

VLAFF NEWS

Year. 01 Num. 01

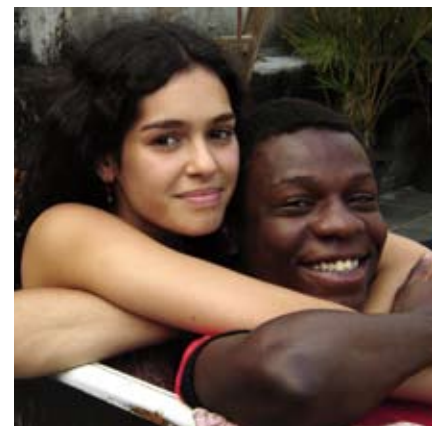
The Vancouver Latin American Film Festival Newspaper

Gael García's new role as a director



DEFICIT will be screened at 2008 VLAFF

**CHECK OUT
THE COMPLETE
PROGRAM FOR
THE 2008 VLAFF**
Featuring more than
70 latin films.



CLOSING NIGHT Brazilian Film *Proibido Proibir* (Forbidden to Forbid).

All the magic of one continent

The 6th Annual Vancouver Latin American Film Festival will dazzle you with over 30 feature-length films and 40 short films representing 14 different countries. Come join us in celebrating a selection of the finest contemporary cinema Latin America has to offer.

There are many highlights within the ambitious selection of films this year. From Canada, we will screen the epic travelogue *Americano* by Montreal-based Carlos Ferrand, who takes us on an extraordinary voyage from Tierra del Fuego to the Arctic Circle. From the USA, Vivien Lesnik Weisman will present her film *The Man of Two Havanas*, a documentary about growing up as a Cuban-American with a politically controversial father. She will be one of the guests participating in the panel discussion "Daughters of Revolution and Exile". Also attending, will be Maiana Bidegain with her film *Secrets of the Struggle* that depicts her search to recover the history of her parents and relatives during the dark years of the Uruguayan dictatorship.

From Guatemala, VLAFF will screen *VIP: La Otra Casa*, a groundbreaking fictional film made inside a prison facility in Guatemala City with real inmates as the actors. From Peru, we will screen Francisco J. Lombardi's most recent film *Mariposa Negra*, a chilling political thriller set on the eve of the fall of President Alberto Fujimori's regime. And, from Ecuador we will present Tania Hermida's *Qué tan lejos*, which follows the adventures of two women hitchhiking to Cuenca.

One of the highlights from Mexico is Gael García Bernal's directorial debut *Deficit*. Argentina offers a fine selection of shorts and features including Pablo Fendrik's unsparingly tense drama *El Asaltante*. Brazil is the spotlight country of VLAFF 2008 with the screening of nine works, including *Milky Way*, *Not by Chance* and our Closing Gala film *Forbidden to Forbid*. Our Opening Night film is *El Baño del Papa*, which tells the story of a small Uruguayan town and the drama that unfolds as it prepares for Pope John Paul II's visit. These are just some of the exciting films VLAFF offers to you this year.

For the first time, the Vancouver Latin American Film Festival is accompanied by VLAFF NEWS, a resource of articles, interviews and the program schedule to help you plan your best film festival experience yet. ●

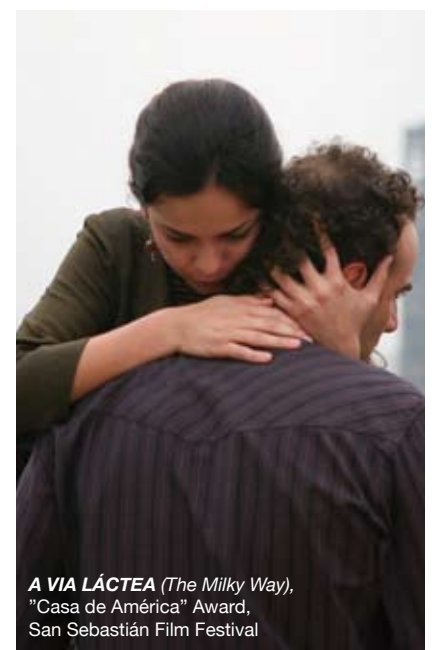


VLAFF08 OPENING FILM
Award Winner *El Baño del Papa* (The Pope's Toilet)

BRAZIL: GUEST COUNTRY

With Brazilian Directors on the rise, VLAFF takes a look at their new cinema

Brazilian cinema will be represented at VLAFF' 08 with nine films, including fiction and documentaries. » Go to pg. 12



A VIA LÁCTEA (*The Milky Way*),
"Casa de América" Award,
San Sebastián Film Festival

VLAFF NEWS

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ARTICLES

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JULIO FEO ZARANDIETA, Journalist
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VLAFF SPECIAL EVENTS

Master Lighting Workshops / Seminars
“Daughters of Revolution and Exile”, forum with
woman artists

GUEST COUNTRY AT VLAFF

Overview of Brazilian Cinema

FULL PROGRAM OF VLAFF 08

Film descriptions
Times and Locations
Where to buy tickets

VLAFF WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL OF OUR VOLUNTEERS

Andre Kirchner | Federico Rivero Villalpando
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VANCOUVER LATIN AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL SOCIETY

207 - 55 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC, V5Y 1P1
Canada Tel. 1-778-883-8040

EDITORIAL

THE MANY HUES OF LATIN AMERICA.

SIX YEARS ago, the Vancouver Latin American Film Festival (VLAFF) started screening Latin American films with this mission: to bring Latin American culture to Vancouver.

This first issue of VLAFF NEWS is a commitment to this same mission, and we are proud to accompany the 6th Annual VLAFF.

Multiculturalism has been the norm of Latin America for such a long time that we have really become a mix, without distinctions, and sharing in the same history. As such we can serve as a model to other parts of the world that are managing the conflicts and pleasures of cultural mixes for the first time. However, in saying this, we must not fail to acknowledge the foundation of all our peoples, the ancient cultures of the indigenous nations, that have given to this continent something extremely special, and that make us, without a doubt, what we are now: a complex cultural mix of ancient cultures with emigrants from Europe, Africa and Asia who sought a new and better future in Latin America.

The Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano, a lover of Latin America, says in this region *all the colours, all the sounds and all the smells of the world are reunited*. Believing in this, and most of all, knowing that all this is the best reality of our continent, VLAFF propose an ambitious selection of the best cinematography of Latin America.

If Latin America contains in a large scale all the world cultures and histories, we can proudly say that even

though we represent only a region of the world, this region has captured all the essences of the globe. And, filmmaking is the art that we feel best responds to the complicated task of representing the diversity of human experience. Only with film can we show all the arts to their best: photography, music, writing, dance and acting are only some of those that in film work together, harmonized perfectly and rooted in different traditions and a common history.

