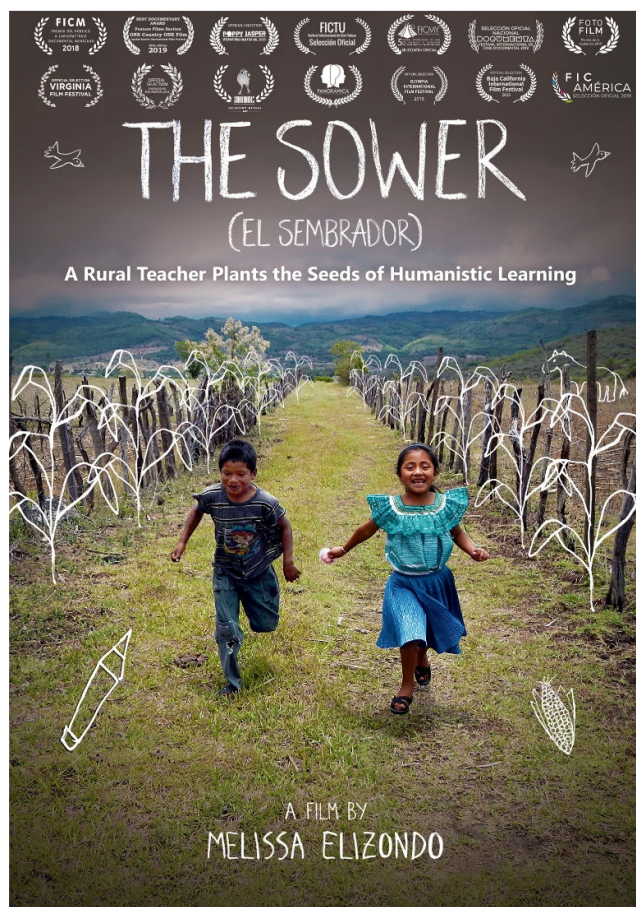


THE SOWER (EL SEMBRADOR)



A FILM BY

MELISSA ELIZONDO MORENO

86 mins / Color / 2018 / Spanish, Spanish, Tselal & English Subtitles, Spanish Subtitles



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AWARDS & HONORS

- Guerrero Documentary Press Award – Morelia Int’l Film Festival, Mexico
- Award for Documentary Made by a Woman – Morelia Int’l Film Festival, Mexico
- Mexican Public Documentary Feature Award – Morelia Int’l Film Festival, Mexico
- Honorable Mention, José Rovirosa Prize – Best Student Documentary
- Audience Award – FotoFilm Tijuana Festival, Film and Photo Festival, Mexico
- Best documentary – ONE Country ONE Film International Film Festival, Bolivia

FILM FESTIVALS

- Thessaloniki Documentary Festival, Greece
- Ambulante Showcase, Cine las Américas Int’l Film Festival, Austin, TX
- Chiapas Film Festival, Mexico
- Native Crossroads Film Festival, Norman, OK
- The Muestra Internacional “El Cine en la Cumbre”, Argentina
- The Muestra de Las Otras Educaciones en el Cine, La UV in Xalapa, Mexico
- Festival Internacional Cine de América, sección Panorama Continental Documental, Mexico
- “Cine de barrio” in P.I.L.A.R.E.S. by the Trust for the Promotion and Development of Mexican Cinema, Mexico
- Ciclo de cine itinerante “Se va caer”, Mexico
- “Lluminando el Pacífico” with Cine Móvil Toto, México
- Baja California International Film Festival, México
- “Made in México” Festival, San Francisco, CA
- Festival de Arte y Cultura Cuento Contigo, Fundación Romel, México
- DOQUMENTA, Festival Internacional de Cine Documental, México
- La Muestra de cine de la Feria de las lenguas Indígenas, México
- Deep México Debate Film Series: Women and Indigenous Communities, Museum of Memory and Tolerance

SYNOPSIS

Amongst the mountains of Chiapas, a rural schoolteacher is dedicated to sowing the seeds of learning in a group of fifty Tseltal children of different ages. Bartolomé has been a father to the children of the community and has made the school a second home for all of them. He knows education is not based on textbooks and cannot fit inside the four walls of a classroom. A true sower of knowledge, Bartolomé's approach to teaching based on curiosity, respect and the love of nature, makes his humanistic philosophy of teaching a beacon of hope to his community.

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Melissa Elizondo Moreno graduated from the National School of Cinematographic Arts of the UNAM. Her work focuses on the themes of resilience, childhood and the gender perspective. Her debut feature "The Sower" was awarded The Warrior of the Documentary Press Award, The Made by a Woman Award and the Audience Award for Documentary Feature Film at the Morelia International Film Festival. The Sower also won awards at festivals in France, Chile and Bolivia. Her short films "Túmin: Solidarity Economy" and "The Threads That Weave Us" have been presented at various film festivals and international exhibitions.



DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

My interest in making this film stemmed from an educational reform effort by the Mexican government. This meant the privatization of education in the country. The effort included a smear campaign against teachers. It is important for me to bring people to understand the complicated and important work of rural teachers. I want to make people aware of a more humanistic type of education that does serve the needs of children. During the schooling that many of us received, we were never asked what we were interested in. Our education was not thoughtful. It was an attempt to impose and dominate.

Sometimes people believe that by sending their kids to a private school, they are guaranteed a good education. This is not real success. Its only goal is economic rewards. It makes me wonder where has the goal of making better people gone? What are the results of teaching this kind of knowledge to children?

Education has been transformed into a cruel and imposing experience. It is planned by administrators who don't care about personal, collective and contextual needs. They are less interested in teaching the importance of the earth, our primary learning space.

Being a rural teacher requires a strong commitment to education. Teachers are required to acknowledge social inequality and the goal of improving society. Working in the poorest regions of Mexico, rural teachers are familiar with the problems that Mexican peasants face. They need to understand the practical knowledge needed in rural areas in various trades. Teachers know that in addition to educating students, they need to work with important members of the communities that support and contribute to the students' lives.

My goal was to present a teacher that is truly interested in the welfare of students. Someone connected to the community, including its language, history and, above all, its intelligence. A teacher that trusts students and grows with them. A teacher who seeks to motivate their students through curiosity, freedom and the joy of learning. Someone committed to teaching moral values. A teacher that considers each child's situation and understands that students are not just numbers. Each child has dreams and unique circumstances that affect school performance.

Teachers like Bartolomé work in a variety of rural areas throughout the country. They learn when they start their rural teacher apprenticeship. They face difficulties and shortages, but their student's affection and gratitude are their greatest rewards.

Education can only be truly humanistic if freedom, research, independence, dialogue and solidarity are the goal. Nothing is lost by trying a new pedagogy, yet it could help create a new society and future if these efforts succeed.

Melissa Elizondo Moreno

ENAC UNAM – MEDIODÍA present

THE SOWER

Written & Directed by: **MELISSA ELIZONDO MORENO**

Producers: **MELISSA ELIZONDO, CECILIA GIRÓN**

Editors: **RAÚL ZENDEJAS & MELISSA ELIZONDO**

Directors of Photography: **NATALI MONTELL, ALICIA SEGOVIA**

Colorist: **ISIS BRIDGE**

Post Production Supervisor **RAÚL ZENDEJAS**

Sound Mix **ENCORESOUND**

Production Sound **GABRIEL VILLEGAS**

Sound Designer **ALICIA SEGOVIA**

Music

IVAN TREVINO

ESCAPE TEN

MICHAEL BURRITT

COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE

IVANA BILIC

