

IFC Film presents

UNA NOCHE

Written and directed by
Lucy Mulloy

IFC Feature Film

Best New Narrative Feature Director, Best Actor, and Best Cinematography
Tribeca Film Festival

Grand Jury Prize, Deauville American Film Festival

Best Script, Athens International Film Festival

Best Script, Brasilia International Film Festival

Gotham Independent Film Award - euphoria Calvin Klein Women Filmmakers



BEST SCRIPT



GRAND JURY PRIZE



BEST NEW DIRECTOR
BEST ACTOR
BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY



BEST SCRIPT

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UNA NOCHE TECHNICAL DETAILS

Cuba/UK/USA, 2012, Colour, Drama

Language: **Spanish with English Subtitles**

Running Time: **88 minutes**

Screen Format: **35 mm**

Aspect Ratio: **1:185**

CREW

Lucy Mulloy	Writer/Director
Mark Nichols	Executive Producer
Lucy Mulloy	Producer
Daniel Mulloy	Producer
Maite Artieda	Producer
Sandy Pérez Águila	Producer
Yunior Santiago	Producer
Trevor Stuart Forrest	Director of Photography
Shlomo Godder	Director of Photography
Lucy Mulloy	Camera Operator
Cindy Lee	Editor
Laura Huston	Production Designer
Yinka Graves	Art Director
John Paul Burgess	Art Director

Tom Wilkinson	Focus Puller
Ernesto Calzado	Camera Assistant
Jesús Miguel Dávila Mejía	Assistant Director
Liuda Motes Lado	Casting Assistant
Miriam Rodríguez Debasa	Production Manager
Jorge Carlos Milanés Moreno	Line Producer / Location Manager
Andre Des Rochers	Legal Consultan

KEY CREW Bio

DANIEL MULLOY (Producer, b.1977) is a filmmaker and visual artist. He studied fine art in London and New York. Mulloy's works have been broadcast, screened, and exhibited worldwide on visual art platforms and cinematic release. His films have premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. They have won many awards at festivals including Melbourne, Hamburg, Oberhausen, Krakow, Clermont-Ferrand and Edinburgh International Film Festivals. Mulloy has also won the British Independent Film Award (BIFA) and the British Academy Film Award (BAFTA) and was also nominated for the European Academy Film Award (EFA).

MAITE ARTIEDA (Producer, b. 1984) graduated with a degree in Media and Communications. She began her work in film commercial production and short films. Artieda also works at the San Sebastian Film Festival. In 2008, Maite became involved in *Una Noche* as a production assistant but was such an amazing asset to the team that she was asked to become a producer. After *Una Noche* she founded the production company "Primera Luz," which now has various projects in development.

SANDY PEREZ AGUILA (Producer, b. 1981) Sandy's mother used to leave him at the cinema when she went to work at the hospital when he was a child, planting the seed for his love of film. Born and raised in Havana, Cuba, he studied in Norway and at the International School of Cinema, Television and Video of San Antonio de los Baños, Cuba's acclaimed film school. He has worked on various short films and adverts, and has been involved with *Una Noche* since its inception.

YUNIOR SANTIAGO (Producer, b. 1982) Born in Holguin, Yunior was the first Cuban to be awarded a scholarship to leave Cuba to attend Westminster College. He was invited to become a member of the Association Cubana Del Audiovisual where his career in film began. Yunior is renowned for his natural talent for diplomacy, which earned him the reputation as one of Havana's most sought after producers. He is now working in the US.

CINDY LEE (Editor, b. 1979) is a New York-based editor working in documentary and narrative film. Her editing credits include: *We're Not Broke*, premiering in U.S. Documentary Competition at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival; *Hot Coffee*, which premiered at Sundance in 2011 and was broadcast on HBO; the Oscar-nominated *No End In Sight*, which won the Sundance Special Jury Prize and New York Film Critics Circle

Best Documentary in 2007. She was an assistant editor on *Half Nelson*, directed by Ryan Fleck.

TREVOR FORREST (Director of Photography, b. 1971) is a cinematographer working in London. His résumé includes the horror/comedy *Tormented* with director Jon Wright; *Someone Else* with writer/director Col Spector; and *Huge*, starring Noel Clarke, Thandie Newton and Johnny Harris. With his background as a painter, Forrest has a sensitivity for the composition and details in a narrative.

