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**THE INTERNATIONAL LATINO CULTURAL CENTER OF CHICAGO
ANNOUNCES THE FIRST CONFIRMED TITLES FOR
THE 34th CHICAGO LATINO FILM FESTIVAL, APRIL 5-19**

*Highlights include: the new film from the makers of festival sensation **7 Boxes**; Fernando Pérez's latest love letter to Havana; a musical documentary featuring Paco de Lucía's guitar, Caetano Veloso and Alejandro Sanz; and award-winning films from Locarno, Fantastic Fest and Guadalajara*

CHICAGO (February 20, 2018) - The **International Latino Cultural Center of Chicago** is proud to announce the first confirmed titles out of more than 100 features & shorts selected for the **34th Chicago Latino Film Festival** to be held **April 5-19** at the **AMC River East 21 Theatres, 322 E. Illinois St.** Opening and Closing Night selections will be announced in the next couple of weeks with the full lineup to be announced in mid-late March.

These first fifteen titles include award-winning films from the most-prestigious international film festivals (Locarno, Curaçao-Rotterdam and Guadalajara, among others); the latest from such critically acclaimed Latin American film artists as Darío Grandinetti, Paulina García, Fernando Pérez, Ana Claudia Talancón, the late great Federico Luppi, and the Paraguayan duo of Juan Carlos Maneglia and Tana Schembori (*7 Boxes*); a James Franco-produced documentary about poetry in the world's most violent city; three horror films from Brazil, Mexico and the United States, one of which Academy-Award nominated director Guillermo del Toro considers "one of the best 10 films of 2017"; and the world premiere of *Pablo's Word*, Arturo Menendez's film-noirish take on Shakespeare's *Othello*.

"In past years, we have exclusively shared this festival preview with our members and social media followers but we are so excited by this year's lineup that we couldn't wait to share it with all of the city's movie lovers. These first fifteen titles of the entire line up are reflective of the diversity of genres and styles that have long been a trademark of our annual cinema feast," said **Pepe Vargas**, founder and executive director of the International Latino Cultural Center, producer of the Chicago Latino Film Festival.

THE FIRST FIFTEEN

- ***I Will Wait for You* (Argentina / Director: Alberto Lecchi):** Architect Ariel Creu (Dario Grandinetti) is forced to confront memories he had long kept locked away when the remains of his father Miguel -a revolutionary who fought in the Spanish Civil War, the Cuban Revolution and against Argentina's military dictatorship- are found on a common grave. Ariel's son Federico (Juan Grandinetti, Dario's son) is determined to uncover the truth behind his grandfather's death while arrival of a Spanish writer (Juan Echanove) who has written a series of novels based on Miguel further murkies the waters.
- ***Good Manners* (Brazil / Directors: Juliana Rojas and Marco Dutra):** Winner of a Special Jury Prize at the Locarno Film Festival and Best Film at the Sitges-Catalonian International Film Festival, "Good Manners" offers a new spin to the classic werewolf story. Clara, a black nurse from the outskirts of São Paulo, is hired by the mysterious and wealthy Ana to be the nanny of her unborn child. A strong attraction grows between the two women until Anna's child is born during a full moon. In using horror as a means to explore issues of race and class, Rojas and Dutra follow in the footsteps of such giants as George Romero.
- ***The Desert Bride* (Chile/Argentina; Directors: Cecilia Atán and Valeria Pivato):** Paulina García ("Gloria," "Little Men") delivers another warm and sympathetic performance in Cecilia Atán's and Valeria Pivato's feature debut. García plays Teresa, a woman who has worked all her life as a live-in maid for a Buenos Aires family who is left adrift after the family sells their house. On her way to a new job in a distant town, Teresa loses her bags with all her belongings. She searches for them with the help of travelling salesman *El Gringo* and ends up finding love and her own potential.
- ***Tropical Virus* (Colombia / Director: Santiago Caicedo):** To say that Paola's family is rather unconventional would be an understatement. Her father is a former Catholic priest, her mother a clairvoyant and her sisters are both rational and rebellious. Raised in both Colombia and Ecuador, Paola, the youngest of the three, will struggle for her own independence in this quirky black and white film based on Colombian-Ecuadorian artist Paola "Powerpaola" Gaviria's semi-autobiographical graphic novel.
- ***Last Days in Havana* (Cuba / Director: Fernando Pérez):** Fernando Pérez ("Suite Havana") paints a portrait of a city in stasis through the unlikely friendship between two men who couldn't be more different. Restaurant busboy Miguel dreams of leaving for New York; he spends his days working, waiting for a visa that may never be approved and taking care of his bedridden neighbor Diego, who suffers from AIDS. Miguel is the proverbial pessimist while Diego is the eternal optimist. They are surrounded by a cast of characters who are as loud, conflictive and colorful as the Havana street they live in.
- ***The Watchman* (Dominican Republic/Puerto Rico/Brazil; Director: Alejandro Andújar):** Juan finds refuge in his job as a watchman after his wife leaves him for another man. His dignity and pride are put to the test when the young son of the mansion's owner shows up, unannounced, with a friend and a local girl. Juan is forced to make a decision that will affect the rest of his life when their presence turns into a nightmare. Winner last year of the Yellow Robin Award at the Curaçao International Film Festival Rotterdam, Andújar's debut feature offers a unique perspective on racism and social class.

