

Communication

# Mamita Yunai



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# PRESENTATION

Mamita Yunai is a feature film based on the literary work of the same name by Costa Rican writer Carlos Luis Fallas (CALUFA).

The work recounts a biographical passage of the author in the 1920s and during the time he worked at the transnational United Fruit Company and where there were great social injustices such as the miserable conditions in which the workers of the transnational lived. Despite all the subhuman conditions in which these workers lived, they never lost hope or their fleeting joys, much less their solidarity with each other in the face of the harshness of their reality and environment.

The literary work was deservedly recognized by the great poet Pablo Neruda, who wrote a poem to one of his characters (Calero) in his famous Canto General.

Likewise, the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera gave his work "Grandiosa Victoria" to illustrate one of the pages of the 1st edition published in Mexico in 1957.

The ethnic variety is a very important factor in the development of the entire story, which gives a multicultural richness from start to finish. The film explores the states of the soul, feelings and universal human realities.

The literary work has been translated into English, Italian, German, Russian, Chinese, among others.

*"It is the most beautiful book I have read for years"*

Pablo Neruda



# SINOPSIS



Three great friends/brothers: Herminio, Calero and José Francisco Sibaja (Sibajita) YUNAI workers bend their backs and leave their "leather" opening a gap in the indomitable lands of the Atlantic zone and that the transnational obtained with pleasure from the government.

Despite the miserable conditions in which they live, they always try to maintain a cheerful and hopeful attitude of one day returning with their heads held high with their families or fulfilling their dreams.

Solidarity, tenderness, optimism are contrasted with the harshness and abuse in which they live.

In the village of Andrómeda are the YUNAI workers' camps, where everything is miserable, monotonous and unpleasant and where the workers came in search of a new life.

Nicaraguans, Jamaicans, Gringos, Italians and Ticos converge in those miserable camps.

# VISUALIZATION

Because it is a very sensitive story in terms of human conditions, the inner world of the characters would be explored, reflecting their deepest emotions.

Visually, the film will have a very intimate photograph with the characters, from medium shots to very close-ups, with soft lighting and "critical focuses".

The sound will be 100% live to better capture all the majestic natural settings of history. The dialogues will be simple, precise and clear, with a poetic-philosophical sense.

The music of the film will be original and whose composition evokes the pure and rude nature, as well as the most noble and oppressive feelings. The score will be an active element during the assembly process. The film mixes realism and poetry, its goal is to raise awareness and reflect.



# DISTRIBUTION

Mamita Yunai is a film that shows the inhuman working conditions of many human beings throughout the history of mankind. And with great detail: without losing tenderness and solidarity. It is not a "proselytizing" film or a denunciation. As it is a great Latin American literary work, it will be widely disseminated in the mass media, both national and international, from the beginning of the project.

At the same time, a great information campaign will be carried out on the different processes of the film through social networks and other digital platforms.

The artistic and technical team will be made up of the best and most experienced professionals in the region. Likewise, the filming equipment will be of the highest quality and technology.

For all of the above, the final result of this film will be of high quality in the international cinematographic environment, which fills us with optimism to think about our first screenings at the main International Film Festivals: Cannes, Berlin. Venice, San Sebastian, Sundance, Toronto and many more.

Without neglecting other great prizes like the Goyas, Platino and others.

After participating in Festivals, it will be shown in national cinemas and in other countries.





# DATA SHEET

**Title:** Mamita Yunai  
**Genre:** Fiction / Drama  
**Duration:** 90 – 100 minutes  
**Format:** HD

**Production and Direction:** Peter Avilés  
**Executive Producer:** Steve Aronson  
**Screenplay:** Maria del Pozo  
**Coproduction:** Mekanismo  
**Direction of Actors:** Luis Carlos Vásquez  
**Photography:** Sebastián Vega  
**Art Direction:** Fedra Brenes  
**Casting Director:** Rocío Carranza  
**Sound Engineer:** Luis Orlando "Nano" Fernández  
**Musical Composition:** Walter Flores  
**Costume Design:** Francisco "Pancho" Alpízar  
**Assistant Director:** Lourdes Elizarrarás  
**Continuity:** Nosara Urcuyo  
**Production Supervision:** Daniel Aguilar  
**Production Direction:** Juan Valverde  
**Editing:** Johnny Corrales

