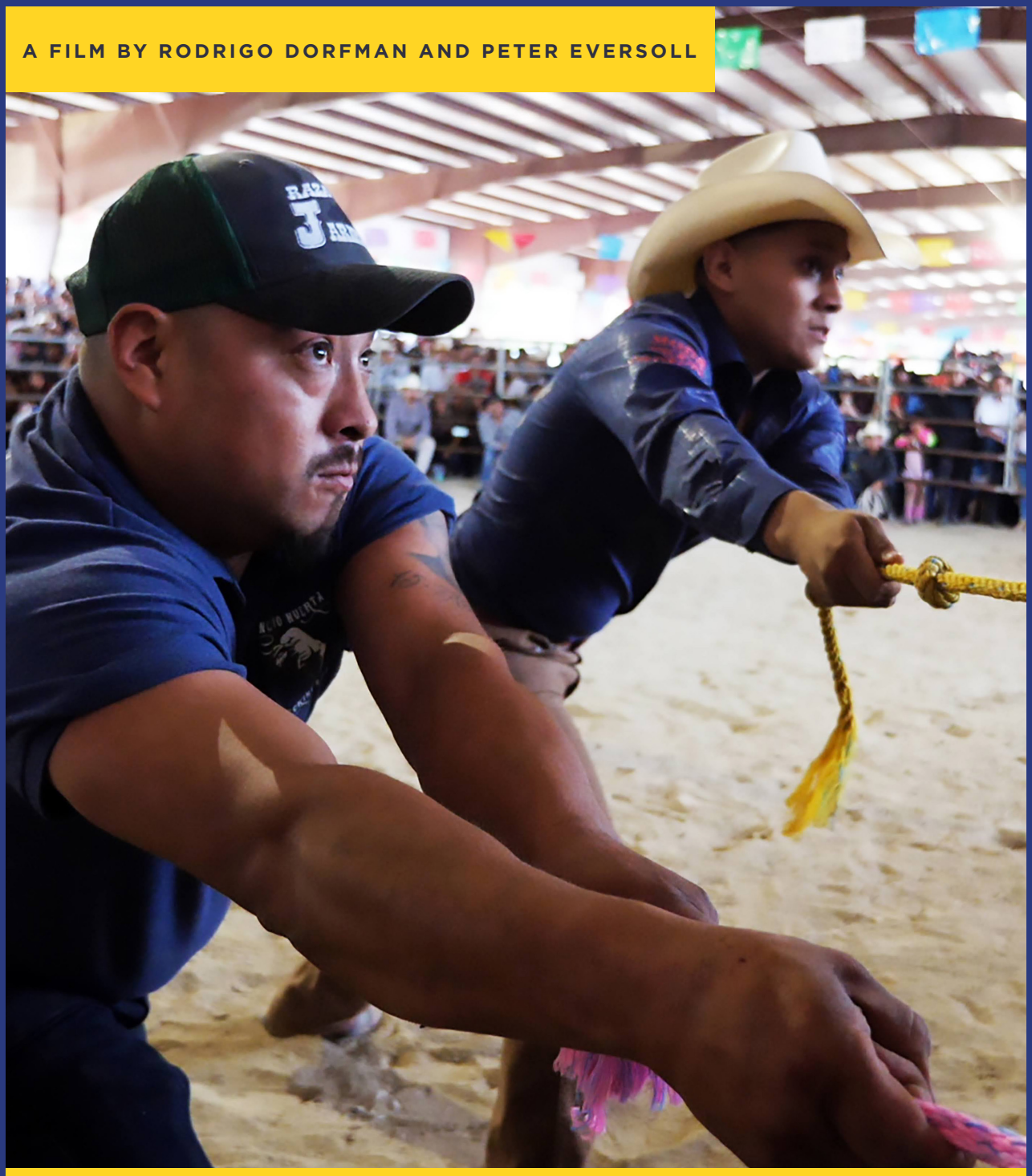
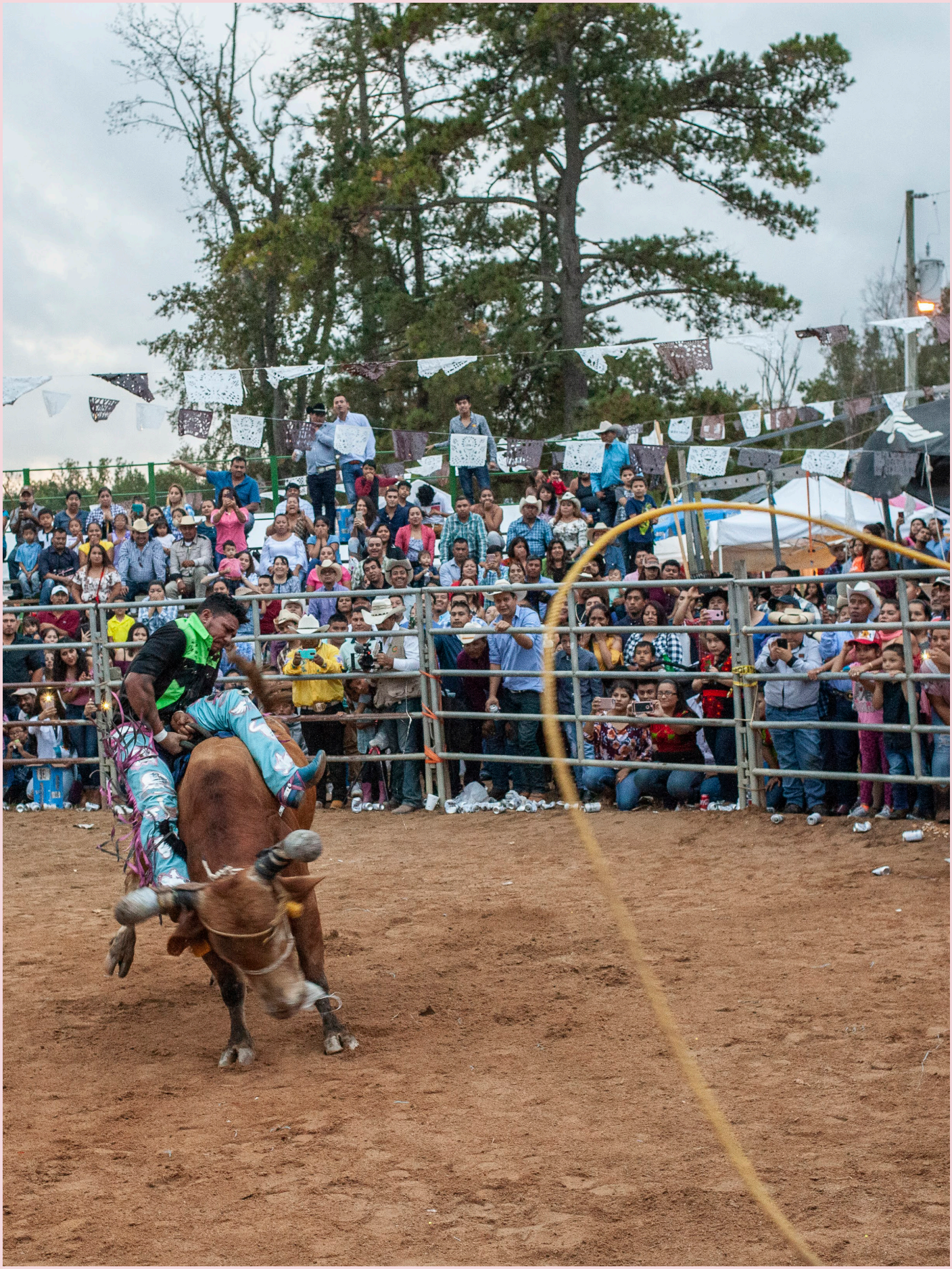
Toros y Santos (Bulls & Saints)

