

Latino Film Market, Teatro IATI Y Producciones El Torno presents:



L for Latino

TABLE READING - TV PILOT

A group of five Latinos descendent navigate through their life not being fully latino or white
in their journey for their goal in the United States

TV Series:

12 Episodes

Duration: 40 min

Genre: Comedy/Drama

Locations: NYC, Paraguay and Puerto Rico

Address: 64 E 4th St, New York, NY 10003

Date: November 3, 2023

Time: 7:30 pm

Created by: Elmer Salmeron

Written by: Elmer Salmeron, Pavel
Morale-Martinez & Daniel Somarriba

L for Latino

Logline:

An ambitious rich girl leaves the comfort of her Paraguayan home to follow her dreams in the Big Apple but in a rapidly evolving world of identity, relationships and sex, she finds out that life is not all it's cracked up to be. She quickly finds herself identifying with second and third generation Latinos who welcome her to a foreign land.



Synopsis

L for Latino

“L for Latino” is an inside view for the outsider of our Latino traditions. L for Latino is a TV series of 12 episodes, which portrays the life and culture of the new generation of Latinos in the USA. This comical series exposes the life of the second generation of Latinos and how they are linked to their ancestors' culture but also to the land of where they are born. Through the mix of cultures this generation creates a new language known as "Spanglish". The new wave of Latino immigrants is completely different from the immigrants that came to this country years ago, and it has become important to show the changes and let the audience judge it for themselves.

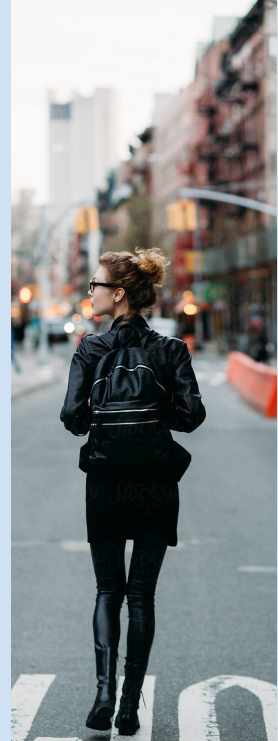
L for Latino is a must see! It is a show that once you start watching you won't want to stop! It is so captivating, so seductive that it'll leave you wanting more. It isn't just a sitcom, it is a real life inside view of what it's like to be a Latino in this generation and if that within itself isn't enough to get you hooked, then you'll have to watch to understand just what is L for Latino.

Now we have the Latinos that were born here and the Latinos that came from their country. The Latinos that grew up with their grandparents allow the traditional Latino culture to be carried on to the new generation.

In the pilot of this series we are introduced to the five main characters, one Latina that came to the United States on a student visa, she's fallen in love with New York City, and no one can make her go back, except the US government because her visa is on the verge of expiring, her name is Carolina.

Carolina lives with her roommate Vanessa, native New Yorker, but she is of Latino descent, and she is proud of it. Kristy, Carolina and Vanessa's friend, is also of Latino descent. Unlike Vanessa and Carolina, she is ashamed of her heritage, she never mentions why, but stay tuned and you'll be sure to find out.

Helen is also Latino, a New Yorker, and typical Hispanic sister. She is always trying to find ways to solve her brother's relationships in the matter of love. Lastly, we have Raul, New York native, brother to Helen. He can be careless about meaningful relationships; all he is interested in are his looks, and having fun. As the series unfolds, we will see how each one of their stories intertwine with one another.



Second Season

Locations: NYC and Paraguay

Languages: English, Spanish and Spanglish

After a stint in ICE detainment, Carolina is set free after her mother, the wealthy and powerful Monica Cortez, pulls a few strings. Monica sells her mansion and comes to live in the Upper West Side to spy on her daughter and intrude in her life. Carolina develops a relationship with Arthur Hastings, a white hipster who owns a music studio in the Lower East Side. Vanessa struggles with her mental state as her undiagnosed Bipolar disorder gets her fired from her job after a workplace argument spirals out of control. This event conflicts with Vanessa's long-held belief that "therapy is for white people". Meanwhile, Helen Castillo begins to develop feelings for her best friend, but he does not want to be compromised in a relationship. Helen struggles with her family because they tell her that she is old and is not going to get married. As all this the drama unfolds, Carolina's relationship with Arthur crumbles when he reveals himself to be a racist who is using Carolina's identity as a Latino woman as a sick type of trophy. Shattered, Carolina finds sympathy from Christian Santos and ends up hooking up with him much to Vanessa's horror. Unbeknownst to Carolina, Raul moves in with Christian the intention to claw his way back into her life.