The 6th annual Vancouver Latin American Film Festival will screen films that represent the finest accomplishments of Latin American filmmakers living in their countries of origin or in the diaspora, and bring to audiences here the treat of hearing the many languages and seeing the diverse colours of Latin America.

VLAFF NEWS, the official voice of VLAFF, is extremely proud to represent all the enormous differences of Latin America, because those, in fact, are our biggest similarity.

Enjoy reading us and enjoy the show.



CHRISTIAN SIDA-VALENZUELA
CHIEF EDITOR.

SECRETS OF URUGUAY

“What I am telling you here, you know, I never told anyone. I didn’t tell my own brothers, and I certainly didn’t tell my children.”

Secretos de Lucha, the first feature-length documentary of Maiana Bidegain, shares an intimate perspective of a family’s struggle against oppression in the darkest days of the Uruguayan dictatorship of the seventies. It gives voice to those who were both witnesses and pawns in a story that was stolen from them, to reflect poignantly the struggle of the entire continent.

Maiana Bidegain is a product of what she calls the “circle of emigration.” She was born, like her grandparents, in the Basque country of southern France, to parents who were born and raised in Uruguay. *Secretos de Lucha (Secrets of the Struggle)*, is based around her family’s transition between France and Uruguay. Bidegain travels to Uruguay to visit the place her parents left, which results in an eye-opening lesson about the dark and unfamiliar years of Uruguay, a small country rarely noticed on the large geopolitical map. *Secretos de Lucha* calls us to uncover a forgotten country and its history through the story of a family who see themselves as ordinary people,

when, in fact, their fight is emblematic of one of the most valuable legacies of Latin America today.

Bidegain claims her main motivation for making the film was to talk about what happened in Uruguay during the dreadful years of the dictatorship, and she found her family’s testimonies to be the perfect mouthpiece. Bidegain’s father and two of his sisters were forced to leave Uruguay because of their political beliefs. “[Uruguay] was the country they considered theirs, yet through an instinctive motion they found refuge in the country of their ancestors, which is where I was born.” Bidegain recounts the presence of her relatives’ distress that she had always been aware of and the desire to understand where those scars had come from. She describes the difficulties in getting them to tell their stories because they did not think they had done anything worth telling, and they were still filled with trepidation left over from the time when it was dangerous to speak of it. Bidegain chose to focus the camera solely on her family, a decision owing to the diversity of her relative’s occupations and their respective commitments, which were spread throughout unions, political parties and the clandestine guerrilla movement, the Tupamaros. As Bidegain tells us, “I thought they were quite representative of the upright part of the Uruguayan population. I decided to stick to them because they are not stereotypical heroes but average people who followed their ideals.”

The film also speaks of the unequal attention paid to the countries ruled by dictatorships within Latin America. As Bidegain points out, “People only remember Chile or Argentina. Rare are those who know that in 1976, when Amnesty International

made its first international campaign in favour of a country, it was for Uruguay.” At that time Argentina and Chile were also under dictatorships, but Amnesty estimated that it was Uruguay that held the highest ratio of people being arrested and tortured in all of South America.

The film seeks to impart the notion that without talking, and without transmission, there is no memory. Through her father’s eyes and her seven aunts and uncles’ confessions, Bidegain struggles to understand why they kept silent for so long. And, she strongly believes that these memories can be an inspiration for the current generation for whom the notion of commitment seems so loose. “All the fights seem to have been fought and lost before us but there is still so much to fight for everywhere in the world.”

At first Uruguay was a shock to Bidegain, being so different from France, but she soon fell in love with it. “I said to myself that one day I will do something for Uruguay, this small country that has touched me with the warmth of its inhabitants who were able to help each other so generously with love and solidarity, even when going through the direst of straits.”

Maiana Bidegain will be a special guest at VLAFF 2008. She will be attending the screening of her film, and will also take part in the forum “Daughters of Revolution and Exile” at UBC Robson Square on September 8th, 2008 at 5pm. “Secretos de Lucha” won the best documentary award at the Biarritz Latino Festival in 2007. ◆



Bidegain Family. Secrets of Struggle

THE DAUGHTER OF TWO HAVANAS

Vivien Lesnik was born in Havana, Cuba but moved with her family to Little Havana in Miami when she was still a young girl. Her father, Max Lesnik, is one of the most controversial public figures in the Cuban exile community and his life and beliefs are the subject of her film *The Man of Two Havanas*. But this is not only a personal documentary film, it is also a history lesson, a captivating story and an ideal way to see that nothing, is black and white—not even on the island whose radiant passion arouses the world.

Max Lesnik was a prominent revolutionary when he left Cuba due to ideological differences with his then friend, Fidel Castro. After moving the family to Miami, he publicly defended a position that was both against the Cuban government and in opposition to U.S. policy regarding Cuba. When we asked Vivien Lesnik about what it was like to live in an environment of political tension while growing up, she spoke of the isolation from society that her family experienced: “There were the right wing Cuban exiles that planned the Bahía de Cochinos (Bay of Pigs), and the extreme leftist Cuban exiles that were against Castro. People that came to my house were against the Cuban government but from the left side, and the other Cubans in Miami were against Cuba from the right. I could only play with the kids of my father’s friends as there were other kids that were not allowed to play with me because they considered my family communist.” As she grew up, Lesnik learned never to discuss

Cuban politics. In fact, she constantly avoided the subject.

Vivien Lesnik had originally set out to write a narrative film about her father’s life, but worried that the real events were so incredible that people would not believe the story. Taking a friend’s suggestion, Lesnik decided to make a documentary instead. As she states, “I wanted to know my father and understand what he did from his point of view.” And, a documentary film seemed like the perfect way to do so.

In addition to sharing her father’s story, Lesnik was also motivated by the desire to inform the American people about a problem that is rarely approached with justice and equality in the media. Lesnik recognized that this perspective of a Cuban exile had never been presented, allowing her a wide avenue of approach to the subject.

Since completion, the film has been included in various international festivals around the world, including the Florida Film Festival in Orlando, but never in Miami. “I sent the film to

Max Lesnik and Fidel Castro, *The Man of Two Havanas*



the Miami Film Festival and talked to many people that could have done something to get the film in, but it was rejected.” Nevertheless, despite continual opposition, the film is scheduled to screen in Miami this September with the support of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Throughout the film, Lesnik makes an effort to explain that the situation in Cuba is not black and white, and suggests that most of the films made about Cuba are very hazy in terms of the revolution. “There are things that we cannot deny, such as the persecution of homosexuals at the beginning of the revolution, but not acknowledging the advances that the revolution has achieved in health care or how they try to have a more equal society in terms of race is not having a clear picture.” Thus, Lesnik sums up her

underlying motivation: “In addition to being a personal documentary about my father, my family and our struggle in Miami, I also see *The Man of Two Havanas* as a history lesson—a lesson for the American people because we keep making the same mistakes, terrorism returns, and attacks return. All the terrorists trained by the American government are now attacking the USA. It is the same as what is happening in Iraq right now. Everything comes back.”