SHLOMO GODDER (Director of Photography, b. 1974) is a cinematographer who lives and works in New York City. He launched his career as director of photography on more than 20 short films, as well as numerous commercials, music videos, and feature films. Notable artists and clients he's worked with include: Herman Miller, Lexus, Land Rover, Philip Glass, MTV, Beyonce, and Fifty Cent. He earned an MFA in Directing/ Cinematography from New York University's Graduate Film School, under the tutelage of Declan Quinn and Sandy Sissle.

LAURA HUSTON (Production Designer, b. 1981) *Una Noche* is Huston's first feature film as production designer. Previously she completed a BA in Spatial Design at Chelsea College of Art & Design in London. She has worked on various music videos and film sets including the features *Sweeny Todd* and *Horrid Henry*. Laura lived in Cuba for three months before *Una Noche* was shot.

SYNOPSIS

Trapped in the nervous desperation of Havana, Raul dreams of escaping to Miami. When accused of assault, his only option is to flee. He begs his best friend, Elio, to abandon everything and help him reach the forbidden land, 90 miles across the ocean. Elio's commitment is tested when he is torn between protecting his beloved twin sister, Lila, and his own secret desire to be with Raul. All three struggle with their commitment to family, but each has a burning motivation to pursue a dream. Brimming with the electric energy of Havana's restless youth in the sun-bleached capital, *Una Noche* follows one sweltering day, full of hope and fraught with tension that burns to a shocking climax.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When I was twenty-one, I moved to Havana. I was completely taken by the architecture, the energy of the city, the openness of the people I met, and the incredible quality of the natural light. I rented a small room in Vedado next door to my friend. From my first day there, I was struck by how I'd never seen Havana in a movie, and I remember thinking that it would be amazing to see a movie made there. This was before film school, and before I had thought of the story for *Una Noche*.

While there, repeatedly I was told of people leaving Cuba on homemade rafts, risking everything. Almost everyone to whom I spoke, seemed to know someone who had gone or attempted to leave. I was told of mothers who had left their children, husbands who left their wives. Some made it, but many disappeared or washed up further down the shore, sometimes alive, but often not.

DIRECTOR'S Bio

LUCY MULLOY is a Student Academy Award-nominated writer/director. She graduated from Oxford in Politics, Philosophy, and Economics and from NYU's Graduate Film Division. Mulloy was included in *IndieWIRE's On the Rise: 10 Directors of the Future 2012* and *Una Noche*, her first feature, premiered at the Berlinale to critical acclaim and was a finalist for the Teddy Award. *Una Noche* will be released in the US by IFC in the New Year and has swept the international festival circuit winning awards including Best New Narrative Director, Best Actor, and Best Cinematography at the Tribeca Film Festival, Best Script at the Brasilia and at the Athens International Film Festivals, and the Grand Jury Prize at Deauville American Film Festival. *Una Noche* won the Spike Lee Production Grant, Hollywood Foreign Press Association Grant, Tribeca Film Institute Creative Promise Emerging Narrative Award, Adrienne Shelly Foundation/IFP Director's Grant, and a Gotham Independent Film Euphoria Calvin Klein grant for women filmmakers. Lucy is currently developing her next feature film in NYC.

ABOUT THE CAST

All three are first time actors who worked in training workshops in Havana with the director for a year before shooting began. The Berlinale Festival marked not only their

first festival appearance, but also the first time any of them had left Cuba. It has been a life changing experience for everyone.

DARRIEL ARRECHAGA (Raúl) is a 25-year-old from Havana, Cuba. He is a trained musician, having studied percussion since the age of ten. Mulloy met him when she was handing out casting notices next to his music school. Immediately upon meeting him, Mulloy knew she had found Raúl. Despite having never acted, he was a natural for the part.

JAVIER NUNEZ FLORIAN (Elio) is a 20-year-old Havana native. He attended culinary school and was training to become a chef. He submitted his photo along with hundreds of other high school students. When he auditioned, he was incredibly shy, but he stunned the director with his presence and innate natural ability.

ANAILIN DE LA RUA DE LA TORRE (Lila), now 20, was a Taekwondo champion in Havana; she was training when she was discovered at the beach by a casting assistant. When she auditioned with Dariel, both he and Mulloy felt the connection and instantly determined that she was the one to play Lila.



PRESS NOTES:

What was the genesis of the idea for *Una Noche*?

The film is inspired by true events. A young boy on the Malecon (Havana's sea front) told me the story of three of his friends who left on a raft. I could not get his story out of my head. The script for *Una Noche* was also motivated by the feeling of being stifled and suppressed, by the desire to get away and realize a dream, to risk everything, and at the same time feel the conflicting emotions of being tied to family and the familiarity of home.

Is this your first feature?

