

November 4-6, 2009

# Cinemateca

Crossings and interrogations of geographical borders have been at the forefront of much Spanish, Latin American and U. S. Latino cinema. Moreover, the historical project of transnational Hispanic cinemas often appears to have been constructed by directors and producers "imagining" audiences beyond their own immediate political borders. Theories, films, directors, genres, and actors have traveled – and continue to do so – across languages and countries. Spatiality has always played a crucial role in the politics of representation, while geographies have been central in production and circulation. The multiple facets of the Hispanic community on screen have been marked by its geographical imaginaries.

## GEOGRAPHICAL & IMAGINARIES HISPANIC FILM



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SILVERSTEIN FUND, FILM STUDIES PROGRAM  
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# Geographical Imaginaries Cinemateca

Unless otherwise noted all screenings will take place in the Mississippi Room

## Wednesday, November 4th

### 9:00-10:30 AM

*Los dioses rotos* (2008) D. Ernesto Daranas. Cuba/Mexico. 90 min. In Spanish with English subtitles.

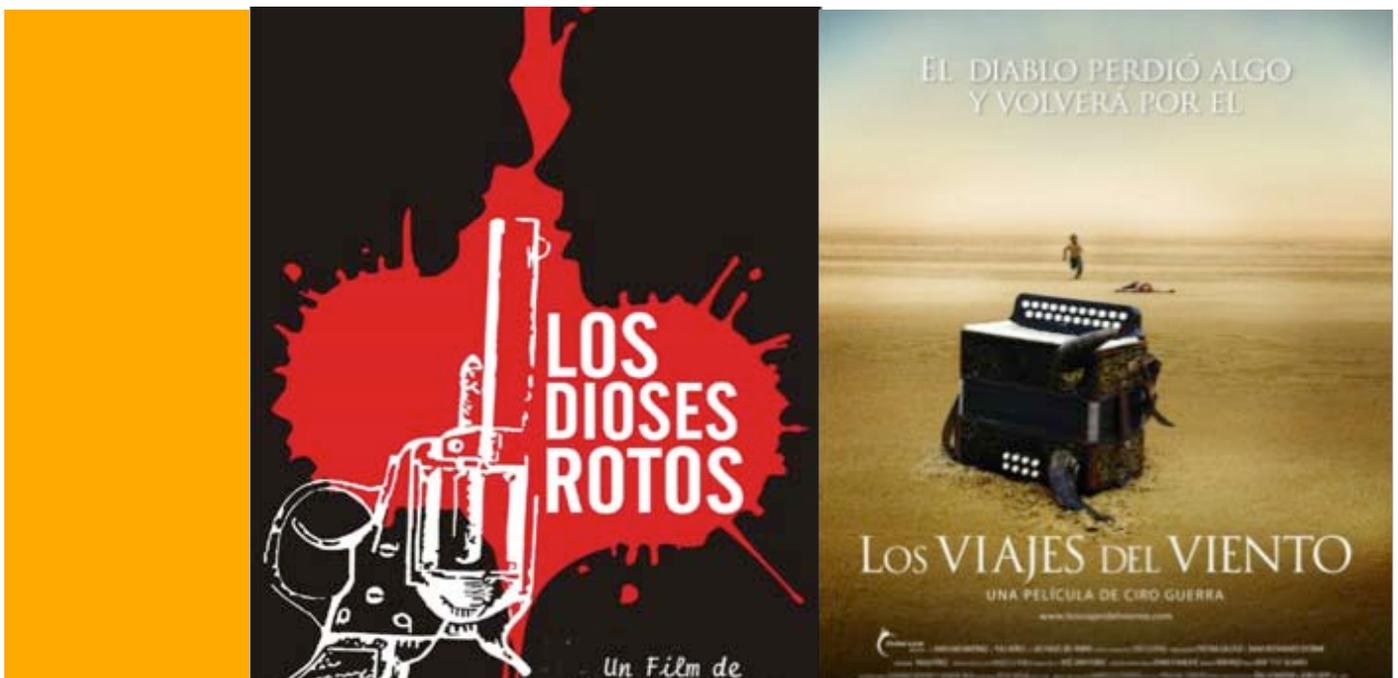
Laura is a university professor researching the famous Cuban pimp Alberto Yarini y Ponce de León, who was assassinated by French rivals that controlled the prostitution business in Havana in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Interested in proving that the legend of Yarini is still of importance, she penetrates one of the most complex zones of contemporary life in Havana. Beyond its story line, *Los dioses rotos* is a drama about conflicting values and a reflection on the ethical and moral perspective of a group of characters – of all socioeconomic classes – who are simply impossible to label as either “positive” and “negative.” Social drama, suspense and melodrama are commingled in a story that is both pleasurable, universal and of great “local” significance.