Vivien Lesnik will be a special guest at VLAFF 2008. She will be attending the second screening of her film, and will also take part in the forum “Daughters of Revolution and Exile” at UBC Robson Square on September 8th, 2008 at 5pm. “The Man of Two Havanas” won The First Coral at the 2007 Havana International Film Festival. ◆



Vivien Lesnik and her father, *The Man of Two Habanas*

LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA, A BEAUTIFUL REVENGE AGAINST THE DICTATORSHIPS.

Julio Feo Zarandieta.



Chile, Peru, Venezuela, Colombia, Uruguay, and not to forget, Cuba and its highly reputed film school Escuela de San Antonio de los Baños. Despite the rise of co-productions, which are absolutely necessary for the existence of some national cinema, there is no doubt that the nationality of a film is first and foremost that which comes from the cultural roots of its author or director. In Argentina, Mexico and Brazil, as well as in Colombia, the new regulations for cinema funding have allowed unquestionable progress. But other countries such as Uruguay, Chile or Peru are still waiting for these cinematic policies to be implemented. At the core, Latin American cinema is reborn and affirmed thanks to the audacity and the stubbornness of young filmmakers.

In the last twenty years we have witnessed the renaissance of the established film industry with the arrival of new young filmmakers who have taken the place of the veterans. In addition, we have also witnessed Paraguay's emerging film scene with such works as *Hamaca Paraguaya* by Paz Encina, a country that today is undergoing a transformation of great fervour, as well as groundbreaking works by the Ecuadorian filmmaker Sebastian Cordero, and Julio Hernandez Cordón of Guatemala.

All the programmers of the international festivals are in agreement that today's Latin American cinema is developing with an immense vigour and is an endless source of new directors and authors, whose work, due to the lack of a solid industry in their original countries, is thriving thanks to co-productions and the constant incentives of film festivals around the world. The Cannes Film Festival in May 2008 confirmed this trend with two Argentinean and two Brazilian films in the official selection and with twenty Latin American films represented among all the sections of this prestigious event.

The three countries that are best known historically for their development of a film industry are still the main drivers in the diverse panorama of Latin American cinema: Argentina, Brazil and Mexico. And to their ranks, other filmmakers have been joining from

In the nineties we, the film critics, started to talk of the new Argentinean cinema, the dozens of new filmmakers who wanted to film, and the technology which replaced the Super 8 and allowed for more advanced video, thereby starting the promising careers of a larger number of filmmakers despite the absence of a film industry and financing in their own countries. In the last fifteen years, many renowned filmmakers including Lucrecia Martel, Pablo Trapero and Martin Rejtman of Argentina, Guillermo del Toro, Carlos Reygadas and Fernando Eimbke of Mexico, and Walter Salles and Fernando Meirelles of Brazil, have affirmed that the youth of yesterday are the veterans of today. The list of new films coming from Latin America keeps growing with the works of such

filmmakers as Matias Bize and Sebastian Lelio of Chile, Ciro Guerra of Colombia, and a very long etc.

Paradoxically, this continent that has suffered through the military dictatorships and the bloody repression that was intended to erase the words culture and progress from the planet earth, and that sacrificed and assassinated a whole generation of young men and women in the seventies, watches with bewildered curiosity the capacity of artistic creation today. The militancy of the social activism of the seventies that was curtailed by the dictatorships has created a space for the social and critical views of the new generation. Latin American cinema, sustained by the solidarity of European production, has allowed the recovery of that interrupted memory for the whole world. With suitcases full of ideas for new scripts, Latin American filmmakers have achieved, in a certain way, what their politicians never did: they have given a common identity to diverse productions while respecting their own idiosyncrasies and culture. Magnificent revenge against the dark dictatorships is what the cinema of Latin America offers us. In 2008 people around the world, from Prague to Vietnam and Paris to Mexico, are commemorating the forty years that have passed since the events in May of 1968, as Latin American cinema, in fiction as well as in documentary form, continues to assert with talent, strength and total freedom that "it is forbidden to forbid." ◆

Julio Feo Zarandieta was born in Madrid in 1948, but has lived in France since 1974 when he was accepted as a political refugee for opposing the Franco regime. He is a member of the International Federation of Film Critics (Fipresci), and of the Union of French Film Critics. Since 1977 he has worked as a journalist and film critic for Radio France International and has covered the annual Cannes and San Sebastian Film Festivals since 1980. Additionally he has been a press juror representing Fipresci in many film festivals, including La Habana, San Sebastian and Toulouse.

Descriptions for this year's films are available
in our festival catalogue and online at

www.vlaff.org



FILM AND MY EYES

Indran Amirthanayagam.

I love moving pictures, shadow plays, light beamed on a screen, all of us gathered in the darkness, our communities united for a show. I don't think of the Americas. I see the continent in each brown and European mix, in corn fields, the Lacandon rain forest, the cascading of the Iguazu. My images come from landscapes I have known and films I have seen. Whether I speak Spanish or Zapotec, Portuguese, Guaraní or English, I can delight in pictures that speak ten thousand and more words.

Film began in the silent era, its images accompanied by live orchestras. Now the music, as well as the sounds of words, are embedded in film, "la película" or in digital tape. Like bread or rice, moving pictures have become staples, and they feed our wish to escape present realities in order to investigate them in even more intimate detail.

The white screen offers the exploratory space where we can more easily and safely examine our intricate and secret passions projected in the darkness. The cultures of the Americas become eyewitnesses to themselves. We can gasp, shout, and cry, as we see our continent through the films of this indispensable festival.

I have lived in the Americas since I emigrated to the United States as a 14 year old. I attended Punahou School in Hawaii where I delighted in the many Asian and Pacific students and learned about the trade routes that brought Manila cabinets to Veracruz. Geographically, Hawaii is a Pacific state but its multicultural model represents the potential of the Americas, of Europe, of India, of China, of the societies that will thrive in the years to come. We have to learn to live together. Film can show us what happens when we oppose this basic rule, when we choose not

to love our neighbors. And what results from embracing the other.

I ask a lot of the films we will enjoy in this festival. Yes, they should entertain, transport us to other worlds, give us energy and hope, move us to pick up paint brushes and our lives again. They should also show our imperfections, the blemishes that render us human, the hungers that lead us to devour those close to us, whether with love or rage. Let us make peace with ourselves by releasing ourselves to the movies, to the safe and swirling play of light in the darkness. ◆

Indran Amirthanayagam was born in Ceylon, now Sri Lanka. He is a multilingual writer and has published books and articles in both English and Spanish. He is a United States diplomat, and has lived and worked in Latin America, West Africa, India, Europe and Canada. His latest book is The Splintered Face: Tsunami Poems. He is a Board Member of the Vancouver Latin American Film Festival.



