

BIOGRAPHY | AMY SERRANO



Photo Credit: Ann Benoit + Tom Dalferes

Award-Winning filmmaker, writer, poet, and human rights advocate **Amy Serrano** is the **Chief Creative Officer** of **Siren Films** where along with her team, she writes, directs, shoots, and produces her own films. She is also **Director** of **Siren Creative Media** where she works on creative media marketing and communications campaigns for clients.

Currently, Amy is finalizing the second phase of the production on a film on the last 3 years of the life of the last known **Tuskegee Airman** in New Orleans. **AIRMAN: The Extraordinary Life of Calvin G. Moret** is a transmedia film about American and World War II history, aviation, country, humanity and civil rights. It's the very timely story of one man's love of country and humanity, *even during unconscionable times*.

She is also writing a book of her very special friendship with Mr. Moret. **Mr. Moret & I: The Legacy of My Unexpected Friendship with Louisiana's Last Known Tuskegee Airman**. This book is one part memoir [Serrano's], and one part biography [Mr. Moret's]. It reveals Mr. Moret's first hand, contemplative recounting of history and race in America, while dually functioning as Amy's retrospective reflection of the very meaningful friendship that emerged as a consequence of the great blocks of time spent at home, on the road, and up in the air during the shooting of the film.

And launching late in 2018, Amy is curating and participating as an artist on **The Saudades Project** which seeks to artistically and vehemently explore the *Saudade* associated to Persons, Places, and Time through transmedia conceptions and intersections. Selected works will be featured in a full colour, 8.5 x 11 book entitled, **The Saudades Project** published by the publishing division of **Siren Creative Media**. Participants will be invited to perform their work at book launch events to be hosted in partnering cultural venues in Miami, New Orleans, and other participant cities.

PAST WORKS

Amy's visual body of work includes shooting, producing, writing and directing the feature-length and critically acclaimed documentary, **The Sugar Babies: The Plight of the Children of Agricultural Workers in the Sugar Industry of the Dominican Republic**. Narrated by renowned Haitian-American author **Edwidge Danticat** and composed of field recordings coupled with outside testimony, the film explores the lives of the descendants of the first Africans delivered to the island of Hispaniola for the bittersweet commodity that once ruled the world. Up until recently, these very same people continued to be trafficked from Haiti to the Dominican Republic to work on sugar plantations under circumstances that could only be considered modern day slavery. Besides the awareness created on issues leading to nearly eliminating human trafficking and child labor, the screenings and advocacy surrounding this film led the **U.S. Department of Labor** to finally place sugar imported from the Dominican Republic on the list of products to be made with forced or child labor.

Amy wrote, produced, and directed the U.S. co-production for the feature length film **MOVE!** Produced in Rome, Italy and distributed throughout Film Festivals in Europe, **MOVE!** is a global, collaborative film composed by 11 filmmakers in 6 continents exploring the dispassionate state of humanity through varied human emotions. **She directed and produced** the PBS broadcast **A Woman's Place: Voices of Contemporary Hispanic-American Women** featuring Isabel Allende, Dr. Antonia Novello, Bianca Jagger, Maria Hinojosa, Esmeralda Santiago, Marjorie Agosin and other barrier breaking Hispanic-American Women. The film features the music of **Tori Amos**. Amy also

produced the award-winning film, **Adios Patria: The Cuban Exodus** narrated by **Andy Garcia** (Berlin Film Festival, Best Documentary New York Independent Film and Video Festival, PBS). She executive produced the **PBS** broadcast and **Emmy-Award** nominated **Cafe con Leche: Voices of Exiles' Children** and associate produced the **Emmy-Award** nominated **Havana: Portrait of Yesteryear** narrated by **Gloria Estefan** for **PBS**.

Because of time spent with the **Garifuna** people of Honduras, Amy wrote an essay and created a multidisciplinary installation titled, **From Punta to Chumba** which is currently traveling the state museum system in **Louisiana** until **2018**. The multidisciplinary installation and essay were commissioned and published by the **State of Louisiana Division of the Arts**.

