

A SHORT FILM BY José Eduardo Castilla

# aguarario





**74** Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
**Generation**



LOGLINE

To fulfill his responsibilities or disobey his brother and embark on a small three-wheeled adventure. That's the dilemma for a 10-year-old boy on a lonely coast in Mexico.







## SYNOPSIS

Under the sun and in the heat of a coast in Veracruz, Mexico, a 10-year-old boy who works alongside his older brother delivering water jugs on an old tricycle, crosses paths with a girl of his same age. This will make him face a dilemma: to fulfill his responsibilities or disobey his brother and embark on a small three-wheeled adventure





## DIRECTOR'S SEMBLANCE

José Eduardo Castilla (Puebla, Mexico. 2000) has worked as a director, screenwriter, and assistant director on various audiovisual projects, including fiction, documentaries, commercials, and music videos.

He has directed three short films and is a co-founder of the production house “**Persignados**,” which focuses on creating music video clips and fiction projects. Currently, he is specializing in film directing at the Centro de Capacitación Cinematográfica in Mexico City.

Additionally, he is in post-production for his upcoming short film “**Levantamuertos**”.



# STILLS







## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

### Intent Behind the Story

Have you ever experienced those seemingly insignificant events that gradually gain lots of importance over time? “Aguacuario” emerges as an attempt to capture those moments. The narrative aims to immerse audiences in the mundane, showcasing how the small things, over time, become valuable, leaving an indelible mark.

On a personal note, I wrote this short film during my transition from high school to college, experiencing a wave of nostalgia for my childhood. The goal was to pay homage to that life stage, exploring how, even in the routine and monotony, the little things are the ones that bring happiness and joy.

Through Vinzent, the protagonist, the story mirrors the conflict between responsibility and the need to preserve one's childhood—a struggle I believe I was undergoing in one way or another at that moment.



## Inspiration

The narrative unfolds in Coatzacoalcos, Veracruz, a port on the Gulf of Mexico where my family operated a water purification business called “**Agua Purificada Acuario**” (Aquarium Purified Water). That place not only shaped my childhood and that of my relatives but also gave me some of my most cherished memories.

When initiating the script, I chose to situate the plot in three places that stood out in my memory—a park with stairs (near my grandparents’ house), the coastal promenade (where we were taken to buy slushies), and the beach (where I had the most fun with my cousins).

The term “Aguacuero” originates from a sales call used while delivering water jugs on a tricycle, alerting neighbors that we were passing by. Initially, I believed it to be an invented word, a portmanteau of “agua” (Water) and “acuero” (Aquarium) for a swifter call. However, just before filming, I realized I was the only one who perceived it like that.





## Aesthetic and Atmosphere

The short's aesthetic was crafted to evoke the feeling of a "memory". When reminiscing, the mind tends to beautify what we lived. So what we aimed was to visually and sonorously capture that added beauty to this simple story. In this "memory", I decided to create a sense that only the three protagonists inhabited it. Consequently, the streets are deserted, and all those they interact with never reveal their faces.







## Working With Children

For the main roles of Vinzent and Viviana, I chose to work with non-professional actors from Coatzacoalcos. Hugo and Marsell were selected through an open casting across the area. They not only brought the characters to life but also infused their own experiences, elevating the characters beyond my expectations.

Despite this being their first film experience, the connection and play during filming created an incredibly beautiful dynamic, which, in my opinion, constitutes the soul of the film.



## Production Challenges

The creation of “**Aguacu**ario” encountered numerous challenges. Initially rejected from various funding contests, the project remained in limbo until the 2021 pandemic. Amid personal struggles and bouts of depression, the short film became a light of hope.

This marked my directorial debut, and thanks to the support of my grandparents, family, the people of Coatzacoalcos, and an exceptional crew that consistently believed in me, we successfully filmed the short. It constituted four demanding yet incredibly rewarding days of collective effort, love, and dedication.

The production of “**Aguacu**ario” became a reality through the backing and contributions of a passionate team and all those who joined forces, both in pre-production, during filming, and in post-production.





## Themes

The short film also aims to talk about themes such as sibling relationships (where I have personal experience, given that my siblings are triplets). It also explores childhood loves and crushes, highlighting the innocence and simplicity of these emotions at that age. Additionally, I sought to address Mexican and regional family economies, where everyone contributes to the family's economic well-being, irrespective of age.





## CAST

*Vinzent* – Hugo Benítez  
(Coatzacoalcos, Ver. Mexico, 2010)  
A devoted enthusiast of horror cinema,  
“**Aguacu**ario” is his first experience in film.

*Viviana* – Marsell Moreno  
(Minatitlan, Ver. Mexico, 2010)  
A passionate swimmer and winner of multiple  
swimming competitions, “**Aguacu**ario” is his  
first experience in film.









## ALL CAST & CREW

Director & Screenwriter JOSE EDUARDO CASTILLA  
Producer CAROLINA MACIEL DEL PINO  
DOP CESAR SALGADO  
Editing JULIO RUBIO  
Music FER RUBIO  
Sound Mixer LUIS "AZTEK" HERNANDEZ  
Sound Design FRANCISCO JAVIER GOMEZ GUEVARA  
Production Design ERIKA NUÑEZ  
Art Director GERARDO GARCIA LEÓN  
Assistant Director DANIEL CARRERA PASTERNAC  
Production Coordination TOMASA VASQUEZ  
Production Manager DANIEL PONCE SAN ROMAN  
Executive Producer EDUARDO CASTILLA OREA

### CAST

Vinzent - HUGO BENÍTEZ  
Viviana - MARSELL MORENO  
Alan - CLAUDIO JURADO

aguacuario



OFFICIAL RELEASE POSTER  
BY ALEKS PHOENIX





**TECHNICAL ASPECTS**

FORMAT - Digital DCP  
ASPECT RATIO - 2:35.1  
AUDIO FORMAT - 5.1  
LENGTH - 20 minutes  
LANGUAGE - Spanish







# aguacuario

IG @aguacuariocortometraje FB Aguacuario Cortometraje

CONTACT aguacuariocortometraje@gmail.com

Jose Eduardo Castilla +52 (222) 758 8006

PRODUCTION COMPANY Persignados Films - persignadosfilms@gmail.com