

# mis dos voces

una película de  
**LINA RODRIGUEZ**

with  
**ANA (GARAY) KOSTIC   CLAUDIA MONTOYA   MARINELA PIEDRAHITA**



# mis dos voceS

a film by **LINA RODRIGUEZ**

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68 minutes, Super 16mm on DCP, 1:66, color

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“ I exist. It is soft, so soft,  
so slow. And light: it seems  
as though it suspends in  
the air. It moves. ”

— Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea*

## Synopsis

A poetic reflection on the fluid nature of identity, *Mis dos voces* focuses on Ana, Claudia, and Marinela, three Latin American women who share their intimate experiences of immigrating to Canada while reflecting on themes of violence, belonging, motherhood, and reconciliation.

Weaving together carefully framed close-ups of hands and faces with contemplative images of private and public spaces against a richly layered soundscape, the film creates an impressionistic tapestry that resists a centralized perspective and echoes the protagonists' fragmented and hybrid identities.



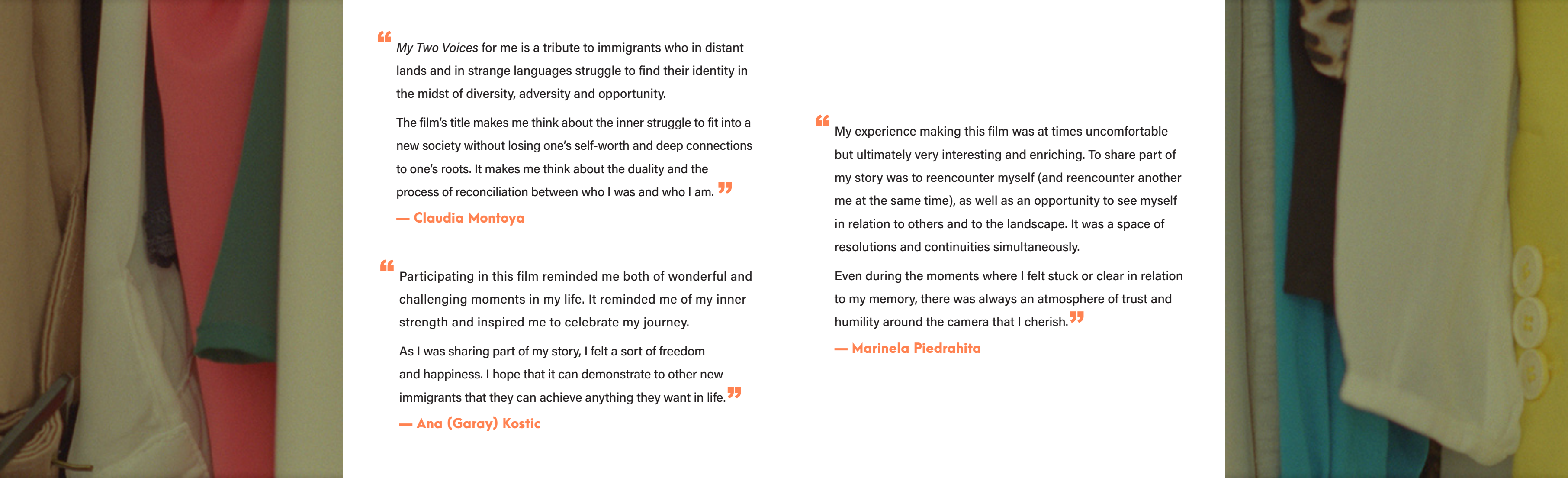


## Director's note

As I was trying to find ways to portray the complexities of these three incredibly inspiring women, it became clear that it was impossible to do so by defining them. It was then that I decided to focus on the very cadence of their voices, on their gestures, and on the objects, textures, and sounds of their everyday lives as a strategy to trace their respective biographies and journeys. Inspired by Trinh T. Minh-ha's invitation to "speak nearby" (instead of speaking about), I sought to work with a delicate touch, without grabbing, capturing, or enclosing.

By refusing to provide a clear correspondence between sounds and images, I built the film around an ongoing tension between what we see and what we hear, creating a sort of chorus that intentionally blurs the line between the different voices. I wanted to find a way to celebrate the coexistence of the multiple places, times, and identities that are part of our journeys as immigrants, always walking on shaky ground.





“ *My Two Voices* for me is a tribute to immigrants who in distant lands and in strange languages struggle to find their identity in the midst of diversity, adversity and opportunity.

