



# PRODUCTION NOTES

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**Logline:**

KAYARA, a beautiful, athletic, and determined 16-year-old young woman, longing to follow in her father's footsteps, defies tradition in her quest to try and become the first female messenger of the Incan Empire.

**Synopsis:**

Long ago, the Inca Messengers (Chasquis), were fast, strong and exclusively male. A beautiful and athletic 16-year-old young woman, Kayara, is determined to become the first female to break into the exclusive league of the Incan Empire's messengers. Along the way of her daring quest, Kayara overcomes treacherous terrain, defends the undiscovered Golden City from the great dangers of exploitation, and saves her friends and family from unexpected threats.

**Long Synopsis:**

In the heart of the Incan Empire, the *Chasquis*, swift and mighty messengers of the Emperor, have always been male. Now, a 16-year-old young woman with unparalleled athleticism and unwavering determination, dreams of shattering this ancient tradition. Defying societal norms, she sets out on a daring quest to join their ranks, prove herself worthy and more.

As Kayara battles treacherous terrain and overcomes grueling tests, she stumbles upon a hidden threat to the fabled Golden City, a realm steeped in mystery and danger. Faced with the dual challenge of securing her place among the Chasquis and protecting her homeland from exploitation, Kayara's courage and ingenuity are put to the ultimate test. Alongside her loyal friends and family, she must navigate unexpected threats and unravel secrets that could reshape the Incan Empire forever.

In a journey filled with bravery, discovery, and heart, Kayara learns that true strength lies not just in physical prowess but in the power of belief in one self and a sense of unity with her community.

**Director**

**César Zelada**

**Bio**

César Zelada Mathews is a Peruvian filmmaker and a graduate of the New York Film Academy (NYFA). Since 2006, he has been a leading director in the fields of film and advertising, working with major international brands like Coca-Cola, Toyota, Kellogg's, and SabMiller, as well as on projects for the U.S. Government, both in Peru and abroad. He is the founder and shareholder of Tunche Films SAC, a film production company with

branches in Bogotá and Panama, and a founder and shareholder of EPIC (Escuela Peruana de la Industria Cinematográfica).

Throughout his career, Zelada has received several prestigious awards and nominations. He won the Gold Award at the New York Festival Global Awards in 2016 for the project "Keyword/Vitis." His animated feature "Ainbo: Spirit of the Amazon" was nominated for Best Ibero-American Animated Film at the Platino Awards in 2022 and received nominations for Best Film and Best Sound Design at the Quirino Awards. The film was also an official selection at the Annecy Int'l Animation Film Festival 2021. Additionally, his film "Mariposas Negras" has been nominated for Best Film at Annecy 2024.

Zelada's filmography includes roles as Executive Producer for the sci-fi series "El Visitante" (2018), the animated feature "Ainbo" (2021), and upcoming projects such as "Kayara" (2024), where he serves as Director and Screenwriter, "Mariposas Negras" (2025), "La Lágrima del Diablo" (2025), and "Intoxidante" (2026, currently in pre-production).

## **Interview with César Zelada**

- **What part of the production was done in Peru?**

In Peru we worked on the entire beginning of the film from the conception of the idea and all the design in general. We even did the narrative part of the animatic storyboard and character designs, scenery, props, costumes and some character sculptures that were later detailed in modeling.

- **How has the experience of working with B-Water Studios been?**

Despite the distance, the experience has been very positive. The work has flowed smoothly, and I haven't encountered any significant obstacles. I think that the experience of having gone through a previous pandemic has made us much more adaptable to working remotely.

- **Tell us about your inspiration for the creation of Kayara?**

I have a great passion for history in general, and particularly for the history of the Inca Empire. Since I was very young, I traveled a lot throughout Peru and I always had a special interest in pre-Inca cultures and visiting Inca ruins. When I first visited Machu Picchu, it was not as a tourist but while working as a lighting assistant on a commercial shoot. The truth is, I felt a strong connection to Machu Picchu and the experience inspired me to explore more stories about the Inca Empire, its conquest, and its way of life.

