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FULL HOUSE and MODENA FILMS
IN COLLABORATION WITH HAVANA CLUB INTERNATIONAL S.A.
PRESENT

7 DAYS IN HAVANA



A FILM BY
BENICIO DEL TORO
PABLO TRAPERO
JULIO MEDEM
ELIA SULEIMAN
GASPAR NOÉ
JUAN CARLOS TABÍO
LAURENT CANTET



7 DAYS / 7 DIRECTORS

wild bunch



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Running time: 2h09 – Visa 128.944 – 1.85 – Dolby Digital

Download press kit and photos from
www.wildbunch.biz/films/7_days_in_havana

INTERNATIONAL SALES **wild bunch**
4 La Croisette – 1st floor (In front of the Palais)
Phone: +33 (0) 4 93 30 17 46
Carole BARATON: cbaraton@wildbunch.eu
Gary FARKAS: gfarkas@wildbunch.eu
Vincent MARAVAL: ndevid@wildbunch.eu
Gaël NOUAILLE: gnouaille@wildbunch.eu
Silvia SIMONUTTI: ssimonutti@wildbunch.eu

INTERNATIONAL PRESS: RENDEZ VOUS
Viviana ANDRIANI: viviana@rv-press.com
+33 6 80 16 81 39
Aurélien DARD: aurelie@rv-press.com
+33 6 77 04 52 20

7 DAYS IN HAVANA is a snapshot of Havana in 2011: a contemporary portrait of this eclectic city, vital and forward-looking, told through a single feature-length movie made up of 7 chapters, directed by Benicio del Toro, Pablo Trapero, Julio Medem, Elia Suleiman, Gaspar Noé, Juan Carlos Tabío and Laurent Cantet. Each director, through his own sensibility, origins, and cinematographic style, has caught the energy and the vitality that makes this city unique. Some have chosen to meet Cuban reality in tune with its everyday life, through the eyes of the foreigner far from his familiar points of reference. Others have chosen total immersion and drawn inspiration from the local people.

Each chapter depicts a day of the week through the daily – and extraordinary – lives of its characters. A world away from the familiar clichés, 7 DAYS IN HAVANA aims to express the soul of this city and its diverse neighborhoods, atmospheres, generations and cultures. If the seven stories have different plots, the directors have accepted to fall within the same common framework and link the stories together to create a dramatic cohesion. Shared locations play their part: emblematic Havana landmarks like the Hotel Nacional or the Malecon form the backdrop for some of the chapters. Some lead and minor characters move from one film to another, connecting the stories and demonstrating that, in Havana, all layers of society meet, rub shoulders and sometimes intermingle.

EL YUMA

by **BENICIO DEL TORO**

Synopsis

Teddy Atkins is a young American tourist who travels to Havana for the first time. Angelito is a middle-aged Cuban cab driver. Hired by Teddy during his trip, Angelito will offer him a tour of the city that is anything but traditional...

Director's notes

The film will present a picture of Havana's nightlife and its idiosyncrasies. A night in which Teddy discovers that Havana's attraction lies in the visceral and the abstract, once he's got past the visual shock of its crumbling tenements and its slow rhythm. A night in which a tourist discovers what Graham Greene concluded when he stated that Havana was a city where «anything is possible».

The film will highlight the difficulties in pinning down Havana's real essence, intertwined with humorous reflections on the city's shortcomings. We will witness Teddy's metamorphosis, from his initial annoyance at the island's disorder to his embracing of the intoxicating Cuban spirit.

Filmography / Benicio del Toro

As Director

- 2012 7 DAYS IN HAVANA
Cannes Film Festival, Un Certain Regard
- 1995 SUBMISSION, short film

As Actor (selected)

- 2010 THE WOLFMAN - Joe Johnston
- 2009 CHE - Steven Soderbergh
Cannes Film Festival 2008, Award for Best Actor
Goyas 2009, Best Actor
- 2004 SIN CITY - Robert Rodriguez, Frank Miller
- 2003 21 GRAMS - Alejandro González Inárritu
- 2000 THE PLEDGE - Sean Penn
- 2000 TRAFFIC - Steven Soderbergh
Academy Awards® 2001, Best Supporting Actor
BAFTA 2001, Best Supporting Actor
Berlin Film Festival 2001, Silver Bear
Golden Globe 2001, Best Supporting Actor
- 2000 SNATCH - Guy Ritchie
- 1998 FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS - Terry Gilliam
- 1995 THE USUAL SUSPECTS - Bryan Singer

JAM SESSION

by PABLO TRAPERO

Synopsis

A well-known director travels to Cuba to receive an award in honor of his career. More interested in nightlife than celebrity, he strikes up a friendship with his driver, who happens to be an incredible trumpet player.