- ***Pablo's Word* (El Salvador / Director: Arturo Menéndez):** This film-noirish take on William Shakespeare's "Othello" focuses on Pablo, the son of a well-known lawyer involved in a case of corruption, and his objections to his father's relationship to a much younger woman. Disgusted and envious, Pablo begins to weave a tangled web of lies, accusing his father's young girlfriend of cheating on him. Pablo's word will lead all parties involved into a maelstrom that will ultimately destroy them. **WORLD PREMIER.**
- ***Voices Beyond the Wall: Twelve Love Poems from the Murder Capital of the World* (Honduras/USA; Director: Bradley Coley):** Executive produced by Golden Globe winner James Franco, Bradley Coley's documentary debut follows poet and Episcopal priest Spencer Reece to San Pedro Sula where, thanks to a Fulbright grant, he will teach poetry and English at Our Little Roses, the only girls' orphanage in the country. At first the girls see no value in poetry, but they eventually come around, finding their voices as they use literature as a vehicle to express their fears and hopes. "Voices Beyond the Wall" is a beautiful, intimate and inspiring ode to the power of literature.
- ***American Curious* (Mexico / Director: Gabylu Lara):** Jordan Belfi ("Grey's Anatomy," "Entourage"), Ana Claudia Talancón and Isela Vega star in this romantic comedy about a Chicago-based stand-up comedian, David Green, who finds out that the Mexican biological mother he never knew has passed away and left him a restaurant in Mexico City. David travels to Mexico where, with the help of Sol, the restaurant's chef, he embarks on a journey in search of his roots and the secret recipe for a soup created by his mother.
- ***Tigers Are not Afraid* (Mexico / Director: Issa López):** Stephen King tweeted "this is one terrific film, both tough and touching." And none other than Guillermo del Toro declared it one of the ten best films of 2017. Winner of Best Director at Fantastic Fest and five awards at Screampfest (including Best Picture), Issa López's stunning third feature tells the story of Estrella who, followed by the ghost of her mother, who was presumably killed by a local cartel, joins a gang of children, themselves orphaned by Mexico's drug violence. Supernatural forces will come to their help when the cartel targets them.
- ***The Gold Seekers* (Paraguay / Directors: Juan Carlos Maneglia and Tana Schembori):** Maneglia and Schembori follow-up their critically acclaimed "7 Boxes" (2012) with this fast-paced and confident heist film. Twenty-one-year-old paperboy Manu receives from his ailing grandfather an old book; inside the book he finds a map and a photo of his grandfather and his brother when they were treasure hunters. With the help of two friends, he determines that this particular treasure is buried inside an embassy. His search soon attracts the attention of other parties eager to get their greedy hands on the treasure.
- ***Seven Seeds* (Peru / Director: Daniel Rodríguez Risco):** From the director of the spine-tingling, body horror thriller "The Womb" (2016), comes this new-age comedy about Ignacio Rodríguez (Carlos Alcántara), the self-centered manager of a textile export company founded many years ago by his father Manuel (the great Argentinian actor Federico Luppi in one of his final roles before he passed away last October). Ignacio's life changes after he suffers a heart attack and meets a singular guru (Almodóvar alum Javier Cámara) who shows him how to find the necessary balance between work and family.
- ***Nuyorican Basquet* (Puerto Rico / Directors: Ricardo Olivero Lora and Julio César Torres):** Mario "Quijote" Morales, Raymond Dalmau, Georgie Torres, Charlie Bermudez, Nestor Cora, Bobby Knight, Isaiah Thomas...the match between Puerto Rico's and the

