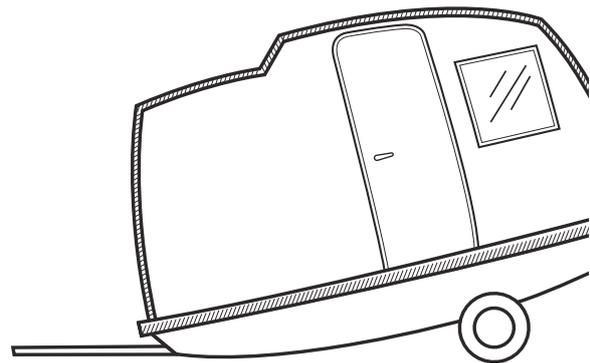
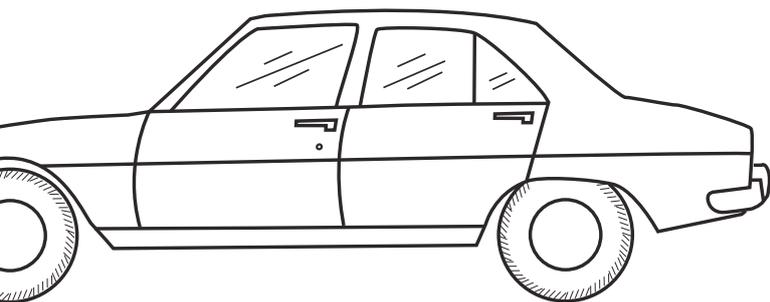


# the last summer of la boyita

a film by **Julia Solomonoff**



## THE LAST SUMMER OF THE BOYITA

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A film by **Julia Solomonoff** (Hermanas)

**Original Name: "El último verano de la Boyita"**

cast:

Guadalupe Alonso

Nicolás Treise

Mirella Pascual

Gabo Correa

Guillermo Pfenning

## SYNOPSIS

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In an apparently bucolic setting, a secret is revealed, accidentally, spontaneously. Returning from a horse ride, Jorgelina sees a bloodstain on Mario's saddle. There is another one on Mario's pants. Mario doesn't know what to say, he has no idea as to why. Jorgelina will accompany him on his road through discovery, fear and, ultimately, acceptance. This revelation, instead of separating them, will bring Jorgelina and Mario closer than ever.

La Boyita was a type of trailer home that had the seemingly magical ability to float, a species of domestic amphibian. Every summer since my parents bought one, I imagined a series of adventures through rivers and forest. But our Boyita collected only dust and toys. Parked in the back of our yard, it became the home for childhood games and confessions.

One summer, everything changed. My parents had separated and my older sister began adolescence; closing the bathroom door, hanging out with new friends and moving into her own room for "privacy", a word that to me sounded like exclusion and loneliness. Facing a vacation at the beach where I knew I would be painfully left aside by my big sister and her friends, I decided to go to the country with my Dad and be with Mario, the son of the farmhands, who was our 'country' playmate.

But Mario was going through his own transformation, one significantly more profound than my sister's. He wasn't a boy like others and this discovery, instead of separating us, drew us closer. Throughout a summer of siestas, horserides and adventures to the river, innocent and curious, the mysteries of sexuality began to appear, leaving to be discovered a truth that the adults around us did not dare to face."

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fig. 24

de diminutos conductos que están situados junto al introito, las  
tholin, cuando son estimuladas, secretan un flujo (moco) que lubrica  
el coito. La uretra, que transporta la orina desde la vejiga hacia el  
orificio de salida delante de la vagina.

## SPECHS SHEET

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ARGENTINA, 2009, 86 min

director: JULIA SOLOMONOFF

producers: PEPE SALVIA / MARIA TERESA ARIDA / LUCIA SEABRA

production companies:

TRAVESIA PRODUCCIONES S.A./J. SOLOMONOFF/ DOMENICA FILMS S.R.L.

/ EL DESEO (ESPAÑA)/ EPICENTRE FILMS (FRANCIA)

screenwriter: JULIA SOLOMONOFF

executive producer: PEPE SALVIA

dp/camera operator: LUCIO BONELLI

art director: MARIELA RIPODAS

editor: ROSARIO SUAREZ- ANDRÉS TAMBORNINO

sound design: LENA ESQUENAZI

composer: SEBASTIAN ESCOFET

casting director & coach: MARÍA LAURA BERCH

## BIO

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Argentine-born, New-York-based writer and director, Solomonoff holds an MFA from Columbia University, where she currently teaches.

