



**‘POV’ Announces the National Broadcast Premiere of  
*Igualada: Refusing to Know Your Place*, Chronicling  
Francia Márquez’s Amazing 15-Year Journey From Grassroots Activist to  
Be Colombia’s First Female and First Black Presidential Candidate**

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*Directed by Juan Mejía Botero, the documentary premieres  
**Monday, July 7, 2025 at 10pm** on the PBS Television Channel & Available to Stream Until  
October 5, 2025 via the [PBS App](#)*

**Brooklyn, N.Y. — June 17, 2025** — POV, the multi-Emmy® and Peabody award-winning documentary series, presents [Igualada: Refusing to Know Your Place](#), directed by Juan Mejía Botero (*Death by a Thousand Cuts*), which chronicles Francia Márquez’s extraordinary journey from rural grassroots activist to history-making presidential campaign in Colombia. The powerful documentary was produced by Juan Mejía Botero, Juan E. Yepes, Daniela Alatorre Benard, and Sonia Serna Botero.

Filmed over 15 years, Mejía was granted unprecedented access to capture Márquez’s transformation into a powerful force for change, inspiring millions to reimagine their nation’s future and their place within it. In a time when many find themselves disillusioned and alienated by traditional politics, Mejía’s empowering story of a Black woman who dares to challenge the status

quo of racial and socio-economic disparities results in an uplifting portrait of resistance, resilience, and transfiguration.

After a widely acclaimed world premiere at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival, [\*Igualada: Refusing to Know Your Place\*](#) will make its national broadcast debut on **POV on Monday, July 7, 2025 at 10pm (check local listings), and will be available to stream through October 5, 2025, at [pbs.org](https://www.pbs.org) and on the [PBS App](#)**. Now in its 38th season, POV is the longest-running non-fiction series.

Juan Mejía Botero, director of *Igualada: Refusing to Know Your Place* said: “When Francia called me in 2020 to say she was launching a presidential campaign. I thought she was joking—a Black woman from a rural community, aspiring to lead in a country built on racism, elitism, and misogyny? But she was serious. I told her: ‘If this is real, we need to document it—it’s going to be historic no matter how far it goes.’ She hesitated, then said something I’ll never forget: ‘They don’t make films about women like me or communities like mine... so go for it.’

“*Igualada: Refusing to Know Your Place* is a film about hope—and belief in democracy. And wow, do we need that right now. If Francia’s unimaginable campaign—and her becoming Colombia’s first Black Vice President—was possible in a country like ours, then it’s possible almost anywhere. We have to believe that. We have to allow ourselves to dream again. And we can’t get tired of fighting.”

Chris White, Executive Producer of POV, said: “As global threats to democracy rise, Juan Mejía Botero’s beautiful film *Igualada: Refusing to Know Your Place* stands as a timely exploration of authentic activism, and a powerful reminder of democracy’s promise. Francia Márquez’s incredible journey gives us hope that, if we fight together, all may not be lost.”



Shot in a cinéma vérité style, Mejía Botero’s film follows Márquez’s rise from a local leader in La Toma, a small rural town in Colombia’s Pacific Southwest and home to over a quarter-million descendants of enslaved Africans. Rich in natural resources, the region is frequently targeted by

multinational corporations and paramilitary groups. It was during a 2020 funeral for five murdered sugarcane workers that Márquez decided to launch her unlikely campaign.

The film begins in 2009, when Mejía Botero first began documenting Márquez's efforts as a young land defender. The resulting footage reveals a rare, long-term portrait of a movement and a leader in the making—culminating in a watershed moment in Colombian history.

With the support of a small, tireless team, Márquez's grassroots campaign—originally intended to spotlight the struggles of Afro-Colombian, rural, and Indigenous communities—quickly grew into a national movement. Her motto, rooted in African roots, declared: *"I am because we are."*

Despite threats to her life, Márquez defiantly reclaimed the term *"igualada"*—a pejorative used to belittle those who demand rights seen as above their "place"—and she catapults the struggle for a more just Colombia into the upper echelons of power, rose to become a leading candidate in a broad progressive coalition led by Senator and former guerrilla fighter Gustavo Petro.

