

Un
Corrido
de la
Tierra

A BALLAD of THE LAND





Braceros in Coachella Valley
1957
Sid Avery for Time

Logline

Un Corrido de la Tierra / A Ballad of the Land follows three generations of Mexican laborers examining how capitalism has shaped migration and the landscape in Southern California.

Synopsis

Through his lived experience as a young warehouse worker in Moreno Valley, CA, Juan traces his family's hardships from Bracero work to crossing the border in the hopes of giving their family a better life. Three generations of labor, from working in the fields to working in warehouses, is recounted as we follow their migration from a small pueblo in Zacatecas, Mexico to Long Beach and finally the Inland Empire.

The abandoned ranch town of La Encarnación, once bustling from a neighboring mining economy, shows the traces of desertion as most have gone to work up North. Long Beach and later Moreno Valley become the locus of where the Carrillo family settles, along the precarious route of the supply chain—teeming with shipping ports, railroads and warehouses.

This film seeks to historicize the current labor force and migratory patterns of Mexican residents living in Southern California as it examines how the flow of capital has shaped geography, history, and political power.



Juan's dad, Octavio, in Zacatecas, Mexico
courtesy of the Carrillo Family



223 Wilmington Ave. in Carson, CA
2022

Locations



La Encarnación, Zacatecas
(Carrillo origins)



Long Beach, Ca
(The first and former family home)



Moreno Valley, Ca
(The current family home)



San Pedro Port



Refinery Towns in South Bay
(Anaheim/Del Amo Streets)



Warehouse Sites in I.E.
(where Juan and his Dad work)

Narrative Structure

Throughout the film, Juan will trace his family's migration from Zacatecas to Southern California. We will follow him as he takes us back to his family's origin of Encarnación, to where he was born in Long Beach and later to his family's current home in Moreno Valley. Through family photographs and storytelling, we will learn of the Carrillo family's history which resonates with so many who have left home to work in the states.

This documentary will later introduce archival images, footage and maps that will show the history of Southern California as a base for agriculture and industry, drawing workers from Mexico. Inspired by excerpts from the book *Inland Shift*, we will meet local geographer and academic Dr. Juan De Lara. Through his interview, Dr. De Lara will bring context to the migration of Latinos to the region and why these areas became rife for labor exploitation and pollution through political policies.

Witnessing emotional interviews and intimate depictions of the landscape, the viewer is left questioning how labor and land are intertwined, and specifically how Mexican Americans have embodied these struggles of crossing back and forth to work towards an elusive American Dream.





Warehouse under construction
in Moreno Valley, CA
2020

Artistic Approach & Execution

The Ballad

The title *Un Corrido de la Tierra / A Ballad of the Land* is a word play referencing the traditional Mexican folk songs that were often sung by the Braceros in the fields and the style of lyrics that Juan's father sings in his Banda gigs on the weekends at various local bars and events.

The Ballad of the Uprooted Ones/*Un Corrido de los Desarraigados* was a popular song sung by the Braceros in this area. To contrast the other expository parts of the documentary, we would like to weave this lyricism and theme of song throughout Juan's story in a poetic style, as music is such an important part of his family's identity. Juan's story will be told through his own first-person account and that of his family members.

The Land

Through cinematic observation, we will let the depiction of the land reveal the impact industry has had on the surrounding residential communities currently battling environmental racism.

To further honor this study of the land, all interviews will be shot on location, in-situ with natural light, to compliment the rest of the footage in the film.