Yes. I had previously completed short films at NYU. The school was great in the sense that they throw you a camera, a roll of film and let you out into the streets of NYC to shoot. In graduate school I got to work on my friends' movies in various capacities. *Una Noche* is also my thesis for NYU. It was initially written as a short film, but the story developed into a feature once I moved to Havana and spent time there.

How did you raise money for the film?

Funding came from a variety of different sources. Initial investment came after I met with a friend from college, Mark Nichols. I was telling him about what I had been working on. He is a film fan and wanted to get involved with the movie immediately. He helped raise the basic funds. *Una Noche* was also supported through a number of grants. Attending the IFP and Tribeca All Access labs was crucial in helping the movie develop and gain attention. We were also able to use facilities at NYU to edit. A lot of the support for *Una Noche* came through in-kind industry sponsors such as Kodak, who gave us 35mm film. Arri Media and Clairmont Camera supported us with cameras; Trew Audio microphones. We got flights from Cubana because we had to fly all our film stock out of the country, as there is no lab in Havana. Without all of this support there would be no movie.

How did you go about casting the film?

We started casting by following the traditional route to find young talent, through acting schools and Cuban TV, but most of the actors we saw were mainly trained for theater and I was looking for subtle, real sensibilities. We started street casting; we went to every high school, beach, concert, party, cinema and ice cream parlor with flyers. Thousands of people came to audition. Every weekend we had a line down the high street of young people waiting to try out for *Una Noche*. Every person who came did an improvisation. I interviewed everyone. I was also on the lookout for additional and supporting characters. We had a lot of really talented people come in.

Some of the other actors in the film were found through street casting. I saw María Adelaida Méndez Bonet, who plays Raúl's mother, arguing at the market and I approached her. I met Lachi, who plays Cristal, the transvestite with whom Raúl

gets involved, through going out onto the streets at 3am for weeks and meeting people. I auditioned many actors for the role of the chef, but I realized I was looking for someone exactly like Dariel's (Raul's) real father. He auditioned and initially was not very comfortable, but after many rehearsals he became a natural and embodied the role. I like the fact that Dariel is playing against his real father in the movie. For each of the three main actors, I knew immediately that we had found the characters as soon as I saw them. I met Dariel (Raúl) at the entrance of his school. He was surrounded by a group of girls and I gave him a casting flyer. It was clear to me then that he was Raúl, and three auditions later I gave him the part. Anailin (Lila) was spotted on the beach by our casting assistant, Betty. We asked Anailin to come in and audition alongside Dariel who had, by that stage, met practically every girl in Havana. Anailin had this incredible natural ability, and she was exactly what we were looking for in terms of looks and personality. As she auditioned, Dariel and I looked at each other, and without exchanging any words, we both just knew that she was Lila. After casting Lila, we needed another actor who resembled her and could play her brother. After sorting through many photos taken by Sandy, our producer, and the other casting assistants, I came upon Javier's (Elio); he stood out in his photo with his collar popped, and his charisma was clear even in his snapshot.

How did you research the process of illegally leaving Cuba?

I spoke to a lot of people. For example, when we were casting the role of Lila and Elio's father, one actor came in to audition and the first thing he asked me was when we were going to shoot the film. I told him that we were planning to start filming in three months. He looked concerned and went silent. He glimpsed at the raft we had stored in the office and said really quietly that he was making his own raft and would be leaving before we shot the movie. He gave us advice on how to make it and on what they would take with them on the boat. We did not see him again and I do not know if he made it. There were others who left when we were in pre-production. We were tracking down a young reggaeton artist named Elvis Manuel to do a song for the movie, but he left before we got to talk and passed away at sea. It is harrowing to know that people are leaving like this all the time.

What was it like shooting in Cuba?

There were difficulties, but in so many ways shooting in Havana was an amazing experience. People were really supportive and worked hard to ensure that things worked out. So many of the moments that I appreciate in the movie I owe to chance and to a flexible crew who were open to change and to embrace what was happening in the streets around them. There was no single day that went as scheduled. All the shots with the police car chases were off-the-cuff, spontaneous moments where the police agreed to the scene on the spot. I asked them to chase Raúl and they did it. We only had one take, though, because they had to go back to their real jobs.

Any particular difficulties during production?

