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# Querido trópico

**PAULINA  
GARCÍA**

**JENNY  
NAVARRETE**

UNA PELÍCULA DE  
**ANA ENDARA**



# QUERIDO TRÓPICO

## BELOVED TROPIC

2024

Panamá - Colombia

108 min. / Spanish - English subtitles

1:66 / DCP / Color / 5.1 Sound

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Ministerio del Turismo  
Ministerio de la Cultura, del Patrimonio y del Deporte

### FiGa Films

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## LOGLINE

In Panama City, a Colombian immigrant employed as a home health aide, who harbors a secret, develops a touching and unexpected bond with a strong-willed, wealthy businesswoman struggling with encroaching dementia.

## SYNOPSIS

Set in Panama City, this tender and atmospheric drama explores the evolving relationship between two dissimilar lonely souls who develop a touching and unexpected bond. Ana María, a Colombian immigrant, employed as a home caregiver and harboring a secret, crosses paths with Mercedes, a high-class woman (played by acclaimed Chilean actress Paulina García, known for her role in *Gloria*), who is grappling with encroaching dementia that is slowly erasing her identity and past.

As their lives intertwine, they embark on a journey of mutual discovery and support, delving into the fraught complexities of mother-daughter relationships. Together, they navigate the challenges of caregiving and the profound need for connection, learning to survive and care for one another amid their personal struggles.



## CREDITS

### DIRECTOR

Ana Endara

### WRITERS

Ana Endara

Pilar Moreno

### PRODUCERS

Isabella Gálvez

Joan Gómez Endara

### PRODUCTION COMPANY

Mente Pública

Big Sur Productions

Mansa Productora

### IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Fondo Cine de Panamá

Ministerio de Cultura

FDC

Su Mirada IFF Panamá

Cine en Construcción

### CINEMATOGRAPHER

Nicolás Wong Díaz (CCR)

### EDITOR

Bertrand Conard

### PRODUCTION DESIGN

Oso Daniel Rincón

### SOUND DESIGNER

Carlos García

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

*Querido Trópico* arises from my personal reflections on inescapable situations in life. The film explores the need to care for the parents who took care of us and the possibility of seeing them turn into children while reflecting on our difficulty in taking care of ourselves as we age. Additionally, it addresses various experiences of motherhood, including the longing for an unconceived motherhood, in a context where, in our societies, especially in Latin America, a woman without children is considered by many to be incomplete.

Both protagonists live in a Panama marked by inequality. Although they come from different worlds—one is an immigrant without family or support, and the other is a high-society lady—they share a loneliness that grows over time. Their isolations connect and build this story, bringing them closer and revealing two sides of the same dark reality: we live in an increasingly cold and cruel society, where alienation prevails and there is no space for mutual care. In this world, Ana María and Mercedes meet and create a bond, forming a loving sisterhood that would be impossible under any other circumstances.

Their bond allows them to find humor and laugh amidst their distress. *Querido Trópico* is a luminous drama with a tropical texture, full of unexpected moments, much like the changing Panamanian weather. Through this film, I wanted to portray the encounter between two women who are separated by everything, or almost everything.

In Panama, the most humane and important jobs are not necessarily the best paid or valued; I am referring to jobs that involve, for example, caring for others or teaching. Care work is performed by people in vulnerable situations, who are often paid less or offered poor working conditions. These people are, in many cases, migrants. Despite Panama being historically a crossing for many migrants, foreigners often do not have their rights recognized, and we can be a very xenophobic society.

Having worked in documentary filmmaking for several years now, I started to think about making a narrative feature film when imagining the encounter between these two very

different characters who, at the same time, had something in common, which gave them the opportunity to share each other's company. I think what I brought from documentary to fiction is the ability to leave space to allow unexpected things to creep in.

In documentaries, you prepare a lot and then leave room for reality to surprise you. Here, that "surprise" is provided by the actresses. I am referring, for example, to the rewriting that arises from the work they contributed in the joint readings, rehearsals, and even at the time of filming. We were always open to exploring other paths if what was in the script was not working.

I did not have Paulina García or Jenny Navarrete in mind while I was writing the first versions of my film. However, once Paulina joined the project, we went through a rewriting process to adapt the character of Mercedes to her. With Paulina's help, we carried out the final casting process to find the right person to play Ana María. I wanted her to participate in this part of the process because I knew that the chemistry between the two was essential to the story we wanted to tell. This has been my first experience working with actresses, and I am very grateful and happy for the opportunity since they are all incredible actresses, with an admirable level of work and commitment.

I always find inspiration in Céline Sciamma's films, especially in how she approaches her female characters and emphasizes "the female gaze." And, in thinking about the character of a woman in the process of deterioration, I was struck by the short film *I'm Not From Here* by Maite Alberdi and the short story *La respiración cavernaria* (The cavernous breathing) by Argentine writer Samanta Schweblin. It was also important for me to read the reflections on memory in *Journal de confinement* (Confinement Diary) by Canadian-Lebanese writer Wajdi Mouawad. I was helped in creating the role of Ana María by the dignity of two characters: the nanny Louise in Leila Slimani's novel *Lullaby* and Alma in Paul Thomas Anderson's film *The Phantom Thread*. During editing, reading Rick Rubin's *The Creative Act: A Way of Being* was invaluable, especially his advice to embrace mystery and uncertainty as essential parts of creativity.