QUERÒ From Brazil. Best actor and art director at the Cinema de Brasilia



MARIPOSA NEGRA from Peru, directed by Francisco Lombardo

Ticket Outlets

Advance tickets must be purchased from ticket outlets at least one day prior to the screening. All advance sales end at 9pm the day before the screening. Advance tickets on sale starting Monday, August 25th



Pacific Cinémathèque

Videomatica

1855 West 4th Avenue (between Burrard and Cypress)
Open daily for tickets sales 11am-9pm
Cash only. Free parking available in back of store.

Tierra del Sol

2018 Commercial Drive (at 4th Ave.)
Open Monday-Saturday 11am-7pm, Sunday 11am-6pm. Cash only. Se habla español.

Pacific Cinémathèque

1131 Howe Street (at Helmcken)
Open Monday-Friday 12pm-5pm
Cash only.

Thursday 4	Friday 5	Saturday 6	Sunday 7
 <p>EI BAÑO DEL PAPA (OPENING GALA FILM) <i>(The Pope's Toilet)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Uruguay/Brazil/France/ Fiction Directors: César Charlone, Enrique Fernández</p> <p>Awards: Best Opera Prima Guadalajara Film Festival 2008, Best film (Critics) & Audience Award Gramado Film Festival 2007, Horizontes Award San Sebastian IFF 2007, Best Film Sao Paulo IFF 2007, Best Screenplay Huelva Film Festival 2007</p> <p>Preceding Short: No Bikini Canada Director: Claudia Morgado Escanilla Awards: Grand Price PlanetOut 2008, Best Short New York Lesbian and Gay FF 2008, Audience Award Best Short San Francisco International Gay and Lesbian FF.</p> <p>(rush tickets at the door only)</p> <p>VIFC 7:00</p>	<p>Master Lighting Workshop Seminars</p> <p>Advancing the art and craft of filmmaking</p> <p>VIFC 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM</p>	<p>Master Lighting Workshop Seminars</p> <p>Advancing the art and craft of filmmaking</p> <p>VIFC 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM</p>	 <p>PRO DIA NASCER FELIZ <i>(For a Better Day)</i> Portuguese / English subtitles Brazil / 2006 / Documentary Director: João Jardim Awards: São Paulo International Film Festival 2006 SFU 3:00 PM Free Admission</p>
	 <p>EL CORAZÓN <i>(The Heart)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Colombia / Documentary Director: Diego García Moreno Awards: Premio Nacional de Cultura Video Universidad de Antioquia 2006, Premio Unión Latina- Festival SFU 4:00 PM Free Admission</p>	 <p>SHORTS PROGRAM VENEZUELA</p> <p>A fine selection of the best Venezuelan short films.</p> <p>SFU 3:00 PM Free Admission</p>	 <p>DOBLE JUEGO <i>(Con Game)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Peru - Spain / 2004 / Fiction Director: Alberto Durant SFU 5:00 PM Free Admission</p>
	 <p>EI BAÑO DEL PAPA <i>(The Pope's Toilet)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Uruguay/Brazil/France/ Fiction Directors: César Charlone, Enrique Fernández Awards: Best Opera Prima Guadalajara Film Festival, Best Film Sao Paulo IFF, Best Screenplay Huelva Film Festival PC 5:00 PM</p>	 <p>QUE TAN LEJOS <i>(How Much Further)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Ecuador / 2006 / Fiction Director: Tania Hermida SFU 5:00 PM Free Admission</p>	 <p>BUSCANDO A MIGUEL <i>(Looking for Miguel)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Colombia / 2007 / Fiction Director: Juan Fischer Awards: People's Choice Award Cinesul Brazil 2008 PC 5:00 PM</p>
	 <p>AMERICANO Spanish / English subtitles Canada - Peru / 2007/Documentary Director: Carlos Ferrand Awards: Best Documentary JUTRA 2008 PC 7:00 PM</p>	 <p>EL BRINDIS <i>(To Life)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Chile / 2007 / Fiction Director: Shai Agosin Awards: People's Choice Award San Diego Film Festival 2008 PC 5:00 PM</p>	 <p>SANEAMIENTO BASICO <i>(Basic Sanitation)</i> Portuguese / English subtitles Brazil / 2007 / Fiction Director: Jorge Furtado (rush tickets at the door only) VIFC 6:00 PM</p>
	 <p>A VIA LÁCTEA <i>(The Milky Way)</i> Portuguese / English subtitles Brazil / 2007 / Fiction Director: Lina Chamie Awards: Prize "Casa de América" San Sebastián 2006 PC 9:15 PM</p>	 <p>THE MAN OF TWO HAVANAS <i>(El Hombre De Las Dos Habanas)</i> English-Spanish / English subtitles USA / 2007 / Documentary Director: Vivien Lesnik Weisman Awards: 2006 IFP Fledgling Fund Award for Best WIP Emerging Latino Filmmaker PC 7:00 PM</p>	 <p>SECRETOS DE LUCHA <i>(Secrets of the Struggle)</i> French-Spanish / English subtitles France / 2007 / Documentary Director: Maiana Bidegain Awards: Prix de l'Union Latine à Biarritz PC 7:00 PM</p>
		 <p>EL ASALTANTE <i>(The Mugging)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Argentina / 2007 / Fiction Director: Pablo Fendrik Semaine de la Critique CANNES 2007 PC 9:15 PM</p>	 <p>PÁGINAS DEL DIARIO DE MAURICIO <i>(Mauricio's Diary)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Cuba / 2006 / Fiction Director: Manuel Pérez Paredes PC 9:15 PM</p>

Tickets and General Festival Information

VLAFF Memberships - \$2

As a registered non-profit society, the VLAFF screens films that have not been seen by the BC Film Classification Board. Under BC law, any person wishing to see these unclassified films must be a member of the VLAFF society and be **18 years or older**.

The membership fee is \$2 and is valid until August 31, 2009. Please carry your membership card with you at all times, as you will be required to show it at all VLAFF screenings, including special screenings throughout the year.

Tickets and Passes

Single Tickets: \$10

Opening Night/Special Receptions at VIFC: \$20 (available as rush tickets at the door only).

SFU Screenings:

Free admission (2008 VLAFF membership required)

Festival Pass: \$120 (available at VLAFF Ticket Outlet at Pacific Cinémathèque only)

Festival Pass - \$120

This pass gives access to all VLAFF screenings held at the Pacific Cinémathèque. Passholders must arrive at least 20 minutes prior to screening time to claim an entrance ticket from the Box Office. A Festival pass does not guarantee seating to sold-out shows. Passholders must carry a valid VLAFF membership card.