Something I found interesting is that the Incas did not know writing, but nevertheless they had a coded communication system, known as the *Quipus*. That coding system was a way of transporting messages throughout the Empire. Let's remember that it was a very large empire, an empire that covered almost all of South America but it was quite well

communicated thanks to the Chasquis. The Chasquis were the messengers of the Inca who could travel across the whole Empire in four days through relays. That part of the history of the Inca Empire attracted me a lot.

I did a lot of research on the Chasquis and I began to see that they were fast, strong, and only men. It was something that caught my attention because nowadays, the most awarded marathon runners in Latin America or even in the world are Andean women. Then I wondered why a Chasquis could not be a woman, if today, it is basically women who are winning all the marathons.

So that's where it comes from... besides, it is much more interesting to have a female character who wants to fit in a man's world. That was a little bit the inspiration and that's where the story comes from. Kayara as a name in Quechua which means "*Desert Flower*". I thought it was interesting because in the same way Kayara stands out in a man's world, the flower can bloom in such arid terrain, right?

- **What is the history of Kayara?**

The history of Kayara is set in the Inca Empire, a vast civilization that spanned nearly all of South America, where communication was vital. The Incas relied on the Chasquis—strong and resilient men who could relay messages across the entire empire in just four days. Within this context, we meet Kayara, a young girl born into a family of Chasquis, with the dream of becoming one herself. However, as a woman, this was considered impossible. Despite the odds, Kayara's persistence sets her on a path to achieve her goals and change the future of the empire.

- **The emotional meaning of directing Kayara?**

For me, this project has a very important meaning because I have always felt a deep connection to Andean culture. Their valued customs, the beauty of their landscapes and the ruins that you see today, highlight what the Inca culture was. The order and majesty of this culture are remarkable, so making a film that tells a little, or shows a little of what the Inca culture was like was extremely important to me. And above all, to be able to represent the strength and spirit of the Andean woman has been especially meaningful.

In the Inca Empire, Andean women were traditionally responsible for cultivation, child care and animal care. In Kayara, however, we present a different perspective: a woman who takes bold action, displaying strength and determination. Kayara not only surpasses the traditional male Chasquis but plays an important role in shaping the destiny of the empire.

I hope this film serves as an inspiration for Andean girls and all young girls around the world, offering them a role model in Kayara and motivating them to pursue their own dreams and aspirations.

## **Co-Director**

### **Dirk Hampel**

#### **Bio**

Dirk started his career in animation in the 90s working his way to advanced roles such as production manager and overseas supervisor. He helped develop various studios until founding B Water Studios, which has continued to grow under his leadership. He has also worked as a director for TV series for channels such as Nickelodeon and ZDF, and has been successfully writing comics and children books. His comic George & Cool had two million readers weekly over 5 years. One of his last books: The Magic of my Name has sold over 500.000 copies so far.

#### Filmography

2024 - Feature Film: Lotte & Totte  
2024 - TV Series: Lotte & Totte  
2024 - TV Series: Dino Mates  
2023 - TV Series: Ghost of Ruins season 1  
2023 - Feature Film: Kayara  
2023 - TV Series: Dinomite  
2023 - TV Series: Unique eyes  
2022/2023 - Feature Film: Rufus, the sea serpent who couldn't swim  
2022/2023 - Feature Film: Ellie  
2022/2023 - TV Series: Newtons  
2022/2023 - TV Series: Klincus  
2021 - Videogame Cinematic: Lord of the fallen 2 cinematics  
2022 - TV Series: FC Bayern Munich mascot  
2022 - Short Film: Yomis  
2022 - Feature Film: Mavka, the forest song  
2021 – Spot: FC Bayern Munich - Team Campus  
2021 - Dome Film: Alien and Caveboy  
2021 - Feature Film: My Fairy Troublemaker  
2021 - TV Series: Treasure Trekkers TV movie  
2021 - TV Series: Treasure Trekkers season 3 + 4  
2020 - TV Series: Johnny Sinclair the ghost hunter  
2020 - TV Series: Pettson and Findus  
2020 - Feature Film: Conni - Geheimnis um Kater Mau  
2020 - TV Series: The Xtreme  
2019/2020 - TV Series: Diddl  
2019 - TV Series: The Fruitties  
2018 - TV Series: Treasure Trekkers season 1 + 2  
2017 - TV Series: Filly Funtasia