Echoing *Knock Down the House* and *Mandela*, Mejía Botero's documentary deftly traces the rise of a global icon in the making, capturing the thrill and magnitude of Márquez's historic presidential campaign from an intimate vantage point. An engrossing David vs. Goliath story—featuring original songs by award-winning singer-songwriter La Muchacha—[\*Iqualada: Refusing to Know Your Place\*](#) is a dynamic portrait of a woman who refused to back down, making history along the way.



[\*Iqualada: Refusing to Know Your Place\*](#) made its world premiere at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival. It won the Jury Award at the Bergen International Film Festival (2024), the Jury Award at the Cine Las Americas International Film Festival (2024), and the Audience Award at the Films for Future Festival in Zürich (2024). The documentary was an official selection at the Seattle International Film Festival (2024), the Human Rights Film Festival in Berlin (2024), and the Palm Springs International Film Festival (2024). Other key accolades include making the IDA Documentary Awards Shortlist (2025), the SIMA Award for Best Systemic Change Documentary

(2025), nominations for the Cinema Tropical Awards' Best U.S. LATINX FILM, and One World Media Awards' Best Documentary, and Special Selections at DOC NYC Selects and HotDocs Doc Soup.

*"Stirring... rousing and intimate."*

—Lisa Kennedy, *Variety*

*"[Francia] Márquez is an impressive figure to follow.  
Iqualada hints at an insider look at an amazing story."*

—Jacob Oller, *Paste Magazine*

*"A vital reminder that each person has the power to help evoke the change*

*—no matter what they call you in the process."*

—Courtney Small, *POV Magazine*

[\*\*Iqualada: Refusing to Know Your Place\*\*](#) is a Human Pictures co-production with No Ficción. The director is Juan Mejía Botero. The producers are Juan Mejía Botero, Juan E. Yepes, Daniela Alatorre Benard, and Sonia Serna Botero. The cinematography is by Gómez, and the editing is by Andrea Chignoli. Music is by Richard Córdoba. The executive producers are Felipe Estefan, Juan Pablo Ruiz, Paola Mendoza, POV alum Marco Williams, and for American Documentary, Erika Dilday and Chris White.

Download [\*\*Iqualada: Refusing to Know Your Place\*\*](#) photos.

Click [\*\*Iqualada: Refusing to Know Your Place - Press Kit\*\*](#) to access the festival press notes.

### Credits

**Director:** Juan Mejía Botero

**Producers:** Juan Mejía Botero, Juan E. Yepes, Daniela Alatorre Benard, and Sonia Serna Botero

**Cast/Participants:** Francia Márquez

**Executive Producers:** Felipe Estefan, Juan Pablo Ruiz, Paola Mendoza, Marco Williams, and Erika Dilday and Chris White for American Documentary

**Cinematographer:** Gómez

**Editor:** Andrea Chignoli

**Music:** Richard Córdoba

**Original Theme Song:** La Muchacha

**Sound:** Aldonza Contreras

**Languages:** Spanish with English subtitles

**Countries:** Colombia, USA, Mexico

**Year:** 2024

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## About the Filmmakers

**Juan Mejía Botero** - Director, Producer, *Igualada: Refusing to Know Your Place*



**Juan Mejía Botero** is an award-winning film director with over 25 years of experience in feature documentaries and documentary series. His work centers on human rights abuses, social justice, and systemic inequality around the world. His latest feature, ***Igualada: Refusing to Know Your Place***, about Colombia's current Vice President, Francia Márquez, premiered at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival and went on to win numerous awards, including Best Systemic Change Documentary at the 2025 Social Impact Media Award (SIMA).

A native of Colombia, Juan has directed films in conflict zones in Latin America and the Caribbean. His credits include *Uprooted* (PBS), *The Battle for Land* (Red Foundation Honesty Oscar), and the environmental true-crime thriller *Death by a Thousand Cuts* shot along the border of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The film premiered at the 2016 Hot Docs Film Festival and won the Audience Award at DOC NYC 2016 and the Grand Jury Prize at the Seattle International Film Festival. In the United States, his work has addressed immigration, racial justice, and the criminal justice system. His sports documentary, *Houston United*, about Wisdom High School's diverse soccer team, made its world premiere at the 2023 Tribeca Film Festival.

