



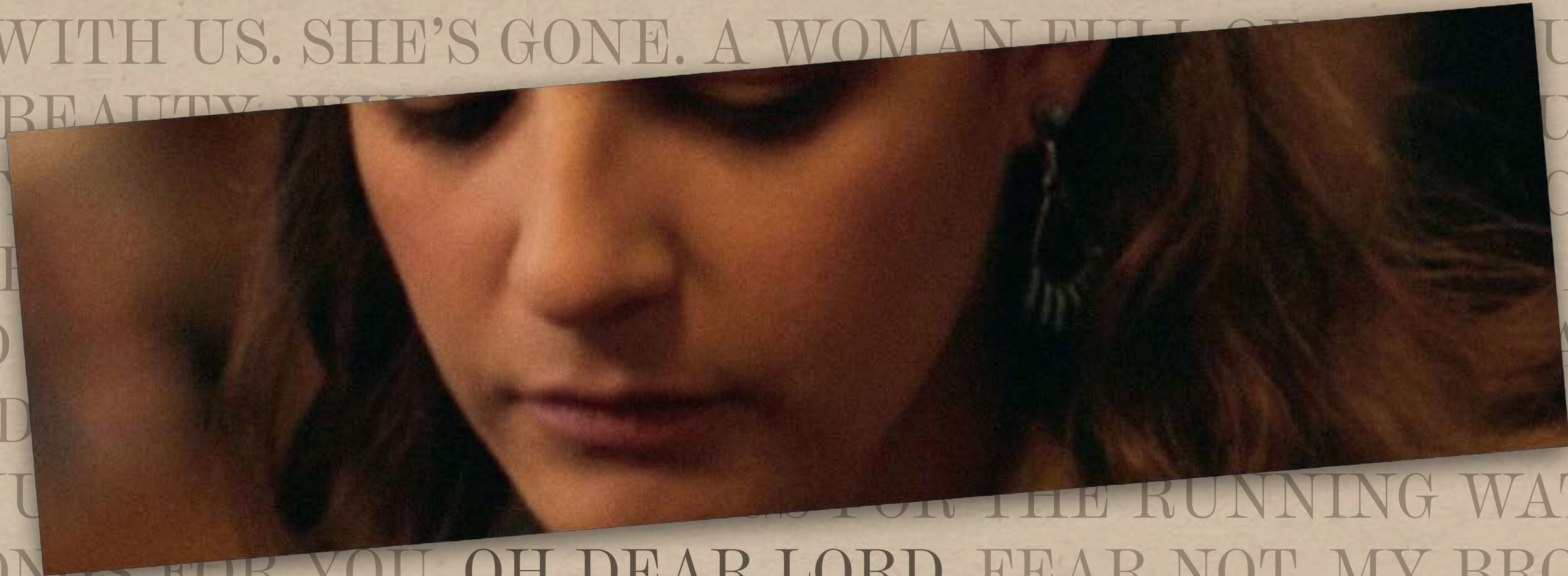
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A DECREM FILMS & DRIVEN EQUATION PRODUCTION

THE MOURNING OF

A film by MERCED ELIZONDO

I LOOK OUT BEFORE ME TODAY, AND I SEE A COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS AND FAMILY THAT DEEPLY LOVED ELENA GUTIERREZ. I ASK OF YOU TO BEND YOUR MINDS, BREAK YOUR HEARTS, WITH ME, WITH EACH OTHER FOR THE TRAGEDY OF WHY WE ARE HERE TODAY. ELENA IS NO LONGER WITH US. SHE'S GONE. A WOMAN FULL OF LOVE, FULL OF BEAUTY, BUT IT'S OKAY TO HAVE OTHERS HOLD EACH OTHER'S HANDS. A MERCIFUL GOD. AND AS WE ARE TOLD IN PSALMS 42, WE ARE TOLD TO HOLD THE FACE OF GOD. JUST AS FOR THE RUNNING WATERS, SO MY SOULS LONGS FOR YOU, OH DEAR LORD. FEAR NOT, MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS. IRMA HAS FINALLY MADE IT HOME. GOING TO BE OKAY. YOU CAN'T UNBREAK A HEART. AND HIDING OUT IN OTHER PEOPLE'S GRIEF CERTAINLY DOESN'T ABSOLVE YOU OF HAVING TO DEAL WITH YOURS.