2017 - TV Series: Screwbolt and Mister Pencil  
2017 - TV Series: Funtik new  
2016 - TV Series: Zafari  
2016 - TV Series: Niloya  
2016 - TV Series: Chikats  
2016 - TV Series: Pet Parade  
2016 - TV Series: Glimmies  
2016 - TV Series: Alien and Cave Boy  
2016 - Feature Film: Sherlock in Antwerp  
2016 - TV Series: Applaus für Felix - Ein Tag im Bundestag  
2016 - TV Series: Cornny capers  
2016 - TV Series: Casparade  
2015 - TV Series: Crayons  
2015 - TV Series: Spinne widerlich  
2015 - TV Series: Mauia the Andalusian princess  
2015 - TV Series: Turma da Monica  
2015 - TV Series: Wombat and Platicus  
2015 - TV series: Sherlock junior  
2014/15 - TV Series: 4 and a half friend  
2014 - TV Series: Conni 2  
2014 - TV Series: Subway Surfers  
2014 - TV Series: Leo & Pisa Gang  
2013/14 - Feature Film: Pinoccio  
2013 - TV Series: Conni 1  
2013 - TV Series: Ying Yang Dragons  
2013 - Feature Film: Pinocchio  
2012 - TV Serie: Minty, The Fairy  
2011 - TV Series: Pixi  
2010 - Feature Film: Little Big Panda

### **Interview with Dirk Hampel**

- **What do you like most about working at B-Water Studios?**

What I love about B-Water is that we are always working as a team. For me, working on a team is not only enjoyable but essential to overcoming the challenges that arise during production. In Kayara, in our feature film, we can see this very well. From the outside it may look like everything runs like clockwork but inside, sure, we have little obstacles, and we have some challenges however, we come together with good ideas to solve problems. And it's fun, it's pleasure. It's really nice to be in these meetings and find solutions together.

- **What were the problems at Kayara?**

As it can happen in many productions, we encountered some challenges. Early on, one of our co-producers withdrew, so we had to replan the entire production and explore how we could maintain a high level of quality despite the change. We carefully assessed each department and considered how the audience would perceive the quality. By brainstorming creative solutions, we were able to implement effective ideas that helped us achieve our goals.

- **What was it like to prepare the pipeline for this film?**

Another aspect was that preparing for this film we had a similar project with similar specifications. This allowed us to anticipate all the technical challenges and pipeline requirements for Kayara. We essentially prepared ourselves for this production during the other production and it was a very big help. On the first day of production we already knew exactly what to do and how to do it. Everybody was excited to start because we wanted to see our vision come to life.

- **Tell us a challenge from this production.**

During production at B-Water, we faced a big decision about how to design the hair and fur in the film. Initially, we could only use geometry for the hair but we said that is going to look odd, we don't want this. We had to find a technical solution to achieve the look we wanted. So, we did a Houdini and Blender combination, which has not been done very often. We had good advice from some experts in this field, we developed special tools and techniques and it worked very well. The fur is great. The hair is wonderful. We are very happy that we did this.

- **How did you accept the challenge of being Co-Director?**

Late in production, we faced a new challenge that required additional creative support. I was asked to step into the role of director. Initially, I had concerns about managing my time, so I discussed with the team how to rearrange responsibilities to accommodate this new role. We found a solution, and the team agreed that my involvement would be beneficial given my familiarity with the story and production details. Taking on this role turned out to be a rewarding experience. It allowed me to contribute effectively, helping us avoid potential delays and conflicts and ensuring a smooth process from beginning to end.

- **What is the inspiration for working on this film?**

I have been traveling to the Andes for a long time, and it is always a wonderful experience. I fell in love with the landscapes, the culture, and the old legends of the Inca. I have also been learning the language Quechua. When I was by myself at Machu Picchu and other places to see their monuments, I imagined their stories, which I was also reading about in books at the time. And so, for me, working on this film was a really big pleasure.