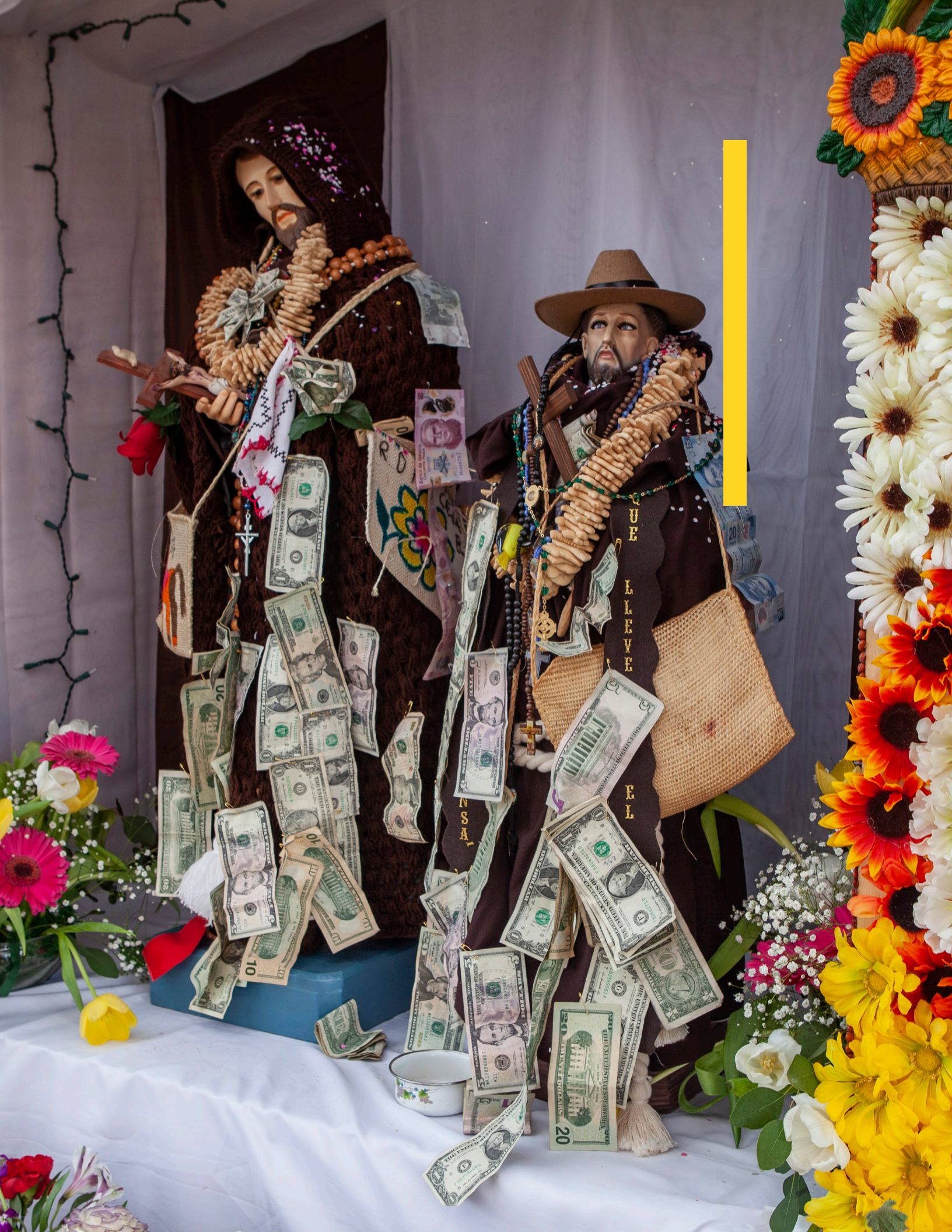
A FILM BY RODRIGO DORFMAN AND PETER EVERSOLL



