

**THE AL DIAZ**

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# CHASING **THE LIGHT**

ANNUAL ILS  
PHOTO & FILM  
**COMPETITION**



# WELCOME TO THE 2023 AL DIAZ CHASING THE LIGHT ANNUAL ILS PHOTO & FILM COMPETITION

Letter from Al Diaz  
Miami Herald Photojournalist

Dear students,

Way back during my freshman year at ILS in 1972, I walked into a darkened classroom next door to what is now room 805. Inside the room I found a fellow student, Gustavo Pupo-Mayo, shining a photography studio lamp with its polished aluminum reflector at still objects sitting on a tabletop. As Gus moved the light side to side at a triangle, a square, and a sphere, I asked Gus, “what are you doing?” His reply, “I’m taking a photography class by mail. You should join the photography club Al!”

With that, I started my lifelong journey as a photojournalist. I bought my first film camera, joined the photo club and met some of the original club founders Mercy Palomo and her brother Luis. By junior and senior year I was working on the Royal Courier newspaper and Signum yearbook, graduating in 1976.

At ILS I learned to visualize. Football defensive coach, Carmen Grosso taught us to visualize a fumble, anticipate the ball carrier’s movements for the tackle, or the big play. He would tell us to visualize the action before they even hike the ball. Our team’s quarterback, Bill St Pierre, would say, “Visualizing changes reactions into reflexes and helps to do things quicker and better, like a moving picture in slow motion.”

Today, visualizing helps me prepare and be ready before the moment. I’ll frame an image, compose and visualize what’s going to happen next before it even occurs. I visualize and place myself in a position to capture the light, the emotion, the movement, and composition all colliding in a split second for the decisive moment to tell a compelling story in a single photograph.

This year will be the third annual Al Diaz Chasing the Light at ILS Photography Contest and the Luis Palomo ILS Film Shorts. I hope that it will inspire ILS students to visualize the moment while chasing the light, at ILS, and the South Florida community.

*May the Best Shots Be Yours!*

*Al Diaz*

# THE LUIS PALOMO ILS FILM SHORTS

**Chasing the Light at ILS begins accepting entries for its annual competition on April 5-17, 2023**

**Submissions must be received by APRIL 17, 2023  
(11:59pm EST)**

ILS dedicates this section of the competition in memory of Luis Palomo, a caring alumni who shared a passion for film and photography. Class of 1972 graduate, Luis was also a recipient of that year's Miami Herald's Silver Knight Award.

Luis was a successful director who mentored many young professionals throughout his long career in commercial advertising. A lifelong advocate of the arts, Luis was also a founding member of the City of Miami's Art & Entertainment Council instrumental in Little Havana's revitalization as a cultural arts hub. Luis passed away on January 14th, 2021 from complications caused by Covid-19.

The film contest features two distinct categories: narrative and PSA. Themes for the narrative shorts must tell a story. Films in this category can be executed either as fiction or experimental/ artistic. The PSA category should take a public service announcement approach focusing on a topic backed by research and data, know your audience to present the information in the best way, have a hook something "newsworthy" and a well planned script.

All entries should be no more than three minutes in length. Both categories will be judged on originality, structure, cinematography, sound design and execution. You may use royalty-free music, photos and illustrations. Credit as specified in your source. Please do not use any copyrighted materials without the written permission of its authors. This includes music, graphics, archival footage and photographs.

## FILM SHORTS ENTRY RULES & REGISTRATION

### How to enter:

- Students may enter as an individual or a group in the film category, keep in mind that any prize will be split evenly among the group. No more than 3 students per film group.
- Three minutes maximum in each category
- Students may enter a maximum of 2 entries, preferably one in Storytelling and one in PSA or one as a group and one as an individual filmmaker.