Master Lighting Workshops/Seminars, Vancity Theatre, Sept. 5-6, 2008

(Tickets available through www.vlaff.org or VLAFF Ticket Outlet at Pacific Cinémathèque only)

Friday Seminar Pass: \$35

Saturday Seminar Pass: \$35

Full-Access Pass: \$60

Ticket Outlets

Advance tickets must be purchased from ticket outlets at least one day prior to the screening. All advance sales end at 9pm the day before the screening.

Advance tickets on sale starting **Monday, August 18th:**

Tickets Tonight

(Please note: All tickets purchased through Tickets Tonight are subject to surcharges and processing fees.)

Online: www.ticketstontight.ca (Please arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the screening to pick-up your order from Will Call.)

In person: Tourism Vancouver Touristinfo Centre, Plaza level, 200 Burrard Street (at Cordova) Open daily 10am-6pm

Advance tickets on sale starting **Monday, August 25th:**

Tierra del Sol

2018 Commercial Drive (at 4th Ave.)

Open Monday-Saturday 11am-7pm, Sunday 11am-6pm

Cash only. Se habla español.

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VLAFF Ticket Outlet at the Pacific Cinémathèque

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Cash only.

Tickets at the Door -Cash Only

On the day of a screening, tickets may be purchased at the venue only. The Box Office opens 30 minutes prior to the first screening of the day. Tickets for the **free screenings and events** at SFU Harbour Centre and UBC Robson Square are available at the door on a first-come, first-seated basis starting 30 minutes prior to each event.

Latecomers are not guaranteed seating. Please arrive early. Tickets are non-refundable.

Monday 8	Tuesday 9	Wednesday 10	Thursday 11	Friday 12	Saturday 13	Sunday 14
Panel “Daughters of Revolution and Exile” Three woman artists will discuss how being daughters of exiles has impacted their creative work. UBC (ROBSON SQUARE) 5:00 FREE ADMISSION	 THE MAN OF TWO HAVANAS <i>(El Hombre De Las Dos Habanas)</i> English-Spanish/English subtitles USA / 2007 / Documentary Director: Vivien Lesnik Weisman Awards: 2006 IFF Fledgling Fund Award for Best WIP Emerging Latino Filmmaker PC 5:00 PM	 EL BRINDIS <i>(To Life)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Chile / 2007 / Fiction Director: Shai Agosin Awards: People's Choice Award San Diego Film Festival 2008 PC 5:00 PM	 LA SEÑAL <i>(The Signal)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Argentina-Spain/2007/ Fiction Director: Ricardo Darin / Martin Hodara PC 5:00 PM	 ESCUELA INTERNACIONAL DE CINE Y TV San Antonio de los Baños SHORTS PROGRAM SFU 3:00 PM Free Admission	 V.I.P. ... LA OTRA CASA <i>(V.I.P. ... The Other House)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Guatemala / 2007 / Fiction Director: Elías Jiménez SFU 3:00 PM Free Admission	 MARIA LIONZA, ALIENTO DE ORQUÍDEAS <i>(Maria Lionza, Breath of Orchids)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Venezuela/2007/ Documentary Director: John Pettrizzelli Awards: Best Photography and Best Sound Merida National Film Festival PC 3:00 PM
	 ¿QUIÉN DICE QUE ES FÁCIL? <i>(Who says it's easy?)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Argentina / 2007 / Fiction Director: Juan Taratuto Awards: Best Screenplay, Best Actress, Best Supporting Actor, Argentinean Film Academy Awards. PC 7:15 PM	 4 DE JULIO. LA MASACRE DE SAN PATRICIO <i>(July 4TH – St. Patrick's Massacre)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Argentina / 2007 / Documentary Directors: Juan Pablo Young, Pablo Zubizarreta Awards: Festival Internacional de Cine de Mar del Plata PC 7:00 PM	 DESIERTO SUR Spanish / English subtitles Chile / 2007 / Fiction Director: Shawn Garry Awards: Best Director, Audience Award, Special Jury Award Viña del Mar Film Festival 2007 PC 7:00 PM	 WOOD & STOCK: SEXO, OREGANO E ROCK'N ROLL Portuguese / English subtitles Brazil / 2006 / Animation Director: Otto Guerra Awards: Best Animated Feature Festival Internacional de Animación ANIMACOR 2006 SFU 5:00 PM Free Admission	TBA To be announced at vlaff.org SFU 5:00 PM Free Admission	 LA SEÑAL <i>(The Signal)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Argentina-Spain/2007/ Fiction Director: Ricardo Darin / Martin Hodara PC 5:00 PM
 JANELA DA ALMA <i>(Window of the Soul)</i> Portuguese / English subtitles Brazil / 2001/ Documentary Directors: Walter Carvalho, João Jardim Awards: Audience Award And Jury Award Best Documentary: 25th. São Paulo International Film Festival PC 7:00 PM	 MARIPOSA NEGRA <i>(Black Butterfly)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Peru / 2006 / Fiction Director: Francisco Lombardi Awards: Best Actress Biarritz Latin American Film Festival 2006 / Audience Award Montreal World Film Festival 2006. PC 9:30 PM	 NÃ POR ACASO <i>(Not by Chance)</i> Portuguese / English subtitles Brazil / 2007 / Fiction Director: Philippe Barcinski PC 9:15 PM	 AL FINAL DEL ESPECTRO <i>(At the end of the Spectra)</i> Spanish / English subtitles Colombia / 2006 / Fiction Director: Juan Felipe Orozco PC 9:15 PM	 COCALERO Spanish / English subtitles Argentina/2007/ Documentary Director: Alejandro Landes <i>Official Selection Sundance Film Festival 2007.</i> PC 5:00 PM	 SHORTS PROGRAM MEXICO (IMCINE) The best short films of all time in Mexico. PC 4:00 PM	 PROIBIDO PROIBIR <i>(Forbidden to Forbid)</i> Portuguese / English subtitles Brazil – Chile – Spain 2006 / Fiction Director: Jorge Durán Awards: Best Film Biarritz Film Festival 2006 / Jury Special Award Havana Film Festival 2006 / Best Script Huelva Film Festival 2006 PC 7:00 PM (CLOSING GALA FILM)
 QUERÒ Portuguese / English subtitles Brazil / 2006 / 90 min Director: Carlos Cortez Awards: Best Actor, Best Sound, Best Screenplay and Best Art Director Festival de Cinema de Brasilia 2006 PC 9:00 PM	 VLAFF08 FESTIVAL PROGRAM For full film synopsis go to www.vlaff.org			 O MAIOR AMOR DO MUNDO <i>(The Greatest Love of All)</i> Portuguese / English subtitles Brazil / 2006 / Fiction Director: Carlos Diegues Awards: Jury Special Award at Festival International de Mar del Plata 2007 / Best Film at the Festival International de Film du Monde Montreal 2006 / Best Film by the Popular Jury at the Biarritz Festival 2006 PC 7:00 PM	 JC CHÁVEZ Spanish / English subtitles Mexico / 2006 / Documentary Director: Diego Luna PC 6:00 PM	 DEFICIT Spanish / English subtitles México / 2007 / Fiction Director: Gael García Bernal <i>Semaine de la Critique Cannes 2007</i> PC 9:00 PM
VENUE INFORMATION Pacific Cinémathèque 1131 Howe Street (at Helmcken) SFU Downtown Campus Harbour Centre 515 West Hastings (at Richards) UBC Robson Square 800 Robson Street (below the Vancouver Art Gallery) Vancouver International Film Centre, Vancity Theatre VIFC 1181 Seymour Street (at Davie) Festival Information (778) 883-8040 www.vlaff.org Email: boxoffice@vlaff.org Mailing address: VLAFF Office 207-55 West Broadway Vancouver, BC V5Y 1P1						
				 SANEAMENTO BASICO <i>(Basic Sanitation)</i> Portuguese / English subtitles Brazil / 2007 / Fiction Director: Jorge Furtado PC 9:15 PM	 DEFICIT Spanish / English subtitles México / 2007 / Fiction Director: Gael García Bernal <i>Semaine de la Critique Cannes 2007</i> PC 8:00 PM	