- **How was the experience of working with such a big team?**

We had a really great technical team for this film, which I want to thank especially for all their problem-solving skills. Without them, we would not have been able to achieve the high quality of the film. This is due to creativity, which all of the team members have been showing. Creativity is not only happening in the drawings or with the directors, creativity is something that happens in all the teams at all levels. We have to be creative all the time in life, every day, in every situation. There can always be a solution if we are open and communicate well with others and look at all the possible angles. Then we can find creative new solutions and overcome any challenge.

- **Tell us your experience working on this project.**

Working on this project has been an absolute joy, and I believe I speak for many of us when I say that it has been a truly rewarding experience. We've enjoyed every moment of bringing this film to life. While it's a bit bittersweet to see this project conclude, we are already excited and ready to dive into the next one.

## **ABOUT TUNCHE FILMS**

Tunche Films was founded in 2003 by the Zelada brothers—Sergio, César, and José—who each brought unique expertise and a shared vision to the company.

Sergio Zelada began his journey in the 1980s, exploring design and computing with a focus on CGI and visual effects (VFX) in Peru. His early work in this field positioned him as a pioneer in digital art. César Zelada, an advertising graduate from Peru, joined Sergio in integrating CGI with traditional graphic design. Together, they created innovative 3D images for groundbreaking advertising campaigns at their graphic agency, PixelArt. César's studies in film at New York further enriched his approach to storytelling, which he later applied as he co-founded EPIC. José Zelada, known in the industry as "El Tunche," was an acclaimed director with a track record of prestigious commercials and awards. His collaboration with his brothers in 2002 led them to realize the potential of combining their talents and launching Tunche Films.

With a team of highly skilled and dedicated professionals, Tunche Films excels in blending sophisticated storytelling and performance with visually captivating imagery. The studio is known for its exceptional special effects and post-production expertise, consistently pushing the limits of creativity and technical excellence. Tunche Films' post-production department is celebrated for its innovative approach and ability to bring imaginative visions to life, setting new standards in the industry.



## **ABOUT CINEMA MANAGEMENT GROUP**

Cinema Management Group (CMG) is one of the leading international sales companies, headed by Executive Producer and founder Edward Noeltner. Recent successes include the Oscar Nominated "Loving Vincent" grossing over US\$ 42 million worldwide and the live action feature "Girls To Buy" which grossed over US\$ 5.3million in Poland and sold around the world. Released in theatres Fall 2023 in the United States, Canada, the UK and many other territories is "The Canterville Ghost" boasting a VIP voice cast of Stephen Fry, Hugh Laurie, Emily Carey, Freddie Highmore, Imelda Staunton and Miranda Hart. Currently on Netflix is CMG Executive Produced "Seal Team" with VIP voices J.K. Simmons, Dolph Lundgren, Patrick Warburton, and Kristen Schaal. CMG's current slate also includes Canada's animation powerhouse, ICON Creative Studios "Charlie the Wonderdog", along with one of Europe's most successful animation producers 4 Cats Pictures' "Buffalo Kids" with VIP voices Alisha Weir, Gemma Arterton, Sean Bean and Stephen Graham which was just released in Spain via WB. CMG licensed features have grossed over US 500 million at the worldwide box-office.

### **Executive Producer**

**Edward Noeltner**

### **Bio**

Edward Noeltner is a seasoned and well-respected executive in the field of international motion picture licensing, distribution and sales. He has licensed many worldwide major Academy Award winning feature films such as "Chicago", "The Hours", "Frida", "Shine", "Kolya"; award winning foreign language arthouse titles such as "Faithless", "Under The Sun", "Tango", "Four Days in September" and prestigious film libraries such as Svensk Filmindustri's impressive Ingmar Bergman collection of over 40 titles, SNC's library of 350 European classics, The Douris Corp's Buster Keaton collection and The Rohauer Collection. Recent acquisitions and strategic partnerships include the Oscar Nominated documentary feature "Gasland", representing Cirque du Soleil's "All Together Now" and the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Award Winning documentary features from Moriah Films.

