

CINEMATIC LUXE INDIE SHOWCASE

OFFICIAL PRESS FEATURE

“Yungay”

Best Animated Short Award Recipient

Directed by: Marisa Bedoya

Festival Edition: Winterfest '26

Award Recognition: Best Animated Short Award

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Feature Overview

Yungay delivers a grounded and emotionally conscious narrative shaped by personal history and cultural memory. Through animation, the film brings a real-world tragedy into focus, using perspective and atmosphere to guide the audience through a deeply human experience. Told through the eyes of a child, the story unfolds with clarity and intention, allowing its emotional and historical weight to emerge gradually. This approach creates a viewing experience that feels both intimate and reflective, offering insight into a moment that continues to resonate beyond its setting.

Cinematic Luxe Insight

Yungay finds its strength in the way it quietly brings its story to life through intention and craft. The animation never competes with the narrative it moves with it, shaping each moment with care, while the sound and pacing help carry the viewer through the experience without distraction.

Holding a Narrative Insights Score of 7.9/10, the film reflects a team that understands both the emotional and technical sides of storytelling. There's a clear sense of direction here,

along with the feeling that this is only the beginning of what this group is capable of creating.

Director Conversation

The following conversation is presented as part of Cinematic Luxe's official winners feature spotlight.

The Story & Inspiration

First off, congratulations on winning Best Animated Short. When you first began developing Yungay, what inspired you to tell this particular story?

Thank you very much. We are truly honored to receive this award and very happy about it.

In our case, I (Marisa Bedoya) wanted to tell the story of my father, who is a survivor of the Yungay tragedy. It is an event that deeply marked my family, and I believe it is something that not many people know about.

Over time, I also realized that this story needed to be told and remembered, because it is part of the history not only of the people of Yungay, but also of Peru.

Perspective & Character

The film centers on Mateo experiencing the world through a life-changing moment. What drew you to telling the story from a child's perspective?

Because my father was that age when the events happened, and it also allowed us to tell the story from a child's point of view. While Mateo is not directly my father, we did base the character on him and on his testimony in order to tell the story and his perspective of what he experienced at that moment.

Emotional Core

The relationship between Mateo and his dog adds a lot of heart to the story. How important was that bond in grounding the emotional side of the film?

It is quite important, since from the beginning we wanted the protagonist to have a character connected to him who could support him throughout the story. At the same

time, this character also offers another perspective on the story, since he can see the ancestors.

Visual Style

The animation style feels both retro and modern at the same time. What influences shaped the visual look of the film?

We were strongly influenced by the visual style of Cartoon Saloon, especially Wolfwalkers, particularly in the way we approached the earthquake sequences and the line work. At the same time, we also took into account the styles of other student short films when developing the visual aspect of the film.

Judge's Quote

“The judge praised the animation design, describing it as a compelling blend of retro inspiration and modern artistic choices. The color palette and drawing style created a distinct visual identity that gave the film its own personality.”

Research & Historical Context

The film introduces audiences to the 1970 earthquake in Peru. What was the research process like when bringing such a significant historical event into an animated narrative?

We carried out extensive research, starting with my father's testimony as our main point of reference, especially in how he remembered the streets, his house, and the different locations that appear in the short film.

From there, we consulted various sources such as books, videos, and other materials to better understand how to represent this event. In fact, we even contacted the cultural center of Yungay, who kindly provided us with the photographs that can be seen in the film's credits, which meant a lot to us.

Sound & Atmosphere

The sound design and production elements help immerse viewers in the world of the story. How did your team approach building that atmosphere?

As a team, we paid close attention to the details of Yungay's environment, aiming to make it as faithful as possible to the original city based on our research. There are many details within the backgrounds that are directly inspired by the real streets, thanks to a map my father created, where he pointed out specific locations and even the path he took to reach the cemetery on the day of the catastrophe.

As for the sound, it was the incredible work of the musicians Daniel Quesada, Jason Polychronakos and Ana Miriam Vázquez, and the foley artist Carlos Mansa. They did an excellent job bringing to life everything the team had envisioned. The musicians were students from Berklee's SFTV Master's program (Scoring for Film, Television, and Video Games), and they composed the music based on the characteristic musical style of the region. They even collaborated with external musicians who played traditional instruments such as the charango. To create the emotional ending and the credits, they recorded with the Budapest Art Orchestra, which gave the film a unique sound.

Featured Quote

"We wanted to bring attention to this event, which is not widely known outside of Peru, while also honoring the victims and the survivors."

Animation as a Tool

Animation often allows storytellers to explore emotional moments in unique ways. Were there any scenes where animation helped you communicate something that might have been harder to achieve in live action?

Yes, definitely. There are many scenes where animation helped us convey the emotion we were aiming for. Especially during the earthquake, we shift to a much more graphic style, with pencil-like strokes that emphasize the danger and movement of the moment.

The ending as well, with the appearance of the souls and ancestors, is something I can't imagine being portrayed in any other way.

Themes & Impact

Many viewers said the film sparked curiosity about the real history behind the story. What do you hope audiences take away after watching Yungay?

I'm really glad to hear that, as that was exactly our intention. We wanted to bring attention to this event, which is not widely known outside of Peru, while also honoring the victims and the survivors.

The Creative Team

Independent animation projects require a lot of collaboration. Can you share a bit about the creative team and how everyone contributed to bringing this film to life?

We are a team of five people: Lam Alonso, Ines Castellano, Ana M Puig, Alba Roca, and myself, Marisa Bedoya, who came together during our Master's in Animation at the Universitat Politcnica de Valncia (UPV). We organized ourselves to handle all the tasks the project required, with each person taking on roles that best suited their skills and strengths.

We also received a lot of support from our professors within the UPV Animation Master's program, who helped us shape the project, especially our tutors. In addition, we had collaborators who helped us complete the short film, and we are very grateful to them as well.

In terms of sound, the musicians did an excellent job with the soundtrack (which you can also listen to on Spotify!), conveying the atmosphere of the place and the emotions of each moment. The foley artist also played a key role in bringing out the feeling of the earthquake and the rest of the scenes. Thanks to him, we were also able to record the voice acting for Mateo in his studio, performed by Elena Rodrguez, who also did a wonderful job.

Looking Ahead

Now that Yungay has received the Best Animated Short Award, how does this recognition influence the kinds of stories you hope to tell next?

It is a great recognition, and we are deeply grateful for the award and the warm reception the short film has received.

It is difficult to say what will come next, but knowing that your audience has embraced the film with so much appreciation gives us even more motivation and excitement for our future projects.

Recognition

Yungay was awarded **Best Animated Short** at the **Cinematic Luxe Indie Showcase Winterfest '26**, recognized for its thoughtful storytelling, distinct visual identity, and ability to bring historical memory to life through animation.

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