

# BORDERS OF BELONGING

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BY JULIA UBRANKOVICS

“Nothing human is alien to me” Terence 195-159 BC

# LOGLINE

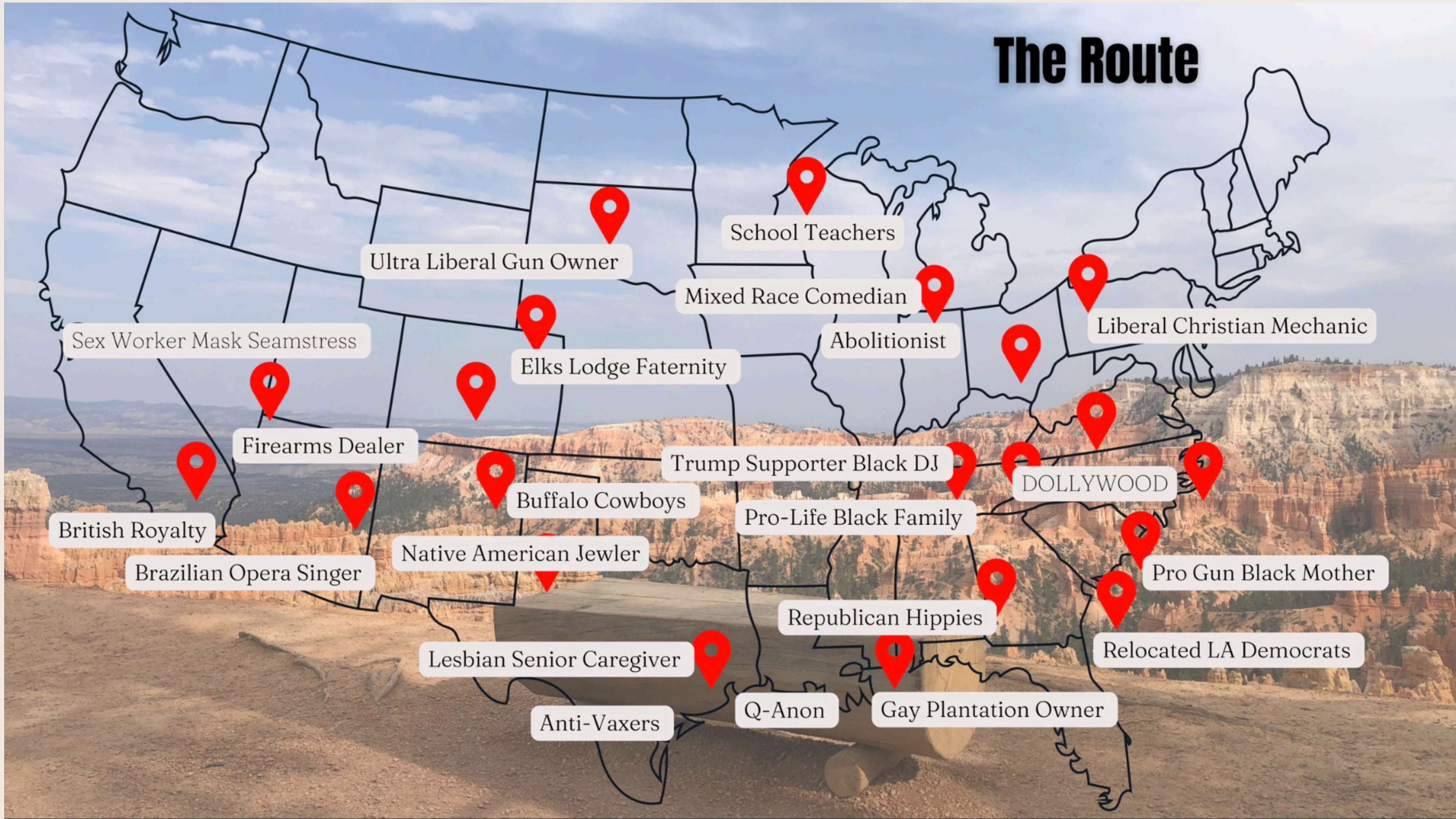
An immigrant actor's solo journey offers an uncommon perspective on America today—and a personal discovery of what it takes to truly connect.

Borders of Belonging is a feature documentary about the universal human need to belong – and what happens when the borders around us become political, cultural, emotional, and inherited.

