

Gris

IN EVERY SHADE, SHE EXISTS

A FILM BY
LOREN ESCANDÓN



LATINO FILM INSTITUTE PRESENTS

AN OKAN STORIES AND CINEMAZUL MEDIA GROUP PRODUCTION

CASTING BY MARGARITA ARBOLEDA DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY MAURICIO VIDAL (ADFC) MUSIC BY SEBASTIÁN ZULETA EDITED BY MAURICIO VERGARA HURTADO ANIMATION BY PIRAGNA ANIMACIÓN

EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY THE LATINO FILM INSTITUTE ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS MARGARITA ARBOLEDA & JOSE E. ARBOLEDA PRODUCED BY JORGE VELA WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY LOREN ESCANDÓN





GRIS

FILM DETAILS

Runtime: 15:00 min

Genre: Drama. Live
action/Animation

Country: Colombia / USA

Language: Spanish

Subtitles: English

Aspect Ratio: 16:9

Camera: Arri Alexa

Color: Color

PRODUCTION

Okan Stories

Cinemazul Media Group

Latino Film Institute

Supported by Netflix

CONTACT

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FESTIVAL JOURNEY

WORLD PREMIERE



Bogotá Short Film Festival / BOGOSHORTS
Bogota, Colombia

OFFICIAL SELECTIONS



Alternativa Film Festival,
Medellin, Colombia



Cleveland International Film Festival
Cleveland, USA



Festival de Cine de Elche
Alicante, Spain



Drama International Short Film Festival
Greece

SPECIAL SCREENING



Los Angeles Latino International Film Festival
Los Angeles, USA

Festival selections current as of July 2026.

A close-up photograph of two young girls sitting at a desk in a classroom. The girl on the left has dark, curly hair with colorful barrettes and is looking down at a book. The girl on the right has light brown hair and is looking at the book with a focused expression. In the background, a banner with the word 'VALORES' is partially visible.

THE STORY

LOGLINE

Sofía's first week of school stirs unexpected questions about race, family, and belonging. As she struggles to define herself, her drawings spring to life, guiding her toward embracing every shade of who she is.

SYNOPSIS

Sofía's first week of school sparks unexpected questions about race, family, and belonging. As she searches for answers, her drawings come to life through hand-drawn animation, transforming ordinary moments into a vibrant inner world. Through imagination, love, and quiet acts of discovery, Sofía begins to understand that identity cannot be confined to a single label; it is something she embraces in all its shades.

FROM THE DIRECTOR



When I was in first grade, I came home with a note from my teacher asking my parents to explain race to me. Earlier that day, I had told a classmate that because my mother was Black and my father was white, I was gray. To me, it wasn't a political statement or an identity crisis; it was simply the logic of a child trying to understand the world.

I grew up in Colombia, where conversations about race are shaped by centuries of cultural mixing. Labels like *mestizo*, *mulato*, and *moreno* are part of everyday life, yet they rarely capture the complexity of how people see themselves. After moving to the United States, those same questions took on a different meaning. I was no longer described by the words I had grown up with, but by new categories that felt just as incomplete.

That lifelong negotiation with identity became the foundation of *GRIS*. Rather than telling the story through the perspective of an adult looking back, I wanted to return to the honesty of childhood, a time before we learn to explain ourselves through labels. Sofía's imagination became the emotional language of the film, allowing hand-drawn animation to express the questions she cannot yet put into words.

While *GRIS* explores race and belonging, it is ultimately a story about the freedom to define ourselves beyond others' expectations. My hope is that audiences recognize something of their own search for identity in Sofía's journey and leave reminded that the most honest parts of who we are often live in the shades in between.

THE FILMMAKERS



LOREN ESCANDÓN

Writer & Director

Loren Escandón is a Colombian writer, director, and actress based in Los Angeles whose work explores identity, resilience, and belonging through intimate, character-driven stories. A Film Independent Project Involve Directing Fellow, Berlinale Talents Guadalajara alumna, Tomorrow's Filmmakers Today Fellow, and recipient of the Latino Film Institute x Netflix Inclusion Fellowship, her films have screened internationally, including at the Cleveland International Film Festival, BOGOSHORTS, Alternativa Film Festival, Macabro, and Fantaspoa. Inspired by a childhood memory, GRIS reflects her commitment to telling stories that embrace the complexity of identity with honesty, imagination, and heart.



JORGE VELA

Producer

Jorge Vela is a Colombian producer and co-founder of Cinemazul Media Group, with extensive experience across fiction, animation, documentary, and transmedia projects. His productions have been supported by Colombia's leading public funds, including FDC, Crea Digital, and Mincultura, and have screened at festivals worldwide. Known for championing ambitious independent cinema, Jorge combines creative vision with strategic production expertise. On GRIS, he brought together an exceptional creative team, helping transform an intimate personal story into an internationally recognized short film.



MAURICIO VIDAL

Director of Photography

Mauricio Vidal is a Colombian cinematographer whose work has premiered at Cannes, Sundance, Toronto, Camerimage, and the Montreal World Film Festival. His credits include *Undertow*, *La Suprema*, *On Becoming a Guinea Fowl*, as well as international productions such as *Narcos*, *Jack Ryan*, and *Lost Children*. Known for his naturalistic visual style and emotionally grounded imagery, Mauricio brings an intimate and human perspective to *GRIS*, capturing Sofía's world with warmth, sensitivity, and authenticity. His ability to find extraordinary emotion within everyday moments makes him an ideal collaborator for stories rooted in quiet human experience.