Latin America in short



FIN DE TRAYECTO, Short Film

Since its inception, the Vancouver Latin American Film Festival has been committed to promoting emerging filmmakers and to giving them one of their first opportunities to be exposed in a film event. In a continuation of this commitment, VLAFF '08 will screen more than 40 short films, some of them created by first-time filmmakers and others by experienced directors.

This year, in addition to presenting more than 20 short films preceding features and documentaries, VLAFF will include three different shorts programs: one from

the Mexican Film Institute; the second, a compilation of recent shorts from Venezuela; and the third, a program from one of the best film schools in Latin America, the Cuban International School of Film and Television (EICTV) of San Antonio de los Baños. The selection of short films to be presented at the festival will cover a large range of different styles from the 3-minute Argentinean animation film *Lapsus*, to the 20-minute Chilean fiction film *The Man and the River* with its outstanding cinematography.

VLAFF is also proud to promote Latin-Canadian filmmakers. Artists such as Josselyn Alvarado from Montreal, who co-hosts the weekly television program "Foco Latino," will screen her short film *Nosotros los Vivos*; and Miguel Valdez-Lopez, a recent graduate of the Vancouver Film School, will be at VLAFF for the first time with *Night of the Living Dead*. We will host the well-known local director, Claudia Morgado Escanilla, presenting her multi-award winning short film *No Bikini*.

Argentina and Mexico, as two of the countries with the highest annual film production in Latin America, will have a special place in the VLAFF shorts selection. At the Cannes Festival this year, the Mexican short film *El Deseo (The Desire)*, directed by the 26-year-old filmmaker Marie Benito, competed in the official selection, and VLAFF will present it along with several other short films from Mexico such as *Holiday* and *Saw Your Cell*. From Argentina, VLAFF will screen the amazing short documentary *Constitution* that shows us the intimate part of a Buenos Aires neighbourhood, and fiction films such as *Heralda* and *Chapitas*. The Chilean short film *Tide* is by far the best offering from this South American country; in this short film with almost no words, we can see nine minutes of great Chilean cinematography.

VLAFF '08 is proud to present short films from great and upcoming film directors. Don't miss the chance to expose yourself to film works almost impossible to find in this part of the world. ●

Nine Minutes to Push Boundaries



No Bikini is the latest short film from the award-winning Chilean-Canadian filmmaker Claudia Morgado Escanilla (*Sabor a mí, Unbound*). Based on a short story by Ivan E. Coyote, *No Bikini* introduces us to a young girl who defies convention during her summer swim class. It has screened at some of the most prestigious festivals around the world including the Toronto International Film Festival and the Berlin Film Festival. Claudia Morgado Escanilla, a Vancouver-based artist, talked to us about her film and about her vision as an artist.

What is the greatest satisfaction given to you by the films you have made?

Every film that I make always surprises me, especially when people have a positive reaction, and it is really an honour because you never know what to expect from the audience—you never know if people will understand your work and what you are trying to say as an artist.

No Bikini has been presented at very different types of festivals such as the International in Toronto, the Children's Film Festival in New York and the Lesbian & Gay Film Festival in Miami. Is your film, or are you as an artist, intentionally trying to break boundaries?

In a way the film pushes for that, but I was not aware that my film was going to be accepted in all those different festivals, and really that has been a big surprise for me. It is very positive that the film can be shown in gay festivals, children's festivals and many others. It is great that a film that is only nine minutes long can reach such a wide audience, and that is the point of the film—that in one way or another we have to accept what we are as people, that we are diverse, with different opinions, and that opinions come to life at a very early stage.

You have lived for more than 20 years in Canada, but your work is still marked by your "latinoameri-

canism." As an artist, is it difficult to leave one's roots?

For me it is, and there is a reason why I always use latin music in my films. Because to express what I am, a bilingual and bicultural person, I use the music to connect with myself, even though the film itself may be in English.

In your own words, you are "a filmmaker when I get up in the morning and a filmmaker when I go to bed at night." As cinema is so important in your personal life, what defines your work the best?

There is a necessity in my work to express myself as a woman, and to talk about what the depiction of a woman's body proposes. From the point when you use it to tell a story or to show something, you are pushing the boundaries, and I have to ask where the politics of the body start. And I like to do that in a fun way and in an interesting way for people to see, because above all that is the problem I like to solve, and I like to do it with creativity, not with a boring speech. ●

No Bikini won the PlanetOut Short Movie Award Grand Prize and was the Audience Award winner at the San Francisco Lesbian & Gay Film Festival. No Bikini will screen at VLAFF as part of the Opening Night program on September 4th, 2008.



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GUILLERMO NAVARRO, ASC, AMC**

2007 Oscar-recipient for Best Achievement in Cinematography for Pan's Labyrinth, will be the key speaker at the Master Lighting Workshops on Sept 5th- 6th 2008. The workshops will be held at the Vancity Theatre, 1181 Seymour Street, and are part of the 6th annual Vancouver Latin American Film Festival.

Visit our web-site for full the schedule: www.vlaaff.org

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PANEL DISCUSSION

FREE ADMISION

DAUGHTERS OF REVOLUTION AND EXILE

The triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 led to many fleeing the country. At the same time, it inspired the formation of liberation movements throughout the Americas. Just over a decade later, military dictatorships in the Southern Cone imprisoned, tortured, killed and “disappeared” tens of thousands; many survivors became exiles around the world. In this panel three daughters of exiled parents discuss the impact of their life experiences on their creative work.

