

WINTER IN A BEACH TOWN

a film by Lila French
original music by Bruce Chianese



ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT
September 2019

SHORT SYNOPSIS

In a beach town, where the summers are hot and crowded, and the winter is as quiet as death, a story of moving through the changing seasons unfolds.

LESS SHORT SYNOPSIS

In a beach town, where the summers are hot and crowded, and the winter is as quiet as death, a story of moving through the changing seasons—told through a mix of film clips and a poetic narrative—unfolds.

Winter in a Beach Town is my third film and the first from my time living in Spain. I wrote, shot, and edited it in Conil de la Frontera, my home of three years, and within the setting of this small town, I hope to share a story of how we are urged to move with life's changes.

– Lila French



WRITING

I'd been developing another longer script (working title *Death Valley*) for several years when the idea for *Winter* came to mind. Setting the other one aside, I wrote *Winter* over a few days in early March of 2018, which left just a few weeks of winter weather to make a plan and film.

FILMING

Having minimal real cinematography experience (B-roll for *Birdbath*), and having lots of experience wandering Conil and taking photos with my iPhone, I opted to upgrade and shoot with that. That would allow me to quickly get set up and shoot within the remaining winter days, without the additional learning curve of a DSLR camera, and it would allow me to remain minimally intrusive while shooting in public.

I bought a new iPhone 8, a Manfrotto tripod, and the Filmic Pro app and got to work. I filmed roughly 20 days (usually just a couple of hours per day) in 2018 in varying conditions to provide a wide selection of footage to choose from. Some days were meant for experimenting, but, as I also experienced in *Birdbath*, some “throwaway” shots ended up in the final cut.

I also ended up shooting about another 10 days in 2019.

Working at a steady but non-rigorous pace, the film was still in post-production when 2019 rolled around, which ended up being fortuitous timing. The original conception of the film ended with sunflowers on the riverbank, based on what was there in 2017, however, due to crop rotation, in 2018, what sprouted there was (decidedly less exciting, and perhaps even grim) wheat. I briefly changed the idea from “sunflowers” to “wildflowers” (which also sprout in Spring). However, due to the long post-production process, I was able to revert back to the original idea when the sunflowers made a reappearance in 2019. I was also able to film additional pickup shots.

EDITING / MUSIC

As the film is an 11-minute montage, there were countless ways to match up images with dialogue. So I began just making decisions to come up with a very, very rough cut. I then began the process of going through each part of the film repeatedly, changing an image here, or timing there, to carve out what would eventually be part of the final cut.

As a less rough cut began to emerge, I brought composer Bruce Chianese (who I worked with on *Birdbath* and *Da Parish*) on board to compose the score, knowing it would be essential to guiding the emotions of the viewer throughout the film, due to the indirect nature of the script.

I assembled a temp track using selections from *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* to give Bruce an idea of the feel I had in mind, and, over the course of a year and in parallel with the edit, Bruce developed and refined a beautifully detailed original score. We made many adjustments throughout the process, and Bruce produced many variations of the different sections of music to get it just right. Some highlights of Bruce's composition include recording a live Spanish guitar (rather than a computer-generated sound) and the use of a "Moroccan winds" theme, to evoke a sense of Southern Spain.

SPANISH TRANSLATION

I'd always had the idea to create a separate version of the film in Spanish, to be able to share it with local audiences without subtitles, which can be distracting with so many image changes. So, towards the end of the editing process, I enlisted the help of Mateu Adrover, who had previously done excellent work on the subtitles for *Birdbath* and *Da Parish*. For all three projects, as a Spanish-speaker but not a native, I was able to ask Mateu about certain words and phrases, and he would explain or offer alternatives based on our discussion. However, for *Winter*, his deft language abilities were especially crucial, and he delivered, bringing the emotion and poetry of the English script to a Spanish script that stands on its own.







Lila French – Writer/Director

Lila French grew up just outside of New Orleans, graduated from the **Massachusetts Institute of Technology** with Bachelors and Master's degrees in Computer Science in just four years, and later studied acting in Los Angeles.

After performing in Leonard Melfi's play *Birdbath*, Lila wrote an adapted screenplay, secured the rights, and directed, produced, and acted in the film adaptation of the play (and the only adaptation allowed since 1972). The film screened at the **New Orleans Film Festival** in 2013 as well as at **Laemmle's Royal Theater** in Los Angeles (an Oscar-qualifying screening). Lila's second film, *Da Parish*, a documentary about a community's recovery after Hurricane Katrina, also screened at the **New Orleans Film Festival** in 2016 and at the **Madrid Int'l Film Festival** in 2017, where it won **Best Director of a Short Documentary**.

