

SARA ANTÓNIO

EZEQUIEL GARIBAY

JULIA GRUPIŃSKA

BOKANG KOATJA

TIAN WESTRAAD

PRESSKIT

EL OMBLIGO DE LA LUNA



GOBELINS
— PARIS —



Logline

When his long estranged son shows up at his doorstep, Chava, a Mexican mechanic, must take him to the moon in order to fulfill his late mother's last wish.



Synopsis

Chava is a struggling mechanic living in Guadalajara amidst the 90's economic crisis in Mexico. As he is about to get his precious Volkswagen beetle repossessed he gets an unexpected visit from his son, Nacho. He carries his mother's ashes in his arms and demands his father to take them to the navel of the moon as this was his mother's last wish. Chava, at first reluctant, refuses but when Nacho presents him with a large sum of money he has a change of heart.

They drive on the moon in his old, red beetle. Nacho makes sure his mother feels comfortable in the back seat and opens up a fruit juice to keep himself entertained. Chava, worried that he might stain the seats, abruptly stops the car and asks him to get out. Once outside, Chava tries to convince Nacho that taking him to the moon was enough. While father and son have an argument about whether or not they should go to the navel of the moon, the car starts slowly sliding downhill. When they realize the car is moving they try to chase it but to no avail.

They walk for a long time following the car's trails on the moon's surface, but as they enter the dark side of the moon, it gets colder. Chava suggests they take some rest and light up a fire to keep them warm.

When they are standing next to the fire Nacho asks his father why he didn't live with him and his mother, Chava tries to avoid the question by asking him to go to sleep. Nacho insists in the conversation and asks what will happen if the car never stops to which Chava jokingly responds that the car will eventually go around and hopefully, it won't run them over, lightening the mood.

The next day, both father and son are walking side by side while Nacho talks about football when they come across a giant crater on the horizon. They see a light blinking and realize it is the car at the bottom of the crater. Nacho runs downhill immediately calling for his mother and Chava follows him, jumping and falling down the crater walls. Chava then finds his car destroyed and he quickly enters a state of rage, yelling for Nacho while searching for him. When he finds him, however, he sees Nacho holding back his tears, trying to desperately reassemble the broken urn and gather his mother's ashes that are now mixed with the lunar dust. He approaches Nacho, holds his hands, and tells him that his mother is gone and that he has to let her go. Nacho breaks down into tears and Chava embraces him.

While still hugging, Chava looks around and realizes they must be in the navel of the moon. He comforts Nacho and congratulates him. They then flip the car together, and because of the moon's gravity, it jumps into the air and slowly lands back on the moon's surface. With some broken pieces and a few scratches, the car is now moving again. Inside, Nacho and Chava are drinking fruit juice each as they head back home to Earth.



The Directors



Sara ANTÓNIO

I am a recent graduate of the Master in Character Animation and Animated Filmmaking at Gobelins Paris and I have over a year of experience in the animation film industry, mainly as a 2D animator. I am starting my career as a production coordinator after managing a 2022 Annecy festival opening video "Silvesterklaus". I have a passion for supporting projects and artists, as well as organizing a team, meeting new people, and traveling around to find new animation projects that will welcome me aboard.



Tian WESTRAAD

I am a recent graduate from Gobelins, l'école de l'image where I obtained a master's degree in Character Animation and Animated Filmmaking. Before studying at Gobelins I worked in the animation industry for two years as a character animator. I had the privilege of working on exciting original feature films as well as television series for Netflix, Dreamworks, and Disney respectively. At Gobelins I went on to co-directed an Annecy opening film titled "Schwing!" as well as a short film "El Ombligo de la Luna".



Julia GRUPIŃSKA

2D animator and story artist from Poland, during two years of studies in Gobelins Paris, co-directed "Watch Closely", an animated opening for Annecy Festival 2022, and "El Ombligo de la Luna", a graduation movie to obtain a master's degree in Character Animation and Animated Filmmaking. Before that worked for a year in the Polish animation industry and co-directed a stop-motion puppet animated movie to obtain a bachelor's degree.