The film's title makes me think about the inner struggle to fit into a new society without losing one's self-worth and deep connections to one's roots. It makes me think about the duality and the process of reconciliation between who I was and who I am. ”

— **Claudia Montoya**

“ Participating in this film reminded me both of wonderful and challenging moments in my life. It reminded me of my inner strength and inspired me to celebrate my journey.

As I was sharing part of my story, I felt a sort of freedom and happiness. I hope that it can demonstrate to other new immigrants that they can achieve anything they want in life. ”

— **Ana (Garay) Kostic**

“ My experience making this film was at times uncomfortable but ultimately very interesting and enriching. To share part of my story was to reencounter myself (and reencounter another me at the same time), as well as an opportunity to see myself in relation to others and to the landscape. It was a space of resolutions and continuities simultaneously.

Even during the moments where I felt stuck or clear in relation to my memory, there was always an atmosphere of trust and humility around the camera that I cherish. ”

— **Marinela Piedrahita**

## A conversation between writer-director Lina Rodriguez and writer-director Sofia Bohdanowicz

**I was very moved by the way the film explores the experience of immigration as a kind of leaving your essence behind. It focuses on women who've been forced to reconstruct their lives in a new place, and you were able to create portraits of their lives in an empowering and authentic way. Can you speak about how the film began, and your collaboration with the performers?**


I met the one and only Claudia Montoya in 2017 during a screening of my second feature, *Mañana a esta hora* (*This Time Tomorrow*), in Toronto. At the time, I was developing a new fiction film called *So Much Tenderness*, which follows the immigration journey of a Colombian environmental lawyer to Canada. Given Claudia's extensive experience as a settlement worker with the Latin American immigrant community in Toronto, I asked her if she would give me feedback on the script. She graciously agreed, and after meeting and chatting, I was so inspired by her incredible leadership that I wanted to make a film to celebrate her and the work she does. I approached her with the idea of making a film together, and asked her to introduce me to other

Latin American women whose immigration journeys she had supported. She put me in touch with Marinela and Ana. After several months of chatting with them, I decided to focus the film on all three women, and make it a triptych portrait. From this point on, I focused on developing connections with them, spending time with their families, sharing stories, and visiting their respective homes.

Given that we had spent time together before any images or sounds were recorded, I had an idea of their respective journeys and routines. But I didn't want to use this "knowledge" to define or categorize who they were. Instead, I wanted them to come across on their own terms, which is why I started developing an audiovisual approach whose guiding principle was to record sounds (both ambiances and conversations between me and each of them) and images (of them, their houses, their families) separately. After this, I worked closely with each of them to determine the locations and actions that best evoked the texture of their lives, as well as to determine what they were comfortable talking about during the recorded conversations. This was







an ongoing process that invited us all to be open and flexible, as things could change on any given day based on new information gathered, as well as their comfort level.

I'm deeply grateful for their generosity: not only did they first welcome me with open arms, but later on, when we started shooting, they trusted me and the team every step of the way with their stories.

**When I watched the film for the first time, I was so captivated by the opening sequence. The precise framing of the buildings and paintings gave me a sense of the challenges one can encounter when faced with a new language and culture—it almost made me feel like a newcomer. Can you speak about how you went about deciding how to articulate this experience on screen?**

Indeed, part of the formal strategy for the film was to constantly create a sense of disorientation in the viewer, making it challenging for them to locate themselves in relation to what they are seeing and hearing. This came from my refusal to enclose or define these three women, their histories and their experiences, but also from my desire to echo the very experience of immigration, which asks us to constantly find our bearings in a new environment and culture. I did this not only by deepening the distance between what we see and hear via the use of non-synch sound, but also through the very framing and composition of the images.

**Speaking about how you shoot, you've often used Pablo Picasso's quote, "I don't seek, I find," when speaking about your process. Can you tell me a bit more about how you went about capturing the film and collaborating with your cinematographer, Alejandro Coronado?**

*Mis dos voces* is the third feature film that Alex and I have worked on together (he also shot my first two features, *Señoritas* and *Mañana a esta hora*). In all of my films, I work toward creating an energy around the camera, which in turn invites all collaborators to be present and connect to the moment and to each other. Alex has an incredible sensibility: he feels the space and the people around the camera, and this connection can be felt in the images themselves.