Director's notes

Havana is a mythical city that strikes a particular chord in the hearts of Latin American directors, and therefore in mine. My first encounter with this city goes back to 1999 when I came to present my film MUNDO GRÚA at the Havana Film Festival. I've been returning regularly ever since.

JAM SESSION is, in a way, a parable of fame. When Emir Kusturica arrives in Havana, a land out of time, a trigger is activated. He discovers, for the first time in a long time, a place in which appearances aren't everything. Just by being in contact with ordinary people he metamorphoses throughout the story back into himself. He manages to free himself from the public persona that has overtaken his being and blurred his bearings. This transformation is largely thanks to The Driver, a real, raw man as regards his feelings. And we witness the birth of a beautiful friendship, as natural as it is incongruous, that will allow a lost man to find himself. The parable reaches its full meaning at the end when the award received by The Director earlier in the film, an external sign of respectability and riches, ends up in a toy truck belonging to The Driver's daughter.

Selected filmography / Pablo Trapero

Feature Films

- 2012 ELEFANTE BLANCO (WHITE ELEPHANT)
7 DAYS IN HAVANA
Cannes Film Festival, Un Certain Regard
- 2010 CARANCHO
Cannes Film Festival, Un Certain Regard
- 2008 LEONERA (LION'S DEN)
Cannes Film Festival 2008, in Competition
- 2006 BORN AND BRED
- 2004 FAMILIA RODANTE
Sao Paulo Film Festival 2004
- 2002 EL BONAERENSE
Chicago Film Festival 2002, FIPRESCI Award
- 2001 NAIKOR, LA ESTACIÓN DE SERVICIO (documentary)
- 1999 CRANE WORLD
Venice Film Festival 1999, 2 Special Awards
Rotterdam International Film Festival 2000, Tiger Award
Havana Film Festival 1999, Jury Award

Short Films

- 1995 NEGOCIOS
- 1993 MOCOSO MALCRIADO

CECILIA'S TEMPTATION

by JULIO MEDEM

Synopsis

Leonardo wants to hire Cecilia as a singer and suggests she comes to Spain with him. She lives with her baseball player boyfriend Jose, who is going through a major crisis in his professional life. Cecilia will have to make a crucial choice: to live out her passion and growing love for Leonardo, or to stay in Havana and support Jose.

Director's notes

CECILIA'S TEMPTATION features three characters - Cecilia, José and Leonardo - inspired by the 19th Century novel "Cecilia Valdes", and representative of Cuban culture. These three characters find themselves involved in a triangular relationship, driven not only by feelings of love but also by professional aspirations. Cecilia is a talented singer, Leonardo a Spanish businessman, and José a young athlete and Cecilia's boyfriend.

Some of the ingredients, particularly the dramatic tension, were already present in the novel. But the setting has been modernized and is completely current, as is the structure of the story. I wanted to tell the story from the climax in their relationship onwards.

When the film begins, Cecilia is at breaking point, facing a life-changing decision - perhaps the most important of her life - and unable to bear the stress that accompanies it.

This love triangle is an explicit metaphor, in which José represents Cuba, her country. Staying with him is a gesture of loyalty, of holding back from betraying her country and its people... Leonardo, in turn, is the possibility of working abroad, in Spain. He represents the opportunity of a new life.

Selected Filmography / Julio Medem

- 2012 7 DAYS IN HAVANA
Cannes Film Festival, Un Certain Regard
- 2010 ROOM IN ROME
- 2007 CHAOTIC ANA
Toronto Film Festival 2007, Official Selection
- 2001 SEX AND LUCIA
Goyas 2002: Best New Actress, Best Original Soundtrack,
and 9 nominations including Best Film, Best Director, Best Cinematography
- 1998 LOVERS OF THE ARCTIC CIRCLE
Venice Film Festival 1998, in Competition
Goyas 1998: Best Editor, Best Original Soundtrack and 2 nominations
(Best Actress and Best Script)
- 1996 TIERRA
Cannes Film Festival 1996, in Competition
Goyas 1997: Best Special Effects and Best Original Soundtrack
Festival International de Sao Paulo 1997, Critics' Award
- 1993 THE RED SQUIRREL
Cannes Film Festival 1993, Directors' Fortnight, Prix Regard Jeune
Goyas 1994: Best Music and 2 nominations
(Best Actress, Best New Actress).
- 1992 VACAS
Goyas 1993: Best Director
Tokyo International Film Festival 1992, Grand Prix

DIARY OF A BEGINNER

by ELIA SULEIMAN

Synopsis

ES, a Palestinian, arrives in Havana and wanders the streets of the city while waiting for an appointment organised by the Palestinian Embassy.

