SAN SEBASTIAN Int'l Film Festival

OFFICIAL SELECTION

Rome Int'l Film Festival

Stockholm Int'l Film Festival

The Ronda Int'l Film Festival, Malaga, Spain

SYNOPSIS

A modern-day portrayal of daily life in a remote part of the mountainous Colombian countryside, set around the friendship between Manuel and Julián. One day, while playing a game of football, they kick the ball into a minefield. Accompanied by Poca Luz, they do everything they can to recover their prized belonging, an essential part of their everyday lives and dreams.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The Colors of the Mountain began as a small idea, almost like an image: a country boy who wanted to know what was behind a mountain... As we worked on the many versions of the screenplay, and because of the almost documentary tone in which this story is narrated, the difficult reality of present-day Columbia gradually became part of the story.

Nonetheless, I didn't direct a film that claims to explain the complex Colombian armed conflict or the political reality of my country. I focused, above all, on the drama of the civilian population. The film is more human and, in a way, destined for a more universal audience. In *The Colors of the Mountain*, it doesn't really matter what one armed group or another does in the "La Pradera" district, as the focus is on the secret psychological drama that the main characters undergo.

I chose the point of view of the children because it gives me an opportunity to create a sharp contrast with the irrational and absurd world of the grown-ups. This contrast allowed me to leave a lot of the violence "out of frame", and suggest it, for example, through sound, through silence, which is undoubtedly more effective than showing it in an explicit manner.

The film was shot in the province of Antioquia, located in the Andean area of Columbia. There, the mountains - green and huge - have shaped the culture of the region. It could be said that, in a way, *The Colors of the Mountain* is a reflection of the violent Colombian reality, from the emotion, from the perspective of childhood. The soccer ball on the minefield - a leitmotif

throughout the film - is a symbol of our harsh and absurd reality and, at the same time, carries universal resonance.

Yet, it's also true that no matter how tragic the reality of the children, they're always ready to defend games and laughter as fundamental parts of their lives. Childhood is, without a doubt, the time of friendship, the age when one truly makes friends. A game of soccer is all it takes to make at least dozen new ones! The theme of childhood is recurrent in cinema, whose celluloid is able to come back every now and then, perhaps with the intention of renewing our gazes, as a kind of starting over or, if you will, as a need to be able to believe again.

This movie has influences of Iranian cinema. It's true, as Truffaut says, that children almost automatically bring about poetry, and Iranian cinema is full of poetry, as it always uses simple and direct language. It also has influences of other films and other directors: *Goodbye, Children* by Louis Malle, *Simón el Mago* by Columbian director Victor Gaviria.

We made minimal artistic intervention to the natural settings of the Municipality of Jardín (Antioquia), which we chose as our location. For the casting – which took over two years – we chose natural or non-professional actors, mostly from the region, because we wanted to emphasize the feeling of reality as our aesthetic proposal. Although the landscape is very important to this story, we didn't want to make a "landscape" movie full of colors and beautiful photographic "frames". We gradually "dimmed" the colors of the mountain towards the end of the film, like the existence of these small lives. I doubt that a movie is able to carry out a social function, in the sense of being able to significantly change the reality of a society, of a community, or of a country. But, as the filmmaker Wim Wenders says, cinema should try, time and time again, "to be useful to man".

BIOGRAPHIES & FILMOGRAPHIES

CARLOS CÉSAR ARBELAEZ
Director

Carlos César Arbeláez is a director from Antioquia (a State of Colombia). He holds a degree from the Communications Faculty of the University of Antioquia, has studied script-writing, drama and the history of cinema at the International School of Cinema at San Antonio de los Baños (Cuba) and at the ENERC (the National School of Cinematic Experimentation and Production) in Argentina.

Arbeláez has directed more than a dozen documentaries for television including three documentaries for the series *Good Boys* which won an India Catalina prize for Best Documentary Series for Television at the International Festival of Film and Television in Cartagena; *Deep Black – Miner's Stories* which gained a mention of honor at the International Film Festival in Bogotá; and *How to Get to Heaven* which gained a mention of honor from the competition "Para Verte Mejor", organized by Comfenalco - Antioquia. His first storyline short, *Ice Age*, came second for the *Sky Television* National Cinema Prize at the Cinema and Television Festival at Cartagena in 2000 and was shown on this channel throughout Latin America. In 2005 he won the prize "Ciudad de Medellín" (Medellín City) for Best Unpublished Storyline Script.

His second short, *The Serendade*, won the competition organized by the Culture Ministry's Cinema Development Fund in 2005. In 2007 he won a scholarship from City of Medellín to develop *The Eyes of the Dove* fiction feature film.

The Colors of the Mountain is his first feature film.

CREDITS

CREW

Director	CARLOS CÉSAR ARBELÁEZ
Screenwriter	CARLOS CÉSAR ARBELÁEZ
Producer	JUAN PABLO TAMAYO
Executive Producer	JULIÁN GIRALDO
Editing	FELIPE ALJURE / ANDRÉS DURÁN
Assistant Director	BIVIANA MÁRQUEZ
Script Supervisor	VIVIANA ARTEAGA
Casting Director	CARLOS CÉSAR ARBELÁEZ / JUAN PABLO TAMAYO
Line Producer	JUAN PABLO TAMAYO
Art Direction	GONZALO MARTÍNEZ
Costume Designer	MARÍA ADELAIDA OLARTE
Make-Up Supervisor	JORGE BETANCUR
Photography	OSCAR JIMÉNEZ
Camera	OSCAR JIMÉNEZ
Focus Puller	HUVER GONZÁLEZ / ANDRÉS GUZMÁN
Composer	CAMILO MONTILLA
Sound Designer	CAMILO MONTILLA
Sound Recorder	YESID VÁSQUEZ

CAST

Manuel	HERNÁN OCAMPO
Poca Luz	GENARO ARISTIZÁBAL
Julián	NOLBERTO SANCHEZ