His international and domestic clients include some of the best-known companies in distribution from around the globe (Sony Pictures Worldwide Acquisitions Group, Millennium Films, Samuel Goldwyn Films, TF1, Constantin, Pathé, EOne Ent., Central Partnership, Lucky Red, BAC Films, Videocine etc..) as well as television broadcasters (Arte, Showtime, HBO Latin America, Sogecable, Canal Plus, BSkyB, SuperChannel). As President and founder of Beverly Hills based Int'l Sales Company Cinema Management Group, Mr. Noeltner has over 25 years of experience distributing feature films internationally, negotiating all forms of international distribution and acquisitions agreements and has Executive Produced the 3D animated feature "Adventures in

Zambezia” starring Abigail Breslin, Leonard Nimoy, Jeff Goldblum and Samuel L. Jackson, “Carjacked” starring Maria Bello and Stephen Dorff , the Cult hit 13 x half hour animated TV series “Happy Tree Friends” and most recently TIFF’s 2015 Official Selection NZ hit “Born to Dance” and 3D animated feature “Ratchet & Clank” starring Paul Giamatti, John Goodman, Bella Thorne, Rosario Dawson and Sylvester Stallone.

**Marketing and Logistics Director**  
**Tiffany Kilgore**

**Bio**

As the Marketing & Logistics Director at Cinema Management Group (CMG), Tiffany Kilgore spearheads the strategic planning and execution of marketing campaigns and logistical operations for a diverse portfolio of films and entertainment projects. With over 10 years of experience in the entertainment industry, Kilgore brings a wealth of expertise in brand management, digital marketing, event coordination, and distribution logistics. Tiffany has become a key figure in orchestrating successful marketing campaigns and managing intricate logistics for independent films at major film markets, including Cannes, AFM, EFM, and beyond. A recognized thought leader in entertainment marketing, Tiffany contributes insightful articles to leading trade publications on a regular basis. Her work on KAYARA further illustrates her skills in managing and promoting projects and contributing meaningful work to the industry.

**CAST**

Naomi Serrano  
as Kayara  
**(AINBO: Spirit of the Amazon)**

Charles González  
as Paullu  
**(Intertwined)**

Arthur Romero  
as Villa Oma

Edgar García  
as Tunupu

Aldo Ramírez  
as Shaman / Guard

Ignacio Pineda  
as Kusi / Piro Shaman

Paty Cortez  
as Birima / Innkeeper

Bernardo Rodríguez  
as Amauta

Nate Begle  
as Martin

**(Mystery Science Theater 3000)**

Jon Olson  
As Wari

Jaynalie Rios  
As Young Kayara

Kolbe Garza  
As Young Paullu

### **CREW**

Director  
César Zelada

Co-Director  
Dirk Hampel

Producers  
Cesar Zelada, Sergio Zelada, Jose Zelada and Dirk Hampel

Screenwriters  
Cesar Zelada, Brian Cleveland and Jason Cleveland

Music by  
Toni M. Mir

Toni M. Mir is a composer and music producer who earned a Goya Award nomination in 2020 for his work on *La Inocencia*. After spending a decade working in a studio specializing in music and sound for advertising, he founded Trafalgar 13 Music House in Barcelona in 2004. At Trafalgar 13, Toni has composed and recorded over 2,000 pieces. By 2022, Trafalgar 13 expanded internationally with a new location in Santa Monica, CA. Although Toni adapts his music to fit each narrative's needs, he has cultivated a distinctive and personal artistic style that has garnered widespread success and recognition.

Production Designer  
Pierre Salazar

Born in Lima, Peru, Pierre Salazar is a digital artist with over 15 years of experience in the film industry. Throughout his career, he has collaborated with some of the most renowned film directors to bring their creative visions to life. Since 2013, Pierre has been a co-founder and one of the academic directors at EPIC (Escuela Peruana de la Industria Cinematográfica), a prominent film school he helped establish.

Art Direction by  
Claudio Iriarte