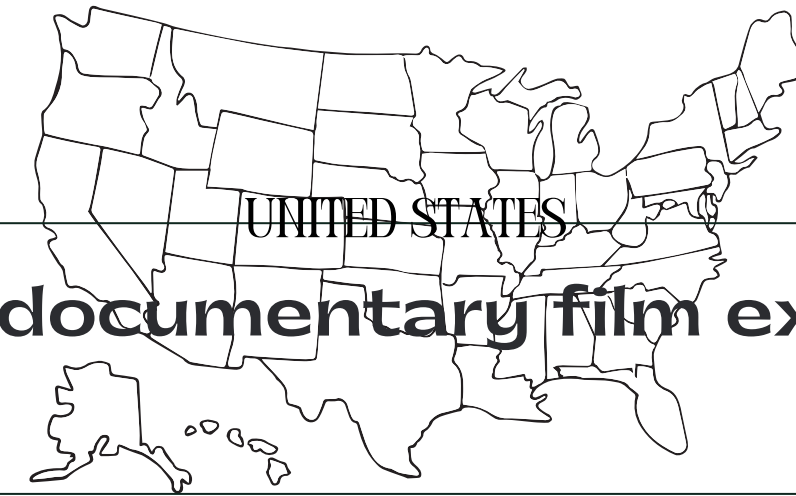
The film follows Hungarian-American actor and artist Julia Ubrankovics on a 40-day journey across the United States, with parallel chapters in Hungary and Puerto Rico, moving between real encounters, memory, and staged psychodrama. Through one woman's experience, the film opens into a larger portrait of a divided world: how people search for home, connection, and understanding when the lines between us feel harder than ever to cross.

It is not a political documentary, and it is not simply a personal memoir. It is a cinematic story about the invisible borders we inherit, the ones we build, and the human longing to be seen, understood, and finally belong.

# The Route



# TWO STORYLINES



**"Borders and Belonging" is a feature-length creative documentary film exploring the quest for belonging through two interwoven narratives.**

## **The Outer Journey:**

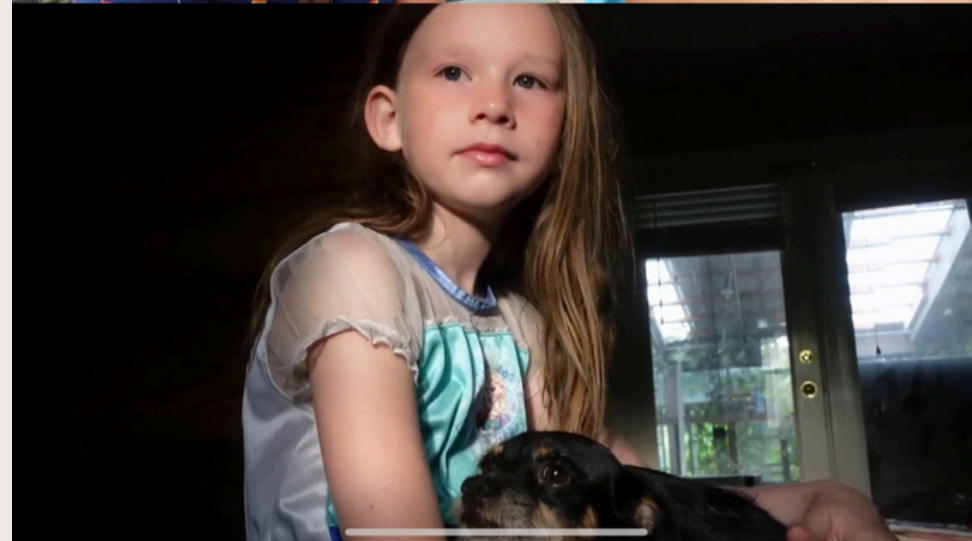
Can we truly relate to people whose lived experiences challenge our assumptions and our privilege? To find out, I set off on a 40-day solo journey through 22 U.S. states, filming myself and dozens of strangers on a Sony ZV-1. I stayed wherever I was welcomed—backyards, living rooms, trailers—gathering over 50 hours of vérité and interview footage that reflect a mosaic of American voices: Black Republicans, anti-vaxxers, abolitionists, cowboys, strippers, spiritual seekers, and Native Americans. Each encounter held contradictions, tenderness, and truth. The journey was not just geographic but emotional—each conversation challenged my own blind spots and expanded my understanding.