IT TAKES WORK. **THE MOURNING OF** IG @THEMOURNINGOFMOVIE CONTACT THEMOURNINGOFMOVIE@GMAIL.COM

A group of people, mostly men, are standing in a line, holding white balloons. They appear to be at a funeral or a memorial service. The lighting is dim and warm, creating a somber atmosphere. In the center of the group, a woman with long dark hair, wearing a yellow jacket, looks directly at the camera with a serious expression. Other people in the background are looking down or away, some with somber expressions. The balloons are white and tied with strings.

SYNOPSIS

Maribel has been mourning the tragic loss of her mother in the most peculiar way imaginable— by secretly attending the funerals of strangers. After weeks of lying and searching for solace through the grief of others, her inability to move on finally catches up with her.

STILLS





DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Death.

I've always had a bit of a sour relationship when it comes to my fear of death, and *The Mourning Of* is an attempt at trying to make sense of it. I'm afraid of it, certainly, but this has far less to do with the idea of physical suffering and more to do with the fear of losing my dearest loved ones and how my grief will manifest itself afterwards. This is a fear of the unknown, and what this devastation could look like when pushed to the limit. How will I move on? Do I have the capacity to do so, or will I be paralyzed in a cycle of guilt for even trying?

This film was born out of necessity to answer these questions — both for myself and for those that find themselves at odds with their personal convictions about death and grief. Through Maribel's journey, my goal was to create a film that serves as an exercise in learning how to resign yourself to the fact that grief is not something you move on from. Rather, it's something you carry with you for the rest of your life, and making this film is a manifestation of me finally giving into this idea in hopes that others can do the same.

BEHIND THE SCENES



TEAM



MERCED ELIZONDO, Writer/Director

Merced Elizondo is a Mexican-American filmmaker that got his start in 2017 by working on multiple film and television productions all across Texas. Since launching his career as a writer/director, he has gone on to be nominated for an Imagen Award and shortlisted for a Young Director Award at Cannes Lions. In 2021, Merced was selected as a fellow for the Tomorrow's Filmmakers Today program, presented by WarnerMedia and the Hollywood Foreign Press Association. He was also honored as "Person of the Year" by the National Hispanic Institute in 2021 and selected as a Directing Fellow for Ryan Murphy's Half Initiative in 2022.

His previous film, *Manos de Oro*, is a black-and-white short that stars Julio César Cedillo and was acquired by Argo in 2022. It screened at festivals such as the the Oscar[®]-qualifying HollyShorts Film Festival, LA Shorts International, LALIFF, the Miami Film Festival, Bentonville Film Festival, and the "InFocus: Latinx & Hispanic Cinema" event, hosted by NewFilmmakers LA and The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Merced is currently developing his debut feature film, *The Mourning Of*.

INSTAGRAM | IMDB



HELENA SARDINHA AND RAFAEL THOMASETO, *Producers*

Helena Sardinha and Rafael Thomaseto are the founders of Driven Equation, a boutique production company with headquarters in both Los Angeles and São Paulo that's committed to championing inclusivity and representation in media and delving into the heart of social issues and marginalized themes.

Their projects have earned acclaim at some of the best festivals around the world, such as the Sundance Film Festival, Aspen Shortfest, Palm Springs, Santa Barbara International Film Festival, Fantastic Fest, and SeriesFest. Their latest project, *The Ballad of Tita and the Machines*, was successfully reviewed by the LA Times and Forbes and screened at a number of festivals in 2023, including the Tribeca Festival and Morelia International Film Festival. Following the success of their previous short film *Huella* (Amazon Prime, Short of the Week), Rafael and Helena are currently developing its feature-length adaptation, supported by the Sundance Institute through their Producers and Screenwriting Labs, and will be shot in 2024.

The duo are currently in post-production on their latest feature film *Satisfaction*, which boasts a stellar cast that includes Zar Amir Ebrahimi, Emma Laird and Fionn Whitehead.