CARMEN AGUIRRE

Carmen is a Vancouver-based theatre artist who has written and co-written fifteen plays. She has sixty film, TV, and stage acting credits and is currently working on a memoir entitled “Something Fierce”, to be published in 2010 by Douglas & McIntyre in Canada, and Granta/Portobello in the United Kingdom. Carmen is the daughter of Chilean exiles who arrived in Vancouver in 1974. She is a graduate of the prestigious theatre training program Studio 58.



MAIANA BIDEGAIN

Maiana Bidegain was born in 1977, in Bayonne, in the French Basque country. Her parents had arrived a few months earlier, fleeing the threats of the Uruguayan dictatorship. Growing up under the weight of a dual identity and culture, Maiana explores in her work her need for memory to fulfil a wish for belonging often frustrated, but well-known by many sons and daughters of exile. She is the director of *Secretos de Lucha* (Secrets of the Struggle).



VIVIEN LESNIK WEISMAN

Vivien Lesnik Weisman was born in Havana, Cuba. She grew up in Miami, where her childhood was marred by bombings and assassination attempts on her father. Her father, Max Lesnik, a former revolutionary, is considered an enigmatic and controversial figure in the Cuban exile community. For many years he was the publisher of *Replica*, a magazine that was a forum for debate and his incendiary point of view. Vivien Lesnik is the director of *The Man of Two Havanas* (El Hombre de las dos Habanas).



MODERATED BY:

VERONICA MIRALLES SANCHEZ

Her parents came to Canada in 1976, shortly after the military coup in Argentina. When the military junta fell and elections were called, they tried to return home, but found that it was difficult to reinsert themselves in Argentine society. She is a founder of H.I.J.O.S. (Children for identity and justice against forgetting and silence) an association that includes sons and daughters of the disappeared, assassinated, political prisoners and refugees from Latin America.

Presented by the Department of French, Hispanic and Italian Studies of the University of British Columbia and the Vancouver Latin American Film Festival.



Monday September 8 at 5PM
UBC Robson Square 800 Robson Street

FALAMOS PORTUGUÊS!!

VLAFF 2008 is honoured to have Brazil as its spotlight country. This time football and samba will be out for a short period. Brazilian cinema is taking over.

Film production in Brazil is once again at a fever pitch. With more than 70 films produced last year, it is exciting to see so many of the most accomplished new works get screen time. And with the temptation so high for successful foreign directors to set up shop in Hollywood, it is refreshing to see that filmmakers like Walter Salles (*City of God*) and Fernando Meirelles (*Motorcycle Diaries*) remain interested in making Brazilian films. This year films from Brazil started an amazing festival tour winning awards at two of the most prestigious film events. In Berlin, the award for best film, the Golden Bear, went to *Elite Squad*, directed by José Padilha. The other major film festival, Cannes, gave the Brazilian director Fernando Meirelles its opening night with his new film, *Blindness*, an adaptation from the novel by the Portuguese writer José Saramago. Cannes also honoured Brazilian talent in its award night giving the prize of Best Actress to Sandra Corveloni, for her performance in the Walter Salles' film *Line of Passage*.

However, the history of Brazilian cinema has been volatile. While Brazil kept churning out movies during the 1970s and 1980s, the quality of the work suffered due to the country's political situation. Many of the country's best filmmakers had been forced into exile by the military regime, so lowbrow sex comedies dominated screens. By 1989, when democratic elections were held for the first time in a quarter of a century, Brazil's film industry was at its lowest ebb. It would take nearly a decade to recover, a period dubbed the *retomada da produção* or "retake." But with new funding systems in place, a fresh group of filmmakers eventually emerged, forging a new style of Brazilian cinema that is again grabbing international attention.

Leading the charge was Walter Salles, whose 1998 film *Central Station*, a road movie about the friendship between a bitter middle-aged woman and a homeless boy, drew praise around the world and earned a pair of



SANEAMENTO BASICO, a comedy from Brazil directed by Jorge Furtado

Academy Award nominations. *Central Station* provided the model for a filmmaking approach that seems calculated to appeal to both domestic and international audiences. While Salles and his colleagues pack their films with exotic Brazilian locales and culturally specific details, they seek to tell universal tales of family, loss, love and survival. Visually, their films speak in the global language of art-house realism: atmospheric landscapes, graceful handheld camerawork, pumped-up colour levels, plenty of graininess. Fernando Meirelles and Kátia Lund's 2001 film *City of God* epitomized this approach, and became a surprise success in Brazil and abroad, paving the way for more than a dozen Brazilian films to come out in the US and Canada since then.

VLAFF 2008 will present nine of the best recent works of Brazilian cinema, including fiction features, documentaries and animation. The list of films includes *Milky Way*, *Not by Chance* and *Forbidden to Forbid* (Closing Gala), all of them highly acclaimed and with many awards gathered. In addition, VLAFF's Opening Night film, *El Baño del Papa* (The Pope's Toilet), is co-produced by Brazil. ●

Includes an excerpt from "The Brazilian Invasion" by Michael Talbott.

Can Society Live in the Same Place?

Gael García Bernal looks for the answer.

Déficit is the directorial debut of one of Mexico's best-known actors, Gael García Bernal, who also stars in one of the leading roles. The film depicts a day in the life of a group of wealthy Mexican teenagers as they vacation in one of their parents' summer houses, without a chaperone. A film of initiation for García Bernal as a director, Déficit explores the gap between the Mexican high class society and the people of the lower socioeconomic classes who work to make that lifestyle possible. We spoke with García Bernal about the expectations and considerations involved in creating such a film.

From your perspective, what is Déficit about?

The movie poses a simple question: what is society going to do to live together in the same place? The whole movie happens in the same small place, and it is interesting because we can intuitively predict the reaction of the characters based on their social condition or social class. This is what is shown in this movie: the richest looking down on the poorest, the way the house servants hide and disregard themselves, the way the characters try to find a single good action to give meaning to their lives, and the way they screw it up. These characters are victims of their skin colour, of their home town, of their socioeconomic rules; victims of living in Mexico, which is in part a colonial whim. They are completely responsible for their acts though. I play a character who makes decisions he thinks are good, but they aren't. This is a movie that aspires to have a happy ending but it doesn't.

Do you have some fears that the film could be misunderstood? Some people may consider it to be more like a documentary or a somewhat elitist movie.