Lila wrote, shot, and edited her latest film, *Winter in a Beach Town*, in the south of Spain, her home of three years. There, she practices Ashtanga yoga, kitesurfs, enjoys siestas, and does remote computer programming work while developing each next film project. Learn more about Lila at <http://lilafrench.com>.



Bruce Chianese – Composer

A truly unique blend of engineering skill and creative talent is brought together in Bruce Chianese. His musical pieces and capabilities encompass a broad range of genres, from animation to heavy drama. Bruce loves music and what it can do for a film. He is passionate about using his talent to further evoke emotion and is a true believer in the ability of music to set the mood.



After performing as a keyboardist and starting his first studio in San Diego, Bruce went on to attend **Berklee College of Music** in Boston, graduating Magna Cum Laude with a degree in Film Scoring and Composition. He then moved to Los Angeles where he teamed with highly regarded composer, Geoff Levin. Together they collaborated on a wide range of successful musical endeavors which led to award-winning scores for feature film, television, record albums, animated children's programming, theme park attractions and large-scale theatrical productions.

Chianese has received numerous accolades and awards, including the prestigious **Cine Golden Eagle** for his score for the film, *My Neighborhood*, an **Emmy nomination** for *Disney's Spaceship Earth*, and an **Oscar nomination** for his contributions to the short, *The Janitor*. His music for *Qwerty* (2012) was voted the **Best Original Movie Score** at the **Nashville International Film Festival**, and his film score for *You Can't Kill Stephen King* debuted at the **Cannes Film Festival** and won the **People's Choice Award** at the **Auburn Film Festival**. His score for *Power of Choice* won a **Telly Award**, and his music for *Halfway to Hell* (2013) and *Echos* (2018) were both nominated **Best Original Film Score** at the **Hollywood Action on Film Festival**. Learn more about Bruce at <http://brucechianese.com/>.

Mateu Adrover – Spanish Version Translator

Mateu Adrover is a Barcelona-based writer and occasional director. After graduating with a degree in Journalism from the **Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona**, he worked as a producer for Servicios Informativos de Televisión Española until 1990. That same year, he was awarded an Indiana-La Caixa scholarship to study in Los Angeles, where he graduated with a Master of Fine Arts in Cinematography from the **American Film Institute** in 1993. Since then, he has worked as a film and television screenwriter.



In 2007, *Fuerte Apache*, his first film as a director, premiered. It won the **Premio del Público** at the Toulouse Film Festival, the **EU-XXL Award** at the **Forum and Film Festival**, Krems, Austria, and Mateu was a finalist for **Best New Director** at the **Premis Ciutat de Barcelona**.

director/producer Lila French

composer Bruce Chianese

piano Bruce Chianese

guitar Geoff Levin

additional guitar Billy Petito

violin Manoela Wunder

viola Kathryn Madsen

cello Paula Lewis

cinematographer Lila French

editor Lila French

narrator Lila French

writer Lila French

Spanish version translator Mateu Adrover

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| Project Title (English): | Winter in a Beach Town |
| Project Title (Spanish): | Invierno en un Pueblo Costero |
| Forms: | Narrative Fiction, Short Film |
| Genres: | Drama |
| Themes: | Sea, Nature, Loneliness, Death, Relationships |
| Run Time: | 11 minutes 0 seconds |
| Date of Completion: | October 2019 |
| Countries of Production: | USA, Spain |
| Country of Filming: | Spain |
| Languages: | English, Spanish (separate versions) |
| Subtitles Available: | Spanish, English |
| Shooting Format: | Digital (4K) |
| Aspect Ratio: | 16x9 |
| Film Color: | Color |

CONTACT

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FILM SITES

<http://winterinabeachtown.com>
<http://facebook.com/winterinabeachtown>
<http://instagram.com/lilafrench>
<http://twitter.com/lilafrench>
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt10546952>



Roman's Living Room
Film Fiesta-ival
Conil de la Frontera, Spain
Aug 2019



Frog and Toad Film Festival
Alhaurín El Grande, Spain
Sept 2019



Lisbon Film Rendezvous
Lisbon, Portugal
Oct 2019