



**CLAUDIA MEDINA- CULOS, Vancouver, BC
WIDC 2006 Director Participant**

Claudia is a filmmaker, writer, and educator who currently lives on Galiano Island. Her filmmaking deals with the stories and influences of her cultural background and how they are transposed onto the Canadian cultural landscape. Claudia has worked as a social justice organizer and educator and currently

dedicates herself to filmmaking and facilitating youth to tell their own stories through this medium.

As a child visiting relatives in Mexico, Claudia's imagination, and love of the story were ignited as she listened to expertly told tales of love, death, and life seamlessly moving through the natural and supernatural worlds. Since those times of being enthralled in her aunt's kitchen, she's been compelled to develop her own voice, her own sense of story, and a visual language that can enhance a tale through well crafted and inspired imagery. After making shorts throughout high school Claudia decided to study sociology and Latin American studies. She then began to work as a consultant for filmmakers making both dramas and documentaries with Latin American themes. These experiences allowed her to begin learning the craft of filmmaking from different sides, whether it was from post-production to production coordination. The privilege of working with talented and driven people increased her desire to undertake film projects of her own. What began as a documentary project about her Mexican grandmother eventually transformed itself into a dramatic film project which she wrote keeping in mind all the stories her grandmother had told her growing up. Claudia amalgamated them into a twenty minute film script, which she received grant funding for. She went to Mexico, assembled a crew and cast and shot the film on super 16mm. ENTRE EL MEDIO (IN BETWEEN THE MIDDLE) went on to screen in over twenty festivals around the world. The experience in making this film, in bringing her vision into reality, taught her many things about filmmaking and life in general. But most importantly, it instilled in her a passion for the craft of visual storytelling which she feels compelled to build on. Throughout this time she was also pursuing her love of activism and education. She had the opportunity to work in the non profit realm and incorporate video with youth based international development projects. She also worked as a community organizer in BC, collaborating with dedicated groups and individuals raising awareness about social and ecological issues. Video was, and is a powerful tool in this work. It became very clear to her that visual storytelling was not only something she wanted to develop for herself, but also assist in teaching others how to make and incorporate this medium into their own work.

For the last few years she has dedicated herself to education and activism. Most recently she was asked to direct the filmmaking component of the youth mentorship program "Projections" in the downtown east side of Vancouver.