

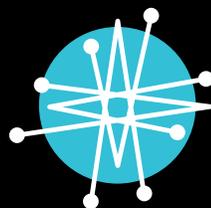


RIGOBERTA MENCHU: DAUGHTER OF THE MAYA

A FILM BY DAWN ENGLE AND IVAN SUVANJIEFF

PRESS KIT

**NOBEL
LEGACY
FILM
SERIES**



PEACEJAM
EST 1996

ABOUT RIGOBERTA MENCHU



“The priests say the new dawn will be like the rain that fertilizes the soil before we begin to plant our corn. It will renew the natural cycle of life. The Mayan people will once again flourish. I believe in this very strongly. The holy men say we are entering a period of clarity. We are rediscovering our Mayan values.”

Rigoberta Menchú Tum was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 in recognition of her work for social justice and ethno-cultural reconciliation work based on respect for the rights of indigenous peoples in her native Guatemala. She is the first indigenous person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 2007, Rigoberta ran for Presidency of Guatemala with Encuentro por Guatemala in 2007. Subsequently, Rigoberta made important contributions in spearheading the first indigenous party in Guatemala, and garnering enough votes to make her WINAQ party official, and ran again for President with this party in 2011. Despite the fact that she was not elected, she remains a steadfast presence in Guatemalan politics and the struggle to end impunity.

Rigoberta was born in 1959 to a poor Indian family in the highlands of Guatemala. Like many other countries in the Americas, Guatemala has experienced great tension between the descendants of European immigrants and the native Indian population. The Menchú family experienced extreme hardship as a result of their Mayan background. Rigoberta confronted the oppression faced by her family and her peoples by actively protesting labor and human rights abuses. In 1981 she was forced to seek exile in Mexico, where she became an eloquent defender of the rights and values of indigenous peoples and other victims of government oppression. On several occasions, Rigoberta returned to her home country to plead the cause of the Indian peasants, but death threats forced her back into exile. In 1983, Rigoberta's testimonial book *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, catapulted the plight of indigenous people in Guatemala into global headlines. After receiving the Peace Prize, Rigoberta established the Rigoberta Menchú Tum Foundation which promotes the rights of indigenous people around the world. She is an author of many books and active activist towards working for justice in her native country

SYNOPSIS

The story of an unlikely hero, a poor peasant Maya girl living in a remote section of Guatemala, that survived a genocide and became a voice for her people across the world. "Rigoberta Menchu: Daughter of the Maya" tells the story of a poor peasant girl from Guatemala who became a voice for her people across the world. Raised in the traditions of the Quiche, a branch of the Maya people, Rigoberta Menchu.

Rigoberta and her family, and all the families in the village, including the young children, were forced by economic necessity to work at plantations owned by Guatemala's large landowners. Their working conditions were brutal. They were exposed to poisonous pesticides, young children suffered from malnutrition. Rigoberta's little brother Nicolas, died of hunger on a plantation. It was a devastating life for many families.

While her family struggled to survive, Rigoberta's country struggled also. In 1954, the CIA caused the overthrow of the democratically elected government of Guatemala. They supported an invasion and then urged the Guatemalan army to take power. This sparked over 30 years of dictatorship, war and violence, during which 200,000 Guatemalans were murdered. One of the main targets of the military was the Mayans. They launched a campaign that destroyed 450 Mayan villages, creating 1 million refugees.

This wave of violence hit Rigoberta's village. The army began by setting houses on fire, destroying property and killing animals. The soldiers tried to scare the Mayan people off of their land so that the military and other wealthy people could have it. In spite of the danger, Rigoberta's father organized the community to resist.

The military rulers of Guatemala were ruthless. Rigoberta's family suffered terribly for daring to stand up for their rights. In 1979, her younger brother was kidnapped, tortured, and killed by a military death squad. Then her father was killed during a street protest. Just months later her mother was kidnapped, tortured, raped, mutilated and killed. In total Rigoberta lost both of her parents, two brothers, a sister-in-law, and three nieces and nephews to violence in Guatemala. In the name of her brother, father, mother, and all the Mayan people, Rigoberta vowed to continue working non-violently for the rights of her people. It was only by constantly moving, hiding, and staying with trusted friends that Rigoberta escaped torture and death herself. Finally it became impossible for her to remain in Guatemala since everywhere she went she endangered those who protected her. In 1981 she fled to Mexico.

In exile she became the world spokesperson for the Guatemalan poor, and a powerful voice against the terrible oppression they suffered at the hands of the right-wing military. In 1983 she told her life story to Elisabeth Burgos Debray in a series of interviews. The interviews were translated into English and published as "I, Rigoberta Menchu." and the book drew international attention to the horrors occurring in Guatemala.

In 1992 Rigoberta Menchú Tum was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of her work for the rights of the Maya of Guatemala and native people everywhere. She was the first indigenous person ever to receive the award and one of only a handful of women. She continued a lifelong process of working for justice for her people.

In 1996, all of Rigoberta's non-violent work, along with the struggles of so many other activists, helped lead to a peace accord in Guatemala. This agreement ended Guatemala's 36-year civil war and gave many rights back to the Mayan people.