She wrote and directed "**The Last Summer of la Boyita**" co-produced by **Almodovar's El Deseo**. After showing at BAFICI's International Competition, it opened internationally at the San Sebastian Film Festival 09, with enthusiastic press and public reception. The project has received funding from BAFICI (Buenos Aires Independent Film Festival) and Ibermedia and was selected for the Berlin Co-Production Markt.

Her first feature, "**Sisters**" (Hermanas) debuted at the Toronto Film Festival 2005 and was partially developed at the Sundance Writers' Lab.

Solomonoff also produced "**Cocalero**", a documentary directed by Alejandro Landes, that followed Evo Morales during Bolivia's historic Presidential election. The film opened at Sundance 07 and won a Best Documentary Award from the Argentine Academy of Cinema.

Her TV work includes a mockumentary "**Chin Chon Fan**" (Argentina, 2006) and "**The Suitor**" (USA, 2001) winner of Grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, Corporation of Public Broadcasting and Latino Public Broadcasting. During 2009 she was Creative Consultant for Canal Encuentro, the National Educational TV station of Argentina.

She was the 1st AD on Walter Salles' "**Motorcycle Diaries**" and has collaborated with such well respected directors as Isabel Coixet, Fabian Bielinsky, Dan Algrant, Luis Puenzo, Carlos Sorin and Martin Rejtman. In 2002 Carlos Sorin casted Solomonoff in "**Intimate Stories**" (Historias Minimias) for which she was nominated "Female Newcomer of the Year".

Her short films have won awards from the Director's Guild of America, FIPRESCI, New Line Cinema, Milos Forman Fund, La Mujer y el Cine and her short, "**Siesta**", was a regional nominee for the Academy Awards.

She is currently developing her third feature film and is co-producing Julia Murat's debut feature, *Peso da Masa* to be shot in Brazil in Spring 2010.

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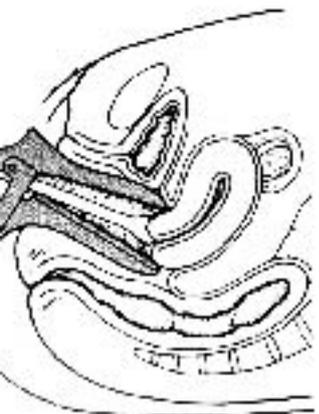
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Los labios menores tienen su punto de encuentro en el clítoris, una zona muy sensible y sensible protuberancia análoga al pene en el hombre que está cubierta por una capa de piel (el prepucio) similar a la piel que se encuentra en el extremo del miembro masculino. Al igual que éste, el clítoris es muy sensible a la estimulación y puede tener erección. Los labios mayores se encuentran en la parte inferior, en el perineo, una zona que se encuentra localizada entre la vagina y el ano. La piel (epidermis) que cubre el perineo y los labios mayores es similar a la del resto del cuerpo.



Los labios menores tienen su punto de encuentro en él. La piel (epidermis) que cubre el perineo y los labios mayores es similar a la del resto del cuerpo. El clítoris, seco y puede descamarse. Por el contrario, el revestimiento de los labios menores y la vagina es una membrana mucosa; a pesar de que las capas internas son de estructura similar a la epidermis, su superficie se mantiene húmeda gracias al líquido de los vasos sanguíneos de las capas más profundas que atraviesa el tejido. Su gran cantidad de vasos sanguíneos le da un color rosado.

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**INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR**

**What similarities and differences do you see between 'Hermanas' ('Sisters'), your first feature, and 'The Last Summer of La Boyita', your second film as writer and director?**

'The Last Summer of La Boyita' is a more intimate film, more like a first film. We shot in HD to be closer to the characters and action and to allow for the spontaneity of the kids. We had a very reduced crew and a budget of about half that for 'Hermanas'. From my view as director, what I looked for in both films was to find an angle from which to narrate without falling into the obvious. Both films are intimate stories in which tone is everything, their themes filtered by a certain subjectivity.

**From where did the idea for 'The Last Summer of La Boyita' emerge?**

I had heard a conversation between my parents that left me unsettled: my mother, a gynecologist, consulted with my father, a psychiatrist, about her patient, a country boy who was menstruating. A boy was slowly turning into a girl, or so thought my curious and confused 11-year old mind. I myself was beginning the transformations of puberty and with all those confusion and fears, the story struck me hard. Over the years, I inquired about that boy and researched the subject, and in 2003, I wrote the first draft of what would become this film.

