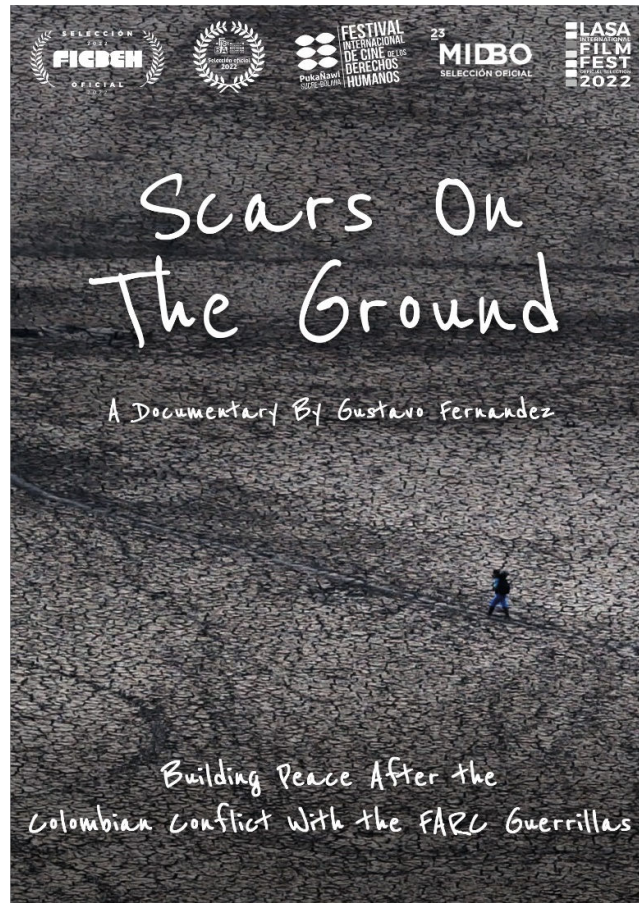


SCARS ON THE GROUND / CICATRICES EN LA TIERRA



A FILM BY
GUSTAVO FERNÁNDEZ

122 mins / Color / 2021 / Spanish, English Subtitles / Colombia



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FILM FESTIVALS & AWARDS

"Truth, Peace and Reconciliation Audiovisual Award" –The Peace and Reconciliation Memory Center of Bogotá.

Official Selection Latin American Studies Association Int'l Film Festival
Official Selection Proyecto seleccionado en la Clínica de Proyectos Alados
Official Selection Bogotá Int'l Documentary Film Festival
Official Selection Santander Int'l Festival of Independent Cinema

SYNOPSIS

In 2016, the Colombian government signed a peace agreement with the largest armed insurgent group in the country, the FARC. This peace agreement was a crucial step in ending a 70-year conflict that claimed over 250,000 lives. In "Scars on the Ground," Gustavo Fernández tells the stories of 4 former FARC combatants who laid down their arms in 2017 and reintegrated into a Colombian society weary of violence and war.

The 4 characters describe their journey from humble peasant origins to joining the FARC and their struggle to restore ties with their families, civil society, and the Colombian state. Each of them experiences both benefits and losses in their transition from war to peace and tries to make sense of what comes next in their new lives as civilians.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In "Scars on the Earth," I set out to construct an exercise in memory, interweaving the voices and experiences of Ex FARC fighters. These men and women fought for altruistic reasons – to bring social and political transformation through words after the signing of the peace agreement between the Colombian state and the FARC in 2016.

Their stories are complex, revealing ideological and ethical inconsistencies and problems that I sought to interpret. One of the former combatants, William, remembers a battle in which he was seriously injured, "...thinking about the war, one is not going to tell everything he lived, did, or didn't do." This raises the question of how many Colombians perceive former guerrilla members as either monsters or innocent people.

What remains is their authentic commitment to the new civilian life, even though a small group of former fighters such as Iván Marquez, who was a peace negotiator in Havana but took up arms again in August 2019. His decision was met with disbelief and disappointment by many former guerrilla fighters, as he was the one who convinced them to start the peace process.

The goals of this documentary project are as follows:

- 1) Highlight the importance of upholding the peace agreement commitments, which has saved thousands of lives three years after its approval, despite the continuous assassination of social leaders who have taken up the demands of the inhabitants of the areas formerly occupied by the FARC. Over 300 murders have been committed to date, in addition to over 150 ex-combatants who were killed in the process of reincorporation.
- 2) Give a voice to witnesses of the war through the stories of four former FARC combatants who made the commitment to surrender their weapons and reintegrate into civilian life.
- 3) To show the reaction of the Colombian population towards the historic change that the signing of the peace agreement brought to the country, and how it represented a departure from the traditional way of addressing social conflicts."

Although my initial motivation as a filmmaker was to focus on the problems and risks that the peace agreement faced. I wanted to explore the Fariano Ethos. The group's members saw

themselves as soldiers fighting for a cause rather than as criminals or terrorists. The FARC placed great emphasis on collective decision-making and discipline, and their members lived in communal settings where they shared resources and worked together towards common goals. The Fariano ethos also encompassed a deep connection to Colombia's rural communities and a commitment to defend their rights and interests.

"I was particularly interested in the "Veredal Zones," also known as Territorial Training and Reincorporation Spaces (ETCR). These areas are designated for the reintegration of FARC ex-combatants into civilian life as part of the peace agreement, with the aim of promoting their transition to a peaceful and productive life. This fascinating mission has taken us over two years and has allowed me to learn about their habits, life stories, cultural symbols, and witness the interesting socio-political dynamics of the FARC community."

Gustavo Fernández

DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Since 1990 Gustavo Fernández has achieved national and international recognition for the documentaries that he has directed, photographed and produced. *De(s)amparo-Polifonía familiar* received a National Audiovisual Award Honorable Mention in 2004. *El diablo y la rumba* was released in Colombia, France and the United States in 1991.

Gustavo has a Master's degree in Documentary and Ethnographic Filmmaking from the Paris Nanterre University. He studied cinematography studies at The Institut National Supérieur des Arts in Brussels and Industrial Engineering, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Medellín.

Gustavo has been an Associate Professor of the Arts for more than 15 years at the National University, Bogotá and was the director of the Film and Television Department. He has published articles in books and magazines and given lectures at national and international events. Gustavo was invited to be a member of the jury in national documentary filmmaking competitions in Colombia, at the National Film Council (CNCINE) in Ecuador, and at the Audiovisual Fund of Chile. Gustavo Fernández is a founder and member of ALADOS, the Documentary Filmmakers Association of Colombia.

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Production and Direction: Gustavo Fernández V.

Cast:

William Sánchez Sánchez ('Faber')
Isabel San Roque
Bladimir López S. (Luis David)
Yeison Fabián Díaz D.
Janeth (Jhoana Omaira Gómez)
Luz Mery López (Valentina Beltrán)
Blanca Rosa Paez
Rosa Cilia Sánchez P.
María Elizabeth Durán
María del Tránsito Granados.

Director of Photography: Gustavo Fernández Vega.

Sound Engineers: Sara Fernández M.,
Diana Martínez M.

Editor: Carlos Serna Lozano.

Sound Post-Production: Guateque Cine SAS.

Sound Editor: Diana Martínez Muñoz.

Sound Mixer: José Delgadillo Gaviria.

Colorist: Miguel Araya (Chilean).

Sound Design: Diana Martínez Muñoz
José Delgadillo Gaviria.

Graphic Designer: Alejandra Bernal.

Script and Research: Gustavo Fernández V.

Associate Producer: Guateque Cine SAS.

Distributor: Danta Cine.