

UU LEN NYK-BAS

FEA: FILM

(EXPECT PIX)

FILM FOUNDATION AND SCHOOL AIMS TO ENCOURAGE THIRD WORLD CINEMA:
BY LIONEL MARTIN

HAVANA, DEC 20, REUTER -- THE ESTABLISHMENT THIS MONTH IN CUBA OF THE FOUNDATION FOR NEW LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA (FUNDACION DEL NUEVO CINE LATINOAMERICANO) HEADED BY THE COLOMBIAN NOBEL PRIZE WINNER FOR LITERATURE, GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ AND ITS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL FOR CINEMA AND TELEVISION (ESCUELA INTERNACIONAL DE CINE Y TELEVISION) IS SEEN BY MANY OUTSTANDING MOVIE MAKERS AS A MILESTONE ON THE WAY TO A MORE DYNAMIC LATIN AMERICAN FILM INDUSTRY AND, ON A BROADER SCALE, TO GREATER COOPERATION AND MUTUAL AID AMONG LATIN AMERICAN FILM MAKERS.

THERE IS A CONSENSUS AMONG THOSE INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT THAT WHAT THEY PERCEIVE AS THE UNITED STATES' AND WESTERN EUROPEAN MONOPOLY OF INTERNATIONAL FILM DISTRIBUTION MUST BE CHALLENGED. CUBAN PREIDENT FIDEL CASTRO COMMENTED THAT THERE ARE EXCELLENT LATIN AMERICAN FILM BEING MADE +BUT THE TRAGEDY IS THAT THE MULTI-NATIONALS HAVE CONTROL OF DISTRIBUTION IN THE WORLD. +

THERE IS ALSO CONSENSUS FOR THE IDEA THAT THERE IS A VAST POTENTIAL FOR TALENT AND SOCIALLY IMPORTANT THEMES IN THE THIRD WORLD THAT MUST BE DISCOVERED, ENCOURAGED AND SUPPORTED IN EVERY WAY, INCLUDING FINANCIALLY.

RECOGNITION OF THE HISTORIC IMPORTANCE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FOUNDATION AND THE SCHOOL HAS COME FROM MANY NON-LATIN AMERICAN MOVIE MAKERS. AMONG THEM ARE THE AMERICAN DIRECTORS SYDNEY POLLACK (TOOTSIE, THE WAY WE WERE, OUT OF AFRICA) AND FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA (THE GODFATHER AND APOCALYPSE NOW); THE AMERICAN ACTORS GREGORY PECK AND HARRY BELAFONTE; THE BRITISH ACTRESS JULIE CHRISTIE AND THE ITALIAN ACTOR, GIAN MARIA VOLONTE. ALL OF WHOM WERE IN HAVANA THIS MONTH FOR THE EIGHTH FESTIVAL OF THE NEW LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA.

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1986

RR-86-12

UU LEN NYK BAS

FEA: FILM 2HAVANA

DURING THE INAUGURATION OF THE FILM SCHOOL OF DECEMBER 15, MESSAGES OF SUPPORT WERE READ FROM FRANCESCO ROSSI, THE ITALIAN DIRECTOR, INGMAR BERGMAN, THE SWEDISH DIRECTOR, PETER BROOK, THE BRITISH DIRECTOR, AKIRA KUROSAWA, THE JAPANESE DIRECTOR AND FROM NORMAN MC CLAREN, THE RENOWNED CANADIAN ANIMATED FILM MAKER. 1756

DESPITE THEIR PRESENCE ON CUBAN SOIL, NEITHER THE FOUNDATION FOR NEW LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA NOR THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL FOR CINEMA AND TELEVISION ARE CONTROLLED BY THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT. WHILE THEY HAVE THE ENTHUSIASTIC BACKING AND COOPERATION OF FIDEL CASTRO'S GOVERNMENT, THEY ARE PRIVATE ENTITIES REGISTERED IN CUBA ACCORDING TO THE LAW. 1756-86-12

BOTH THE FOUNDATIONS' HEADQUARTERS, AN OLD MANSION IN THE LA CORONELA SECTION OF HAVANA AND THE NEW SCHOOL IN SANTIAGO DE LOS BANOS TO THE SOUTH OF HAVANA, WERE DONATED BY THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT AFTER HAVING BEEN TOTALLY RENOVATED OVER THE PAST EIGHT MONTHS.

AT THE INAUGURATION CEREMONY FOR THE FOUNDATION, GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ THANKED FIDEL CASTRO WHO WAS PRESENT +FOR HIS GENEROSITY WITHOUT PRECEDENT.+ HE EXPLAINED THAT THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT WOULD SUPPLY FOOD AND TRANSPORT AS WELL AS WORKERS FOR THE FOUNDATION AND SCHOOL WHILE THE FOUNDATION WOULD PAY PLANE FARES, WAGES FOR PROFESSORS AND OTHER HARD CURRENCY EXPENDITURES. FIDEL CASTRO TOLD JOURNALISTS THAT CUBA WOULD CONTRIBUTE SOME 800 THOUSAND PESOS A YEAR (ABOUT ONE MILLION DOLLARS) TO THE PROJECT.