POV

DISCUSSION GUIDE





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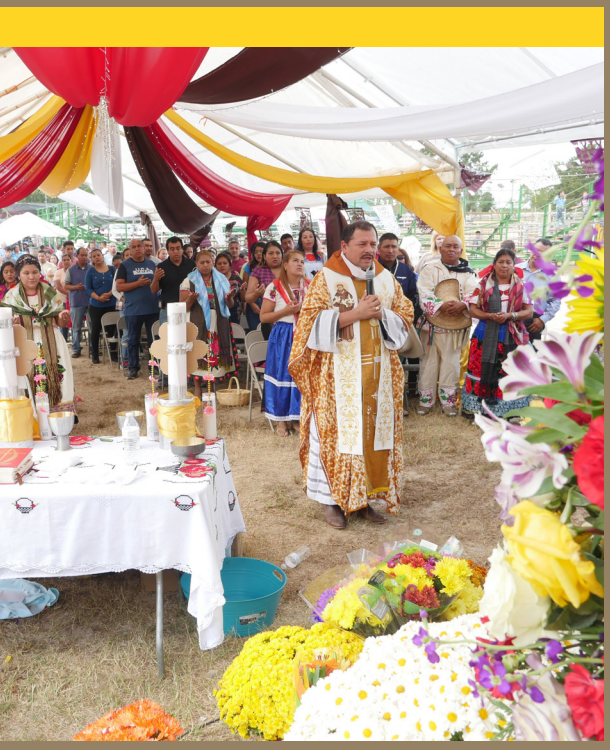
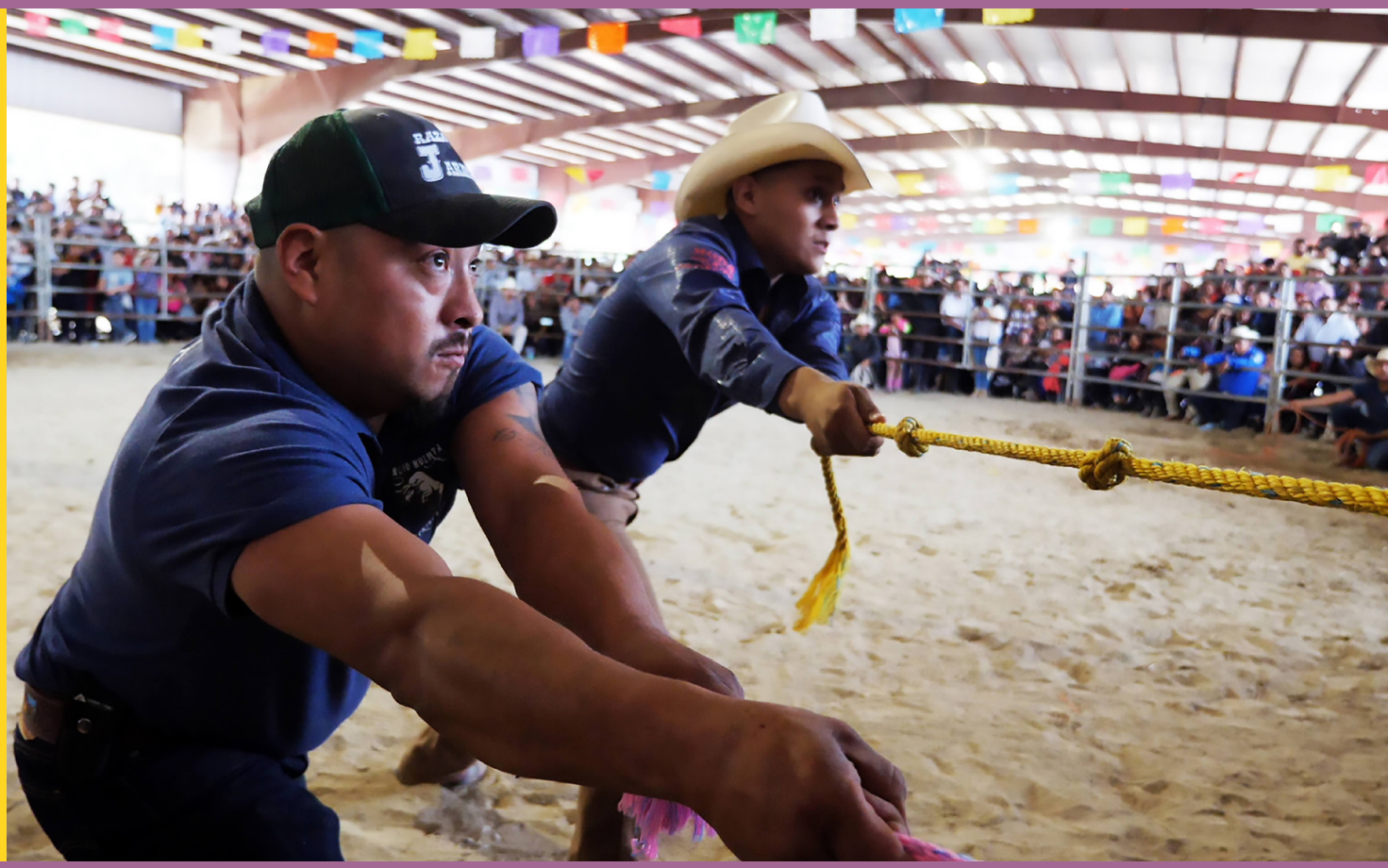


Film Summary



After 20 years of living in the United States, an undocumented family decides to return home. Little do they know it will be the most difficult journey of their lives. Set against a backdrop of the rodeo rings of North Carolina and the spellbinding Mexican hometown they long for, *Toros y Santos (Bulls and Saints)* is a love story of reverse migration, rebellion, and redemption. *Toros y Santos (Bulls and Saints)* was co-produced by Nuevo South, LLC and Firelight Media in association with American Documentary / POV and Latino Public Broadcasting, with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Using This Guide

This guide is an invitation to dialogue. It is based on a belief in the power of human connection and designed for people who want to use *Toros y Santos (Bulls and Saints)* to engage family, friends, classmates, colleagues, and communities. In contrast to initiatives that foster debates in which participants try to convince others that they are right, this document envisions conversations undertaken in a spirit of openness in which people try to understand one another and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening actively.