### 10:30-12:45 PM

*Los viajes del viento* (2009) D. Ciro Gómez. Colombia. 117 min. In Spanish with English subtitles.

Ignacio Carrillo travelled all his life throughout the villages and regions of northern Colombia, carrying music and traditional songs on his accordion, a legendary instrument that is said to be cursed, because it once belonged to the devil. As he became older, he got married and settled with his wife in a small town, leaving his nomadic life behind. When she suddenly dies, he decides to make one last journey to the Northern edge of the country, to return the accordion to the man who gave it to him, his teacher and mentor, so he will never play it again. On the way, he is joined by Fermín, a teenager who dreams of becoming a “juglar” like Ignacio, and to travel all around playing the accordion like he did. Tired of his loneliness, Ignacio accepts to be accompanied, and together they start the journey from Majagual, Sucre, to Taroa, beyond the Guajira desert, finding on the way the enormous diversity of the Caribbean culture and surviving all kinds of adventures. Ignacio will try to convince Fermín to take a different path in his life, having learned that his only led to solitude and sadness, but he will have to face the fact that destiny has different plans for him and his pupil.

*Colombian film scholars Francisco Montaña and Cira Inés Mora will introduce and discuss the film.*



# Geographical Imaginaries Cinemateca

## 1:00-2:30 PM

*Chicos normales* (2008) D. Daniel Hernández. Spain. 85 min. In Spanish without subtitles.

In a small Moroccan village that was home to many of those responsible for Spain's 2004 terrorist attacks, two young men and a young woman struggle to make ends meet. Although Rabia studied law, her only work option is as a seamstress, which she hopes to parlay into owning her own shop. Khader is an aspiring actor who pals around with Youseff, a small-time crook with a bum leg and a missing brother. While they try to figure out ways to get some cash, Youseff searches for clues to his brother's whereabouts. Documentary filmmaker Daniel Hernández's slice-of-life drama paints a portrait of regular people with simple desires and examines how the specter of infamy casts a pall over simple dreams and aspirations.

## 2:30-4:00 PM

*El General* (2009) D. Natalia Almada. US. 83 min. In Spanish and English with subtitles.

Past and present collide in this extraordinarily crafted film when filmmaker Natalia Almada, winner of the US Directing Award: Documentary at the Sundance Film Festival, brings to life audio

recordings she inherited from her grandmother. These recordings feature Alicia Calles's reminiscences about her own father—Natalia's great-grandfather—General Plutarco Elías Calles, a revolutionary general who became president of Mexico in 1924. In his time, Calles was called "El Bolshevique" and "El Jefe Máximo," or "the foremost chief." Today, he remains one of Mexico's most controversial figures, illustrating both the idealism and injustices of the country's history.

Through Alicia's voice, this visually stunning and stylistically innovative film moves between the conflicting memories of a daughter grappling with her remembrances of her father and his violent public legacy. Combining meticulously edited audio, haunting photographs, archival newsreels, and old Hollywood films with an original evocative soundtrack, sweeping footage of modern-day Mexico City, and interviews with today's working poor, *El General* is a poetic and cinematic exploration of historical judgment and a complex and arresting portrait of a family and country living under the shadows of the past.

