



16th Havana Film Festival Begins

April 10, 2015

by Hamptons Art Hub Staff

The 16th Havana Film Festival New York (HFFNY), a project of American Friends of the Ludwig Foundation of Cuba (AFLFC), opens this week to presents over 45 films from and about Latin America, the Caribbean, and Latinos in the United States. The festival takes place from April 9 to 17, 2015 in venues throughout the city, including Manhattan, Queens, and the Bronx. The Quad Cinema in Manhattan is the festival's main venue. Most foreign language films are subtitled in English.

This year's festival includes a tribute to acclaimed Colombian writer Gabriel García Márquez; a retrospective celebrating the presence of music in Cuban cinema; and premieres from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, the United States and Venezuela.

"Our premise this year is to bet on movies you see, read, and hear, hence our special focus on music and on one of the greatest figures in Latin American literature," said Diana Vargas, artistic director of HFFNY. "We also highlight fresh stories that reflect Latin America at a unique social and artistic moment."



Still from "Llevate Mis Amores." Courtesy of Havana Film Festival.

HFFNY collaborates with Havana's International Festival of New Latin American Cinema to introduce its audience to prominent and emerging filmmakers by showcasing the latest award-winning films. The film festival seeks to cultivate audience-artist dialogue through panel discussions designed to give a behind-the-scenes look at an industry that continues to gain global recognition. The festival program offers directors, actors, and producers an opportunity to exchange ideas, enriches and expands the vision of Latino culture, and provides a multi-cultural experience for a diverse audience.

HFFNY kicks off on April 9 at the Director Guild of America Theater with the New York premiere of *Boccaccerías Habaneras / Boccaccio* in Havana, the second feature by acclaimed Cuban director Arturo Sotto (*The Transparent Woman*). An urban *Boccaccio*, a Havana Decameron; the film exudes sensuality, irreverence and hidden passions. Sotto will present the screening, followed by a Q&A.

"HFFNY reflects, through cinema, our mission to build cultural bridges between the U.S. and Cuba,"

said Carole Rosenberg, president of AFLFC. “In the year of our foundation’s 15th anniversary, we are proud to share with our audience a creative and glowing program that offers a rich rainbow of Latino stories from across the continent.”

Eighteen films compete throughout the festival for Havana Star Awards for Best Film, Best Director, Best Screenplay, and Best Documentary.

The Havana Star Awards ceremony is presented on the final day of the festival April 17 at 6 p.m. It will be followed by the New York premiere of the Mexican film *Gloria*, directed by Christian Keller. The film focuses on Gloria Trevi, the rebellious and controversial Mexican pop icon that became a huge success with her style and catchy songs until a larger than life scandal rocked her world.



Still from “A Estrada 47/Road 47.” Courtesy of Havana Film Festival.

This year’s edition celebrates the 50th anniversary of the premiere of the landmark film *Nosotros, la música / We, the Music*, by Director Rogelio París with a 11- film archival program that highlights the importance of music in Cuban cinema. These films showcase a variety of Cuban musicians, dance styles, and rhythms. The selection, curated by Luciano Castillo, film critic and director of the Cinematheque of Cuba, includes some U.S. and New York premieres. Several of the films were restored to near mint condition and subtitled especially for the occasion.

The Cinephile honors Gabriel García Márquez, one of the greatest Latin American writers. The tribute includes a panel discussion and screenings of rarely seen works where Gabo was involved in its production or screenwriting. Films include *La langosta azul / The Blue Lobster*, *Cartas del parque / Letters from the Park*, *En este pueblo no hay ladrones / There Are No Thieves in this Village*, and the documentary by filmmaker Estela Bravo, *A Conversation with Garcia Marquez* about his Friend Fidel. Panel participants are legendary Colombian photographer, Nereo López; film critic Luciano Castillo; and curator Alan McLane. The program will wrap up with a reception.



Still from “Venencia/Venice.” Courtesy of Havana Film Festival.

HFFNY also celebrates the 50th anniversary of the landmark Cuban film by Rogelio París *Nosotros, la música / We, the Music*. with a special screening event on Tuesday, April 14 at 5 p.m. at NYU’s King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center (KJCC). The program includes short films *Celeste Mendoza* and *Las D’ Aida*, both by Cuban José Limeres, followed by *Nosotros, la música / We, the Music*. At 7 p.m.

screenings continue with *Y... tenemos sabor*, by Sara Gómez, *Con todo mi amor, Rita*, by Rebeca Chávez, and *Las manos del ángel*, by Esteban Insausti. These films portray the central role of Cuban music in the island's filmmaking.

For a full festival line-up, visit www.hffny.com.

The Havana Film Festival New York (HFFNY) is the flagship project by the American Friends of the Ludwig Foundation of Cuba (AFLFC). Its programs include the visual arts, film, and dance initiatives and enable American and Cuban artists, art students, professionals, and academics to interact with each other with the aim of providing rich experiences that help build cultural bridges between both nations. In the Hamptons, HFFNY has presented programming at Guild Hall in East Hampton, N.Y. For information, visit www.AFLFC.org.

BASIC FACTS: The 16th Havana Film Festival New York takes place from April 9 to 17, 2015 in venues across New York City. For details, tickets and programming, visit www.hffny.com.

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