## Collaborators

**ACTE** (Asociación Cultural Teatro Espressivo)  
**Televisora de Costa Rica**  
**Havas Costa Rica**  
**Mekanismo** (Audiovisual Workshop)  
**Cine House Rental**  
**El Arado Cámaras**  
**Comunicación e Imagen**  
**Positivo Films**  
**Enso Films**  
**Finca Las Tilapias**

# PETER AVILÉS

## Producer / Director



Film and TV producer with extensive experience in fiction films, documentaries and advertising. He studied audiovisual production in Brazil and Costa Rica. His productions have been developed in different Latin American countries.

Most relevant works:



"Identity taken", fiction feature film / 2018 / Mexico  
(filmed in Costa Rica and Mexico)

"The happiest place in the world", fiction feature film / 2015 / Costa Rica

"GW 100% Tico", documentary feature film / 2014 / Costa Rica

"AE: apocalypse earth", fiction feature film / 2012 / USA  
(filmed in Costa Rica)

"Firearms in Latin America", documentary feature film / 2011 / Costa Rica (filmed in Costa Rica, El Salvador and Venezuela)

"Looking for the wave", fiction feature film / 2009 / Costa Rica

"Gestation", fiction feature film / 2008 / Costa Rica

"House arrest", fiction feature film / 2007 / Costa Rica

"The last commander", fiction feature film / 2006 / Costa Rica  
(filmed in Costa Rica and Nicaragua)

"El camino", fiction feature film / 2005 / Costa Rica (filmed in Costa Rica and Nicaragua)

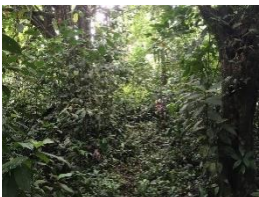
"Caribe", fiction feature film / 2003 – Costa Rica

"From the mud to the south", documentary feature film / 2002 / Nicaragua (filmed in Costa Rica and Nicaragua)

University for Peace, United Nations, TV Producer, 1998-2000, Costa Rica



Between 2000 and 2020, he has also produced a large number of corporate and educational documentaries, video clips, as well as more than 300 advertising commercials.



# MARÍA DEL POZO

## Writer



She has participated in more than thirty films as an actress, screenwriter, producer, director and assistant director with different directors such as Felipe Cazals (Mexico), Ignacio and Gabriel Retes (Mexico), Carlos Azpurua (Venezuela), Ciro Durán (Colombia), Alberto Isaac (Mexico), Juan Luis Buñuel (Spain), Gustavo Fallas (Costa Rica), Esteban Ramírez (Costa Rica), Manuel Escalante (Mexico), Soley Bernal (Costa Rica) and James Scurlock (USA).



Among his most outstanding films are EL BULTO, with which he won as a screenwriter the awards for best screenplay awarded by the VIII Latin American Film Festival of Trieste, Italy and WELCOME WELCOME, winner of best screenplay at the XIV International Festival of Gramado, Brazil. Both films were deserving of multiple awards both in Mexico and at different International Film Festivals.

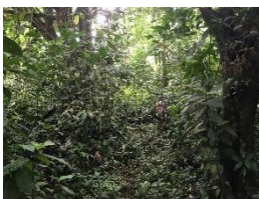


With the film La Ciudad para Vivir, she received the Ariel for Best Actress and has been nominated for the films Mujeres Insumisas and La Nave de los Sueños.

He has participated as a member of the Jury in the International Film Festivals of Gramado, Trieste and Puerto Rico.



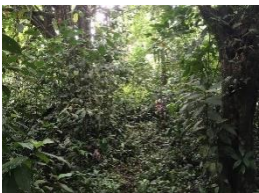
It has more than ten filmed scripts: Identidad Tomada, El Bulto, Bienvenido Welcome, Bienvenido Welcome II, Buscando la Ola, Arresto Domiciliario, La Mudanza, among others. In 2019 he filmed three films: Identidad Tomada, as a screenwriter, under the direction of Gabriel Retes; Los Vecinos, as an actress, directed by Diana Cardozo and Ambar, as script consultant and assistant director, by Costa Rican director Esteban Ramirez.