Director's notes

When I was approached to direct one of the 7 DAYS IN HAVANA by the producers, I blubbered an answer that was no answer: I don't speak Spanish, I said, I've never been to Havana, and I know virtually nothing about Cuba. "That could be interesting too," they replied. I was invited to fly to Havana to spend a few days in order to come back with a definitive answer. I travelled to Havana and spent exactly four days there. Going through customs on my way out of Cuba, it occurred to me that I had already started to formulate my definitive answer after passing customs on my way in. I rehearsed my answer mid-flight trying various sound bites to determine the tonality of my voice when I would give my definitive "No". At a time when the Arab Spring was in full swing, why on earth would I turn to the opposite direction of the globe to witness a revolution long-gone and long-institutionalized, I asked myself. If it's the question of the drama of the blockade, well, we have Gaza, just a stone's throw away. Besides, I did not find Havana exotic. I felt alienated instead. I met the producers to give them my reply. With a slip of the tongue as miraculous as it was metaphysical, and with utter determination, I gave a definitive "Yes". The rest is history; a brief yet tender history, its memory captured in a short film.

Selected Filmography / Elia Suleiman

Feature Films

- 2012 7 DAYS IN HAVANA
Cannes Film Festival, Un Certain Regard
- 2009 THE TIME THAT REMAINS
Cannes Film Festival 2009, in Competition
- 2002 DIVINE INTERVENTION
Cannes Film Festival 2002, in Competition, Jury Prize
Chicago International Film Festival 2002, Special Jury Award
- 1996 CHRONICLE OF A DISAPPEARANCE
Venice Film Festival 1996, Luigi de Laurentis Award
Rotterdam International Film Festival 1997, in Competition

Short Films

- 2000 CYBER PALESTINE
- 1990 INTRODUCTION TO THE END OF AN ARGUMENT

RITUAL

by GASPAR NOÉ

Synopsis

After discovering that their daughter is having a homosexual relationship, her parents decide to have her exorcized.

Director's notes

Che, the most admired of all my fellow countryman... Fidel, the only man who succeeded in confounding the CIA's plans for over 50 years... SOY CUBA, the film whose camerawork inspired me so deeply...

But let's be honest, if I made this film, it's because a friend of mine who has spent some time in Cuba told me that that's where he had seen the highest percentage of the most gorgeous girls and best dancers in the world.

I hate tourism; I had to wait for years for a credible excuse to take a flight to the mythical island. Having missed the screening of IRREVERSIBLE at the Havana Film Festival in 2002, I had to wait until the end of 2009 and the selection of ENTER THE VOID to go. At the same time, some of the producers had already approached me with 7 DAYS IN HAVANA in mind. As a result, after partying for 3 days I agreed to it. But I also realised that today's social reality was more complex than the Castroist utopia whose virtues my father praised, and that the Cuban imagination was more closely linked to African magic than I'd thought.

A year and a half later, I returned to Cuba to shoot in a semi-improvised manner, with an ultra-reduced crew, a short film with a dance scene and a 'cleansing' ritual.

Selected Filmography / Gaspar Noé

Feature Films

- 2012 7 DAYS IN HAVANA
Cannes Film Festival, Un Certain Regard
- 2009 ENTER THE VOID
Cannes Film Festival 2009, Competition
Sitges 2009, Best Cinematography and Special Jury Awards
- 2002 IRREVERSIBLE
Cannes Film Festival 2002, Competition
- 1998 I STAND ALONE
Cannes Film Festival 1998, Critics' Week
Sitges 1999, Best Script

Short Films

- 2006 SIDA (from the short film collection 8)
- 2006 WE FUCK ALONE (from the short film collection DESTRICED)
- 2005 EVA (series of three short films)
- 1991 CARNE

DULCE AMARGO

by JUAN CARLOS TABÍO

Synopsis

Mirta Gutierrez is a psychologist. She appears one afternoon a week on a television show where she gives advice on personal development. Mirta devotes most of her free time to making pastries, to generate the money needed to maintain her home and support her family. On this particular day, she receives a major order from a special customer...