The discussion prompts are intentionally crafted to help a wide range of audiences think more deeply about the issues in the film. Rather than attempting to address them all, choose one or two that best meet your needs and interests. And be sure to leave time to consider taking action. Planning next steps can help people leave the room feeling energized and optimistic, even in instances when conversations have been difficult.

For more detailed event planning and facilitation tips, visit https://communitynetwork.amdoc.org/.

A NOTE TO FACILITATORS

Dear POV Community,

We are so glad you have chosen to facilitate a discussion inspired by the film *Toros y Santos (Bulls and Saints)*. Before you facilitate, please prepare yourself for the conversation, as this film invites you and your community to discuss the experiences of Latin American migrants in the U.S. South and the changing cultural landscapes provoked by the demographic shift in the past 20-plus years. These conversations require learning truths about migration, society, culture, and how culture is fluid, adaptable, and contextual. We urge you, as a facilitator, to take the necessary steps to ensure that you are prepared to guide a conversation that sees the humanity behind each story of migration and that takes into account the challenges of becoming an American, the tribulations of the places we all come from, and, finally, the growth that as communities we enjoy when embracing the life experiences of some of the subjects in the film. Importantly, this film shares the realities of individuals and communities of Hispanic descent through a lens of joy and resilience rather than focusing on the trauma of border crossings, and we hope this guide will aid you in conversations that expand understanding while maximizing care, critical curiosity, transformation, and connection.

Tips and Tools for Facilitators

Here are some supports to help you prepare for facilitating a conversation that inspires curiosity, connection, critical questions, recognition of difference, power, and possibility.

Share Community Agreements

Community Agreements: What Are They? Why Are They Useful?

Community agreements help provide a framework for engaging in dialogue that establishes a shared sense of intention ahead of participating in discussion. Community agreements can be co-constructed and created as an opening activity that your group completes collectively and collaboratively. Here is a model of community agreements you can review. As the facilitator, you can gauge how long your group should take to form these agreements or whether participants would be amenable to using pre-established community agreements.

Opening Activity (Optional): Establishing Community Agreements for Discussion

Whether you are a group of people coming together once for this screening and discussion or a group whose members know each other well, creating a set of community agreements helps foster clear discussion in a manner that draws in and respects all participants, especially when tackling intimate or complex conversations around identity. These steps will help provide guidelines for the process:

- **Pass around** sample community agreements and take time to read aloud as a group to make sure all participants can both hear and read the text.
- **Allow time** for clarifying questions, make sure all participants understand the necessity for the agreements, and allow time to make sure everyone understands the agreements themselves.
- **Go around in a circle** and have every participant name an agreement they would like to include. Chart this in front of the room where all can see.
- **Go around two to three times** to give participants multiple chances to contribute and also to give a conclusive end to the process.
- **Read the list aloud**.
- **Invite** questions or revisions.
- **Ask** if all are satisfied with the list.

COMMON CONCEPTS & LANGUAGE

Cherán

The municipality of Cherán is in the Mexican state of Michoacán, which is situated in the central-western portion of Mexico and extends west to the Pacific shore. Cherán is in northwestern Michoacán, approximately 360 kilometers (220 miles) west of Mexico City and 123 kilometers (76 miles) west of the state capital of Morelia; it is located on a highland plateau at 2,251 meters (7,385 feet) above sea level. According to the 2020 Mexican census, the municipality of Cherán has a population of approximately 20,000. Cherán is one of 11 municipalities demographically denoted as Purépecha. Inhabitants speak the Purépecha language (also known as Tarascan), as well as Spanish. Cherán is known for a style of government it implemented following a 2011 civil uprising over local concerns about corruption and crime. It is now a self-ruling Indigenous community.

Colonization and Syncretism

Colonization is a form of invasion, dispossession, or subjugation of a people. It may take the form of a military invasion, or it can be a geographical movement in the form of encroachment. The result is that land is taken from its original inhabitants, and this dispossession is often legalized afterward. The result is institutionalized inequality. The relationship between colonizer and colonized is unequal and tilts in favor of the colonizer. Current and past colonialism wields tremendous impact on power. For example, White supremacy as a philosophy was mainly developed to justify European colonial exploitation of the Global South (including enslaving African peoples, extracting resources from much of Asia and Latin America, and enshrining cultural norms of Whiteness as desirable in both colonized and colonizer nations). Colonized communities become syncretic, meaning they fuse or mix different beliefs and various schools of thought. (Syncretism involves merging or assimilating discrete traditions.) For example, the Día de los Muertos celebrated today resulted from syncretism of pre-Columbian polytheism and Spanish pagan and Christian practices. By combining and mixing traditions, colonial powers and colonized peoples sometimes are able to negotiate the sharing of land and resources.

Discrimination

Colonization can be defined Discrimination is unequal treatment of people based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, and other aspects. In the United States, it is illegal to discriminate against someone based on race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. It is also illegal to retaliate against a person because the person complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination, or participated in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit. The law also requires an employer reasonably to accommodate applicants' and employees' sincerely held religious practices unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer's business.

