
”Mi Casa My Home” transmedia film trilogy

Oscar Molina*¹, Brenda Steinecke*², and Aggie Ebrahimi*³

¹Director and Producer – Colombie

²Producer – Colombie

³Consulting Producer – États-Unis

Résumé

While living and working in countries with more developed economies, many migrants in the world build with love and great transnational effort the house where they always longed to live in their native countries. However, many years later when their dream is accomplished, they don't dwell in it. Although the migrants and their families do plan a return to their home country to live in the house they have built with great effort, their plans usually change. After many years living abroad and earning the money to build their house, many migrants inadvertently develop new bonds to their adopted countries, forge new communities and probably enjoy new social benefits; in many cases their children are born in the country of destination. Many of them acquire new cultural values and transform their identities. They are proud of having their dream house but their home is somewhere else. Moreover, after being built, the maintenance of many of those houses depends on the resources the migrants earn in the host country.

These remittance houses facing uncertain destinies are located in Latin America, as well as in parts of Asia, Africa and even in East Europe. Some of them stand incomplete, others derelict and many stand uninhabited for years: large-scale containers of the deferred dream of returning and a visual testament to an illusory economic viability. They are visually and symbolically striking. They are often opulent, built with imported raw materials or in a style that draws attention by a foreign design. Symbolically, these houses stand out in their neighborhoods because in order to be built, they require funds that are only accessible to those who left. They are not only a symbol of financial success, but also of the dependence on the benefits obtained in the host country and the transformations of the identity of the migrants. This global phenomenon is the departing point for the documentary film project, ”Mi Casa My Home”, a transmedia trilogy that through migrant stories explores how the notion of home is affected by displacement between countries with different opportunities of access to economic and social conditions. These stories reveal how mobility in our days has generated a divided sense of ‘house/home’, the contradiction within the free flow of capital in the world and the restriction to transfer social rights from one country to another, but at the same time, they validate migration as an organic process, which reconfigures identity.

”Mi Casa My Home” aims to capture the sheer breadth of this phenomenon with two feature documentaries, ”The House of Mama Icha” (in the final stage of postproduction), and ”Absentees’ House” (at the end of production); and through an interactive platform (in conceptualization and development phase) as a tool for reflection, calling attention and poetic translation of this global phenomenon of remittance houses. This project aims to establish an open dialogue about the right to migrate and the right not to migrate, seeking prosperity either by settling down in one's own homeland or by crossing borders freely.

*Intervenant

Mots-Clés: Remittances, remittance houses, migration, transnational architecture, globalization, economic inequality, social rights, flux of capital, right to migrate, right to housing, identity, audiovisual, film, documentary, art & investigation.