Although we had a very precise visual approach for *Mis dos voces* (I knew I wanted to combine close-ups of gestures with long, contemplative takes and panning shots), when we were on set we had to make sure to remain open to changing our plans and welcoming new discoveries. Alex and I had an idea of the kinds of shots we wanted, but it was only when we got to each location and both responded to

the space that we found shots that were in tune with what was happening right then and there. I also worked closely with Ana, Claudia, and Marinela to choose the activities, props, wardrobe, and locations for each shot.

As you mentioned, the difference between seeking and finding has indeed been vital in my filmmaking process. I try to apply this approach in all of my films, be it fiction, documentary, or "experimental." To seek is to attempt to find something, to ask for something from someone. To find is to discover or perceive by chance or unexpectedly, to recognize or discover something to be present. Given that I approach filmmaking as a process of discovery, I need to surround myself with collaborators such as Alex, who are interested in working in this more process-driven manner.



**I was very moved by the experience of working with you and your producer and partner, Brad Deane. You keep your crew purposeful and minimal. You design an experience and encourage tender and authentic connection between everyone on the team. It's an intimate and loving approach. On some films, you even employ and collaborate with your parents. Can you speak a little bit about how you've built such a practice, and upon the concept of connection and family?**

For Brad and I, what a film is about is intrinsically connected to the way it is made, which is why it is very important for us to pay attention to every detail of production and make very conscious decisions about the kind of atmosphere we want to create for each film.

Given that not all films can be made the same, each film requires a different production model, which is why some of my films, like *So Much Tenderness*, have required slightly bigger crews, while others, like *Mis dos voces* or *Aquí y allá* (a short I made in collaboration with my father and mother), have been made with smaller teams. Brad is an incredible producer because he is very conscious about the scale and kind of film we're making, and makes sure that we have what we need. Regardless of the scale of the film, we firmly believe in



the importance of resisting industrial practices through mindful collaborations around the camera that emphasize respect and care, so that we can all learn from each other. We are extremely proud of the fantastic teams that have worked on our films; we know that the diversity of experiences and perspectives in front and behind the camera have nurtured both the process and the finished films themselves.

This approach has in turn inspired me to question the role of the director as "the know-it-all." I had resisted this conception since film school, and this has allowed me to approach filming as an encounter around the camera, as a way of engaging with the world in which myself and my collaborators can attend to the flux of our individual and collective experiences. This is why on all of our sets we work strategically to create space for the cast and crew to be able to be present, engage, and share something of themselves. It's a romantic idea of how to make a film, but one by which both Brad and I stand behind fully. There is no point in summoning a group of people to collaborate and share their present if there is no willingness and opportunity for them to take and leave something behind. To perform, to be, to occupy a space at a certain time is inevitably connected to the turbulence of emotions and experiences of the present, in front of and behind the camera.





For us, filmmaking is not about creating, inventing, or controlling. It's about connecting, weaving, listening, observing, sharing, and being present. It's a space of mentorship, generosity, and reciprocity.

**Watching your documentaries, I noticed that you take the time to collect layers of memories and images. In *Mis dos voces* you juxtapose this array of impressions and weave them together in what you've often described as a "tapestry." Can you speak about the editing process of *Mis dos voces*?**

As I mentioned, I intentionally wanted to record sounds and images separately to echo the impossibility of trying to fix the identities of Ana, Claudia, and Marinela. Following this idea of a tapestry, and drawing from feminist notions of the self as relational, Brad and I started the editing process by tackling the conversations and images separately.

As we started putting sequences of images together, we used either a location or an activity as the guiding principle, while when editing the conversations, we used some of the different themes as frameworks, which in turn started functioning as both narrative and aesthetic threads.

Once we had all of these pieces, we worked on finding ways of weaving them together, always remembering to stay away from using a sound or an image to literally explain or justify the presence of the other. We wanted them to work as parallel through-lines that expanded each other's potential while reflecting the fragmented nature of immigrant identity. While the performer's voices speak of a different time and space, sharing screen time with the images connects them together and creates a time and space in between... the sounds and images are simultaneously here and elsewhere.

**It was such a fascinating experience collaborating with you as your sound recordist. Can you speak about the role of sound in the film?**

I love on-location sound, and I felt really fortunate to be able to collaborate with you in this capacity, because I trust your instincts and intuition. As I've mentioned, my goal as a director is to carve space for my collaborators so they can build their own connections to the people and places in the film, and it was exciting to have you on set to be my ears and explore the atmosphere and texture of the locations through your perspective.



