

THE ISSUE: Echoes of Iemanja: An Interview with filmmaker Yara Barbosa

Yara Barbosa grew up in Minas Gerais, Brazil, and she's now a Youth Leader and Producer at the Global Action Project in New York City, NY. Editor-in-Chief, Myah Overstreet interviewed her about her film "Echoes of Iemanja", which is about how even a stranger can change one's destiny.



MYAH: Tell me about the film and what it's about. Your interpretation of it.

YARA: ["Echoes of Iemanja"] is a movie based on a young, undocumented, immigrant girl from Haiti who has big dreams about going to college. In the beginning, there's a conflict between what her mom wants for her and what she wants for herself, so her mom does not give her the support she needs. [During the scene on] the beach, she speaks with Iemanja, [who is] a total stranger but turns out to be someone who's able to open up her eyes and give her hope and strength to pursue her dreams.

MYAH: What was most exciting about making this film?

YARA: A couple of things were exciting for me making this film. I am from Brazil and I believe this was the first time that Global Action Project produced a film that focused on

Brazilian history. That was really exciting. Also, my mom and I made the fancy dresses that we used in the film. Me and my mom were the same person in the film so we wore the same dress. We bought the fabric & sewed the dresses ourselves. We made them in one night, too!

MYAH: What inspired you to make/ participate in the making of this film?

YARA: What inspired me to make the her eyes and give her hope and strength to pursue her dreams.

MYAH: What was most exciting about making this film?

YARA: A couple of things were exciting for me making this film. I am from Brazil and I believe this was the first time that film was its message to not give up your dreams or silence your voice. We need to [learn from] our history to change things in the world. A lot of young people follow what their parents want them to do and often this means giving up their dreams. Hopefully this film will open their eyes so they can [stand up] for what they want.



MYAH: Tell me about the making of the film. What were some of your fondest memories from the pre- , production, and post-production phase?

YARA: [During pre-production] I remember how we came up with the idea for the film. I was talking to Jesus (Media Educator for Global Action Project) about how the name

Iemanjá means Mermaid or water spirit. I shared a story about Iemanjá, then spoke about my own strong connection to water. If I am sad and you put me by salt water, my mood changes immediately. That's how it all started, with a simple conversation.

YARA: The actual production was a bit crazy! It seemed like we did a hundred takes of the same scene sometimes. But after multiple takes we started to connect with each other more and also see how our characters were connecting. Seeing it on paper is one thing but then acting it out is a totally different experience. Once we were sure about the movie's title, things began to fall into place, the characters, the locations. The support and energy from every single person involved in the production was fantastic! We were so happy how the movie turned out. The editing was beautiful! It was a relief that after the long production process, all the energy and work that every person involved committed came through in the final edit.

MYAH: Why is this film important for both young people, adults, and elders to watch?

YARA: We wrote this film as fiction, but we know this is a true story. One of my messages is to keep trying. If it doesn't happen today, maybe it will happen tomorrow. Don't let other people get you down. So it's important for everyone to watch it and see what message they get from the film.

MYAH: Any fun facts about the film?

YARA: The bloopers, or outtakes from the movie, are hilarious! We could make a short comedy from the bloopers we have!

MYAH: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

YARA: The movie is done! Watch it on YouTube here, [But there will be some surprises coming soon, almost a continuation of the movie. But that's all i can say. Stay tuned!](#)