She also released a book of poems entitled, **Of Fiery Places and Sacred Spaces**. The poetic tome is based on the geography and cartography of people and places. Some of her other poems have been published in the **Latino Stuff Review**, **Ella**, **MiPo Gallery**, **The Peauxdunque Writers' Alliance Annual Anthology**, and multiple times in **Poets & Artists Magazine**. In 2017, Amy edited and is published within an anthology titled, **Into the Woods** which features the works of writers from Louisiana's Northshore communities.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

For her contributions to her hometown, Amy was honored by the City of Miami with a proclamation making **October 27 AMY SERRANO DAY**. Other honors received include twice being named a **Woman of Today** in **Glamour Magazine**. **Glamour Magazine** also named Ms. Serrano a **Woman of the Year**. During Women's History Month, she was presented a **Mentor Award** by the Public School System and named a **Distinguished Female Role Model** by the Public Library System in Miami. She was also 1 of 8 women profiled in a women's empowerment photographic documentary produced by **Clinique/ MAC/ Estee Lauder** entitled **Evolution of Woman**. This national exhibit was first unveiled at New York City's **Metropolitan Pavilion** and shot by award-winning fine art photographer, **Sandi Fellman**.

Amy is a recipient of the **Pond's Tesoro Award** in Art and Culture. She's been awarded a prestigious Fellowship with the **National Hispana Leadership Institute [NHLI]** in D.C. which involved **Leadership Studies** at **Harvard University's JFK School of Government**, the **Center for Creative Leadership**, on Capitol Hill, and with various recognized leaders in social and civic change. She was named a **Latina of Excellence** in **Hispanic Magazine**. She was selected as 1 of 15 top **Hispanic Leaders in the United States** by the **Spanish Embassy** in Washington D.C. and participated in a **Diplomatic Exchange** in **Spain** with their top leaders in the social, political, economic and cultural arenas which included the **King of Spain**. Following this diplomatic mission, Amy was profiled in a book on **Hispanic-American leaders** in the United States published by the **Spain-U.S. Council** and named **one of the most influential and recognized Hispanics in the United States** by **MEGA TV**. She was later selected to be profiled in the **Florida Hispanic Yearbook**, and then named a **Mujer Vanidades** in **Vanidades Magazine**. Amy was also chosen as a subject of an upcoming documentary on female leadership in the United States.

EDUCATION

Amy earned a **Bachelor** degree in **Anthropology** and **Sociology** with a minor in **International Relations** and certificates in **Cuban Studies** and **Latin American and Caribbean Studies** from **Florida International University**. She holds a number of certificates in **Leadership Studies** from **Harvard University** in Cambridge, the **Center for Creative Leadership** in North Carolina, **Gallup University** in D.C., the **National Hispana Leadership Institute** in D.C., and the **Universidad Menendez Pelayo** in Spain.

OTHER

A **published poet, writer, essayist and speaker of 4 languages**, she remains a committed **Senior Fellow** of the **Human Rights Foundation** in New York; a **Fellow** of the **National Hispana Leadership Institute** in D.C.; a **Board Member** of **Voz de Mujer**, a women's empowerment and leadership organization based in Texas; an **Advisory Council Member** of the **Faulkner Society** in New Orleans; a **Member** of the **Spanish Embassy's Hispanic Leader's Association** in Washington D.C. which is now headed by the **King of Spain**, and was appointed a founding Board Member to **United Nations Ambassador Armando Valladares'** non-governmental organization, **Human Rights for All**. She also enjoys being a featured guest lecturer at colleges, universities, and cultural centers giving talks on the intersection of arts and activism; women and children's rights; hope during times of injustice; the ability to impact public policy through the communication arts; and many other inspiring themes.

FUTURE

Her most awaited mission is to finish writing the manuscript for *Somewhere in the World* [*working title has been: In the Fields of the Invisible Children*]; a novel based on the adventures of Cat de Lara, a globetrotting, documentary filmmaker, and champion of seemingly lost causes.

CONTACT

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