In 2024, I returned to my hometown of Sopron, Hungary—once a border town along the Iron Curtain. There I began tracing the inherited traumas and cultural narratives that shaped me. Stories of invasion, displacement, and nationalism—from the Treaty of Trianon to my grandmother's exile from Transylvania—revealed the inner borders I had carried all along.

## **The Inner Journey:**

Then, in 2025, the final thread of the film unfolded in Puerto Rico, whose own ambiguous status mirrored my in-betweenness. At the Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, I staged a reenactment of the dinner using family constellation and psychodrama techniques. This stylized, meditative session became the film's spine. Stepping into my friends' roles, I began to understand that rupture was not born of hate—but of love, fear, and the desire to protect. In seeing them fully, I released my defensiveness. A kind of healing began.

# SOME CHARACTERS



# WHERE IS HOME?

ESCAPE, SEARCH, RETURN TO HOME ALL FILMED IN 4K

## WHAT DO BORDERS MEAN?

Borders of Belonging invites viewers to sit with contradiction, dismantle inherited narratives, and step into empathy. It is not a film about guilt or judgment—but about personal liberation, emotional courage, and the possibility of belonging beyond borders.

The film moves fluidly between these three layers:

- **The U.S. road trip** (outer journey)
- **The psychodrama** (inner reckoning)
- **The Hungarian return** (inherited past)

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Each reflects the film's core idea: that identity is not fixed, but fragmented, shaped by personal, political, and ancestral borders.

# WHERE DO WE STAND?

Principal photography completed 2025 summer. The film was shot across three locations over the course of five years: the United States (2020), Hungary (2024), and Puerto Rico (2025). From close to 70 hours of interview and vérité footage from the U.S. road trip, intimate family scenes from Sopron, and psychodramatic reenactments filmed at the Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, with the help of fantastic dramaturg Eszter Balassa and story producer Nicole Henriksson a 3 hour 51 minute long assembly was created.

We utilize Hungary's 30% tax rebate for post-production services and visual finishing. The assembly is on AVID and the footage is 4K shot on Sony-ZV1, Canon C70 and ARRI Alexa.

Borders of Belonging is fiscally sponsored by the Creative Visions Foundation, giving the project 501(c)(3) nonprofit status and making it eligible to receive charitable donations.

We are currently seeking co-production partners, distribution, and strategic collaborators.



# TEAM

## **JULIA UBRANKOVICS**

DIRECTOR / PRODUCER

Hungarian-American actress & filmmaker.  
Best Actress, 40th Hungarian Film Festival.  
Credits: Shadow and Bone (Netflix), Spy/Master (HBO), Perpetuity (PÖFF Tallinn).  
Founded J.U.S.T. Toys Productions LA

## **JAN MADURO**

PRODUCER

Founder, Philanthropist, Attorney  
AE Syndicate LLC. Producer live events, media & film  
Secretary of Board at MAPR.  
Triple Guinness World Record producer.

## **ANDRES GUILLEMARD & CARY PIERLUISI**

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

Philanthropists, Entrepreneurs

## **NICOLE HENRIKSSON**

STORY PRODUCER

Documentary producer. Credits: Survivor (CBS),  
World's Toughest Race: Eco-Challenge Fiji. Working with  
the directors on story architecture and structure.

## **CHIP WARREN**

DELIVERY PRODUCER

Documentary filmmaker. Produced Kings of the Yukon,  
They Call Us Monsters, We All Live Once Forever. TV  
credits: ABC News Nightline, MSNBC Films.

## **LASZLO PAMACS HARGITTAI**

HUNGARIAN EDITOR / ORIGO STUDIOS

Béla Balázs Award laureate – Hungary's highest film  
honor. 50+ credits. Head of Post-Production, Origo  
Studios Budapest. Credits: Eternal Winter (Prix Europe  
2018), Dune, Blade Runner 2049.

## **MILK & HONEY**

SERVICE PRODUCERS



## **BLIMP.WORKS**

CLEARANCE PRODUCER



## **ORIGO STUDIOS**

POST PRODUCTIONS SERVICES



# INSPIRATION