Institutional Racism

Institutional racism occurs when institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. Institutional policies may never mention a specific group. Still, their effect is to create advantages for Whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color

Jaripeo

Jaripeo is a type of rodeo bull-riding.

Migration

Migration is moving, typically to obtain rights, better wages, education, and security. Much migration is seasonal. The movement can occur over long distances, crossing symbolic, geographic, and national borders, but internal migration is the dominant form of human migration globally. Due to legal frameworks, seasonal migration has led some people who move from one place to another to settle permanently in their new locations.

Purépecha

The Purépecha were an ancient civilization in western Mexico. The contemporary Indigenous population is located mainly in the townships of Cherán and Pátzcuaro, in the state of Michoacán. They were also known as the Tarascan civilization, an exonym (not a word used by them to describe themselves). Their name comes from a Nahuatl word that means "'place of fish masters." The Purépecha are one of the largest Indigenous communities migrating to the United States in the last 30 years. Indigenous migration has particular conditions and forms of experience in the United States. See the Background Information section for more about the Purépecha.

Participants

Gamaliel "Tacho" Juárez Sánchez
Tacho, a Purépecha migrant in his early 40s, is a strongman, a bull rider, and a construction worker. As a husband and father, he likes to provide for his family. Tacho dreams of Cherán, misses his father who passed away (a victim of the new violence), and talks with his mother almost every day. He is married to Ceci.

Cecilia "Ceci" Mendoza Estrada
Ceci has been in the United States for 20 years, working as a cook and raising her children. She wants to return to Cherán. She and Tacho are building a house back home. Meanwhile, she has established a home in North Carolina and become a community organizer. She is married to Tacho.

Teresa Sánchez
Teresa, Tacho's mother, lives in Cherán. She recalls the struggle to maintain Purépecha territory. She speaks about Tacho's father, Leopoldo Juárez Urbina, a teacher and municipal president who initiated the resistance to protect the forest of the Purépecha. He was killed in 2008 while organizing the community. Teresa carries on his legacy.

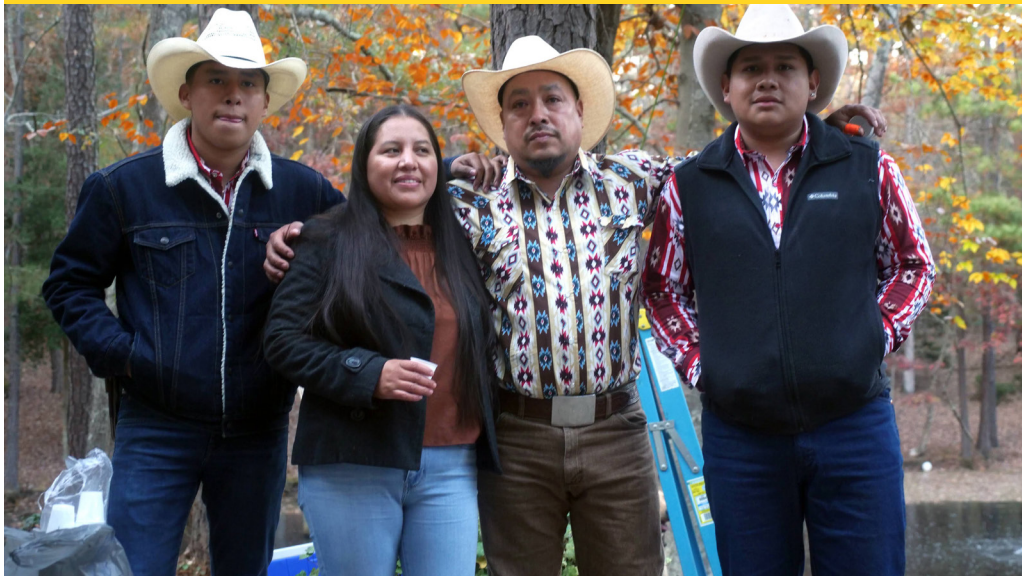
Josefina Estrada
Josefina, Ceci's mother, still lives in the mountains near Cherán. Josefina became an activist against the *talamontes*, those using violent means to expand mono-crops in Purépecha territory. She tells the story of resistance and the creation of the Indigenous guard in Cherán. Josefina is also a feminist who raises women's voices in her community.

Alan Juárez and Gamaliel "Flaco" Juárez
Alan and Flaco, Ceci and Tacho's children, are in school. Alan will graduate soon. They both help with household chores and plan to be great jariperos (bull riders).

Key Issues

Toros y Santos (Bulls and Saints) is an excellent tool for outreach and will be of particular interest to people who want to explore the following topics:

- Migrant experiences
- Family and Community
- Longing and Belonging
- Indigenous migration
- Adaptation, resistance, integration
- Contemporary Indigeneity and Indigenous cultural practices



Background Information

Indigenous Migration to the United States

According to the United Nations International Organization for Migration, in 2020, over 25 million migrants from Latin America were residing in the United States. Latin American and Caribbean populations totaled an estimated 10 million in 1990 and have increased considerably since then. Up until the 1990s, the majority of studies of Hispanic migration to the United States used nationalities (Mexican, Guatemalan, Cuban) to label immigrants. The flow of Latino workers of Mexican descent has increased since the mid-1990s due in part to the establishment of the 1994 trade agreement NAFTA between Mexico, the United States, and Canada. Technification and subsidies in the agricultural sector, trade opportunities, and markets changed how traditional farming practices were implemented in southern Mexico, displacing hundreds of thousands of people.