**Why did you set this story in the countryside?**

Because this character, Mario, belongs to the Entre Rios countryside, a place which I know very well. I think that the movie was an excuse to return to this place, to a childhood moment of unescapable summer heat, of ripening bodies, of life and death. It was a place of immensity, a time of discovery and freedom. This is why it bothers me when people reduce this place, this type of life, to only its brutality. To me, it is arrogant to suggest that city life is better, more open and evolved than life in the country. In fact, if Mario had been born in the city, he probably would have undergone surgeries or hormone treatments in the name of normalcy. In this sense, at least Mario made it to puberty with his genitals intact. In some ways, even if Mario's father does react violently to his revelation, it is a lesser form of violence than surgery...

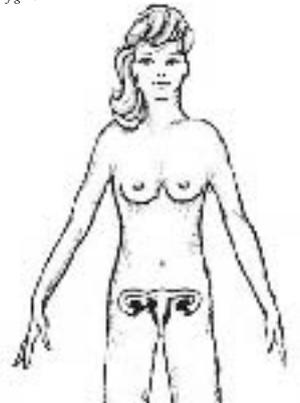
**However, the tone of the film is subdued, far from tragic...**

I really like melodrama, but I like it toned down, without the stridency, without the "bah, bah, bahm!" I tend to focus on a detail or work a subject more from an tangential angle. I believe there is something, a pudor... a certain shyness or modesty in how I approached this movie. I think this restraint, takes the movie away from the predictable, the falseness and the potentially low blows of the subject.

**It's only after 30 minutes into the film that the first sign of the films real conflict appears. Why the delay**

It was very important for me that when the main conflict does appear, we are already fully within the world of Jorgelina, the protagonist. I wanted the viewer to be looking through her eyes, understanding her recent experiences, her unfamiliarity and curiosity. And since the film is more about the evolution of her point of view than about a certain "subject", it should take some time to be established.

fig. 75



Los órganos genitales externos (vulva) están bordeados por los labios mayores (literalmente, labios grandes), que son bastante voluminosos, carnosos y comparables al escroto en los varones. Los labios mayores contienen glándulas sudoríparas y sebáceas (que secretan aceite); tras la pubertad, se recubren de vello. Los labios menores (literalmente, labios pequeños) pueden ser muy pequeños o hasta de seis centímetros de ancho. Se localizan dentro de los labios mayores y rodean los orificios de la vagina y la uretra. El orificio de la vagina recibe el nombre de introito y la zona con forma de media luna que se encuentra tras ese orificio se conoce como horquilla vulvar. A través de diminutos conductos que están situados junto al introito, las glándulas de Bartholin, cuando son estimuladas, secretan un flujo (moco) que lubrica la vagina durante el coito. La uretra, que transporta la orina desde la vejiga hacia el exterior, tiene su orificio de salida delante de la vagina.

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That's why it frustrates me when some press, in their struggle to find a headline, use the word 'hermaphrodite'. First, why put a label, an answer, on something that I, very carefully and intentionally, posed as a question? Second, why not let the viewer discover the story with and through the characters? And third, because it's erroneous. Mario is not a hermaphrodite, he has congenital suprarenal hyperplasia. But above all, what this label implies (and even worse, promotes) is a strictly biological view of gender, which reduces gender to just genes and hormones.

### Each character reacts in their own way when faced with Mario's differences...

In his own family, the reaction is either violence or denial. Jorgelina's father reacts from a medical and scientific position, he sees it as a clinical case and this is why Jorgelina rejects his explanation, covering her ears. Jorgelina's mother trivializes it, it becomes a conversation topic at the beach. Jorgelina, on the other hand, without prejudice, is able to embrace his difference. Mario, with the support of Jorgelina, participates in the horse race to prove that he is a man, like in a Western.

### Let's talk about casting...

Tuto (who plays Mario) has a magnetism, a very strong relation to the camera. I was immediately fascinated by his presence, his look. He has a mystery. I was introduced to him in 2003 through a photo series about the German townships of Entre Rios by Sebastian Ingrassia. In 2006, I began to visit him regularly and to write the character thinking of him, even though I didn't know if he could or wanted to act. I approached it cautiously until I had earned his trust and was able to build an affectionate bond. We had established another type of communication, one of silences, of monosyllables, of certain gestures and at times, simply a presence. Maria Laura Berch played a decisive role in the preparation of Tuto and Guadalupe (Jorgelina). It was very moving to see Tuto with his brothers and sisters at the first public screening. It was the first time he had ever been in a movie theatre and there he was, on the big screen, surrounded by an applauding audience. We were very concerned about the reaction of the people from the village, about the impact of our movie in Tuto's life. And it's been amazing. I may make better or worse films in the future, but I doubt that I will go through such a compelling life-changing experience...