In terms of the sound design, I was thrilled to work with Roberta Einstein again (she also did the sound design for *Señoritas* and *Mañana a esta hora*). Roberta and I are interested in sound as a narrative and sensorial tool that can deepen the audiences' relationship to time, space, and character. This is why in *Mis dos voces* we used sound (the voices and the ambiances) as additional layers of "text" that run parallel to the images. Instead of providing the audience with a clear and identifiable set of sounds that would immediately "locate" them, we focused on creating an atmosphere, a rhythm, and a sensation using a mixture of "aural textures" sampled from the background sounds you recorded on each location, as well as the disembodied voices of Ana, Claudia, and Marinela talking about their respective journeys.

We decided to utilize synchronous and non-synchronous sound as organic elements to create a sense of place that sometimes feels familiar, and other times feels fragmented or strange, echoing an oscillation between feelings of settledness and dislocation.

**You've often spoken of your own experience as a Colombian-Canadian artist, and articulated that your existence floats in a liminal space between these two countries. Your films layer this complex identity quite cleverly, but also**

**speak to your own personal narrative of immigration. Can you speak about why it's important for you to articulate this intimate narrative through your work?**

I have lived in between Colombia and Canada for 20 years, and like many other immigrants I face the ongoing challenges of what feels like a life stranded. It is precisely because of this dislocated sense of self that I've been invested in exploring the idea of performance in my work, as well as reflecting on how we construct our identity, and how we perform this identity (in front of others, with others, for others, and for ourselves). This in-between geographical and emotional space has become a fertile territory for me to reflect cinematically on the processes of subjectivity and becoming, and the production of female identity as a site of political contestation.

It is of course not gratuitous that the title of the film, *Mis dos voces* (*My Two Voices*), includes me in it while pointing toward an articulation of identities that are simultaneously split and plural. This is my first film shot in Canada and the beginning of what seems to be a new chapter in my work: an opportunity to deal more directly with my own immigrant identity while continuing to reflect on the production of self as a process and the creation of a fluid network of identities through the interplay of memory, female embodiment, and agency. ■







## With

Ana (Garay) Kostic

Claudia Montoya

Marinela Piedrahita

## Crew

|   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Producer, writer, director .....              | Lina Rodriguez                       |
| Producer .....                                | Brad Deane                           |
| Director of Photography .....                 | Alejandro Coronado                   |
| Editors .....                                 | Lina Rodriguez, Brad Deane           |
| Sound Recordist .....                         | Sofía Bohdanowicz                    |
| Sound Designer .....                          | Roberta Ainstein                     |
| Production Designer .....                     | Lina Rodriguez                       |
| Camera assistants .....                       | Angela Saviñon, Felipe López Gómez   |
| Dialogue editing and re-recording mixer ..... | Lucas Meyer, El Cono del Silencio    |
| Re-recording mixer .....                      | Lucas Prokaziuk, Victory Social Club |
| Translation .....                             | Alvaro Girón                         |
| Designer .....                                | Craig Caron                          |
| Online editor .....                           | Mac Pepler                           |
| Processing & transfer .....                   | MELS                                 |
| 16mm film .....                               | Kodak                                |
| Theatrical imaging .....                      | Technicolor Toronto                  |

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## Lina Rodriguez

Lina Rodriguez is a Colombian/Canadian filmmaker. She has written, directed, and produced six short films and two features, which have been showcased in festivals and cultural venues including TIFF, Locarno, the Vancouver International Film Festival, NYFF, the Mar del Plata International Film Festival, the Harvard Film Archive, Birkbeck Institute for the Moving Image, Film at Lincoln Center and Tabakalera Centro Internacional de Cultura Contemporánea. She has had retrospectives of her work screened at Sala Leopoldo Lugones in Buenos Aires, Cineteca Madrid and Cinemateca de Bogotá.

Lina is currently in post-production for her fourth feature film, *So Much Tenderness*, which was shot in Toronto in May 2021. *Mis dos voces* is her third feature film.

## Filmography

- 2022 *Mis dos voces* (68')
- 2019 *Aquí y allá* (22')
- 2018 *ante mis ojos* (6')
- 2016 *Mañana a esta hora* (85')
- 2013 *Señoritas* (87')
- 2011 *Protocol* (1')
- 2010 *Einschnitte* (2'22")
- 2009 *Pont du Carrousel* (6')
- 2007 *Convergences et rencontres* (6')





**GRACIAS A  
ANA, CLAUDIA & MARINELA**