In July 2021 he receives the Gaviota International Award for his career of more than forty years.

# JOHNNY CORRALES MÉNDEZ

## Producer



Audiovisual Producer with vast experience in the Advertising Audiovisual Sector. He has produced Spots for Costa Rica and the Latinamerican Regio for brands like BBDO, DDB, McCann Erickson, Publimark, Saatchi&Saatchi among others. He coordinates the Chapter of the Costa Rica Audiovisual Industry of the Chamber of Technology of Costa Rica where he has developed projects like the creation of the Film Friendly Zones of Costa Rica. He also was among the collaborators of the text of the Film Incentives Law of Costa Rica.

Some of his most relevant works are:

- Production of Several Advertising Spots and transcreation material for Hogarth WW including brands like Coca Cola Company, Kellogs, Heinz, Davivienda and others.
- Ride with Norman Reedus - Left/Ride Production / AMC - Audio and Voice Over - Costa Rica Episode. - PBS - Sesame Street - Season 52 - Birds / Nature
- PBS - Sesame Street - Season 53 - Cocokie Monster Foodie Truck - Beans
- PBS - Sesame Street - Season 54 - Cocokie Monster Foodie Truck - Papaya
- Photograph Sessions for Nescafé World Campaign 2017



# PRODUCTION

Because it is the adaptation of a literary work to a cinematographic work and out of respect for the author of the original story, it is intended to maintain the same names and mental and emotional identity of each of the characters, whether they are protagonists, secondary and / or figurants.

The literary work consists of two stories, the first being about a political theme of the moment (1940) where our protagonist (Sibajita) faces great obstacles from the authorities and official government representatives so that he can reach Alta Talamanca to participate as a table delegate in the elections of that year. Because it is a political situation of the time and where our indigenous people are represented as "primitive and decadent", it is not of interest to film this part of the literary work, but also out of respect for the author, this part will not be omitted and it will be treated through dialogues that the protagonist maintains in his casual reunion, fourteen years later, with his friend/brother (Herminio) when he returns from Talamanca after the elections are over. This part of the literary work will be represented with supporting images filmed and that would show the hard journey that the protagonist went through to reach the Alta Talamanca polling station.

The other story (1926) and which I consider the main and most emotional is where the crude and subhuman situations in which the workers of the transnational United Fruit Company live and are treated converge, and which contrasts greatly with the noblest human feelings such as naivety, hope and tenderness. This part of the literary work is the most interesting and the one that delighted the great poet Pablo Neruda and the renowned muralist Diego Rivera. It is in *Andrómeda*, a miserable hamlet where the "linemen" live, who were the workers who would open a gap in the jungle and the mountains to make way for the railway line between the transnational's banana plantations.

It is worth mentioning that this part of the story about the abuse and mistreatment of workers in large companies is a topic that has occurred throughout the history of humanity and that continues to this day, that is why I am interested in filming this part of the literary work maintaining the author's plot line.

The main characters in this part of the story that takes place in the Andrómeda village and its surroundings (jungle, mountains, rivers, swamps, banana plantations, etc.) are Sibajita, Herminio and Calero. They are joined by multiple secondary characters, extras and extras, mostly nationals from different places, as well as from neighboring countries, all this gives it great ethnic richness.

Sibajita (José Francisco Sibaja), 19 and 33 years old, represents the author of the literary work (Carlos Luis Fallas Sibaja-CALUFA) during the time he worked in the Atlantic zone, specifically with the United Fruit Company, we can say that it is almost an autobiography of his rough experiences in the transnational. Despite his limited educational background, he is the character with the most wisdom and equanimity of all the workers in the area, between linemen and foremen. Skilled with dynamite which he uses to fish and thus satisfy the permanent hunger that everyone has. Despite his young age, he is a born leader, therefore, and for being generous with others, he is appreciated by all.

Herminio, 21 and 35 years old, strong and cheerful, a true gallant with abundant black hair and a trimmed mustache. Calero's cousin. He is serene, brave, he is not afraid of animals or blows. He is a good cook and with little he makes delicious food. He dreams of raising enough money to go with Sibajita to tour America, Egypt, India. His stories are always sad even though he tries to be happy. After Calero's death, sadness takes over him and he is never the same again.

