

## AMY SERRANO – BACKGROUND AND BIOGRAPHY



Amy is an award-winning filmmaker. She is also a poet, photographer, author, and multimedia artist.

Presently, she is working on a film, a novel, poems, and various global social impact projects and multimedia initiatives with colleagues overseas.

**AIRMAN: *The Extraordinary Life of Calvin G. Moret*** is a transmedia film project about American and World War II history, aviation and civil rights. Through the use of archival material and footage obtained documenting the last 3 years of the life of Louisiana's last **Tuskegee Airman, Calvin G. Moret**, -- *on land and up in the air* -- it's the very timely story of one man's love of country and humanity, *even during unconscionable times*.

Amy's visual body of work includes shooting, writing and directing the feature-length and critically acclaimed documentary, ***The Sugar Babies: The Plight of the Children of Agricultural Workers in the Sugar Industry of the Dominican Republic***. Narrated by renowned author Edwidge Danticat and composed of field recordings coupled with outside testimony, the film explores the lives of the descendants of the first Africans delivered to the island of Hispaniola for the bittersweet commodity that once ruled the world. Previously unbeknownst, these very same people were trafficked from Haiti to the Dominican Republic to work on sugar plantations under circumstances that may only be considered modern day slavery. Besides the awareness created on issues leading to nearly eliminating human trafficking and child labor for some time, the screenings and advocacy surrounding this film, contributed to the U.S. Department of Labor finally placing sugar imported from the Dominican Republic on the list of products believed to be made with forced or child labor.

*Amy has directed and contributed to the production of several other films both in the U.S.A. and in Europe.*

She has released a book of poems, ***Of Fiery Places and Sacred Spaces***; a poetic tome based on the geography and cartography of people and places. She has edited, published, and released ***Into the Woods***, an anthology featuring the works of writers from Louisiana's Northshore. And because of time spent with the Garifuna people of Honduras, Amy wrote a photographic 20-page essay, ***From Punta to Chumba: Garifuna Music and Dance in New Orleans*** which traveled the state museum system in Louisiana until 2018. This work was commissioned and published by *Folklife in Louisiana of the State of Louisiana Division of the Arts*.

Her current project is ***Saudades: Anthological Contemplations on Persons, Places, Identity and Time***. This is the first book from the ***Untranslatable Words Series*** and is inspired by Amy's love of words and study of 7 languages. *Saudades* -- a global collaboration -- features the work of 28 multimedia artists representing 12 countries, with chapter essays and poems written by Amy. The book also features some of her fine art photography and accompanying promotional short films.

In English, *saudade* is often explained as a word, impossible to translate, yet quantifiable as a state of being that encompasses a wholly relatable configuration of bittersweet emotions. These involve a distinct strain of profound melancholic yearnings that may be for a person, a place, an identity, or a time that has gone and that may never return. *Saudade* is also a word for a deep-seated longing about an idealized experience that has not yet happened, and perhaps *never will*.

Through poetry, photography, paintings, song lyrics, and essays, the artists in this first book from the *Untranslatable Words Series* seek to mine and give new meaning to the dynamic and nuanced complexity of the word, *saudade*.

For her contributions to her hometown, Amy was honored by the City of Miami with a proclamation making October 27, 2000, *Amy Serrano Day*. Other honors include twice being named a *Woman of Today* in Glamour Magazine [Spanish Editions], as well as *Woman of the Year*. During Women's History Month in Miami, she was presented a *Mentor Award* by the Public School System and named a *Distinguished Female Role Model* by the Public Library System. She was 1 of 8 women selected, photographed, and profiled within a women's empowerment photographic installation produced by Clinique titled *Evolution of Women*. This cross-country exhibit was first unveiled at New York City's Metropolitan Pavilion and shot by award-winning fine art photographer, Sandi Fellman.

Amy was awarded a Fellowship with the National Hispana Leadership Institute in D.C. which involved Leadership Studies at Harvard University's JFK School of Government, the Center for Creative Leadership, and on Capitol Hill with distinguished leaders in social, civic, and political change. She was named a *Latina of Excellence* in Hispanic Magazine. She was selected as 1 of 15 top Hispanic Leaders in the United States by the Spanish Embassy in Washington D.C. and participated in an exchange in Spain with their social, political, economic, and cultural leaders. Amy was profiled in a book on Hispanic-American leaders in the United States published by the Spain-U.S. Council, and was once named "*one of the most influential and recognized Hispanics in the United States*" by MEGA TV. She was later selected to be profiled in the Florida Hispanic Yearbook, and then named a *Mujer Vanidades* in Vanidades Magazine. Amy is a recipient of the *Tesoros Award in Art and Culture* presented by Ponds.

Amy earned a dual Bachelor degree in Anthropology and Sociology with a minor in International Relations from Florida International University. She also holds a number of certificates in Leadership Studies from Harvard University in Cambridge, the Center for Creative Leadership in North Carolina, Gallup University in D.C., the National Hispana Leadership Institute in D.C., and the Universidad Menendez Pelayo in Santander, Spain.

Amy makes time for other endeavors. She has served as a past Senior Fellow of the Human Rights Foundation in New York; was a founding Member of Ambassador Armando Valladares' N.G.O., Human Rights for All. She was an Advisory Council Member of the Faulkner Literary Society in New Orleans, and has chaired its Pan-American Artists' Committee. Presently, she is a Member of the Spanish Embassy's Hispanic Leader's Association in Washington D.C., now headed by Felipe VI, King of Spain, and annually volunteers with Guys Achieving Goals' on their Aviation Awareness Day in memory of her sweet friend, Tuskegee Airman, Calvin G. Moret. The mission of Aviation Awareness Day is to teach young people about aviation and provide them with valuable S.T.E.M. skills for the future.

Aside from leading her own media, publishing, and production company, the **Siren Creative Agency**, she recently founded the **One Better World Project** [1BWP], a non-governmental organization [NGO] whose mission is to inspire a better world through the production and diffusion of transformative multimedia art and social impact initiatives.

This is accomplished by employing the communication arts and working with local, national, and global partners to identify and collaborate on small and sometimes large challenges so that the shared work may lead to a better world.

Amy enjoys being a featured guest lecturer or keynote speaker at colleges, universities, and cultural centers. Her long awaited goal is to finish writing her manuscript for ***Somewhere in the World***; a fictional novel based on the adventures of Catalina 'Cat' de Lara; a globetrotting, documentary filmmaker and champion of seemingly lost causes.

**To contact Amy, you may do so at [Amy@AmySerrano.com](mailto:Amy@AmySerrano.com) OR [786] 326.5151 and [504] 909-7255**