



One Film Can

Heartland Truly Moving Pictures, a non-profit organization, recognizes and honors films and filmmakers whose work explores the human journey by expressing hope and respect for the positive values of life. We believe that one film can move us to laughter, to tears, or to make a difference. *Under the Same Moon* is a movie that demonstrates that One Film Can.

Synopsis

Nine-year-old Carlos, aka Carlitos, is one of the countless children left behind by parents who come to the U.S. seeking a way to provide for their families. His mother, Rosario, has worked illegally as a domestic in Los Angeles for four years, sending money home to her son and mother to give them a chance at a better life.

When the death of his grandmother leaves young Carlitos alone, he takes his fate into his own hands and heads north across the border to find his mother. As he journeys from his rural Mexican village to the L.A. barrio, Carlitos faces seemingly insurmountable obstacles with a steely determination and unfettered optimism that earn him the grudging respect and affection of a reluctant protector, a middle-aged migrant worker named Enrique. The unlikely pair finds its way from Tucson to East L.A., but the only clue Carlitos has to his mother's whereabouts is her description of the street corner from which she has called him each Sunday for the last four years. Unaware that Rosario is only hours away from returning to Mexico to be with her son, Carlitos and Enrique desperately comb the vast unfamiliar city for a place he has seen only in his imagination.

Under the Same Moon also stars Maya Zapata, Carmen Salinas, María Rojo and Mario Almada with America Ferrera and features a cameo appearance by the legendary norteño band Los Tigres Del Norte who also contribute to the film's soundtrack. Written by Ligiah Villalobos (Ed), *Under the Same Moon* is produced by Patricia Riggen and Gerardo Barrera. Executive producers are Norman Dreyfuss, Ram Bergman and Ligiah Villalobos with music by Golden Globe® nominee Carlo Siliotto.



I would ask, does he have to be offered the best life money can buy? Or is it better that the family stay together despite monetary problems? Writer, Ligiah Villalobos

Under the Same Moon writer Ligiah Villalobos asks an important question in the quote above. It is a question that is very important to the characters in the film as well as many people who are currently in the same situation.

Discussion Questions:

- Rosario denies herself many things in order to give her son a good life in Mexico. She works desperately to save enough money to bring Carlitos to America to live with her and makes difficult choices. Have you ever had to sacrifice something for the ones you love? What were those things? Did your sacrifices ultimately help those people you were trying to help?
- If you were put in the same situation as Rosario—having to choose between being near your child or providing him with a good life—which would you pick? Why?
- Are there things you wish you could provide your family that you are currently unable to provide? What are they and why? Are those things material or emotional?



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Even though this movie is very Mexican, I believe that people of any nationality will identify with the theme. The relationship between mother and son has no nationality. *Writer, Ligiah Villalobos*

Writer Ligiah Villalobos focuses on the true heart of this movie in the above quote. While it is true that *Under the Same Moon* deals with issues that many Hispanics are experiencing – both in Latin America and in America—the true center of the story is one with which people of any background or nationality can identify.

Discussion Questions:

- After viewing *Under the Same Moon* what stuck with you most? Did you view it as a love story or a political film? Why?
- Is this a story with which you are able to identify? How?
- Has the political aspect of the story in *Under the Same Moon* caused you to look at people around you in a different way? How?
- Although this particular film has wide appeal to the Latino community, think about all immigrants—now and throughout history—who have done the same thing that Rosario has done by leaving her family to give her son a better life. How much of your family history do you know? Did a story similar to this happen generations ago in your family?
- If you aren't familiar with your family tree, but would like to know more about your history www.FamilySearch.org and www.Ancestry.com are great places to start.



The only reason they do it is love. Love for parents, children, family, brothers and sisters, to be able to pay school fees. This for me is something very beautiful. Director, Patricia Riggen

In the quote above, director Patricia Riggen discusses some of the reasons she chose to make *Under the Same Moon*. Although immigration is a hotly debated political issue, this movie is greater than that. This is a movie that truly examines what people choose to do for the people they love.

Throughout *Under the Same Moon* we see love as a driving force. It causes people already familiar with one another to go out of their way for each other and causes complete strangers to band together and support one another.

Discussion Questions

- Think about the movie and all the instances of love and the different ways it is expressed—by stranger, families and friends. Do any of these instances make you consider how you love others, whether they are friends or strangers? In what way?
- Enrique, Carlitos' traveling companion, is hardened by life and his current situation, but throughout the course of the film his outlook changes dramatically. He demonstrates that once one begins to think beyond oneself and care for another it is easier to become selfless. How is this example lived in your everyday life? Do you live for yourself or for others? Was there a turning point in your life that caused you to begin to think beyond yourself?
- Many of the Latino relationships highlighted in the film are very close knit. Relationships with extended family, friends and even fellow workers are an integral part of everyday life. Does this reflect your relationships with family and friends? If not, do you aspire to have deeper and more meaningful interactions with friends and family on a regular basis? Are there things preventing you from having these types of relationships? What are they?



Truly Moving Moments

Under the Same Moon has been honored as a Heartland Truly Moving Picture award-winning film. This award was created to honor films released theatrically that align with Heartland's mission to recognize and honor films and filmmakers whose work explores the human journey by artistically expressing hope and respect for the positive values of life.

These award-winning movies are made up of moving and inspiring moments – those moments that cause you to think, see something in your life differently, or be inspired to do something. It's what makes the movie and its message remain with you well after you've left the theatre.

Think about *Under the Same Moon*. What were the moments that stood out to you? How did they make you feel? How will they cause you to think about things differently in the future?

Share these moments with others at www.TrulyMovingPictures.org. Simply create a membership or login if you already have one and then search the movie list for *Under the Same Moon*. You can leave your review of the movie or thoughts about the moment that moved you most in the "Thoughts and Reviews" section.



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