



Havana Film Festival New York

CELEBRATING LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA

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8th HAVANA FILM FESTIVAL NEW YORK AT QUAD CINEMA APRIL 13 – 19, 2007

TRIBUTE TO ACCLAIMED CUBAN ACTOR JORGE PERUGORRÍA
OPENING NIGHT: NEW YORK PREMIERE OF AWARD-WINNING CUBAN FILM, *EL BENNY*

New York, March 18, 2007 -- The *Havana Film Festival New York* (HFFNY) represents the latest trends in Latin American cinema with exciting new cinematic talent alongside the familiar, from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay and the U.S. HFFNY continues in the tradition for which it is known: *enriching and expanding the vision of Latino culture here in the United States*. The films chosen this year each reflect strong cultural and social identities rooted in their respective cities and countries.

THE FESTIVAL OPENS FRIDAY, APRIL 13TH AT QUAD CINEMA with the NY premiere of *El Benny*, the award-winning film by first time Cuban director, Jorge Luis Sanchez. The story is based on the life of Beny Moré, Cuba's greatest musical legend.

This year's Festival tribute to a prominent figure of Latin American cinema is awarded to Cuban actor Jorge Perugorría. This is the actor-director's first visit to New York. Perugorría is best known for his roles in classics such as *Strawberry and Chocolate*, *Guantanamera* and *Honey for Oshún*. His retrospective includes *Vertical Love* (Arturo Soto), *Things I Left in Havana* and *A Virgin Rose*, both directed by the Spaniard Manuel Gutierrez Aragón with script by Senel Paz, author of *Strawberry and Chocolate*. The U.S. premiere of the documentary, *Habana Abierta* marks Perugorría's directorial debut. He will be present at the screening for a conversation with the audience moderated by Mario Murillo (WBAI, *Wake Up America*).

THE FESTIVAL CLOSES ON THURSDAY, APRIL 19TH with the NY premiere of *The 12 Labors* by Ricardo Elias (Brazil), winner in New Horizons, San Sebastian Film Festival, Spain, and Third Coral, Festival de Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, Havana. The film centers on Heracles, a disadvantaged black youth who undertakes 12 tasks to qualify him for a job as a motorcycle delivery boy in São Paulo, an original take on the Greek myth of Hercules.

The new talents showcased are: Javier Mejía (Colombia) with *Apocalipsouth*, recent prize-winner at the Festival de Cartagena; Pablo Larraín (Chile) and his box office hit, *Fuga*; Manolo Nieto (Uruguay), winner of the Tiger Award Rotterdam Festival for *The Dog Pound*; Ricardo Mendez Matta (Puerto Rico), whose film, *Thieves and Liars*, gained international attention with a story about corruption on the Island; Pavel Giroud (Cuba) and his first full-length feature, *The Silly Age*, recipient of several awards at the Festival del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, Havana; Rafael Rosal (Guatemala), whose film *Las Cruces* received the jury's prize at Ojo Cojo International Film Festival of Madrid; Juan Felipe Orozco (Colombia) with *At the End of the Spectra*, a film in which he later collaborated in a North American remake with producer Roy Lee (*The Ring*) and actress Nicole Kidman.

Directors with broad experience are represented as well: Jairo Eduardo Carrillo and Harold Trompetero (Colombia), co-directors of the black comedy *God Creates Them and They Fall Apart*; Eduardo Raspo (Argentina) with his second full-length feature, *Tattooed*, recipient of major awards in Trieste, Biarritz and

Montreal; Manuel Perez with *Pages from Mauricio's Diary*, recipient of several awards at the Festival del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano, Havana; Ignacio Ortiz (México) who returns to his magical world in *Mezcal*, recipient of Ariel prizes from the Mexican Film Academy and prizes at festivals in Malaga and Trieste.