## CAST BIOS

### PAULINA GARCÍA / MERCEDES

Paulina is an acclaimed Chilean actress, known for her versatility and talent in theater and film. She achieved international recognition for her role in *Gloria* (2013), directed by Sebastián Lelio, for which she won the Silver Bear for Best Actress at the Berlin Film Festival. She has participated in films such as *Illiterate* and *The Desert Bride*. She has also worked in television series, establishing herself as one of the most important actresses in Chile.

### JULIETTE ROY / JIMENA

Juliette is a Panamanian actress, producer, and theater director with an extensive background in performing arts and audiovisual media. She has starred in the short film *God is in the Breath* by Marcela Heilbron and has produced and starred in successful musicals such as *Next to Normal* and *Querido Evan Hansen*. She is also part of the cast of *Querido Trópico*, an upcoming feature film directed by Ana Endara that will premiere at TIFF 2024.

### JENNY NAVARRETE / ANA MARÍA

Jenny is a leading actress known for her roles in *Others* directed by Óscar Campo (Colombia), and *Behind You* directed by Tito Jara (Ecuador). She also played leading roles in *Los Funerales* by Óscar Campo and *The Other Son (Hijo)* by director Juan Sebastián Quebrada, which premiered at San Sebastián 2023. *The Other Son* represented Colombia in the category of Best Ibero-American Film at the Goya Awards 2023.

# CREW BIOS

## ANA ENDARA / CO-WRITER & DIRECTOR

Ana has directed four feature-length documentaries, *Querido Trópico* is her debut feature fiction film. Additionally, she works as a videographer at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences from Florida State University (Panama Canal Branch) and studied Film Directing at the International Film and Television School in Cuba (EICTV).

**2024** - *Beloved Tropic* (fiction)

**2021** - *For Your Peace Of Mind, Make Your Own Museum*  
Directed with Pilar Moreno (documentary)

**2016** - *The Joy Of Sound* (documentary)

**2013** - *Majesty* (documentary)

**2007** - *Curundú* (documentary)

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## PILAR MORENO / CO-WRITER

Pilar is a visual artist who graduated as a psychiatrist in Madrid, specializing in art therapy and narrative practices, and she is also a director and screenwriter. *For Your Peace of Mind, Make Your Own Museum* is her first documentary project, which premiered in competition at IDFA 2021 and received several awards, including the Grand Prix at Festival Millenium Bruselas 2022, Best Film at the Festival Internacional de Cine de Costa Rica, CRFIC 2022, Best Photography at Guadalajara FICG 2022, and Best Sound Design at Mumbai International Film Festival 2022. The film was also an official selection at Hot Docs, DOC NYC, and many other prestigious festivals.

## ISABELLA GÁLVEZ / PRODUCER

Isabella is a Panamanian producer whose works have been released in theaters and recognized at prestigious festivals worldwide. Her latest feature, *Querido Trópico*, directed by Ana Endara, will premiere at TIFF and Horizontes Latinos at San Sebastián in September 2024. Notable productions and international co-productions include *Sister & Sister* (SXSW, Best Iberoamerican Film at Málaga); *For Your Peace of Mind, Make Your Own Museum* (IDFA, awards at Festival Millenium, CRFIC, Guadalajara, and Mumbai); *The Joy of Sound* (IDFA 2016); *Aurora* (IFFR); and *God is a Woman* (Venice).

## NICOLÁS WONG DÍAZ / CINEMATOGRAPHER

Nicolás has worked as a cinematographer on over 21 feature films across Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, the United States, Cuba, Peru, Bolivia, and Panama. His films have been showcased at major international festivals and award events, including the Festival de Cannes, Directors' Fortnight, Un Certain Regard, Camerimage, Locarno, Sundance, the Golden Globes, San Sebastian, Venice, and TIFF. Nicolás is a voting member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) and a founding member of the Costa Rican Society of Cinematographers (CCR). He has won the Costa Rica National Culture Award three times: in 2016 for *The Sound of Things*, in 2020 for *La Llorona*, and in 2022 for *I Have Electric Dreams*, *La Picada*, and *Domingo and the Mist*.

## BERTRAND CONARD / EDITOR

After earning a Master's in Ethics, Bertrand began working for a funeral enterprise in Brussels. This profound experience led him to pursue a career in cinema. In 2013, he enrolled at INSAS, where he edited Valentina Maurel's *Paul est là* (First Prize Cinéfondation, Cannes). Since then, he has edited several shorts and feature films, including *I Have Electric Dreams* (Best Director, Actor, and Actress, Locarno 2022) and *Baloji's Omen* (Cannes 2023), for which he received an Editing Award from the African Movie Academy. In 2024, he was nominated twice for Best Editing at the Belgian Magritte Award.



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