Courtesy of Women Make Movies [www.wmm.com](http://www.wmm.com)



# Geographical Imaginaries

## Cinemateca

**4:00-5:00 PM**

*Documental Histórico: un imaginario cinematográfico de España.* Margarita Lobo.  
Spain. 40 min.

El cine español es ampliamente conocido desde sus inicios, a partir de los trabajos de Chomón, Gelabert, Jorro y otros grandes nombres que fascinados por el nuevo espectáculo presentado en 1896 por los Hermanos Lumiere, en París, transformó sus vidas y sus profesiones. El cinematógrafo abrió una nueva dimensión en la vida de las gentes, aislados en sus pequeños mundos en el que las referencias al exterior provenían de la pintura, las crónicas, la literatura, los daguerrotipos. Con ese nuevo “invento” el mundo entró en la vida cotidiana. La gente vio con asombro y estupor como un tren entraba a toda velocidad en una estación de ferrocarril y como un distraído jardinero regaba y era regado con una manguera de agua. Esa dos visiones, documental una y espectacular la otra, conformaron ya, desde el principio, los caminos por el que se iba a desarrollar el cine.

En España se ruedan las primeras películas a los pocos meses de las presentadas en París, así en octubre de 1896 se filma “Salida de la Misa del Pilar en Zaragoza” y otras de ficción. Comienza así una aventura que llega a nuestros días, con los grandes nombres conocidos por todos los estudiosos y aficionados. Filmoteca Española, entre sus

innumerables títulos recuperados, guarda una colección documental de un valor inestimable por ser la memoria de un país, durante más de 100 años. De esa colección, la que comprende los materiales de 1896 a 1936, que denominamos Archivo Histórico, para diferenciarla de Guerra Civil, Noticiario Español y NODO, es la menos conocida y nos ha parecido que este encuentro es un espacio adecuado para presentar algunos de sus materiales más destacados o sorprendentes.

*Margarita Lobo, Responsable Acceso Colección Cinematográfica, Filmoteca Española, will introduce and discuss the archival footage.*



# Geographical Imaginaries Cinemateca

**Thursday, November 5th**

**9:00-10:45 AM**

*Lejos de los árboles* (1972) D. Jacinto Esteva. Spain. 101 min. In Spanish without subtitles.

An almost anthropological documentary focused on Spanish traditions about pain and death. Many consider it an updating of Buñuel's *Las Hurdes* for the 1970s. It is a classic of the so-called "Barcelona School."

*Courtesy Daria Esteva and Filmoteca Catalana.*

**10:45 -11:20 AM**

*Raza* (2008) D. Eric Corvalán Pellé. Cuba. 35 min. In Spanish with English subtitles.

This documentary attempts to tackle the racial problems in Cuba today, through the voices of researchers, officials, musicians, artists and the general public. It's aimed at serving as an open reflection on the issue and, at the same time, as a social, historical and cultural acknowledgement of the role of black people in the formation and consolidation of Cuban identity.

**11:20 -11:30 AM**

*Martí and I* (2009) D. Juan Carlos Zaldívar. US. 8 min. In English and Spanish with subtitles.

*Martí and I* opens with a lonely candle in a dark room. Melodramatically, as in a silent film, Martí's "lonely and trembling soul" (a famous line from one of his most popular poems) finds a movie camera and walks up to it. "My loyal, divided people. I have a secret yet untold..." Martí also asks "Who

stole six pages from my diary?" Indeed, six pages were torn from Martí's diary – possibly by his military superiors – hours before his possessions were gathered at the army encampment where he perished in battle. What truth did those pages hold? Zaldívar's film is degraded, cut and scratched. Old photographs appear defaced and altered; some are recreated altogether. Slowly and poetically, Zaldívar steps out of a photograph as Martí and visually transforms him into the subject of his most famous poem, "La bailarina española" in an effort to rescue the real man behind the icon from virtual obscurity.

