

# The Golden Dream

Cert 12A Guatemala 2013 108 mins

## Crew

Director/Screenplay Diego Quemada-Díez  
 Cinematography María Secco  
 Film Editing Paloma López  
 Original music Leonardo Heiblum  
 & Jacobo Lieberman

## Cast

Brandon López Juan  
 Karen Martínez Sara  
 Rodolfo Domínguez Chauk  
 Carlos Chajon Samuel

## Synopsis

*Guatemala, the present. Three teenagers - Juan, Samuel and Sara - set out on a journey, leaving behind everything that they know, in search of the American Dream.*

*With some US dollar bills sewn secretly into their jeans, they plan to cross into Mexico by boat, hop on trains up through Mexico and then continue - somehow - on to California.*

*On the journey through Mexico they meet and befriend Chauk, an Indian from Chiapas who is bound for the same destination. But after being caught by the Mexican immigration police, their dream starts to descend into a nightmare...*



## Booking Information

**Distributor:** Peccadillo Pictures

**DVD bookings:**

**CINEMA for ALL Booking Scheme**

see page 8 for more information

0114 221 0314 info@cinemaforall.org.uk

[www.cinemaforall.org.uk](http://www.cinemaforall.org.uk)

**Available:** Now



## Reviews

... Director and co-writer Diego Quemada-Díez condenses many acute observations about life as an emigrant into a sure-footed, credible story. He invests a great deal of compassion in these four characters without allowing that to distort the uncomfortable truths of such a tale: this is a horrific, dangerous and desperate way of eking out a future. Their dream is life in the US.

The reality, of course, is a nightmare, although there are welcome flashes of goodwill and solidarity along the way that suggest that decency and desperation are not mutually exclusive.

*Dave Calhoun, Time Out, June 2014*

.... Quemada-Díez served on the crew of several Ken Loach films (a detail involving stolen cowboy boots may be a reference to one of those pictures, *Bread and Roses*). He has inherited from that director many admirable traits, including an ability to elicit relaxed, naturalistic performances from untrained actors and a preference for camerawork that is almost invisible.

Not that the visual aspect is immaterial to him. He pulls off a lyrical and very un-Loach-like shot of a model train wending its way through a snowy artificial landscape. And he brings some complexity to the grandeur of Latin America, all vine-tangled train tracks and sculpted deserts, which is undercut by the injustices that take place on its soil - just as the beauty of the toasted-orange skies is rendered fragile, even treacherous, by the crimes committed beneath them. A piano motif provides a bare-bones lament for this process of degradation, with a sorrowful cello and plaintive folk music taking over in moments of extreme crisis.

The political content of *The Golden Dream* is implicit in the film's human element without ever coming to dominate it. Quemada-Díez loves his characters and is enthusiastic in coaxing joy from their prematurely aged and scowling faces, but he doesn't soft-pedal their fates. The irony of the title I was prepared for. The bluntness of the vision was more of a shock.

*Ryan Gilbey, New Statesman, June 2014*

## FILM FACTS...

☆ *The Golden Dream* premiered at the Cannes Film Festival 2013, where it won the **Un Certain Regard** prize for the ensemble cast.

☆ The film's original Spanish language title *La jaula de oro* ('The Golden Cage') is the title of a corrido (folksong) about Mexican immigrants in the US, made famous by the norteño-band *Los Tigres del Norte*.