Juan's television work includes producing episodes for the acclaimed series *Amend: The Fight for America* (Netflix, 2018), ABC's breakthrough, Emmy®-winning series *Soul of a Nation*, and the true crime genre-bender *Killing County* (Hulu, 2022).

Throughout his career, Juan has collaborated with prestigious organizations including the Equal Justice Initiative, the United Nations, Greenpeace, Firelight Media, The Mellon Foundation, and Malteser International. His work is currently featured in the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama.

**Juan E. Yepes** - Producer, *Igualada: Refusing to Know Your Place*



**Juan E. Yepes** is a Colombian film producer and post-supervisor, and co-founded the production company Human Pictures. As an independent producer of social impact films, Juan's worked across the United States, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Colombia, Peru, and Mexico.

A frequent collaborator with director Juan Mejía Botero, Juan recently produced the documentary ***Igualada: Refusing to Know Your Place***, which tells the story of Colombia's current Vice President Francia Marquez. The film premiered at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival and went on to receive numerous awards, including Jury Awards at the

2024 Bergen International Film Festival and the 2024 Cine Las Americas International Film Festival, as well as the Best Systemic Change Documentary at the 2025 Social Impact Media Award (SIMA).

Juan's previous credits include the environmental true-crime thriller *Death by a Thousand Cuts* which premiered at the 2016 Hot Docs Film Festival and took home the Audience Award at DOC NYC 2016 and the Grand Jury Prize at the Seattle International Film Festival; *Houston United*, a sports documentary, that premiered at the 2023 Tribeca Film Festival; and ABC's Emmy®-winning series, *Soul of a Nation*. He also produced multi-Emmy® winner Stanley Nelson's *NYC Overcoming*.

Over his career, Juan has collaborated with leading media companies and organizations such as Participant Media, Univision, PBS, CNN, Canal Plus, Firelight Films, Meadowlark Media, the Equal Justice Initiative, the Mellon Foundation, the City of New York, and the United Nations. He brings a strong background in project development, project management, and post-production supervision, overseeing projects from initial concept through final release

#### **Daniela Alatorre Benard - Producer, *Igualada: Refusing to Know Your Place***



**Daniela Alatorre** is an accomplished Mexican producer and filmmaker, credited with over 20 short and feature films. For over 15 years, she worked as Producer and Head of the Documentary Programming Committee for the Morelia Film Festival. In 2017, she co-founded No Ficción, a Mexico City-based production company. Her notable producing credits include the award-winning documentaries *El General* (2009, Sundance FF, Best Director), *Midnight Family* (2019, Sundance FF, Best Cinematography), *Vivos* (2019), *Users* (2021, Sundance FF, Best Director), *A Cop Movie* (2021, Silver Bear at the Berlinale) and ***Igualada: Refusing to Know Your Place*** (2024). Her directorial debut, *Retreat*, premiered in 2019 and received a special mention and the Ambulante Film Festival Award at the Morelia Film Festival. Alatorre is a member of the Documentary Branch of the Academy of Motion

Picture Arts and Sciences and of the Mexican Film Academy. In 2024 she was appointed by Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum as General Director of the Mexican Film Institute.

**Sonia Serna Botero** - Producer, *Igualada: Refusing to Know Your Place*



**Sonia Serna Botero** is a Colombian feminist, anthropologist, and human rights advocate with extensive experience as a researcher. Her scholarly and activist work focuses on gendered and racialized dispossession, environmental defense, and sexual and reproductive justice across Colombia and Latin America.

For over a decade, Sonia has worked as an academic, content, and managing editor, as well as an English-Spanish translator and interpreter. More recently, her practice has expanded to include documentary field production throughout Colombia, the Caribbean, and Latin America. As a longtime member of multiple social movements in Colombia, Sonia has contributed to national efforts to combat gender-based sexual harassment, racial discrimination, homophobia, and transphobia. This trajectory led to her current role as Director of Colombia's National Observatory for Women.

Sonia's multifaceted work spans various formats and creative outlets, including transmedia, television, radio, podcasts, and comic books.