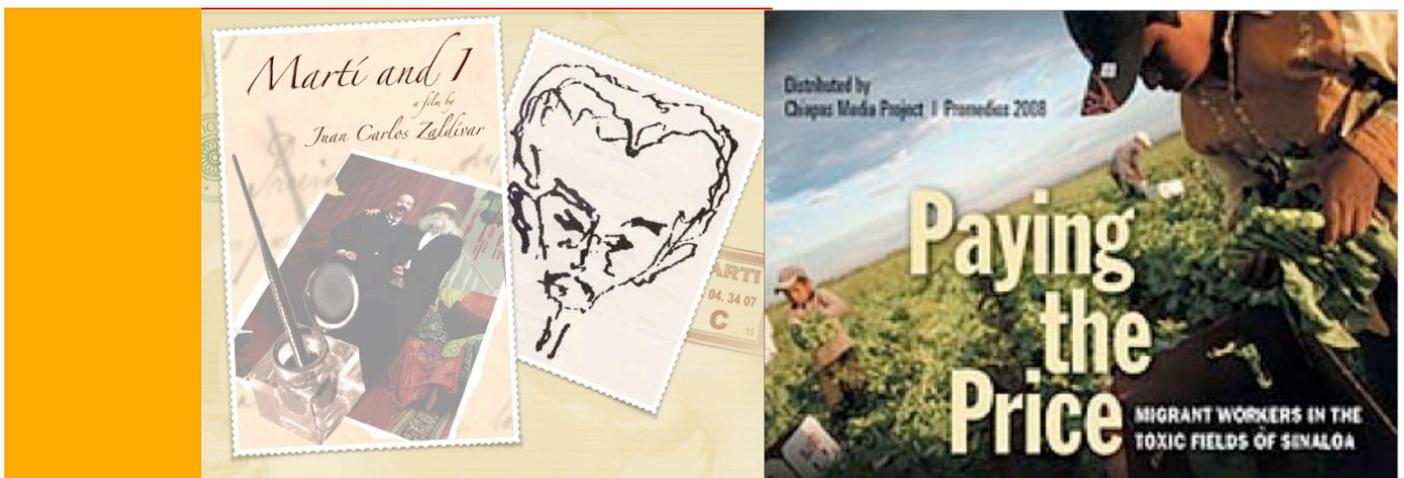
*Courtesy Juan Carlos Zaldívar [www.zaldivar.info/Marti](http://www.zaldivar.info/Marti)*

**11:30 -12:30 AM**

*Paying the Price: Migrant Workers in the Fields of Sinaloa* (2008) D. Alexandra Halkin. Mexico. 37 min. In English and Spanish with subtitles.

*Paying the Price* examines the impoverished lives of migrant workers from Ayotzinapa, Guerrero. We follow them from their community to their lives as migrant workers in a large Sinaloa agribusiness camp, Buen Año, where they pick exotic Chinese vegetables for export to the US and Canada. We see the hardships they face in their community of origin, largely abandoned by the local and state governments to the inhumane and slave-like working conditions in Buen Año.

*Filmmaker Alexandra Halkin will be present to discuss the film.*



# Geographical Imaginaries

## Cinemateca

**12:30 - 3:30 PM**

*Siete mesas de billar francés* (2007) D. Gracia Querejeta. Spain. 113 min. In Spanish without subtitles.

Angela and her son Guille travel to the big city to see Leo, her father and the boy's grandfather, but they arrive to discover that he has just passed away. Charo, the dead man's mistress, explains the dire straits suffered by the paternal business: a hall with seven billiard tables. Charo is convinced that the only way to pay off the debts is to sell the place. However, Angela learns that her husband has disappeared in mysterious circumstances. Given this painful reality, Angela resolves to get on and rebuild her life. And the first thing she decides to do is put her savings into getting the old place and its seven tables back up on its feet.