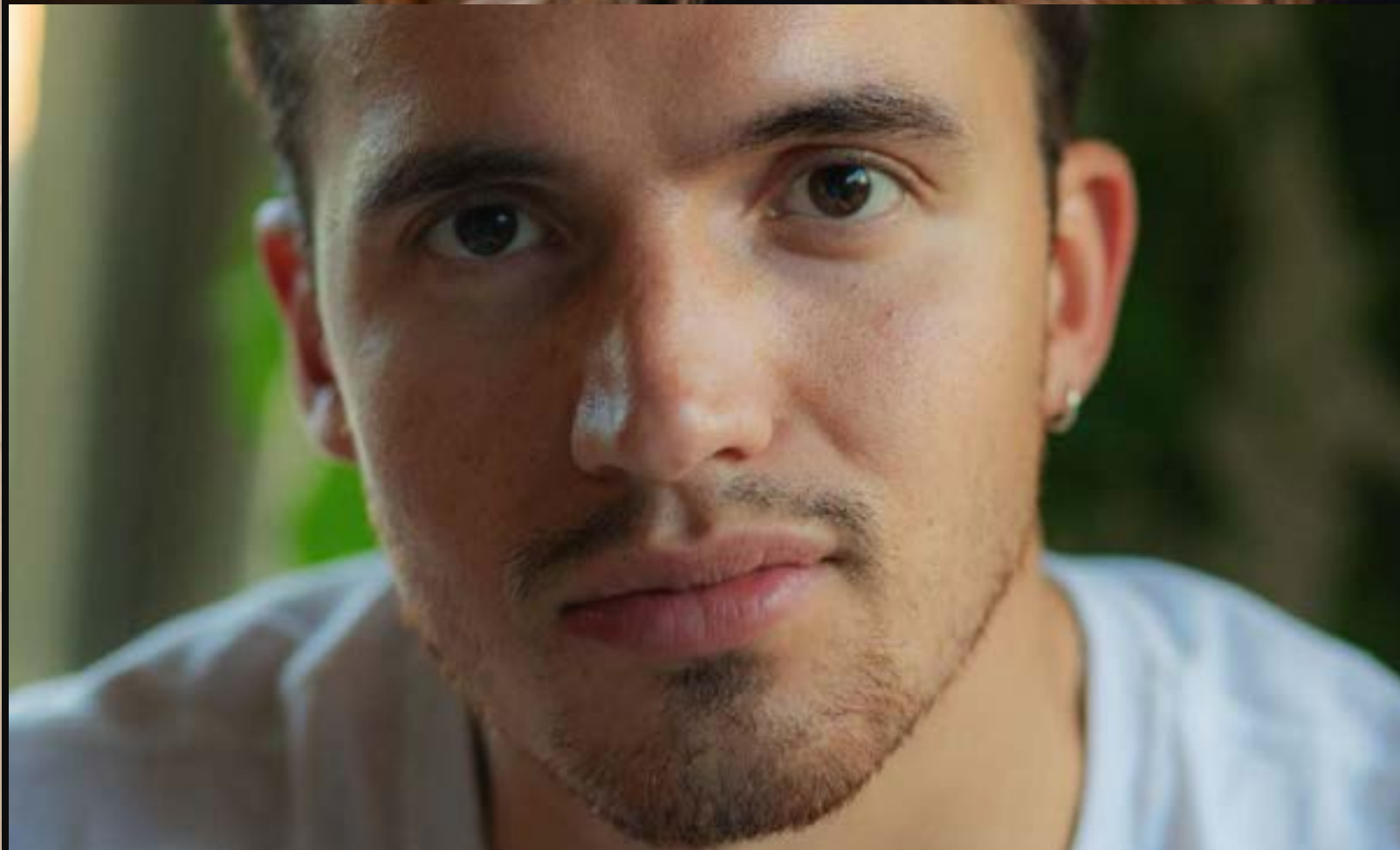
INSTAGRAM | WEBSITE



LIZ CARDENAS, Executive Producer

Liz Cardenas is a Film Independent Spirit Awarding producer that's currently based between Dallas and Los Angeles. Notable credits include *A Ghost Story* (Sundance '17 | A24), *Never Goin' Back* (Sundance '18 | A24), and *Materna* (Utopia), which took home the Best Cinematography and Best Actress awards at the Tribeca Festival in 2020.

[INSTAGRAM](#) | [IMDB](#)



ALAN C. HODGE, Producer

Alan C. Hodge is a Mexican-American producer and development executive. Born in Mexico City and raised in Los Angeles, he currently supports TV and film development and production at Eva Longoria's Hyphenate Media Group. Prior to working with Eva, Alan worked in development at Alazraki Films. He went on to assist Gaz Alazraki on Warner Brothers' *Father of the Bride*. Alan started his career at UTA in the Production Department.