We had to bring everything into Cuba. Maite, one of the producers, and myself filled half the plane's overhead lockers on a London to Havana flight with 90

heavy cans of film stock. Many of these constraints forced us to get creative. We did not have a steadicam or a dolly so we used my roller blades. We dismantled a car so we could shoot out of the side doors and then took out the windscreen so we could shoot Lila running. All the actors did their own stunts - on the rooftop, the biking, the ocean, etc. Initially we did not have an underwater camera, so our cinematographer, Trevor Forrest, constructed a periscope to shoot under water. On the second shoot, we had an underwater camera but the specialist shooter got held up; Daniel Mulloy learned to scuba dive in half an hour to get the shots.

In general there were other challenges. We were working without cell phones and with frequent blackouts. Between our cars breaking down, monsoon rains, lost passports, and crew members who became ill during the shoot, we had to be prepared at all times. We literally had one ton of equipment, which we had to take to Cuba as luggage. We did everything humanly possible to prevent any of these limitations from deviating us from the vision. Nothing was cut from the script because it could not be done. The actors rose to the challenge and production made it happen. We had car chases, stunts, multiple locations, underwater shots, sharks, a huge number of extras and very elaborate scenes. We did not compromise anything in *Una Noche*, which required a massive amount of work, focus, and collaboration from the whole cast and crew.

How did you find your locations?

We spent a year scouting locations, knocking on people's doors and finding corners of Havana that had not been shot before. A lot of the location work also became woven into the script and helped make it more site specific. We discovered some amazing abandoned buildings and rooftops with incredible vantage points. I wanted to let the visual imagery of Havana to speak for itself, almost like a character in the movie.

Any stories or anecdotes that stand out from production?

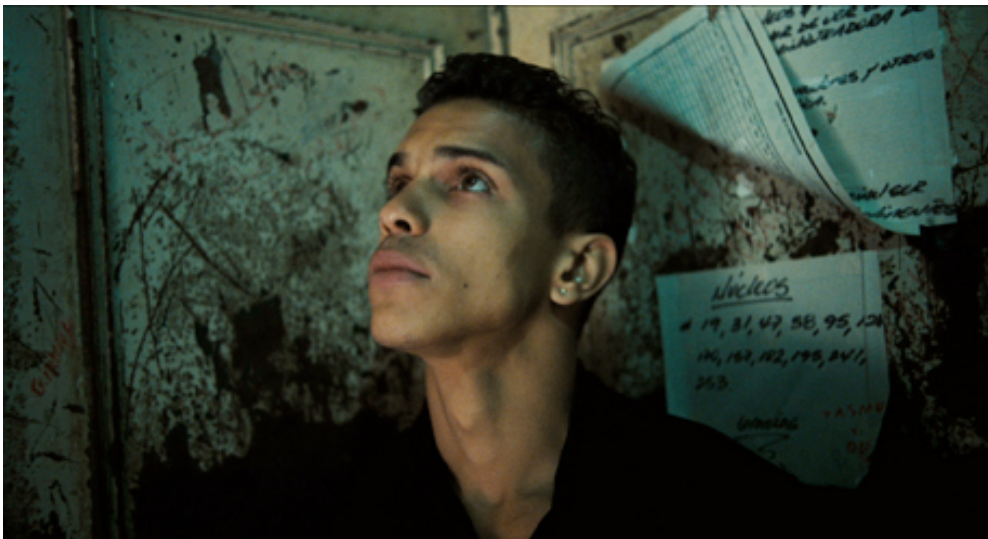
We were shooting pickups on the beach one day with the raft when suddenly twenty military men in fatigues carrying AKs crawled out of the bushes. An informant had tipped the Coast Guard that someone was attempting to illegally leave the country. We had to explain the raft was just a prop.

How did you come by the original music in the film?

Initially we were so wound up in the shoot that we did not have a song for the cabaret scene in the movie. I sat down and wrote the lyrics. I made up a melody and was lucky enough to collaborate with the legendary Anais Abreau and some of Cuba's best musicians like Rolando Luna on recording the song. We had to record fast as Anais had to sing it in the movie and the scene was scheduled to shoot the next day. I also got to work with great Cuban voices like Waldo Mendosa. It was fun because we were recording salsa, reggaeton, rap, and jazz. All are original music and lyrics inspired by the story of *Una Noche*. It was an amazing privilege to work with such talented musicians, rappers and singers.

Did the actors have any difficulties during production?

We were very fortunate in our casting, that even though we worked with first-time actors, they showed real professionalism and maturity. The shoot was a very difficult time for the actors. Anailín was dealing with her parents' divorce, and María Adelaida Méndez Bonet, who plays Raúl's mother, also faced a tragedy during filming when her son was arrested for murder. We were also grieving during the shoot as Javier's father passed away the week before we began to film. He was extremely strong and brave, and both the cast and crew were really supportive.



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