First Season

Locations: NYC and Paraguay

Languages: English, Spanish and Spanglish

Carolina Cortez, a rich girl that lived in the lap of luxury in her home country of Paraguay, has been struggling and surviving in the Big Apple for six months trying to achieve her goal of becoming an animator for “Light-Form” (a New York based animation company in the vein of Pixar). Carolina’s got another problem, having been dumped by her cheating deadbeat ex-boyfriend, Raul Castillo, she has lapsed into a pretty bad bout of depression. Her mother, Monica is breathing down her neck because of Carolina’s frequent requests for money and because of her roommate, Carolina’s cynical, sarcastic and loyal friend Vanessa Volante. This season deals with Carolina struggling to get a stable job, dating a variety of men that range from semi-stable to complete assholes, all the while realizing that she is becoming open to experimenting with women and sexual kinks with the help of Vanessa, the dominatrix/social worker Helen Castillo (Raul’s sister), the flighty hipster Kristy Delaware and their nerdy next door neighbor Christian Santos. Just as Carolina seems to be getting her life together, she is suddenly arrested and put into detainment by ICE with her whole future in question.



Third Season

Locations: NYC and Puerto Rico

Languages: English, Spanish and Spanglish

After a huge fight with Carolina about her new relationship with Christian coupled with her refusal to get therapy for her undiagnosed Bipolar disorder, Vanessa Volante disappears to Puerto Rico in order to spend time with her family. While in Puerto Rico she discovers that her Aunt Tati has her own mental health issues that have long gone unresolved and have resulted in her living alone with her house in shambles. Meanwhile, Carolina's relationship with Christian has started to become serious and her animation career has started to take off with several commercial gigs. Christian is dumped by his all-white dungeons-and-dragons group after they make fun of a Black kid who wanted to join their group. This leads to a bonding experience with Raul, who (much to his own surprise) becomes a fan of Christian's favorite game. Kristy Delaware questions her own identity after she drunkenly reveals to Helen and Juana that she is actually a "white-passing" Mexican who changed her name after she emancipated herself from her family. This revelation forces Kristy to question her ethnic identity. Vanessa comes back to New York when she receives word that Juana and Helen have decided to marry. She goes to her first therapy session, gets medication and reconciles with Carolina. Carolina finds out that Raul has been living with Christian after she encounters Raul in the hallway. After a long argument with Raul, the two end up sleeping together while Christian befriends the head of Light-Form animation.

CAROLINA CORTEZ

Age: Mid-20s

Paraguayan

Professions: Aspiring Animator, bookstore cashier, file clerk

Carolina is the soul of the show and the audience surrogate. She is the stranger in a strange land trying to make sense of who she is and where she is going. Because of this, she will make a lot of mistakes along the way on her journey towards finding out who she really is. She's happy-go-lucky, a little naive and really trying not to be the typical fish-out-of-water despite her rich girl background. In this respect she's a little bit like Piper from "Orange is the New Black".

Carolina has lived in the lap of luxury since she was born in Asuncion, Paraguay. Her father, Fernando Cortez, was the owner of a tuna fish canning company (Corazon Tuna) and died of a heart attack when Carolina was 3. Carolina was raised by her mother, Monica, and by various nannies. Monica, a retired world-renowned surgeon/diplomat, wanted her daughter to become a doctor like her and was astounded when Carolina asked to go to art school after she graduated from her boarding school in Spain. Two movies became pivotal to Carolina's artistic streak:

Toy Story, which she saw when she was 8 and formed her love of animation.

The second, Moonstruck, which she saw at 16 gave her a strong desire to live her life in New York City.

Once she got her degree in animation, she came to the Big Apple where she knew "Light-Form" studios were developing an animation wing in DUMBO. Wanting to leave behind her comfortable world where she felt shrouded from the real world, Carolina left with her savings to start a brand new life in New York. After having been turned down by various animation studios for her little work experience, she took on waitressing jobs while continuing to study art.

