



**THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL**

*Two siblings have to believe in each other to find hope on the other side of the wall that threatens to separate them.*

A coproduction of **Intactes** and **Bambú Audiovisual** | 68 min (DCP)  
| 52 min (TV version) | 16:9 Aspect Ratio. Stereo | OV Spanish |  
Year 2017 | World Premiere March 19th 2017, Málaga Film  
Festival.

Director **Pau Ortiz** | Production **María Nova López, Emiliano  
Altuna, Tatiana García, Carlos Rossini** | Sound **Carlo Massarelli** |  
Editing **Frank Gutiérrez, Pau Ortiz** | Cinematography **María Nova  
López** | Music **Daniel Hidalgo Valdés**



**bambú**|audiovisual



Some people and/or groups of people face a large amount of social injustice, grievances, insults, and direct or indirect shaming due to their origins, their social and/or economic status, or their health. They are thus stuck in the uncomfortable position of having to set the ethical, cultural and/or legal boundaries for a whole country. But that fight also leads to many tales of human endurance and creativity. These people's stories are an inspiration to every one of us who have never had to live in such extreme conditions. They make us feel alive; they make us want to change our world and ourselves. Also, the love-hate relationship between Alejandro and Rocío ponders a deeper question: the struggle of the human being in teetering between being an individual and being part of a group.

## Synopsis

Ale (18) and Rocío's (13) relationship is faced with the greatest challenge possible when their mother is imprisoned under dubious charges. They have to act as father and mother to their two younger siblings.

Initially they promise to help each other and keep their family together until their mother is released.

But as undocumented Honduran immigrants their right to live, work and study in Mexico was already under threat.

And soon the prison wall that keeps their mother away gives rise to other emotional barriers that prevent the brother and sister from understanding each other.

Just as they start to lose hope the family's life takes an unexpected twist.



**ROCÍO** is 13; she's the second of four siblings. She's become the mother in the family ever since her own mom was sent to prison. She was a promising student before she had to drop out of school to clean, make lunches and take care of her younger siblings. She's extremely mature for a teenager, though she's also strongheaded. Her hopes of independence have been shattered at an early age, and she's struggling to fulfill her new role of mother. She's ambitious, intelligent, creative; she has a strong sense of humor and she's very open. Rocío will struggle to share responsibilities with Alejandro without losing him as a brother, all while she transitions from being a kid to becoming a woman.



**ALEJANDRO** is 18; he's the oldest of 4 siblings. He became the head of the household when his mom was sent to prison. He also has a new wife who lives with the family and they are expecting a baby. He was studying software engineering but he's had to drop out of school to focus on earning money for the family since his mom went away. He's honest and mature, but deep down he's still a teenager, and he has a hard time playing the role of father. He has a great sense of humor, he's clever, sweet, and he has a great capacity to listen and reason. Alejandro will try to deal with the challenges of supporting a family, yet finding support in them, and of sharing responsibilities with Rocío without losing her.



## Mother's legal case

The mother had a cantina in Palenque, a Mexican city known for its archeological ruins as well as for the many hotels and tourists who visit it every year. But the city is a dangerous place for immigrants, since "la Bestia" ("the Beast") – a network of freight trains used by many Central-American immigrants to cross Mexico and reach the United States – runs through it. The Palenque route sees the highest number of kidnappings and extortion of immigrants at the hands of both the mob and the police forces in the area.

Rocío had daily contact with many of the immigrants who boarded the Beast at her cantina, as well as with the people who extorted and carried out crimes against them. One day the police asked Rocío to come to the station for a police line-up, to see if she knew some of the people they had arrested. When she went in, however, they arrested her on charges of ties to the mob. Alejandro, her son went to jail to figure out what was going on, and the police offered to release his mom if he paid certain sum of money. The family didn't have that amount of money. Neither did they have the resources to prove Rocío's innocence or hire lawyers.

Rocío Ricco was preventively incarcerated in April 2013. She was never told how long she would have to wait for her trial to be held. Finally, she was tried a year later and sentenced to 10 years in prison for extortion and for having ties to a criminal organization.

Her sentence was handed down to her after the trial had been held but she never had the chance to defend herself as she was not even present at her own trial.

After 2 years and 4 months in jail, and just a couple of days after the film crew from this documentary had visited her in jail, she was notified that her case was going to be reopened.

This came as completely unexpected news. A few days later she was notified that she was free of all charges due to lack of evidence.



## Context

### Women deprived of freedom in Chiapas (México)

Data shows that women get disproportionate treatment in the legal system when compared with men. Women prisoners are very often impoverished, unable to access adequate legal assistance and victims of gender based violence. Women in prison are much more harshly treated in wider society than men. Many have a low level of schooling which restricts their ability to reintegrate into society, and it is not unusual for women to be abandoned by their families after being imprisoned. On release many women are unable to return to their old neighborhoods and lives. Women prisoners are frequently cut adrift from society.



### Director's Notes

In 2014 I worked for a non-profit organization which helps convicted women, overseeing their cases and helping their re-introduction to society. I met Rocío and Alejandro's mother on one of my visits to prison, and I was immediately struck by her energy and clear-headedness in such a terrible environment. The other inmates had a great respect for her.

Then I met her children, and I sensed in them a similar honesty and maturity, which was even more exceptional at their age.

The moment I pointed my camera at them and conducted my first interview I felt drawn to them, and I was particularly intrigued by the way they were handling the situation. The whole thing seemed to me like an extremely difficult predicament, but here I saw two courageous individuals with a great sense of humor who were willing to keep fighting. And I deeply admired them.

I later found out more about their story. Their life had been full of ups and downs from an early age, but the family had stayed together and remained strong through all of it. That history had turned them into very unique individuals; they were a great, tight-knit family and their ties were deep and complex.

### DIRECTOR'S BIO FILMOGRAPHY

Born in Barcelona (1982). Pau Ortiz is a documentary filmmaker and editor. His TV series "Yourself" was selected for the INPUT 2011 and his film "13 ways of ending up alone" was awarded at the WorldFest Houston International Film Festival. After specializing in documentary filmmaking at the Cinema and Media School of Catalonia (ESCAC) he was granted a scholarship at the Quebec Film School.

His style has been shaped by his fascination in human relationships. That is why he also decided to study Psychology. As a Director he tries to capture the human angle. He is dedicated to film stories that empower their characters and promote social change.



## PRODUCER'S BIO FILMOGRAPHY

### INTACTES

The other side of the wall is this company's first feature film. "INTACTES" (Intact Lives)– is a production company founded in 2014 in Barcelona that hopes to bring together film-makers and professionals dealing with social issues/human welfare. It aims to help raise awareness about the need to break down stereotypes and perceptions of minorities who have a higher risk of social segregation and injustice. In order to achieve this, Intactes produces non-fiction audiovisual works.



### BAMBÚ AUDIOVISUAL

Founded by Emiliano Altuna and Carlos Rossini and based on Mexico City, Bambú Audiovisual specializes in the production of Independent fiction and documentary films. Bambú Audiovisual has produced an array of award-winning films with national and international impact, that includes "The Mayor", "El Ciruelo", "Un Mundo Secreto", "Seguir Siendo" etc. being part of the Official Selection in numerous relevant film festivals such as Berlinale, San Sebastian, Guadalajara, Morelia, Lessinia, Bergen, Toronto, among others. All with outstanding reception awards and reviews.

## CONTACT

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