Everybody can have their own perception. I think that *Déficit* is more than just a movie, but maybe we won't transmit that feeling to some people. Although the film could be considered a documentary, it wasn't our intention. I have no problem with different points of view. Sometimes these kinds of thoughts bring new ideas to the story. It is always interesting to listen to them. On the other hand, I think it is silly to think that every film

about upper-class guys is crappy and frivolous—that's certainly a prejudice. The problem of an upper-class person is as vital as any other person's problem.

Is there something you admire more now about the role of a director than before?

Yes, the management of the film grammar. I admire how directors play with the tools of a movie to tell a story. I admire their skills, because some of them whom I've worked with are masters in the management of this grammar and the way they tell their stories. I think they face the same problems I've faced, but they already know the solution. With this experience I hope not to screw it up so often in my next movie.

Did you have any mentors? Did some directors guide you?

Yes, I had a lot of help, especially with the postproduction, from Alejandro González Iñárritu, Alfonso Cuarón and Guillermo del Toro. Michel Gondry helped me as well.

What would Gael the actor think about Gael the director?

We learned a lot from this first project. I admire the bravery we all had making this movie. This experience was completely unforgettable and is our heritage. We are very grateful to *Déficit* because it taught us so many things. We were beginners in everything, even though we could tell a complex story.

Would you direct another movie?

I'd love to. And this time I'll do it right. ●

Déficit will be shown at VLAFF 2008. It screened as part of the International Critics' Week in Cannes in 2007 and at the Toronto International Film Festival. Déficit is produced by Canana Films, a production company owned by Gael García and Diego Luna.



DEFICIT is the directorial debut of Gael García

OBLIVION AS A CENTRAL THEME

Patricio Guzmán

When I was about eight or nine years old (I really don't remember exactly), the students at the school I attended gathered on one side of the avenue Bernardo O'Higgins in Santiago, Chile. It was a cloudy and grey morning. Our teachers accompanied us.

We were waiting for a long time before we saw an uncovered automobile appear and move through the street at an almost normal speed. In the back-seat was a then-ancient woman who smiled and waved with a white handkerchief. She was Gabriela Mistral .

We raised our arms and watched her pass, fleetingly, for ten seconds, more or less. Looking back much later, I have never, at no other time in my life, again seen another "moving image" of Gabriela Mistral. Even several decades later, when I really knew who she was, I never was able to see other filmed images of the writer, be it in Santiago, New York, or wherever it was she was living.

Once I saw Pablo Neruda and Matilde Urrutia pass by on a street in Concepción, one sunny afternoon in 1968, at the head of a small political manifestation. Although I later was lucky enough to see other images of

the poet, these have always seemed too brief.

Only once in my life was I able to see and hear the pianist Claudio Arrau in a concert in Madrid, in his last years and already sick, where he entered the stage assisted by another person. He couldn't walk and that fact was what most impressed me.

These minuscule moving images are the only ones I can remember of these three figures of Chilean culture. After having made this observation, I began to think that it was inadmissible, from any point of view, for us, the filmmakers, to stand by watching as, not just one, but several generations of important characters pass before our eyes, without picking up a camera to make a profound collection of documentary biographies about them.

Actually, we have done almost nothing about the incredible diaspora of Chilean or Latin American innovators living abroad, nor about those who have never left.

In the past, we never watched Violeta Parra sing in Europe or in her modest tent in La Reina in San-

tiago, just as we never watched the group Inti-Illimani sing in front of one hundred thousand people in Rome. Nor have we seen Raúl Ruiz alongside the best actors of Europe receiving awards at Cannes, Berlin or Venice.

Modesty aside, when in May 2004 I had to slowly climb the red stairs at the Cannes Festival to present "Salvador Allende", I was already prepared and knew that not a single Chilean cameraman would be there. Nor was the Ambassador, nor the Consulate, not even the Chilean cultural attaché. ◆

Patricio Guzmán was born in 1941 in Santiago, Chile. In 1973 he filmed "The Battle of Chile", a 5-hour documentary on the end of Allende's government. After the military coup, Guzmán was threatened to be executed, and left the country in November 1973. He has lived in Cuba, Spain and now in France. His film "Salvador Allende" was presented in the Official Selection at the Cannes Film Festival 2004. He is founder and director of the International Documentary Festival of Santiago (FIDOCS). In 2009, VLAFF will present a retrospective of Patricio Guzmán with his attendance.

"A country without documentary films is like a family without a photo album"

- Patricio Guzmán



DESERTO SUR, a Chilean Road Trip



AMERICANO, a voyage throughout the Americas

Americano, The Intimate Voyage of Carlos Ferrand

"I'm on my way to reconnect with long lost friends, mi familia Americana. I need them to help me take the pulse of the Americas."

A prolific filmmaker and cinematographer, Carlos Ferrand has lived in Québec for over thirty years, but that has not made him lose his passion for Latin America. His film *Americano* is proof of that as it follows his travels across the Americas from Tierra del Fuego to the Arctic. A clever compilation of travel stories and road-movie adventure, *Americano* depicts a very personal voyage of which Ferrand says, "No one else could ever make this film." With the idea to make the film coming initially from his producer, Sylvain L'Espérance, Ferrand created it all, from the script and impressive narrative to the choice of only visiting places where his long-time friends live.

The model that Ferrand employed for *Americano* was to create a film with friends, not with professionals. He explains, "This is more the travel of a regular citizen who is interested in the social topics, but also in the art, poetry, culture and politics, a committed citizen, not as a specialist, not as a militant, but as someone who cares." Creating a personal film, with intimate friends, Ferrand finds the action of directing to be quite different. "I don't direct the film, I only follow it," says Ferrand. "I go to my friends' places and I see what they are doing and I shoot it. I don't need to be entertained. I don't tell them what to do. I film what they are doing in their everyday life."

One of Ferrand's most mesmerizing accomplishments is his ability to capture the traditions and the culture of each location he visits—similar, yet so different. "Something that makes all of this continent a common place is that from Tierra del Fuego to the Arctic you see original cultures and they all belong to here. But now those cultures are the ones that people listen to the least and the ones people scorn." But, if images in this film are incredible, the narrative is as well. Ferrand narrates with such skill that we come to experience

the film as not only a great piece of cinematography, but also as an amazing literary work.

As a Peruvian pursuing a film career in Canada, we asked Ferrand how he felt in terms of discrimination or acceptance, if either he felt more or less welcomed for the fact that he is from Latin America. "The reality is I am white and I am a man. I am not native or a woman. Likely, if I were a woman or native, I would not have the same possibility to have the access that I have." Ferrand acknowledges.

The success of *Americano* is the result of four years and two trips to the Americas and, above all, the amazing eye that Ferrand uses to capture the magnificent hidden people of this continent. ●

Americano will be shown at VLAFF 2008. The film was shown at the Rencontres internationales du documentaire de Montréal (RIDM), at the Lima Film Festival and was nominated for Best Québécois Documentary at the Jutra Awards in 2007.

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