Carolina meets her match at one of her waitressing jobs when a jerk refuses to pay and gets his ass kicked by Vanessa Volante. Vanessa takes an instant liking to Carolina and offers her a room in her apartment (which turns out to be a better setup than the shit hole closet she was living in on the Lower East Side). Vanessa is entertained by the sheltered rich girl and the two become unlikely friends. Vanessa becomes Carolina's gateway to self discovery.. The two go to clubs, smoke weed and while Carolina flirts with guys, she is astounded by Vanessa's various sexual partners. Carolina has never seen that before as she has had only one boyfriend in her whole life while at boarding school.. Through the simple act of hanging out with Vanessa and her friends, Carolina begins to question who she really is.

VANESSA VOLANTE

Age: Early-30s

Puerto Rican

Profession: Receptionist at Eon Genesis Laboratories.

Vanessa Volante, a proud Afro-Latinx woman and born and bred New Yorker, hails from the Boogie-Down Bronx. Both cynical and sarcastic, Vanessa is nobody's fool on the surface but underneath she is a vulnerable woman with abandonment issues. Her motto is "never catch feelings for anyone", a rule she applies to all her romantic partners. Through all of her escapades she encounters the "uptight and square" Carolina Cortez. Vanessa would never admit it, but she sees herself in the sheltered girl from Paraguay and becomes closer to her than she has with anyone in her whole life.

A former forensic pathology student, Vanessa dropped out of college during her senior year at Rutgers in order to work full time and help her mom pay off a number of debts. When her mom moved away to reunite with her deadbeat father in Puerto Rico, Vanessa was at first disheartened but got her shit together and got a well-paying receptionist job at a shady bio-engineering lab in order to pay for her party-girl life style. Vanessa believes in living life to the fullest and knows every inch of the city she belongs to. She's the type to play dominos with the old Cubans on the corner, knows the best dance clubs to party in and what stands have the best chopped cheese.

The friendship between these two women is put to the test when Vanessa's moodiness becomes more erratic and eventually develops into a latent Bipolar disorder which Vanessa does not accept and refuses to get treated for. Vanessa has been taught since very young that depression and bipolar disorders are "white people diseases". This ignorance leads her down a path of bad decisions and to an eventual breaking point where she flees to Puerto Rico in the hopes of outrunning her personal demons. Despite all this Vanessa remains forever tethered to her soul mate: Carolina.

RAUL CASTILLO

Age: Early-30s

Cuban American

Professions: Part-time nude model, part-time stock market day-trader, full time lothario

Raul is a chiseled, good looking pretty boy who is also a sex addict. Because of his looks, Raul has led something of a charmed life and has never had to work all that hard to achieve anything in life. Raised alongside his older sister by a single father who also had multiple women going in and out of their small apartment in Spanish Harlem, Raul developed a warped sense of looking at women as sexual trophies. In college he slept with almost the entire female staff and half the campus. Throughout all this, Raul subconsciously feels trapped by the trappings of his status as a macho fuck boi. All his friends are similar frat-boy-bro-types who all reinforce stereotypes of toxic masculinity to an almost ridiculous degree. As such, Raul feels hollow most of the time and fills this void with more meaningless sex. This void is temporarily quenched when he gets a dog which he names “Dwayne The Rock Johnson”.

During a nude modeling gig (something that Raul uses to get with women), he meets Carolina for the first time. He’s completely taken by her “Disney Princess” personality and sees her as yet another sexual conquest. When Dwayne The Rock Johnson accidentally jumps out the window into a garbage truck that crushes him, Raul is crushed and starts taking Carolina very seriously. This lasts for about three and a half months before falling back into his old ways, repeatedly cheating on her before finally getting caught. Oddly enough, Carolina dumping Raul profoundly affects him and for the first time ever he feels a tremendous sense of loss. He tries multiple times to get back into Carolina’s good graces but fails miserably every single time.

After bottoming out into a profound depression and now homeless, Raul tries one last time to get back with Carolina but finds that she is dating a new man. Completely distraught, Raul is comforted by the unlikeliest of people: Carolina’s nerdy next door neighbor, Christian Santos. Christian offers up his apartment for Raul to stay in and the two start a strange partnership where Raul offers Christian love advice in exchange for Christian getting him a job as cameraman for an online geek-news website. After a night of heavy drinking, Christian confesses that he is in love with Carolina. Raul realizes he’s ready to let Carolina go until Christian and Carolina start to date, he then becomes reinvested in winning her back yet again.

HELEN CASTILLO

Age: Late-30s

Cuban American

Professions: Dominatrix, sex and relationship coach, part-time Kung Fu teacher.