CLAUDIA VICTORIA

Production Designer

Claudia Victoria is a Colombian visual artist and production designer whose work spans fine arts, education, and acclaimed Colombian cinema. Her credits include *Yo Soy Otro*, *Chocó*, *Saudó*, and *Que Viva la Música*, earning recognition for her ability to create visually rich and emotionally authentic worlds. Drawing from her background in painting and contemporary art, Claudia crafted the visual identity of *GRIS*, transforming everyday spaces into environments that reflect Sofía's imagination, curiosity, and emotional journey.



SEBASTIAN ZULETA

Composer

Sebastián Zuleta is an Emmy-nominated composer and music editor whose work spans film, television, and animation. A two-time MPSE Golden Reel Award recipient, he has contributed to acclaimed productions including *Encanto*, *Moana 2*, *Father of the Bride*, *Finch*, and *Wu-Tang: An American Saga*, collaborating with composers such as Hans Zimmer, Gustavo Santaolalla, Terence Blanchard, and Germaine Franco. For *GRIS*, Sebastián composed a score that mirrors Sofía's emotional journey, blending warmth, wonder, and quiet introspection to give voice to the world she cannot yet fully express.



MARGARITA ARBOLEDA

Casting Director

Margarita Arboleda is a Colombian playwright, director, producer, and casting director with more than twenty years of experience across theater and film. A two-time Idartes Playwriting Award recipient and an ERASMUS+ scholar at Freie Universität Berlin, she has a multidisciplinary career that has shaped acclaimed productions including *Perro Come Perro*, *Dr. Alemán*, and *Gospel*. Her deep understanding of character and performance has made her a trusted collaborator in actor-driven storytelling. On *GRIS*, Margarita assembled a cast whose honest, emotionally grounded performances bring authenticity and warmth to Sofía's journey.



PIRAGNA

Animation Studio

Piragna Animation is an award-winning Colombian animation studio specializing in handcrafted 2D animation, visual development, and original storytelling. Since 2009, the Bogotá-based studio has created acclaimed animated series, films, and digital content, including *Frailejón Ernesto Pérez*, *Chica Cartón*, and *Deidades*, while developing every stage of the creative process, from concept art and character design to animation and post-production. For *GRIS*, Piragna brought Sofía's imagination to life through expressive hand-drawn animation, seamlessly weaving fantasy into live action and transforming her inner world into an essential part of the film's emotional language.

THE CHARACTERS



JULIANNE MARIE
Sofia

Making her screen debut, Julianne Marie brings remarkable honesty and emotional depth to Sofía, capturing the curiosity, vulnerability, and imagination of a child discovering her place in the world. Her natural performance anchors the emotional heart of GRIS.



JOHANNA ROBLEDO
Myriam

Johanna Robledo is a Colombian actress, theater director, and educator with a distinguished career spanning stage and screen. A graduate and faculty member of Universidad del Valle, she has also directed award-winning theatrical productions. Her recent screen work includes *Del Otro Lado del Jardín*, *Noviembre*, and *Castro's Daughter*. In *GRIS*, Johanna brings quiet strength and emotional honesty to Myriam, portraying a mother whose love gives Sofía the freedom to discover herself.



NICOLAS CARDONA

Juan Pablo

With a natural and heartfelt performance, Nicolás Cardona portrays Juan Pablo, the classmate whose innocent curiosity unexpectedly transforms Sofía's understanding of herself.



HECTOR MEJIA

Lorenzo

Héctor “El Mono” Mejía is a Colombian actor recognized for his work in *Perro Come Perro*, *Escobar, el Patrón del Mal*, *Tres Caínes*, *Metástasis*, and *Pandillas*, *Guerra y Paz*. In *GRIS*, his nuanced performance captures a father who wants to support Sofía but lacks the language to guide her through questions his own generation was never taught to answer.



GABY CÁRDENAS

Nancy

Gaby Cárdenas is a Colombian actress and voice artist whose credits include *The Queen of Flow*, *Entre Sombras*, *I Am Frankelda*, and *Esperando a Gael*. In *GRIS*, she brings warmth and sensitivity to Nancy, a teacher who supports Sofía even as the situation catches her by surprise.





GRIS was filmed in Cali, Colombia, bringing together artists from across film, theater, music, and animation to tell a deeply personal story rooted in childhood memory. Created through the Latino Film Institute x Netflix Inclusion Fellowship, the film reflects a collaborative effort between Colombian and U.S.-based artists who shared a commitment to telling Sofía's story with honesty and care.

PRESS



VARIETY

[LFI announces 2025 LFI Inclusion Fellows and their films](#)
Gris by Loren Escandon



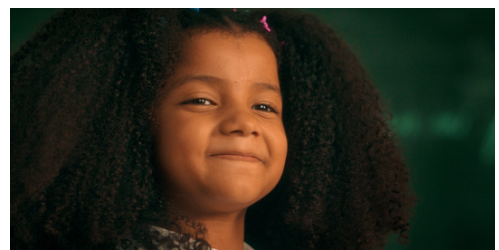
NETFLIX

[Latino Film Institute Fellowship Shorts Special Screening at the Egyptian Theatre](#)

EXPLORE



[Gris Trailer](#)



[Making of Gris!](#)



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