[INSTAGRAM](#) | [IMDB](#)



ALFREDO ACHAR, Co-Producer

Alfredo is a producer, publicist, and film festival programmer who was born and raised in Mexico City and relocated to Los Angeles in 2017. Alfredo has led awards campaigns for Academy Award nominated titles such as Pedro Almodovar's *Parallel Mothers*, *Living* starring Bill Nighy, and 2024's *The Teachers' Lounge*. He has curated content for various film festivals and organizations including LACMA, GLAFF, FICG and NewFilmmakers LA.

[INSTAGRAM](#) | [IMDB](#)



MATHEUS BASTOS, Cinematographer

Matheus Bastos is a New York-based director of photography that works on narrative, commercial, and music video projects all around the world. Notable credits include the feature film *GAZER*, which world premiered at the 56th Directors' Fortnight at the Cannes Film Festival in 2024, *Story Ave* (SXSW '23 | Kino Lorber), and the short film *Tea*, which stars Michael Gandolfini and was an official selection at the 77th Cannes Film Festival Short Film Competition in 2024.

[INSTAGRAM](#) | [IMDB](#)



JONATHAN CUARTAS, Editor

Jonathan Cuartas is a Colombian-American Editor and Writer/Director from Miami, FL. His feature film debut, *My Heart Can't Beat Unless You Tell It To*, world premiered at the Tribeca Festival in 2020, where it received a Special Jury Mention. Jonathan also won the Citizen Kane Award for Best Directorial Revelation at Sitges in 2020. Notable editing credits include the feature films *Mountains* (TIFF, AFI Fest '23), *Ludi* (SXSW, '21), and the short film *Konpa* (Tribeca '23).

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JAVIER UMPIERREZ, Sound Designer

Javier Umpierrez is a Mexico City-based sound designer and supervising sound editor who has worked on narrative films, documentaries, TV series, and commercials across Mexico, France, Puerto Rico and Colombia. Notable credits include Apichatpong Weerasethakul's *Memoria* (Cannes '21 | NEON), Michel Franco's *Memory* (Venice, TIFF '23 | Ketchup Entertainment), *Cassandra* (Sundance '23 | Amazon), and *Monos* (Sundance, Berlin '19 | NEON).

[WEBSITE](#) | [IMDB](#)



NATALIA VILLEGAS, *Maribel*

Natalia Villegas is a Mexican-American actress born in Mexico City and raised in Texas. She began her career with several regional commercials and student films. In 2017, she formed a part of the summer theater company at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London, which prompted her to obtain her MA in Acting at the Institute of Arts in Barcelona a year later. Notable credits include the award-winning short film *El Gato Feo*.

INSTAGRAM | IMDB



JULIO CÉSAR CEDILLO, *Father Tomas*

Raised between Texas and Mexico, Julio César Cedillo has been an actor for the past 30 years and is best known for his showcase performance as the titular character in *The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada*, which went on to win Best Actor and Best Screenplay at the 58th Cannes Film Festival in 2005. Other notable credits include Denis Villeneuve's *Sicario*, Netflix's *Narcos: Mexico*, and *A Cielo Abierto*, which world premiered at the Venice Film Festival and screened at TIFF in 2023.

INSTAGRAM | IMDB

BEHIND THE SCENES



STILLS



CREW

DIRECTOR AND SCREENWRITER
MERCED ELIZONDO

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
LIZ CARDENAS, ANDREA MARQUEZ

PRODUCERS **HELENA SARDINHA, RAFAEL THOMASETO, ALAN C. HODGE, MERCED ELIZONDO**

CO-PRODUCER **ALFREDO ACHAR**
CINEMATOGRAPHER **MATHEUS BASTOS**
PRODUCTION DESIGNER **JONATHAN RUDAK**
EDITOR **JONATHAN CUARTAS**
COMPOSER **RENÉ G. BOSCIO**
SOUND DESIGNER **JAVIER UMPIERREZ**
COLORIST **SAM DALEY (LIGHT IRON)**

CAST

MARIBEL **NATALIA VILLEGAS**
FATHER TOMAS **JULIO CÉSAR CEDILLO**
BLONDIE **KASS MAREN**



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THE MAKING OF + NEXT STEPS

From the very beginning, *The Mourning Of* was conceived as a proof-of-concept short for my debut feature film that would be just a small glimpse at this character's journey with her grief.