**3:30 - 5:00 PM**

*Araya* (1959) D. Margot Benecerraf. Venezuela. 82 min. In Spanish with English subtitles.

The restoration of Margot Benecerraf's brilliant 1959 tone poem *Araya*, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the film's first showing at the Cannes Film Festival, will change the face of Latin American film history. Although it shared the Cannes International Critics Prize with Alain Resnais's *Hiroshima, Mon Amour*, ARAYA was never picked up

for widespread distribution. Rarely shown, this masterpiece was largely forgotten by the film world. Milestone's North American theatrical premiere and worldwide release in 2009 gives audiences the chance to rediscover Benecerraf — a powerful and distinctive voice in the history of cinema.

Benecerraf's film portrays a day in the life of three families living in one of the harshest places on earth — Araya, an arid peninsula in northeastern Venezuela. For 450 years, since its discovery by the Spanish, the region's salt was manually collected and stacked into glowing white pyramids. Overlooking the area, a 17th-century fortress built to protect against pirate raids stood as a reminder of the days when the mineral was worth as much as gold and great fortunes were made in the salt trade. Benecerraf captures the grueling work of these *salineros* in breathtaking high-contrast black-and-white images. Her camera gracefully pans and glides to reveal the landscape and the people of the peninsula. All night, the Pereda family toils in the salt marshes. In the morning, the Salaz clan arrives to load and stack the crystals under the hot brutal sun. Down the coastline, the Ortiz family fish and tend their nets, while the youngest member, Carmen, collects seashells and coral.

Courtesy Milestone Films. <http://www.milestonefilms.com/>



# Geographical Imaginaries Cinemateca

**Friday, November 6th**

**10:30-12:30 PM**

*MAYAN FILM PROGRAM.*

*Much'tal JEdz: Cuando hablamos, lo hacemos una sola vez* (2009). D. Yoochel Kaaj: Cine Video Cultura, A.C. Maya, with subtitles in Spanish. 45 min.

*Arroz con leche: in wool u ti'aal in kuxtal* (1997-2009) D. Yoochel Kaaj: Cine Video Cultura, A.C. Maya with Spanish subtitles. 55 min.

*Entrevista con don Cecilio* (2004) Tigre Grande, Tzucacab, Yucatán. In Spanish. 2 min.

A milpero speaks about experiences with life in the city in comparison to his rural life.

*Uspibil Mix* (2004) Uspibil, Chemax, Yucatán. 4 min.

The children of Uspibil choreograph and shoot their own video clip.

