

From Tec to Vancouver Film School in Canada: her dream come true



When she completed her **Animation and Digital Art** degree, [Belén García](#) dreamed of studying cinematography in the United States or **Canada**, although she would need a scholarship to achieve it.

Even though she wasn't fully convinced she'd be **accepted and obtain it**, she decided to **apply a day before** the call closed to study at the [Vancouver Film School](#) (VFS) in Canada.

*"I had **one week** to apply but I said no, because I'd run out of time to prepare anything. But I **plucked up the courage one day before** and quickly shot a video and **won the VFS scholarship**."*

*"The truth is that **my life changed at that moment, thanks to the Tec and the agreement it has with the VFS**," she said.*

<https://vimeo.com/516993476>

First projects

The graduate from the Tec's [State of Mexico campus](#) knew from her very first day at the VFS that her **passion** was **cinematography**.

*"I'd already worked as a **photographer** and that was what I enjoyed. The whole first year I focused on doing **cinematography projects** with my classmates," she said.*

When Belén graduated, she began working on **independent projects** covering different roles, including that of **camera assistant** and in the area of **lighting** for different short films.

*"I started this way because I had heard it around that **you should start this way**, and not as a director right away.*

*"But **I didn't like it**. I didn't enjoy it. I asked myself, 'Why won't I say that I'm a cinematographer?' **If I believe it, then so will others**," she shared.*

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From theater to cinema

Belén's work as a cinematographer encompasses **dozens of projects**, from short films, documentaries, and music videos to commercials. She also has two **feature films** in her portfolio.

*"The first feature film I made was **science fiction**. We shot it in three blocks due to a lack of budget.*

*"We filmed one week, **we waited three months**, we filmed again for a week, we waited another three months, and we eventually ended with **one more week** of recording," she explained.*

The second feature film was with a **theater company**, as part of the [Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival](#), the largest festival honoring **Shakespeare in all of Canada**.

*"This festival is held **every year**, but it didn't happen last year because of the pandemic. They decided to use the money to **make a feature film** with me as the **cinematographer**," she said.*

The style of the film was unconventional, explains Belén, because **the approach was more theatrical**. It's about two people portraying several characters to **reflect** upon the figure of **Shakespeare and his works**.

*"Working with **stage actors is different**. Stage lighting people are very different to film lighting technicians. It was **new and refreshing** for me," she said.*

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The challenge of being a woman

In the short term, Belén is looking to take on **bigger projects**, to take on a feature film in which she feels **connected** and enjoys the story.

*“I would like to work with a **director with a strong vision** with whom I also share a passion for the **story**,” she said.*

On the other hand, she highlighted that one of the **biggest challenges** she has faced over the course of her professional career has been the fact that **she is a woman**.

*“Generally speaking, being a **female** cinematographer is always more **complicated**. People don’t trust you and you have to **prove that you have the knowhow** and can do the job,” she said.*

“The most important thing is to be patient and persevere, not to give up.” - Belén García

Cinematography and basketball

According to Belén, the **tools** provided by **Tec de Monterrey** have been very important to her **professional success**.

*“During the degree course, they teach you **how to sell a business idea or your project**. This has been fundamental to my film career, because these types of projects require **large budgets** and you have to know how to make a **good pitch**,” she said.*

When Belén performs a task as a cinematographer, she remembers her years as part of the **Tec’s campus basketball team**.

*“**It’s very similar**, having a team and working together. Just like in basketball, you end up very **tired**. There’s a lot of **physical exhaustion** because you’re carrying equipment and other things.*

*“But ultimately, you see the result and, if it’s something you’re **passionate** about, you realize that **it’s all worth it** and you feel motivated to **do it again**,” she said.*

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