On the outside, Helen is a vivacious club-ready Dominicana. On the inside, she is a vulnerable woman who is coming to terms with a second sexual awakening and is struggling to understand what that means for her. She is a part-time massage therapist, as well as a BDSM mistress, whose primary clients are mostly adjunct teachers from a nearby college. She lives life on her own terms and is a bit of a control freak, much to the dismay of her brother, Raul, who is her roommate.

Raul's messy lifestyle often conflicts with that of his older sister who wants to earn enough money to move away from New York and live in California where she thinks she will find an answer to a question she doesn't understand.

Helen's clothing reflects the duality of her personality. On one hand, she dresses much like Vanessa, with clothes that accentuate her features. On the other hand, when she's not with anyone, she dresses in clothes that "hide" her, such as big coats, oversized shirts, and wears her hair in a tight bun and coke-bottle glasses that make her look like Clark Kent.

KRISTY “DELAWARE” VILLALOBOS

Age: Mid-20s

Salvadoran American

Profession: Writer for a GOOP-style website, part-time social media writer for a Kardashian- style socialite.

Kristy is the type of ditzy hipster girl that would claim to have “discovered bubble tea”, and “really enjoy that Black Lives Matter protest Pepsi commercial” but later completely deny having expressed that thought. A poser whose constant need for validation from “too-cool” types resulted in a life that was completely devoid of any meaningful friendships by the time she was 21. Feeling empty, she somehow falls into an oddball friendship with Vanessa, Helen and Carolina. With Vanessa especially, Kristy felt a grounded sense of reality that she hadn’t felt before. This feeling of acceptance (despite her bouts of being the “typical white girl” in the group) made her deeply treasure her friendship with this tight-knit group of women.

Kristy is hiding a secret from her group of besties. Turns out she isn’t really Caucasian at all but a Salvadoran woman who emancipated herself from her toxic parents. The person who discovers her secret is Christian Santos, (who she dated briefly) he is puzzled by Kristy’s refusal to admit that she a Latino woman. Kristy ghosts Christian when she feels threatened that he might reveal her secret to the rest of the group. Her paranoia leads to an explosive falling out between the two and causes Kristy to exile herself from her girlfriends and go back to her old vapid hipster crowd briefly before a racial slur against a Mexican maid propels her to denounce her crowd of “too-cool” white friends. She then travels to Staten Island to find her Uncle Ricardo and reconnect with her Salvadoran roots throughout the Staten Island Salvadoran community.

Eventually Vanessa and Kristy make amends and she reunites with her girls once again. She has changed into a person who knows very well who she is.

CHRISTIAN SANTOS

Age: Mid-30s

Salvadoran American

Professions: Coder for an indie-game company and part time contributor to a geek news website.

Christian is an overweight, self-conscious punk rock-loving comic book nerd who loves role playing games. He's the type of dude you see sitting on the train reading from a book bag full of comics. Christian comes from a very strict and religious family who prohibited him from reading comics and who would demonize punk and metal music to the point where they would force him to put his cds into a trash can and burn them. His only solace growing up was a chess-playing Dominican drag queen named Thea Straps that lived downstairs from him that would secretly give him punk rock cds and comics. As an adult Christian broke away from his religious family and became heavily involved in cosplay, renaissance fairs and nerd conventions. He would eventually come to live across the hall from Vanessa Volante. Vanessa instantly hated Christian, seeing him as a sexless geek who needed to be avoided at all costs. Christian, wanting to make friends with a hottie, pesters Vanessa repeatedly. Despite this contentious relationship Vanessa sometimes treats him like a friend when the mood strikes her.

Christian eventually befriends Carolina who is more accepting of his awkward nerd personality. The two become off-again-on again friends with Vanessa influencing Carolina into ignoring him as a person. In his pursuit to become a better friend to Vanessa and her friends, Christian gets in good with Kristy and the two date briefly before he discovers that Kristy is Salvadoran like him. Kristy is appalled by Christian's discovery and immediately ghosts him. Now heartbroken and lonely, Christian becomes friends with Raul who is bottoming out and they even become roommates. Raul teaches Christian to become more confident and Christian helps Raul back on his feet after losing his job.. The pair even begin enjoying role playing games together and after Christian leaves his D&D group under difficult circumstances, Raul helps Christian start his own group for BIPOC.