United States' national basketball teams for the Gold Medal at the 1979 Pan American Games was one of the most anticipated in the island. Through 3-D photography, archival video footage and testimonies from the surviving players and coaches, sports writers and even the island's governor at the time (the ever controversial Carlos Romero Barceló), this riveting documentary explores how most of these athletes influenced the sport, and the political and cultural context in which these games took place.

- ***Flight of the Guitar: Dreaming of Paco de Lucia (Spain / Directors: Jorge Martínez and Javier Limón)***: Grammy winning producer, singer and songwriter Javier Limón (Buika, Bebo Valdés, Diego “El Cigala”) pays homage to the life and music of Paco de Lucía through the only guitar designed by the musical legend and handcrafted by his friend and luthier, Antonio Morales. The guitar travels from Spain to nine countries and into the hands of such renowned singers and songwriters as Caetano Veloso, Tomatito, Carlinhos Brown and Alejandro Sanz. As they play the guitar, these artists reminisce about Paco’s genius and his fusions of flamenco and other musical genres.
- ***Murder in the Woods (USA / Director: Luis Iga)***: Danny Trejo stars in this slasher tale written by Chicago writer Yelena Leon and directed by Mexican filmmaker Luis Iga about a group of Latino teens who, in the grand tradition of the “Friday the 13th” series, decide to spend a weekend in a mysterious cabin in the woods. Unbeknownst to them, the cabin was the site of an apparent murder-suicide more than a decade ago and soon things, and bodies, begin to go bump in the night.

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets to each regular screening are: **\$13, general admission; \$10 (with valid ID), ILCC Members, students, seniors and handicapped. Mondays and Tuesdays, only \$10 all.** Festival passes worth 12 admissions are: \$110 (a savings of \$46) for the general public and \$80 (a \$76 savings) for ILCC Members. Cash, debit and major credit cards are accepted at the box office. Festival passes and tickets for these confirmed titles can now be purchased at **ChicagoLatinoFilmFestival.org, or on CLFF’s Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/ChicagoLatinoFilmFestival/>).**

SPONSORS

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ABOUT THE ILCC

The International Latino Cultural Center of Chicago is a pan-Latino, nonprofit, multidisciplinary arts organization dedicated to developing, promoting and increasing awareness of Latino cultures among Latinos and other communities by presenting a wide variety of art forms and education including film, music, dance, visual arts, comedy and theater. The Center prides itself for its outstanding multidisciplinary local and international cultural programming which spans Latin America, Spain, Portugal, and the United States.

Born out of the Chicago Latino Film Festival, The International Latino Cultural Center of Chicago also produces other programs, including the Latino Music Festival, which will celebrate its 13th edition in the Fall; Film in the Parks, also in its 13th season; the monthly Reel Film Club, already in its 10th year; and many others. All in all, the audience has grown from 500 people in 1985 for the first Chicago Latino Film Festival to more than 70,000 (Latinos and non-Latinos) who enjoy the year-round multidisciplinary cross-cultural exchanges offered by the Center.

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