More recently, Indigenous recognition has been explored and recorded. A 2021 census bureau survey indicates that Indigenous Mexican Americans (foreign-born and not) constitute the largest Indigenous population in the United States, with 548,959 people, followed by the Navajo Nation with 328,370 people, and the Cherokee Nation with 227,856 people. It is important to recall that the establishment of borders between Mexico and the United States divided at least seven Indigenous nations with populations living on both sides of the border. Few studies describe early or current waves of migrants from Indigenous-populated areas of Mexico. While some work has been published about the participation of rural Indigenous subjects—including Purépecha from Michoacán—in the Bracero Program (which from 1942 to 1964 brought Mexican workers to the United States), the vast majority of Indigenous communities remain unstudied. Motivated by endemic poverty, successive Mexican economic crises, and the termination of the Bracero Program in 1964, these Indigenous communities continued to send migrants to the United States for farmwork. Among the largest Indigenous Mexican migrant communities are the Mixtec, the Otomi, the Maya, and the Purépecha.

The Nuevo South: Migrant Life in North Carolina

Purépecha migrants arriving in North Carolina sought work opportunities in the agricultural, military, and service industries and worked in poultry, swine, and livestock slaughterhouses.

As the state transformed its economy from agroindustry to service, mostly around Charlotte, the Triangle Area (Raleigh. Durham, and Chapel Hill), and the Piedmont Triad (Greensboro, Winston Salem, High Point), new sectors such as food and hotel service, construction, landscaping, and care began to increase in the mid-1990s and have continued to do so. By the early 2000s, a growing Latino middle class developed, with a more

widely diversified presence in the state's workforce and economy. This trend has continued into the 2020s. By 2021, about one-third of Latino people surveyed in the state claimed their yearly household income for 2020–2021 was between $50,000 and $100,000. In 2000, 52,300 North Carolina Latinos were U.S. citizens of voting age; by 2020, that number had risen to about 338,000.

The consolidation of such communities reaches 10% of the population of the state. Hispanic students are a fast-growing population in North Carolina schools. During the 2018–2019 school year, 18% of students in North Carolina were Hispanic, but just 3% of teachers were Hispanic, according to the Hunt Institute. Latino students graduating from high school are at the bottom of the graduation rate (81%), and only around 40% of graduates go on to higher education. This is related to the fact that most students are first-generation high school and/or college graduates. On the one hand, the growth of the Hispanic community is palpable, and its members' participation in the state's economic transformation is a reality. On the other hand, there are still challenges for the migrant community to fully engage with the system.

To start, a broken migration system has cornered communities in the shadows (where illegal structures and insecurity are facts of everyday life). The structural racism of the U.S. South keeps opportunities from many, and divestment in public services and education adds to the challenges of adaptation, financial, political, and cultural integration, and success.

Nonetheless, many organizations representing Hispanics, Latinos, and Latinx have been created in the past decades. They offer services that bridge some resources and allow the communities to have a public presence. Religious organizations (in a multidimensional practice) are another important aggregator. Communities feel secure and active, as national associations, interest groups, and commercial enterprises allow communities to network and progress.

Community Organization (There and Here)

In 2011, the people of Cherán, Mexico, most of them Purépecha, revolted against their local government because of its collusion with organized crime groups. Indigenous groups in Mexico have a long history of struggle for autonomy, but the movement in Cherán was the only one to date that has succeeded. . The most crucial years of the Cherán revolt were 2007 to 2011. During this time, the administration of Mexican president Felipe Calderón declared a "war on drugs." Drug-related violence intensified as a result, and there was a feeling that the national government completely lost control of security and failed to address the problem of criminal organizations. In addition, widespread corruption among government officials created distrust. At the same time, organized crime was diversifying by expanding into other types of businesses, such as extortion, kidnapping, trafficking of crude oil, and illegal logging. In Cherán, the drug trafficking organization La Familia Michoacana used extortion tactics to target logging companies and take control of avocado production. Avocado farming became the perfect cover for laundering the profits of illegal trafficking of controlled substances.

In 2008, Cherán elected Roberto Bautista Chapin as the municipal president. He was a member of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), and there were accusations that he cooperated with La Familia Michoacana to invest portions of the cartel's money in defeating the Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) for control of Cherán. The deal appeared simple: the municipal seat in Cherán in exchange for its forests and avocado fields. Leopoldo Juárez Urbina (Tacho's father) made the deal public and was killed.

As a result, between 2007 and 2010, illegal loggers destroyed 20,000 hectares of forest, approximately 70% of Cherán's forests. However, on April 15, 2011, Indigenous women blocked logging trucks coming through town.

After the local police tried to intervene, other community members joined them. By the end of the week the community had barricaded all the town's entrances. The police, the municipal president, and the loggers were banished from the town, and the roads were forcibly closed. Initially, the community armed themselves with the weapons of the loggers; later, Purépecha living in the United States funded communication equipment, ammunition, and other items. Also, remesas (money transferred from a person living abroad to their family in their country of origin) supported the community in the struggle to secure the territory and obtain autonomy. Bonfires were lit every night and became a locus for organization, debate, and consensus. No one could enter or leave Cherán for six months after the uprising began.

In November 2011, the Mexican government granted Cherán autonomy under the Usos y Costumbres law. It used the concept of justicia comunitaria (community justice), meaning that a community provides its own security and policing. Importantly, the entire community approved the model. The community decision-making conducted throughout the uprising revolved around the neighborhood fogatas, or bonfires.

Purépecha communities celebrate their patron saint, Saint Francis of Assis, every October. The version of this fiesta in North Carolina has become the largest celebration of any one community anywhere in the southern United States. The gathering attracts Purépecha from many states. In celebrating, the community recreates forms of governance from Cherán, designating comisionados who, around a bonfire, organize the different aspects of the celebration. This religious celebration maintains a respectful dialogue with the Catholic Church. It also offers an opportunity to reconnect with Purépecha traditions, foods, music, dance, jaripeo, and crafts. The Purépecha language is the lingua franca, and all aspects of the culture are expressed.