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Dulce Amargo (SWEET AND SOUR) is an oxymoron. Because things are what they are and also their opposite. What is said is not always what is done. Nothing is more harrowing than creating our own happiness. DULCE AMARGO tells the story of a day in the life of Mirta and Daniel. Mirta is a psychologist who finds herself having to make pastries so she can sell them (not to supplement her income but to have an income). Daniel is a retired lieutenant colonel (I don't know if he is retired because he is an alcoholic or if he has become an alcoholic after retiring). DULCE AMARGO is one of seven possible stories taking place in the reality of contemporary Havana. And REALITY, as we all know, is another form of fiction.

Selected Filmography / Juan Carlos Tabío

Feature Films

- 2012 7 DAYS IN HAVANA
Cannes Film Festival, Un Certain Regard
- 2008 EL CUERNO DE LA ABUNDANCIA
Havana Film Festival 2008, Best Script
Cartagena Film Festival 2009, Special Jury Award
- 2000 THE WAITING LIST
Goyas 2001: Nomination for Best Spanish-speaking Film
Havana Film Festival 2000, Best Script
Cartagena Film Festival 2001, Best Supporting Role, nomination for Best Film
- 1995 GUANTANAMERA
Sundance Film Festival 1996
Latin American Cinema Award
Venice Film Festival 1995, Competition
Havana Film Festival, 2nd Award
- 1993 STRAWBERRY AND CHOCOLATE
Academy Awards®1995: Best Foreign Language Film nominee
Berlin Film Festival 1994, Competition, Silver Bear and Best Film
Sundance Film Festival 1995, Special Jury Award
Goyas 1995: Best Foreign Film in Spanish Language
Havana Film Festival, 8 awards including the Audience Award, Best Director, Best Actor)

LA FUENTE

by LAURENT CANTET

Synopsis

Martha lives in an old apartment on the first floor of a crumbling building. In the middle of her sitting room sits an imposing, multi-colored statue of Oshun, the Virgin Mary. Following a dream in which she saw Oshun, Martha decides to organize a ceremony in Her honour and asks all the tenants of her building to help her build a fountain as demanded by the divinity.

Director's notes

While on a previous trip to Havana to scout locations for another film, we pushed open the door of a building on the Malecon and were received by Nathalia, a very pleasant and vivacious woman in her sixties, dressed in workman's clothes, who invited us in to visit her apartment. Inside, the main room was buzzing with activity. Five or six people were busy building a strange sort of pond that had to be ready a few days later. The statue of Oshun reigned briefly in a bedroom, but was soon to be installed on a pedestal in the middle of the small pool that the bricklayers were tiling.

Natalia, a Santeria priestess, was preparing a ceremony to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of her initiation. It seemed as if all the neighbors had come together for the occasion, and they worked as one with a joy that both amused me and made me want to film everything that was happening. I soon realized that what I was witnessing was a perfect allegory of Cuban society, where nothing is possible but in which everything always turns out OK thanks to imagination, enthusiasm, smarts and all sorts of odds and ends. And let us not forget mutual aid and solidarity.

I quickly finalized the screenplay, and the time constraints (action squeezed into one day) immediately enriched the situation, creating a sense of emergency favorable to the most invigorating comicality. This is the first time I have tackled

a genre I wasn't familiar with: comedy. And it was an immense pleasure, pushing the situations to the brink of farce. I immediately wanted Nathalia to play the lead role. I had only met her for a brief moment but enough to be conquered by her vivacity and her charisma. When we met the second time, she hesitated for about 30 seconds before she accepted then, with her gravelly voice, as in the first scene of the film, called her neighbors in the stairwell. In a few minutes she had gathered all those who were present for the construction of the fountain: the bricklayers, the women, the children... the ideal casting in fact. And in a general good humor that conquered me completely, we did a few tests where everybody replayed their own role while adopting with pleasure the directions I suggested, without any shyness in front of the camera and surprising ease and most of all lots of enjoyment. I was going to be able to shoot the way I like, with non-professional actors and leave lots of room for improvisation. A film that combines documentary and "genre" (in this case, comedy). A film that allows you to see faces you never see in cinema, to hear voices you never hear. And which above all will give a voice to those who are so rarely heard.