I brought in Mirella Pascual (Mario's mother), a Uruguayan actress I had admired in "Whisky", because I knew that when the moment arrived, she could put into words the silences of Mario and his father. Then, I re-wrote the script with her in mind. She figured out how to mimic the landscape, how to walk into the skin of a character in such an organic and profound way. People tell me that they really thought she was Tuto's own mother.

The Jorgelina character was difficult to cast because she had to carry the film, demonstrate a real growth and sensibility and have a certain physicalness. She needed to be urban but without being turned off by mud, frogs and horses. We looked at more than 600 girls in Rosario and Buenos Aires and we finally found Guadalupe almost at the point of desperation. It was impressive to see her grow with the character, with great intelligence and commitment.

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**"It's a private matter" is the phrase that Jorgelina uses to end the tale...**

Yes. The first time that the word 'privacy' is used is when her older sister closes that bathroom door. It is the word that excludes Jorgelina. When we did the casting of the sisters, we asked the girls about the idea of privacy. The younger girls defined it as something that their siblings or parents demanded when they wanted to be alone...and the older girls (12-13 year-olds) defined it in the first person: 'privacy is when I want to be alone'. I confirmed a hunch that this kind of discovery or demand for privacy begins at puberty. Privacy seems to be one of those rights that we give up, waive everyday, be it for safety, peer pressure or comfort. It seems beautiful, almost heroic to me that a young girl discovers the value of her own private space and demands it for herself.

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**COMMENTS FROM THE PRESS**  
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**Pablo Sholz, Clarín**

"Like *Hermanas*, this is a film about relationships, narrated with unusual delicacy..."

**Fernando Lopez, La Nacion (Argentina)**

"The curiosity, the confusion, a vague search and few discoveries mark the summer that Jorgelina spends with her father in the country, too far from her mother and her big sister, who now moves in the world of women. During this season ( offered by Julia Solomonoff with the delicacy and force of a narrator sure of her position and a sensibility alert to the eloquence of the smallest details), the girl, even at this difficult age, as she begins to abandon childhood, will live out decisive experiences at the side of her teenage friend who is undergoing disturbing transformations and will form, little by little, her personal ethic and define her identity."

**Horacio Bernades, Pagina 12 (Argentina)**

"Si de alguna violencia habla *El último verano de la Boyita*, es la que produce la disociación entre biología e identidad, entre genitalidad y género, y entre todo eso y el prejuicio sexual (...) Un film narrado con un tempo sereno, ajustado al ambiente campero en que transcurre, libre de subrayados, delicadamente construida y apostando más a la suma de pequeños detalles que al encadenamiento de acciones."

**Diego Battle, otrosclines.com (Argentina)**

"Well narrated and acted, Solomonoff has a sensibility to approach the preadolescent world and the film shows an impeccable technical craft. The contradictions between people from the city and those from the country, the prejudices that exist even in politically correct times, the tiny miseries and hostilities and, above all, the theme of sexual awakening are exposed by Solomonoff with humility, without forcing or underlining the situations, without falling into demagoguery and demonstrated by the expressivity of young Guadalupe Alonso. It is a dignified, honest and well executed film."

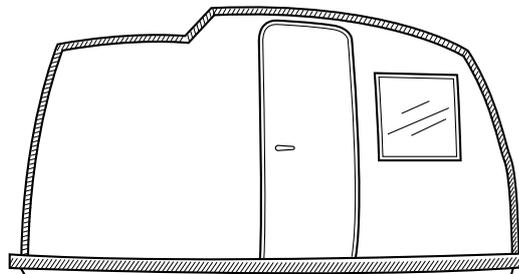
**Juan Villegas, otrosclines.com (Argentina)**

"The differences between *XXY* are apparent. Even though they seem to speak about the same issue, it's clear that they are films

almost opposite in style and tone. I think that the great merit of "...Boyita" is in the nobility of the emotions it generates. The performances of the two protagonists (Mario and Jorgelina) are key because they take the film away from the sordid and bring it toward the tender, but they do it without falling into sentimentality, overstatement or a naive view of the adolescence."

**Catalog, Buenos Aires Independent Film Festival, 2009**

"The Last Summer of La Boyita is a gentle and very precise tale of pre-initiation, that reminds us, at moments, of the recent big hits of some Argentine directors, but that ends up taking off to a different place where, via a certain melancholy and a welcomed lack of emphasis, it locates its own vital energy."



*boyita: uso flotante*

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**Thanks for helping us promote the film.**

Trailer, photos and info available at [www.laboyitafilm.com](http://www.laboyitafilm.com)

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