### Specifications:

- MP4 or MOV files or via link (Vimeo, Youtube) emailed to [elena.capablanca@ilsroyals.com](mailto:elena.capablanca@ilsroyals.com)  
Email Subject: **ProjectName\_Student Name/s\_Grade\_CategoryName**  
(TheBoyWhoLived\_ElenaCapablanca\_JohnSmith\_LucyMartinez\_Storytelling)
- Attach the PDF Synopsis to the email.  
Brief Synopsis of film uploaded as a PDF document (Same file name as project) within the synopsis include the actors names as well as the filmmakers. Prize will be awarded to the filmmaker/s (videographer, director and editor).
- 1080p minimum resolution
- File names / naming convention are as follows for uploads  
**ProjectName\_Student Name/s\_Grade\_CategoryName.MP4 or .MOV**  
(TheBoyWhoLived\_ElenaCapablanca\_JohnSmith\_LucyMartinez\_Storytelling.mov)

Judges reserve the right to disqualify a film if it does not present content in keeping with a catholic school environment and teachings.

## **FILM SHORTS CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS**

Filmmakers may enter any of the categories listed below.

Please upload properly named files to the corresponding folder on Dropbox.

**Storytelling** <https://www.dropbox.com/request/jomRdj42hyzk4w7nsPBu>

*Telling a story will be key in this category. Creativity and originality will also play a role along with cinematography techniques. Films in this category can be executed either as fiction or experimental/artistic.*

### **PSA(Public Service Announcement)**

<https://www.dropbox.com/request/tjDcrD5bzCxywAH0gKqY>

*Something that informs the general public in a memorable way. Needs to have good sources and the key message is conveyed clearly to the viewer. The PSA category should take a public service announcement approach focusing on a topic backed by research and data, know your audience to present the information in the best way, have a hook something “newsworthy” and a well planned script.*

**Nominees will be contacted  
during the first week of May**

**WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED  
MAY 18, 2023**

***PRIZES INCLUDE: GIFT CARDS, CAMERA BAGS & MORE! (TBA)***

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**1st, 2nd and 3rd Place Prizes awarded for  
Photography overall**

**1st, 2nd and 3rd Place Prizes awarded for Film overall**

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# PHOTOGRAPHY & FILM CONTEST JUDGES

## AL DIAZ

### Miami Herald Photojournalist - ILS Class of 1976

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Al Diaz, an award-winning photojournalist for Miami Herald, captures the decisive moment on assignment while covering natural disasters, political campaigns, sports championships, temperamental celebrities, and angry mobs.

Diaz is the recipient of the 2015 Humanitarian Award by the National Press Photographers Association and the Associated Press Media Editors Showcase Photo of the Year for helping, then capturing the dramatic CPR rescue of a baby on a busy Florida highway.

Diaz is also a contributing member of the Miami Herald news team that won the Pulitzer Prize Public Service award for the newspaper's coverage of Hurricane Andrew and twice honored the McClatchy President's Award for Journalism Excellence for team coverage of Puerto Rico: The Forgotten Island in 2018 and for coverage of the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in Haiti in 2010.

Diaz is an alumnus of the ILS Royal Courier and ILS Signum yearbook. Diaz is a graduate of Miami Dade College. He joined the photography staff at the Miami Herald in 1983 upon graduating from the University of Florida with a Bachelor of Science in Journalism degree and a minor in Visual Arts.

Diaz is a Pro Team member for Think Tank Photo and 3 Legged Thing and a lead instructor for Best Buy. Diaz takes pride in always being ready before the moment. He is married to Cindy Seip with two children, Angelika, Bartek, and their dog Amanda Bubbles.

## MERCEDES PALOMO

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### Owner and Producer at Onda Films - ILS Class of 1974



Mercedes Palomo is executive producer and founder of OndaFilms, a film and video production company.

Mercy, as she is affectionally known, began her career in Panama during the 1980's working for the top ad agencies in the country. After the banking crisis shut down Panama's advertising market, she moved back to Miami and began working as a free-lance producer for local and national production companies.

In 1990, she seized upon an opportunity to establish a foothold in Miami's burgeoning production industry and launched Pigeon Productions that rose quickly to become one of the most sought production companies working in the US Hispanic Market. The company also provided production services to international agencies and production companies.

At Pigeon, Mercy managed a roster of award-winning international directors. Additionally, the company created content for television, corporate clients and was one of the leading providers of stock images for Getty Images.

Mercy served as the President of the Florida Chapter of the AICP (Association of Independent Commercial Producers), with the distinction of being the first person of Latinx descent to hold that position.

Mercedes graduated Cum Laude in Communications from the University of Bridgeport, Connecticut. Her interests include fine art, travel, real estate as well as mentoring women in the film industry.