

AMIGO SKATE, CUBA

TRAILER

Vimeo embed link <https://vimeo.com/314564227>

LOG LINE

Skateboards are considered contraband in Cuba. Despite this, a renegade group out of Miami, smuggles skateboards into the communist country and has hopes to build a skate park for the youth of Havana.

PHOTOS

[DOWNLOAD THE PHOTO GALLERY](#)

SYNOPSIS

Skateboarding is as much a passion as a leisure activity—but to skate in Cuba requires a level of ardor, we Americans know nothing about. Vanesa Wilkey-Escobar's debut documentary tracks a transnational effort led by Miami's own Rene Lecour, founder of Amigo Skate, to get Cuban skaters the gear and space they need.

The journey is uphill: the only current skate-park in Havana is built on a drainage ditch and the Cuban government is reluctant to recognize skateboarding—an American invention—as a valid sport. What's more, negotiating with government officials demands a demonstrative respect for authority that can feel antithetical to those whose credo is founded in skate culture's outlaw mentality.

Filled with thrilling sequences of skate virtuosity, Amigo Skate, Cuba presents a fascinating case of cooperation overcoming culture clash—and a universal portrait of freedom on four little wheels.

ABOUT THE FILM

Vanesa, the director, began exploring her Cuban roots for a film project and travelled to Miami in early 2015 to visit family and hear old stories and memories of Cuba. While there, she met Rene LeCour, founder of Amigo Skate Cuba, and was immediately drawn to the story around his charity and smuggling skateboards into Cuba. She called Chris, a fellow producer, and told him point blank – “We are going to Cuba!”

The rest is history. They managed to quickly raise the funds through generous Kickstarter donations and a private investor. In less than three months they were on a plane with a crew of six with huge duffel bags stuffed with skateboards and film equipment headed for Havana, Cuba.

What began that day was a two-year journey that culminated in a feature film documentary filled with images of an beautiful and dilapidated island that holds the hopes and dreams of young Cuban skateboarders and the ambitions of a few aging American and Cuban skateboarders to gets those kids a little slice freedom by way of a government approved skate park.

FESTIVALS AND AWARDS

Miami International Film Festival 2018 -WINNER

Moments Festival, Malaga Spain 2018

Portland Film Festival 2018

San Diego Latino Film Festival 2019

San Francisco Latino Film Festival 2019

International Puerto Rican Film Festival, Brooklyn NY 2019

FAQ

Shot during three visits to Cuba over a two year period. All three times were during different periods of diplomatic relations between the US and Cuba. This first was just before Obama eased travel restrictions, The second was just after the US Embassy was reopened in Havana, and the final trip happened days after the Trump administration retightened travel and trade regulations with Cuba.

TITLE: Amigo Skate, Cuba

GENRE: Documentary

TRT: 72 Minutes

A Brandish Entertainment Production in association with Bohemian Adventures Productions

Produced by Chris Wedding and Vanesa Wilkey-Escobar

Cinematography by Chris Wedding

Edited by Florencia Marano
Graphics by John Cranston

Original Score by Devilsbelt

Music by X Alfonso, Barbaro, and Yimi Konclaze

Shot with Sony A7sii and GoPro cameras

Aspect Ratio: 16:9

Edited on Adobe Premiere Pro

Locations shot – Havana, Cuba / Miami, Florida USA

Languages – Spanish and English

Subtitles - English

FILMMAKER BIOS:

Vanesa Wilkey-Escobar - Director and Producer



Vanesa's first feature film as a Director marks a milestone in a decade long career in production. Her nomadic childhood, innate belief that we can all do better, and lust for understanding the unknown have been the cornerstone of her every artistic endeavor.

"One on many" has been a theme in her recent work which perpetuates the belief - "That which invokes emotion in others is the true art of our world".

Chris Wedding - Producer and Cinematographer



Award winning Producer and Cinematographer Chris Wedding has traveled the world as a visual storyteller. Since 2003 he has been living as a film maker in Los Angeles, California. "I grew up in Kansas City with parents who worked in the airline industry. Every time we got on a plane, I was thrilled I'd be seeing something new. I've never lost that need for adventure."

Having shot all over the world for television and online publications, Chris has seen what vast commonalities people in every corner of the world share. Whether it be the jungles of the Amazon, the slums of India, or a large metropolis like Los Angeles - stories that transcend cultural boundaries can inspire us all.

When he's not making a living telling stories for branded content or television, you'll still find Chris with a camera around his neck and a passport in his hand. "There's something that happens when I travel. I am compelled to share what I see and at the same time to make what I see compelling." More information at www.BrandishEntertainment.com

JOIN US!

Subscribe to receive updates about screenings and big news from around the world about the documentary "Amigo Skate, Cuba!"