HFFNY 2007 also provides an opportunity for audiences to see new documentaries from and about Latin America. *Salud!*, by Academy Award nominee Connie Field (U.S.-Cuba) and *Colegiales*, by Argentine filmmaker Gustavo Laskier, expose important social issues through the use of cutting-edge cinematic techniques. In the short film category, *HFFNY* presents: Juan Pablo Zaramella's *Journey to Mars*, (Argentina), *Enjoy, Eat and Leave*, by Arturo Infante (Cuba), *The Porter*, by Juan Alejandro Ramirez (Peru), *The Rapist of the Drunkards*, by Federico Gonzalez (Colombia), and *Two Mayas* by Gisela Sanders (Mexico-US).

SUNDAY, APRIL 15th (3 PM) AT QUAD CINEMA promises a special program titled *A Small Lens on What's to Come*, a selection of short films by NY-based filmmakers including: *Dreaming the Future* by Marta Bautis (U.S.-Argentina), *Havana Kidz* by Alberto Gonzalez (U.S.-Cuba) and, from *New Children/New Youth Filmmaking Program*, shorts by very young directors: *What's Your Impression of Me?* by Samantha Rosario (Dominican Republic-U.S.), *An Ecuadorian in New York* by Fausto Chadán (Ecuador-U.S.) and *Wetbacks: Undocumented Ecuadorians in New York* by Patricia Torres (Ecuador-U.S.).

Once again, the Festival reaches out to families with the series *LATIN AMERICAN FILMS FOR CHILDREN* at THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART ON SATURDAY, APRIL 14th (12:45 pm) with the special presentation of the first Latin American animation made in 3D: *Pacific Pirates* (Peru). Then a one-time screening of Cannes award winner *Viva Cuba*, the quirky coming-of-age road movie by Juan Carlos Cremata, will be held on MONDAY, APRIL 16th at QUAD CINEMA, 1:15 pm.

In Astoria, Queens, reflecting the trends of the new generation of Latin American filmmakers, the MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE (35th Ave at 36th St. Astoria) will screen *The Silly Age* by Pavel Giroud (Cuba) SATURDAY, APRIL 14th at 2 pm, and a special Preview of *The Most Beautiful Things of my Very Best Years* by Martin Boulocq (Bolivia), SUNDAY, APRIL 15th at 2 pm.

HFFNY continues to serve the filmmaking industry and film aficionados by providing valuable panel discussions. At the highly anticipated panel *MYTH OR REALITY: The Latino Film Market in the U.S.*, at NYU'S TISCH SCHOOL OF THE ARTS on MONDAY APRIL 16th at 6 pm, key industry figures will share ideas and experiences about Latino film distribution in the U.S. - moderated by Sandy Lieberman, Chairman of Film London.

The panel, *MEET THE FILMMAKERS*, on APRIL 18th AT NYU'S KING JUAN CARLOS I OF SPAIN CENTER, 5:30 pm, will be a tête-à-tête with the festival's international ensemble of guest filmmakers. It will be an opportunity to hear their experiences regarding the influence of, and resistance to, the Hollywood model of filmmaking; and critical issues about cultural diversity, national identity, transnational co-productions, religion and politics. More than 15 filmmakers are scheduled to attend *HFFNY 2007*, actively participating in screenings, panels and public events. Both panels are free and open to the public.

Presenting Sponsor NBC4-Telemundo47 is joined by El Diario La Prensa, WBAI, Delta Air Lines, aka Suites, Commerce Bank, Jaguar Animation, Latino Artists Round Table (LART), Commerce Bank, The National Arts Club, and funded in part by the NYS Council on the Arts and a community of loyal supporters in the business and private sector.

Havana Film Festival New York is a project of American Friends of the Ludwig Foundation of Cuba, a non-profit organization building cultural bridges between the U.S. and Cuba through programs in the arts. Carole Rosenberg is President of the Foundation, Chairperson and Director of the Festival.

Festival Passes for The 8th Havana Film Festival New York are available at www.hffny.com or by calling 212.946.1839. For screeners, HR stills, and interviews with invited directors, contact Diana Vargas, Media Relations, at tel. 917 658.77.35; e-mail: press@dianavargas.com

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