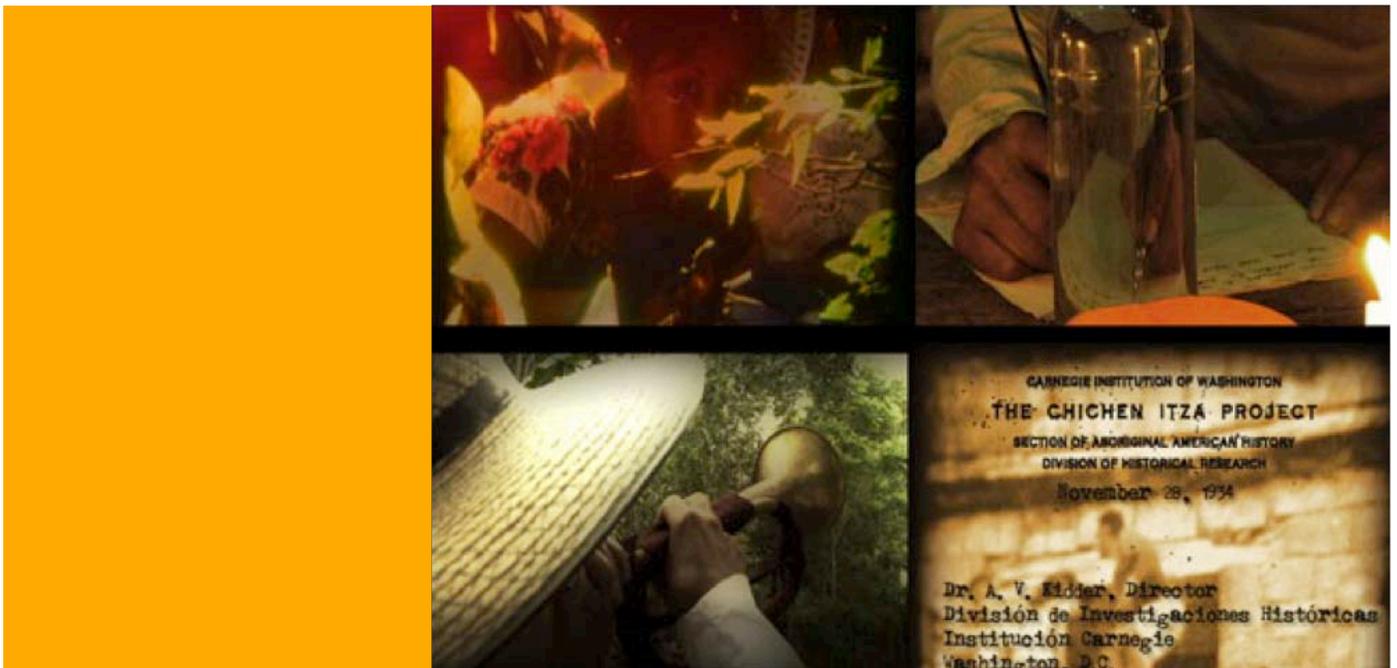
*Filmmakers Ana Rosa Duarte and Byrt Wommack Weber will be present to discuss the films.*

**2:00-3:00 PM**

*Real Sucio Habana* (2009). D. Claudia Ferman. Cuba/Argentina/US. 42 min. In Spanish with subtitles.

This “Videolit© ” (a term coined by the director to designate an exploration of “the possibilities that the illuminated screen may bring to the reception and dissemination of literature”) weaves together conversations with Cuban writer Pedro Juan Gutiérrez, which took place in Havana over a four-year period, with excerpts from his narrative and poetry.

*Filmmaker Claudia Ferman will be present to discuss the film.*



# Geographical Imaginaries

## Cinemateca

**3:00-5:00 PM**

*Amar en tiempos revueltos* (2005) D. Rodolf Sirera. Spain 90 min. Special opening episode.

Primer episodio de la serie de ficción de TVE sobre los años de la guerra civil Española y los años de la dictadura franquista. Se trata de una serie diaria, actualmente en su quinta temporada, protagonizada por un gran elenco en el que se entremezclan actores jóvenes con grandes nombres de la interpretación de España. 'Amar en tiempos revueltos' retrata con una fidelidad extraordinaria y con gran atención al detalle cuál fue la situación personal y social de las personas que vivieron y sufrieron las consecuencias de la guerra. La primera temporada comenzó a emitirse en septiembre de 2005. En ella se narraban los sucesos que ocurrieron entre los años 1936 y 1945.

Desde la primera temporada se convirtió en una de las series más vistas en la sobremesa. Una de las características de 'Amar en tiempos revueltos' es el gran elenco de actores que han intervenido en la serie, tanto en la primera temporada, como en las siguientes. A los nombres de Pilar Bardem, Antonio Sancho, y Ana Turpin, hay que sumarle la de otros grandes intérpretes españoles, como Emilio Gutiérrez Caba, Joan Crosas, Pastora Vega, Jesús Cabrero, Antonio Valero, etc.

*Introduced by Paul Julian Smith.*