Christian and Carolina end up hooking up after her boyfriend cheats on her. Christian is too blinded with devotion to see that Carolina is unsure about their relationship, even after 6 months together he doesn't see the warning signs. Thinking that she is the one, Christian begins to prep for an engagement and is completely oblivious to the fact that Carolina is having a torrid affair with Raul behind his back.

MONICA CORTEZ

Age: mid 50s

Paraguayan

Professions: Retired neurosurgeon, Heir to the Corazon Tuna empire, Former diplomat to the UN

Monica Cortez is a smart, commanding woman who has tried her best to be the best neurosurgeon possible. She hasn't been the best mom to her daughter, Carolina. Monica has largely ignored Carolina in favor of living the good life. The reasons for this are because Carolina reminds Monica too much of her dead husband who passed when Carolina was 3 years old. Monica took to becoming a diplomat for the UN and later becoming a socialite who had love affairs with Hollywood movie stars. It wasn't until Carolina turned 21 where Monica realized her little girl had grown up without her and instead of becoming a neurosurgeon like her, had decided to become an animator. Upset by this turn of events, Monica becomes an intrusive part of Carolina's life, interfering in her relationships and over-parenting her. Later, when Carolina flees to NY, Monica blames herself and makes sure to keep tabs on her by hiring private investigators to follow Carolina around.

At some point Carolina's work visa expires and Monica has to step in and pull a few favors from her diplomatic friends. She helps Carolina avoid detainment after a few days and becomes convinced that Carolina's life is becoming an unstable mess, she buys an apartment on the upper west side to be closer to her daughter. This decision leads to some comic circumstances where Monica must now acclimate to life in New York as well as reconcile her lost time with Carolina. She also tries to date while she is in New York, which leads her to take on a much younger lover: Martin Jensen (27 y/o) who may or may not be after her wealth.



ADDITIONAL NOTES

The main themes of the show will be “Change”, “Relationships” and “Identity”. It will also have surreal meta-comedy that will help viewers digest the more difficult issues the series will address. Think “Community” and “Atlanta”. Also, not all the episodes will be comedies and will veer into a multitude of cultural issues, from drama to thriller to a little bit of science fiction. This is not to say that all the comedy will disappear but it is meant to be a journey into the unknown for the audience.

The show will also have a very rich assortment of Latinx musicians on the soundtrack ranging from all genres of music. This includes punk rock (Davila 666, Auxilio, Fea), to Hip Hop (Daddy Yankee, Ana Tijoux, Pitbull), to old school Salsa, Cumbia, Bachata, and Merengue. The music will also feature up and coming artists and will bring the audience further into the Latinx world.

CAST:

L FOR LATINO

The cast for this show will reflect the reality of the mixing bowl that is the Latino community. This will include Afro-Latino Indigenous, fair-skinned and even Asian Latino people. It will be inclusive to all ethnicities and also tackle the problems that arise from these new changes with old school Latino people pushing against this change. Everyone must be real and dress in modern street wear that best reflects the variety of styles that are popular with young people.

This show aims to be cool and innovative while tackling modern issues that are not just Latino but also universal.

DIRECTOR

Elmer Salmeron is a cinematographer, theatre director, and screenwriter. He was born in Cacaopera, in the department of Morazan, El Salvador. Due to the civil war in El Salvador, Elmer later emigrated to the United States where he eventually completed his high school studies at High Tech in North Bergen, New Jersey. Soon after he entered the Center for the Arts and Television Academy and studied dramatic arts in HB Studio in Manhattan, New York. Elmer later enrolled in the Lee Strasberg Theater Institute Inc. where he specialized in acting for film and television and theater.

Elmer would later study theater and film in the New School University and in the Actors Studio Inc. As an actor he was the protagonist for the movie Homeboys and in the theater he was the protagonist for the play, Busco Amigo. As a teacher he worked for 7 years teaching dramatic arts. He has directed the plays, La Bicicleta al pie de la muralla, and San Salvador después del eclipse, which was nominated four times for the ACE awards in New York. People en Espanol magazine also published an article describing this play as one of the best productions of the Latin American theater in the United States. Elmer has also directed the films Sonata para una madrugada, Image of Silence, and The Mask of Solitude. He has worked as the production assistant in many plays. At this moment, Elmer is working on the pre-production of the pilot for the series L for Latino, which he also created. L for Latino is the first television series created by a Latin American in the United States.



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