In 2020, after years of paying high prices to rent different locations in North Carolina for this celebration, the community decided (in a community manner) to buy a piece of land to stage the celebration and set down roots. As migration rules and policing of migrants have become more extreme, community members who used to travel back and forth between Mexico and the United States to invest, trade, and connect with their relatives have stopped traveling back to Mexico, and they are establishing a new town where they can settle: Rancho San Francisco de Asís, Cherán, North Carolina.

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DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Starting The Conversation

Immediately after the film, you may want to give people a few quiet moments to reflect on what they have seen. You could pose a general question (examples below) and give people some time to themselves to jot down or think about their answers before opening the discussion. Alternatively, you could ask participants to share their thoughts with a partner before starting a group discussion.

- Where does this film take place?
- What did you learn about this family's migrant experience that surprised you?
- What was familiar to you in the film? What was unfamiliar?
- What types of feelings did this film conjure?
- Which specific scene, if any, stayed with you and why?

Common Dreams, Family, and the Future

1. Who is Tacho? What characteristics do you most admire about Tacho? What about Tacho's experiences can you relate to?

2. Who is Ceci? What characteristics do you most admire about Ceci? What about Ceci's experiences can you relate to?

3. Who is Tacho's mother? How would you describe their relationship? What factors of their lives impact their relationship?

4. Who is Ceci's mother? How would you describe their relationship? What factors of their lives impact their relationship?

5. What are some of the challenges that Tacho and Ceci face as individuals? As a family? How are these challenges unique to their lives?

Home(s) Divided

1. What happened in Cherán and why was Leopoldo Juárez Urbina murdered?

2. What did the women of Cherán do?

3. How did Toros y Santos (Bulls and Saints) invite you to think differently about migrant experiences in the United States?

4. How did the people in the film experience a longing for home in ways that are familiar to you or unfamiliar to you? What did you learn about the nature of longing for home?

5. What do you think “home” means to the people in the film? How is it similar or different from your ideas or experiences of “home”?

6. What are some joys that the family and community celebrated together? In what ways were these celebrations bridges between two places?

No Here, No There

1. What are Tacho’s fears and dreams? What are Ceci’s fears and dreams? How do their dreams differ? What are their dreams for their children, Alan and Flaco?

2. What are your dreams for yourself and your family? What do your dreams have in common with Tacho’s and Ceci’s dreams?

3. What does it mean to belong to a place? To a community?

4. What gets in the way of Tacho and Ceci’s experience of belonging in the American South? Do we see this in the film? If so, where and how?

5. What is the function of the rodeo events? How do they serve the community?

6. What types of power are discovered among community members in the film as they congregate in North Carolina? In Cherán?

7. What role do memory and past experience play in on-screen relationships we see in the film? How can relationships transcend time and place and allow us to feel connected to home?

Cultural Practices of Home

1. What kind of food is featured in the film? What kind of ingredients do people in the film use? How does the food they cook connect them to community, family (lost or present), and Cherán?

2. How do they cook? How might this be significant?

3. What do you eat every day? Do you eat alone? Is your food related to a cultural tradition? Do you know where it comes from and who cooks it for you?

4. How can the practices of growing, harvesting, and cooking food be rooted in feelings of home? Do you have any experiences like this?

OPENING/CLOSING ACTIVITY

OPTIONAL

At the end of your discussion, to help people synthesize what they've experienced and move the focus from dialogue to action steps, you may want to choose one of these questions

Approximately 25% of Mexicans are considered Indigenous. Of them, 7.4 million speak an Indigenous language, but only 6.5% of the national population has an Indigenous language as their primary language.

PLEASE READ ALOUD THIS POEM:

My tongue is divided into two

By Quique Avilés

My tongue is divided into two
by virtue, coincidence or heaven
words jumping out of my mouth
stepping on each other
enjoying being a voice for the message
expecting conclusions

My tongue is divided into two
into heavy accent bits of confusion
into miracles and accidents
saying things that hurt the heart
drowning in a language that lives, jumps, translates

My tongue is divided by nature
by our crazy desire to triumph and conquer

This tongue is cut up into equal pieces
one wants to curse and sing out loud
the other one simply wants to ask for water

My tongue is divided into two
one side likes to party
the other one takes refuge in praying

tongue
english of the funny sounds
tongue
funny sounds in english
tongue
sounds funny in english
tongue
in funny english sounds

My tongue sometimes acts like two
and it goes crazy
not knowing which side should be speaking
which side translating

My tongue is divided into two
a border patrol runs through the middle
frisking words
asking for proper identification
checking for pronunciation

My tongue is divided into two

My tongue is divided into two

I like my tongue

it says what feels right

I like my tongue

it says what feels right

QUESTIONS:

Reflect for a moment on what this poem says. Allow yourself to be introspective.

1. How many of you are migrants or are descendents of migrants?
2. How many of you know a recent migrant?
3. How many of you speak another language?