Ezequiel GARIBAY

Studied a bachelor's in Animation Production at CAAV in Guadalajara, Mexico. Worked at Platypus Animation doing character animation and design for advertisement and TV, as well as other projects like the 34th Guadalajara Film Festival opening short and the feature film 'Los Lobos' (2019). Worked at Mako Animation doing character animation for TV. Studied a master in Character Animation and Animated Filmmaking at Gobelins in Paris thanks to the Animéxico scholarship, and co-directed the 2022 Annecy Festival opening film 'Schwing!' as well as the short film 'El Ombligo de la Luna.' Collaborated in character design and concept art for the opening short film 'Kikiriki' for the 2023 Annecy Festival.



Bokang KOATJA

I'm a South African animator and director with 7 years of experience working as a 3D generalist and a character animator in 3D and 2D animation. I've also worked as a visual development trainer, leading interns through animation film projects while teaching them about the process of making an animated film. I'm also a writer and in 2020 I was awarded the grand prize of the Digital Lab Africa competition which was a one-month residency at Ciclic Animation in Vendôme to work on the development of my short film Mannerisms. I have since completed my Master of Arts in Animation and Animated Filmmaking at Gobelins Paris and am working towards directing my first short film.



Frequently Asked Questions


How did the story come to be?

We all wanted to tell a story that felt universal but still kept the inspiration from our own lives. Since we all came from very different countries and backgrounds, the story originated from a mix of personal experiences and touched on themes like empathy, forgiveness, and grief. We chose Mexican characters not only because we felt that the story matched a reality that is very present in Mexico, but also because of the history of the magic realism genre in Latin America and the ancient folklore strongly connected with the moon and poetic tales.


Why the title “El Ombligo de la Luna”?

El Ombligo de la Luna translated in English as The Navel of the Moon was the title we chose for our short film. While at first, we felt the need for a specific location on the moon for the story to move forward, the term “Navel of the Moon” was actually coined by the Aztec Empire, in the náhuatl language, meaning Mexico, based on a legend of the creation of Mexico City. Being that the moon is also strongly connected with the mother figure of the film we felt it was the perfect combination to create a title full of symbolism.

What were your inspirations?



For the story, we took not only inspiration from our personal experiences but also from a lot of movies and books we enjoyed. The magic realism literature and cinematography, especially from Latin America, played a major part as a genre reference as we felt it perfectly matched our intention of directing a movie that would both deal with sensitive issues with a subtle and poetic approach. For our visual style, the characters had a lot of inspiration taken from tv series and Ghibli films since it kept a simple style while still allowing a lot of flexibility for expressivity. As for the backgrounds, we had plenty of references going from Mexican traditional tapestry to UPA stylization techniques.





Credits

Directors/ Conception/ Writing/ Animation/ Compositing

Sara ANTÓNIO
Ezequiel GARIBAY
Julia GRUPIŃSKA
Bokang KOATJA
Tian WESTRAAD

Voices

Clementina GARCÍA
Ezequiel GARIBAY
María Fernanda TERRAZAS

Sound designer
Mathieu TIGER

Sound Engineer
Clément NALINE
Mathieu TIGER

Foley
Christophe BURDET

Mix
Mathieu TIGER

Original Music
Aldo MARTÍNEZ

Color Grading
David CHANTOISEAU

Additional Animation

Santiago ARÉAN
Oscar BARON
João BUOSI
Carla SAMPAIO DA SILVA

Additional Background Paint

Megan BENNION
Cristina GANUSCIAC
Quique GAROS
Vega LÁZARO
Justyna PIENIAZEK
Julie JARRIER-STETTIN
Vedushi SINHA
Gavin WYNFORD

Additional Clean-up and Paint

Weronica CHOROŚ
David DIAS
Aleksandra KORNAŚ
Hélène KSIEZAK
Chloé LECLERC
Monika MADRAK
Júlia MORGAN
Tshegofatso Tracy PITSENG
Kleanthi TSELENTIS

Additional help

Kandy GARCÍA

Ram TAMEZ

Technical sheet

Title

El Ombligo de la Luna

Year of production

2023

Genre

7'36"

Language

Spanish

Subtitles

Spanish (CC)

French

English

Polish

Portuguese

Afrikaans

Technique

2D Computer Animation

Format

1.77.1 (16/9)

Sound

5.1; Stereo

Genre

Comedy Drama; Magic Realism



Contacts

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