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### **About POV**

Produced by American Documentary, POV is the longest-running independent documentary showcase on American television. Since 1988, POV has presented films on PBS that capture the full spectrum of the human experience, with a long commitment to centering women and people of color in front of, and behind, the camera. The series is known for introducing generations of viewers to groundbreaking works like *Tongues Untied* (1989), *Hearts of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse* (1992), *Rabbit in the Room* (1999), *Of Civil Wrongs & Rights: The Fred Korematsu Story* (2001), *Made in L.A.* (2007), *American Promise* (2013), *Not Going Quietly* (2021), *While We Watched* (2022), *A House Made of Splinters* (2022), *The Last Out* (2023) and the mini-series *And She Could be Next* (2020). Throughout its history POV has featured the work of award-winning, innovative filmmakers including Jonathan Demme, Laura Poitras, Nanfu Wang, Frederick Wiseman, Emiko Omori, Janus Metz Pedersen and Ava DuVernay. In 2018, POV Shorts launched as one of the first PBS series dedicated to bold and timely short-form documentaries. In 2024, *Indiewire* named seven POV films in its roundup of "The 50 Best Documentaries of the 21st Century": *Faya Dayi* (2021), *The Mole Agent* (2020), *Minding The Gap* (2018), *Cameraperson* (2016), *The Look of Silence* (2015), *The Act of Killing* (2013) and *After Tiller* (2013). All POV programs are available for streaming concurrent with broadcast on all station-branded PBS platforms, including [PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org) and the [PBS App](#), available on iOS, Android, Roku streaming devices, Apple TV, Android TV, Amazon Fire TV, Samsung Smart TV, Chromecast and VIZIO. For more information about PBS Passport, visit the [PBS Passport FAQ](#) website.

POV goes “beyond the broadcast” to bring powerful nonfiction storytelling to viewers wherever they are. Free educational resources accompany every film and a community network of thousands of partners nationwide work with POV to spark dialogue around today’s most pressing issues. POV continues to explore the future of documentary through innovative productions with partners such as *The New York Times* and The National Film Board of Canada and on platforms including Instagram.

POV films and projects have won 50 Emmy Awards, 28 George Foster Peabody Awards, 16 Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards, three Academy Awards® and the first-ever George Polk Documentary Film Award. Learn more at [pbs.org/pov](https://pbs.org/pov) and follow @povdocs on social media.

## **About PBS**

PBS, with more than 330 member stations, offers all Americans the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television and digital content. Each month, PBS reaches over 36 million adults on linear primetime television, more than 16 million users on PBS-owned streaming platforms, 53 million viewers on YouTube, and 60 million people view PBS content on social media, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature, and public affairs and to take front-row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS’s broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry’s most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to PBS LearningMedia for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. As the number one educational media brand, PBS KIDS helps children 2-8 build critical skills, enabling them to find success in school and life. Delivered through member stations, PBS KIDS offers high-quality content on TV — including a PBS KIDS channel — and streaming free on [pbskids.org](https://pbskids.org) and the PBS KIDS Video app, games on the PBS KIDS Games app, and in communities across America. More information about PBS is available at [PBS.org](https://PBS.org), one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/pbs), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/pbs), or through our [apps for mobile and connected devices](#). Specific program information and updates for press are available at [pbs.org/pressroom](https://pbs.org/pressroom) or by following [PBS Communications on X](#).

## **About American Documentary, Inc.**

American Documentary, Inc. (AmDoc) is a multimedia organization dedicated to creating, identifying and presenting contemporary stories that express opinions and perspectives rarely featured in mainstream media outlets. AmDoc is a catalyst for public culture, developing collaborative strategic engagement activities around socially relevant content on television, online and in community settings. These activities are designed to trigger action, from dialogue and feedback to educational opportunities and community participation.

Major funding for POV is provided by PBS, the Open Society Foundations, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Wyncote Foundation, Reva & David Logan Foundation, Park Foundation, and Perspective Fund. Additional funding comes from the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, Chris and Nancy Plaut; Acton Family Giving, and public television viewers. POV is presented by a consortium of public television

stations, including KQED San Francisco, WGBH Boston and THIRTEEN in association with WNET.ORG.

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