Resources

Centro para Familias Hispanas
Centro para Familias Hispanas, a program of Catholic Charities, empowers Hispanic families in North Carolina as they overcome barriers by providing direct services and connections to community resources.
www.catholiccharitiesraleigh.org/cpfh/

El Centro Hispano
El Centro Hispano is the largest Latino-led/Latino-serving organization in North Carolina and has been working with and on behalf of the Hispanic/Latino community in Durham, Wake, Orange, and neighboring counties since 1992.
elcentronc.org/

El Futuro
It is a nonprofit outpatient clinic that provides comprehensive mental health services for Latino families in a bilingual environment of healing and hope.
elfuturo-nc.org/

El Pueblo
El Pueblo is a nonprofit organization based in Raleigh that specializes in leadership development for both youth and adults in the area's growing Latinx community.
elpueblo.org/contact/

Hispanic American Chamber of Commerce
The mission of this North Carolina organization is to be the motivating force in educating, advocating, leading, and promoting current and future economic diversity and business and workforce development through its entrepreneurship and small business center, educational center, corporate program, and professional program.**https://nchacc.org**

North Carolina Congress of Latino Organizations
The North Carolina Congress of Latino Organizations is a statewide, membership-led organization that builds power among Latino institutions and their leaders to advance social, racial, and economic justice. The group works for the public good by coalescing training and organizing Latinos across religious, racial, nationality, class, county, and neighborhood lines.
www.nclatinocongress.org/

North Carolina Society of Hispanic Professionals
The North Carolina Society of Hispanic Professionals is a professional membership group, made up of individuals who are united by a common desire to see Hispanic students succeed in the classroom so they can succeed in life. Since 1999, the group has promoted the education of Hispanic students at all scholastic levels.
www.thencshp.org/

Teaching Guide

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

We are all migrants. Sometimes we forget, sometimes we do not want to remember, and sometimes we do not realize it. We move across the surface of the mother (the planet), looking for what she offers; we always want to return (at least temporarily) to the roots of our memories.

MATERIALS

- PENCILS
- PAPER

TIME REQUIRED

60 MINUTES (30 minutes for reflection and completing the questions. 30 minutes for sharing with the group).

Essential Questions (30 minutes)

- **Do you know a migrant? Do you know an Indigenous person?**
- **Were you born in the city/state where you live? What memories do you have from childhood regarding the place you were born?**
- **Have you moved from afar to be where you are? Have you ever felt far away from someone you love? Write or draw your journey.**

- **Are you a migrant?**
- **Are you a second- or third-generation migrant? Where are you (or your ancestors) from?**
- **Why, when, and how did you/they migrate?**

- **Do you speak another language? How many?**
- **Have you been to a place where you need to learn the language? Or a place in which you do not know how to communicate appropriately?**
- **Are we all migrants? Are we all indigenous to a place?**
- **If you were Tacho, would you go back to Cherán and why?**
- **If you were Ceci, would you want to go back and why?**

After 30 minutes, share with the group.

Roles of Women

The title of the film, *Toros y Santos (Bulls and Saints)*, refers to masculine attributes, a sort of duality. However, the role of women in the film is central to understanding the relations between characters, locales, struggles, and futures. Women's roles also reveal something about Indigenous communities. Read the poem below aloud and then allow people to share their thoughts.

Purépecha Mother

By Gilberto Jerónimo Mateo

She is not a queen.

Hungry, early in the morning she goes for firewood.

At night she serves supper; the next day

dawns with merchandise: crockery, chapatas, guayabas, bread . . . , she goes to sell them in the morning.

They do not dedicate poems to her.

She claims no privileges; she goes among the furrows

to plant, harvest . . . carefully finishes her handicrafts.

In the family a man may fail, but she . . . never!

Until dawn, alone and in silence, she wanders

the streets searching for her children.

Her eyes proclaim impotence because

she cannot haggle in her own language

to get fair prices for her merchandise.

Mother, for all eternity!

Without distinguishing,

she holds her children in her heart

even though they have abandoned her.

She does not use makeup, nor perfume: yes,

she shows the marks of work.

She is not in a sanctuary.

No one lights incense on her journey.

Her body gets plenty of the sun's rays;

her feet feel the snow;

her face is impregnated

with sweat and dust.

She does not say anything,

her world is what it is.

Her values must collide with modernity.

She must seek her gods among the ashes.

She does not use her beauty to compete.

With her reboso, overblouse, sash, language, smile,

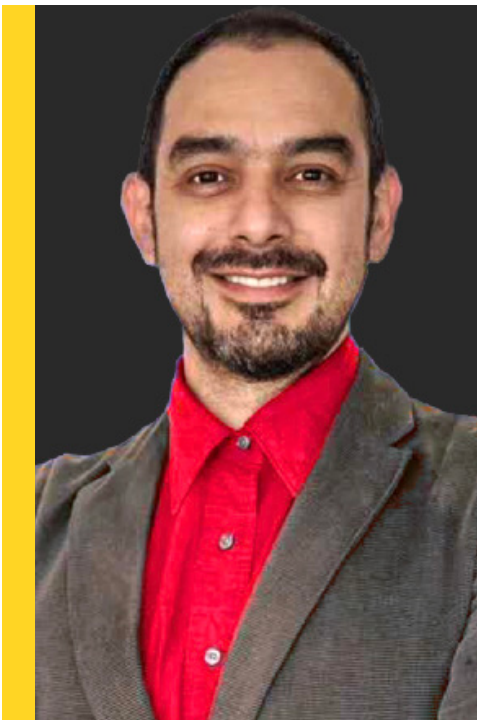
she engenders, amuses and elevates,

and is the last refuge of the Purépecha culture.

She, she is the Purépecha mother.

Translated from the Spanish by Earl Shorris and Sylvia Sasson Shorris. This poem was originally written in Purépecha. From *Words Without Borders*, October 28, 2005. Originally published in *Nuni, Espacio para la expresión de las lenguas y culturas indígenas de México* 5, no. 13, April 2002.

Credits & Acknowledgments



About the Author

Miguel Rojas-Sotelo, Ph.D., works at the intersection of ethnic/Indigenous studies, environmental and health humanities, critical human geography, and border cultural theory. As a scholar, filmmaker, visual artist, and media activist, he studies how Indigenous (settled or displaced) and natural spaces are shaped by modernity and how they mobilize to adapt and resist. He is particularly interested in how Indigenous communities articulate their archival knowledge, racial and class politics, and the spatiality of those processes and how they are manifested in the landscape via visual, audiovisual, oral, and textual narratives.

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