Production began in May of 2023 and was spread out across seven days in Dallas, TX thanks to the generous support of Warner Bros. Discovery and NewFilmmakers Los Angeles, who awarded us their annual NewNarratives grant in November of 2022. Our team was made up of 80+ diverse artists and filmmakers that were involved throughout the entire process of making the film, over 170 background extras, and a post production workflow that took us from Dallas, to Miami, to Los Angeles, to New York City, and Mexico City. The film was completed in March of 2024 and is currently on the '24-'25 film festival circuit.

In the long run, my goal is to use any momentum the short provides at festivals to help get the feature film made and demonstrate the effectiveness of this idea, prove I have a strong sense of direction for this story and tone at-large, and serve as an invitation for potential collaborators, producers, talent, etc. that shows this is a vision worth being a part of and expanding on.

STILLS



BEHIND
THE
SCENES



TECHNICAL ASPECTS

GENRE **DRAMA**

SHOOTING FORMAT **DIGITAL**

SCREENING FORMAT **DIGITAL DCP**

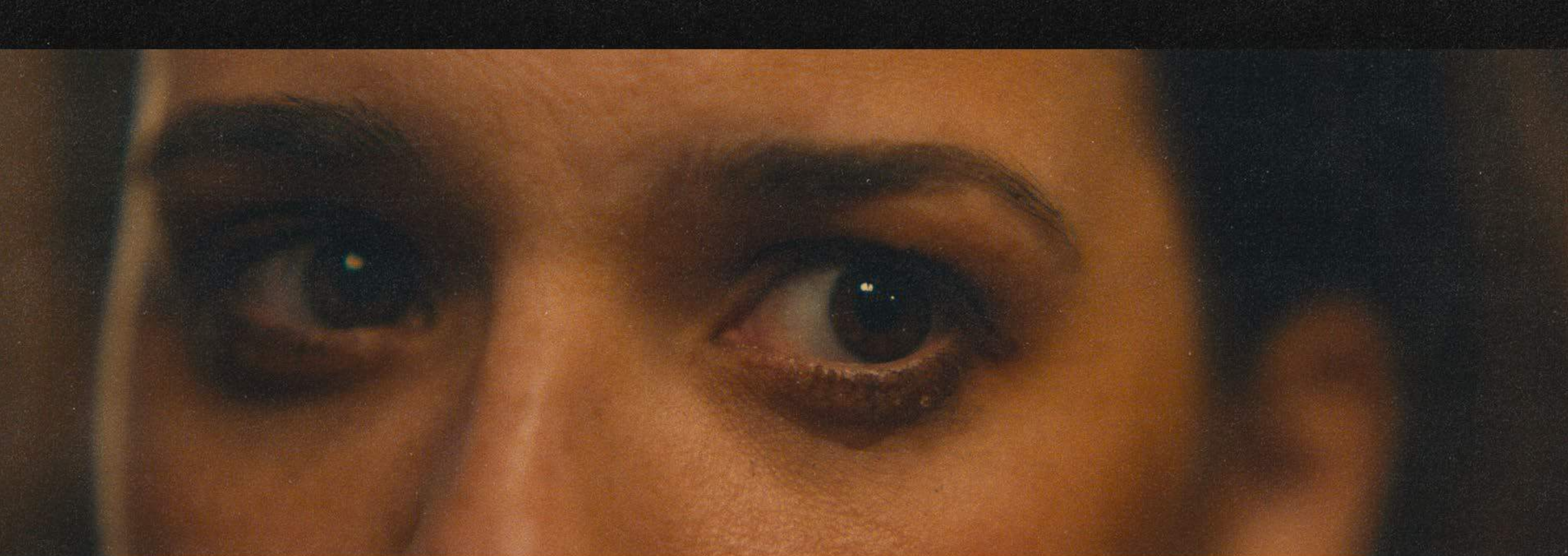
ASPECT RATIO **1.90:1**

AUDIO FORMAT **5.1, STEREO**

COUNTRY **USA**

RUNTIME **23 MINUTES**

LANGUAGE **ENGLISH, SPANISH**



THE MOURNING OF

IG @THEMOURNINGOFMOVIE CONTACT MERCEDELIZONDO@GMAIL.COM, HELENA@DRIVENEQUATION.COM

PRODUCTION COMPANIES DECREM FILMS, DRIVEN EQUATION

DECREM

DRIVEN
EQUATION