Selected Filmography / Laurent Cantet

Feature Films

- 2012 7 DAYS IN HAVANA Cannes Film Festival, Un Certain Regard
FOX FIRE
- 2008 THE CLASS
Cannes Film Festival 2008, Palme d'Or
Academy Awards® 2009 Best Foreign Language film nomination
- 2005 HEADING SOUTH
Venice Film Festival 2005,
Marcello Mastroianni Award and Cinemavvenire Award
- 2001 TIME OUT Venice Film Festival 2001, Don Quixote Award
- 1999 RESSOURCES HUMAINES
Césars 2001: Best First Feature Film and Best Promising Actor

Short Film

- 1995 JEUX DE PLAGE

LEONARDO PADURA

Screenplay coordinator

Born in 1955, Leonardo Padura Fuentes is a journalist, scriptwriter and novelist from the generation who grew up during the revolution. Through his novels he describes contemporary Cuban society and the daily life of Havana's inhabitants. The novels that built his reputation include "Havana Gold", "Adios Hemingway", "Havana Red" and "Cuatro Estaciones". He has, among others, created the character of Mario Conde. One of the most widely known Cuban authors worldwide, his novels have been translated into English, French, Italian, Portuguese and German.

INTERVIEW WITH LEONARDO PADURA

**Who did you work with on the screenplays for 7 DAYS IN HAVANA?
How did you choose your co-writers and why?**

In the beginning, I worked with my wife, Lucía López Coll. We wrote 11 proposals and two other Cuban writers wrote another ten. I chose Lucia because she's familiar with cinema (she has worked as an assistant and has directed her own short films for ten years). Moreover, when it comes to film, I don't like to work on my own. For my novels, I can't even imagine writing with someone else, whereas for film, I can't imagine writing alone. Among the 11 proposals that we submitted to the producers, four were accepted for the film. Beyond that my work has consisted of integrating the seven stories into one common plot with the recurring characters you find in a few segments and keep evolving from one day to another.

We feel very strongly that the stories for 7 DAYS were written to be filmed. In your opinion, what is particular to writing for the cinema?

It's true that these stories were written for film. In this particular case, it was even more complicated because we had to cut them down to between 12 and 14 pages to get 15 minutes of film, and the synthesis of the conflicts was even more important. So the screenplay had to take into account both the time and the other requirements specific to cinema: what the producers want, what the directors want and what can actually be filmed. These concepts are totally foreign to literature. In writing for cinema, the writer only appears during the dialogues, which can be transposed from paper to film. From a stylistic point of view, the rest is of no interest. All depends on the subject and not on the beauty of the language.

Can you tell us in a few words what 7 DAYS IN HAVANA is about?

It's about different ways of seeing Havana: from the inside, from the outside, very close-up or through the amazed eyes of those discovering it for the first time. The film deals with a Havana that is multi-faceted and singular at the same time, where many lives coexist and are in some way related. It speaks of a city that dies and rises up once again. It speaks of my city.

How did you manage to avoid the stereotypes of Havana: the cars, the music, the cigars, Che, fast girls...

I did everything I could. That's why you don't see any of that in the short films of Tabío and Traperó. They may appear in the other films since they are part of the reality and deeply rooted in the minds of the directors and many other people when they think of Cuba.

Another stereotype often found in films is the city treated as a character...

In this case, it is not a character we're talking about but a scenario repeating itself. And since Havana is such a special city, its scope is essential to the development of the different stories.

CAST

with
JOSH HUTCHERSON
VLADIMIR CRUZ
EMIR KUSTURICA
ALEXANDER ABREU
DANIEL BRÜHL
MELVIS ESTÉVEZ
ELIA SULEIMAN
CRISTELA DE LA CARIDAD HERRERA
MIRTHA IBARRA
JORGE PERUGORRÍA
NATHALIA AMORE

CREW

Directed by
BENICIO DEL TORO, PABLO TRAPERO, JULIO MEDEM, ELIA SULEIMAN,
GASPAR NOÉ, JUAN CARLOS TABÍO and LAURENT CANTET

Production
FULLHOUSE & MORENA FILMS
In collaboration with
HAVANA CLUB INTERNATIONAL SA

In association with
BACKUP FILMS, SOFICA COFICUP, PALATINE ETOILE 8 & 9,
M&C SAATCHI GAD and CHAOCORP DISTRIBUTION

With the collaboration of
ICAA and the participation of CANAL + FRANCE

Sound
EVA VALIÑO, CHARLY SCHMUKLER, NICOLAS DE POULPIQUÉT

Original Music
XAVI TURULL with the collaboration of DESCEMER BUENO and KELVIS OCHOA

Dp DANIEL ARANYÓ (AEC) et DIEGO DUSSUEL

Executive Producers
CRISTINA ZUMÁRRAGA and PILAR BENITO

Produced by
ALVARO LONGORIA, GAËL NOUAILLE, LAURENT BAUDENS, DIDAR DOMEHRI,
FABIEN PISANI

Screenplay and script coordinators
LEONARDO PADURA and LUCÍA LÓPEZ COLL

World Sales
WILD BUNCH