Calero, 18 years old, naive as a child and a heart of gold. Tall and muscular, he is invincible with the axe, he is not good at cooking, but he is good at building campfires. Lazy to get up but very good worker. With his sayings, on nights when they drink rum, he makes his companions in misfortune laugh. However, he lives sad, and faces, without thinking about the consequences, the injustices to which he always wants to respond rudely. He dreams of getting home and finding a pretty woman to take care of him and feed him in bed. The only thing he fears is snakes and at night he always sings a sad song.

Regarding the secondary characters there is a lot of diversity of nationalities and ethnicities. There are the servile foremen of the transnational (Bertolazzi, Mr. Gordon, Azuola, Arrieta), as well as the crew chiefs who tried to give their workers better treatment (Corporal Pancho, Corporal Juan, Black Clinton). And obviously the characters from the gang of the protagonists: old Jerez, Alfonsito, Andrés the cat, el Cholo, the "twins" and Badilla.

The Extras and Extras will be enough that would be needed for scenes of the different gangs (Ticos, Nicaraguans and blacks), as well as for various situations in the village on paydays where there are drunks in the streets because it is the only option for fun. and even prostitutes for the most daring.

It is contemplated that ALL the Extras and Extras are people from the area and thus integrate the local population into the project, which leads to generating a temporary paid activity for those who are selected to participate as Extras and Extras.

With the topic of locations, the project is going very well. Given my experience of more than 20 years as a Film and TV Producer in Costa Rica and other latitudes, and having to my credit more than 10 fiction and documentary feature films, as well as hundreds of advertising commercials, the pre-production process of the film is advancing faster than expected, having already defined the area where all the exterior scenes would be filmed (jungles, rivers, swamps, hamlets/camps of the workers of the United Fruit Company, ranches of foremen and other structures), as well as production logistics facilities are located in the area such as lodging, food, health, etc.

For the scenes of the Andrómeda farmhouse and ranches of the foremen, sets of their facades would be built, and local labor will be hired for these constructions, thus generating another temporary work option for workers in the area.

These sets would be set up on a farm where I have filmed on other occasions and where there is a large jungle, canals, swamps and even “old” wooden structures that function as sets for some scenes.

At the same time, the GAM is looking for a large warehouse or hangar where to mount the sets for the interior scenes of the workers' camps, foremen's ranches, medical dispensary, police station and others. This to obtain clear and clean dialogues, since the climatic conditions of the exterior area would not allow it.

### **MAIN LOCATION - FINCA** (exteriors)







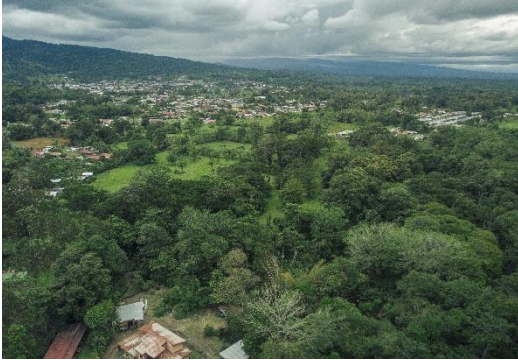




**MAIN LOCATION - FINCA (exteriors) (lodge and restaurant)**



## **CLOSEST CITY** (Additional photography)



## **SAN JOSÉ** (warehouses)





**Mi gran sorpresa ha sido la  
MAMITA YUNAI de Fallas**

México, 14 de enero de 1950.

Mi querido don Joaquín:

Le envío estas cortas líneas de saludo a Carlos Luis Fallas. Estos días en México me han hecho conocer valores de Costa Rica que pertenecen a nuestro total continente y lo ahondan y lo entienden.

Así me ha tocado conocer al poeta Cardona Peña y su poesía desbordante y solar. Mi gran sorpresa ha sido la *Mamita Yunai* de Fallas. Es el libro más hermoso que he leído por años. Y a este joven Gorki, que nos ha salido en América, con ese mismo alto sentido de la realidad y de la ternura, le recomiendo ahora saludarlo, don Joaquín, esto es, llevarle una vez más mi devoción y cariño.

Abrazos para todo 1950, año de la liberación de nuestra América.

**PABLO NERUDA**

(Tomado del *Repertorio Americano* del 20 de Marzo de 1950).