After the civil war ended, Rigoberta fought to have the Guatemalan political and military establishment tried in a court of law. She knew the trial would never happen in Guatemala, so she took the case to Spanish courts. In December 2006 the Spanish courts called for the extradition of seven former members of the Guatemalan government on charges of torture and genocide against the Mayan people of Guatemala.

In 2007 and 2011, Rigoberta Menchú Tum ran for President of Guatemala, campaigning around the country for the rights of all Guatemalans. Although she did not win, she continues to work for justice and peace for her people.

In 2015, Otto Perez Molina went from President to prison for his role in the massacres and former dictator Efraín Ríos Montt has been tried on charges of genocide.

ABOUT- THE FILMMAKERS



DAWN ENGLE - WRITER/DIRECTOR

Dawn Gifford Engle is an activist and filmmaker, and she has been nominated seventeen times for the Nobel Peace Prize. She directed the award-winning documentary films, "PEACEJAM", "Mayan Renaissance", "Children of the Light", "Rivers of Hope", and "Daughter of the Maya". She also co-authored the book, "PEACEJAM: A Billion Simple Acts of Peace", which was published by Penguin in 2008. She has a background in public service, working 12 years for the U.S. Congress, and she was the youngest woman ever appointed to serve as Chief of Staff for a U.S. Senator. In 1994, Dawn Gifford Engle and Ivan SuvanjiEFF created the PeaceJam Foundation, which has been recognized nationally as an award-winning service learning program, and internationally for excellence in peace education.



IVAN SUVANJIEFF - EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Ivan SuvanjiEFF is an artist and an activist. He was a Detroit punk rock musician (lead singer of the Ramrods) and an editor at CREEM magazine (his work is featured in two recently published books: 'The Best of CREEM' and 'Iggy Pop and the Stooges: The Authorized Biography'). He is well known for his abstract paintings and his literary magazine, 'The New Censorship', with contributing editors Charles Bukowski, Anselm Hollo, Anne Waldman and Andrei Codrescu. He co-created the PeaceJam program, and he has been nominated 15 times for the Nobel Peace Prize. He was the Executive Producer and Director of Photography for the award winning films "PEACEJAM", "Mayan Renaissance", "Children of the Light", "Rivers of Hope", and "Daughter of the Maya". He and his wife Dawn were married by Archbishop Desmond Tutu at Saint Georges Cathedral in Cape Town, South Africa in March 2000.



DAVE WRUCK - CINEMATOGRAPHER

Dave Wruck is an Emmy Award winning editor, with nearly two decades of experience working in both television and documentary film. He has received five Emmy Awards for documentary films he has edited. He has also won many awards at leading film festivals, including Best Documentary Film, Audience Favorite, Jury Award, and Directors Choice. He is a constant traveler as he takes on documentary projects all over the world. Dave Wruck has worked closely with the PeaceJam Foundation film department for ten years.



GIACOMO BOUNAFINA - SOUND DESIGN

Giacomo Buonafina is an award-winning actor, sound engineer, and activist from Guatemala. As an actor he is known for his work with respected directors Carlos García Agraz, Rafael Rosal, and the great Guatemalan director Luiz Tuchán. His indie label, "Primera Generación Records", recorded over 100 albums of local and Central American music and worked with artists to record albums which became fundamental in the post war artistic movement in Central America.



ZABE HOLLOWAY - EDITOR

Elizabeth "Zabe" Holloway has been working professionally in the film production field since 2004. She's an award winning editor, and first began working with the PeaceJam Foundation in 2010 as an Editor for the documentary film "2012: The True Mayan Prophecy" and continued on as Editor and Production Manager for the films "Mayan Renaissance", "Children of the Light", "Rivers of Hope", and "Daughter of the Maya". She is a graduate of the Art Institute of Colorado.

BUDGET

STORY DEVELOPMENT & SCRIPT	\$33,000
DIRECTOR	\$35,000
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY	\$35,000
PRODUCERS	\$35,000
CAST	\$20,000
TOTAL ABOVE THE LINE	\$158,000
GRIP/SET OPERATIONS	\$7,000
CAMERA	\$11,200
PRODUCTION SOUND	\$10,700
TRANSPORTATION	\$41,171
LOCATION & OFFICE EXPENSE	\$5,449
PRODUCTION FILM & LAB	\$2,000
STOCK FOOTAGE	\$23,600
TOTAL PRODUCTION	\$101,120
EDITING STAFF	\$55,500
MUSIC	\$12,000
POST SOUND	\$17,800
POST FILM & LAB	\$31,000
TITLES, OPTICAL, & DIGITAL FX	\$12,750
OTHER DELIVERABLES	\$10,500
OTHER POST COSTS	\$8,000
TOTAL POST-PRODUCTION	\$147,550
PUBLICITY & MARKETING	\$58,000
LEGAL & ACCOUNTING	\$13,000
INSURANCE	\$3,000
GENERAL EXPENSE	\$9,330
TOTAL OTHER	\$83,330
TOTAL ABOVE-THE-LINE	\$158,000
TOTAL BELOW-THE-LINE	\$332,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$490,000
RAISED TO DATE	\$490,000
REMAINING FUNDS TO RAISE	\$0