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NNN

1986
UU LEN NYK BAS
FEA: FILM 3HAVANA

GARCIA MARQUEZ SAID DURING HIS SPEECH AT THE INAUGURAL CEREMONIES THAT THE SCHOOL IS NOT ASHAMED TO PUT UP A SIGNED SAYING: +WE ACCEPT DONATIONS.+

THE FOUNDATION HAS AMBITIOUS PLANS. IT HAS INITIATED A PROJECT FOR A SERIES OF FILMS ABOUT NICARAGUA +AS A GESTURE OF SOLIDARITY+. THE DIRECTORS OF THE FILMS WILL BE SANTIAGO ALVAREZ OF CUBA, MIGUEL LITTIN OF CHILE, JORGE PONS OF MEXICO, JORGE SANJINES OF BOLIVIA AND GERALDO SARNO OF BRAZIL. ALL WELL KNOWN EXPONENTS OF THE SO-CALLED +NEW LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA+ WHICH STRESSES SOCIAL AWARENESS.

THE FOUNDATION WILL ALSO SPONSOR THE PRODUCTION OF A FULL LENGTH DOCUMENTARY ON THE LIFE OF THE POPULAR PANAMANIAN LEADER, OMAR TORRIJOS, WHO DIED IN AN AIRPLANE CRASH WHICH MANY LATIN AMERICANS ARE CONVINCED WAS CAUSED BY SABOTAGE. THE DIRECTOR OF THE FILM WILL BE THE PANAMANIAN, PEDRO RIVERA AND THE GOAL IS TO FINISH IT BY DECEMBER 1987.

A TELEVISION SERIES BASED ON FIVE STORIES BY GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ ARE ALSO ON THE FOUNDATION'S LIST OF PROJECTS. THE FILMS WILL BE MADE BY THOMAS GUTIERREZ ALEA OF CUBA, RUY GUERRA OF BRAZIL, LISANDRO DUQUE OF COLOMBIA, JAIME HUMBERTO HERMOSILLO OF MEXICO AND ALEJANDRO DORIA OF ARGENTINA. STILL ANOTHER PROJECT IS A FILM ON THE HISTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN MOVIES.

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UU LEN NYK BAS

FEA: FILM 4HAVANA

1986
THE FOUNDATION IS ALSO SPONSORING A LATIN AMERICAN COMPETITION FOR THE BEST IDEAS FOR FICTION OR DOCUMENTARY FILMS. ANOTHER COMPETITION IS FOR THE WORKS OF AMATEUR FILM MAKERS IN LATIN AMERICA. THOSE WHO SHOW TALENT IN THESE COMPETITIONS WILL GET THE FOUNDATION'S SUPPORT IN PRODUCING THEIR FILMS AND ALSO HAVE A CHANCE TO WIN SCHOLARSHIPS TO THE NEW INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF CINEMA AND TELEVISION.

THE NEW SCHOOL, ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF HAVANA, WAS REBUILT FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE FILM SCHOOL WITH PROJECTION ROOMS, EDITING ROOMS AND STUDIOS FOR FILMING FROM ONE OF CUBA'S MANY "HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE". THE SCHOOL, WITH TWO MAJOR BUILDINGS, EACH WITH TWO STORIES, HAS A SIZABLE TRACT OF FARMLAND WHERE VEGETABLES WILL BE GROWN, A RUNNING TRACK AND A NEWLY COMPLETED OLYMPIC SIZE SWIMMING POOL WHICH FIDEL CASTRO SAID, HALF IN JEST, "CAN BE USED FOR LEARNING UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY."

FERNANDO BIRRI, THE PATRIARCHAL LOOKING ARGENTINIAN FILM MAKER WITH A FLOWING BEARD AND A BLACK FEDORA HAT WHICH SOME SAY JOKINGLY THAT HE EVEN SLEEPS WITH, IS THE DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL. THE FIRST COURSE WILL BEGIN IN MID JANUARY 1987 WITH TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY STUDENTS FROM ASIA, AFRICA AND MOSTLY LATIN AMERICA.

BIRRIA SAID THAT THERE WILL BE THREE SEPARATE SCHOLASTIC LEVELS AT THE SCHOOL.

THE REGULAR COURSE WILL RUN THREE YEARS AND WILL ATTEMPT TO TURN OUT ALL-AROUND (MULTI OFFICIO) MOVIE MAKERS WHO WILL STUDY PRODUCTION, DIRECTION, LIGHTING, STAGE SETTING, SOUND, FILMING AND SCRIPT WRITING. BIRRI EXPLAINED THAT THIS BROAD EDUCATION WILL NOT ONLY MAKE THEM BETTER MOVIE MAKERS BUT WILL ALSO HELP THEM TO FIND EMPLOYMENT WHEN THEY RETURN HOME.

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1986
UU LEN NYK BAS
FEA FILM SHAVANA

THE SECOND LEVEL COURSE IS CALLED "EXPERIMENTAL WORKSHOPS" (TALLERES EXPERIMENTALES) WHERE MOVIE MAKERS WILL PERFECT THEIR SKILLS BY MAKING FILMS.

THE HIGHEST LEVEL IS CALLED "HIGHER STUDIES DIALOGUES" WHERE MORE EXPERIENCED MOVIE MAKERS WILL EXCHANGE EXPERIENCES.

THE IDEA OF THE SCHOOL, BIRRI SAID, IS TO TURN OUR "MILITANTS OF THE VISUAL IMAGE" (MILITANTE DE LA IMAGIN). HE CALLED THE SCHOOL "A PRODUCTIVE CENTER OF CREATIVE ENERGY FOR AUDIOVISUAL IMAGES" (UNA CENTRAL PRODUCTIVA DE ENERGIA CREATIVA PARA IMAGENES AUDIOVISUALES) AND ALSO "A FACTORY AND LABORATORY FOR THE EYE AND EAR" (UNA FABRICA Y UN LABORATORIO DEL OJO Y DE LA OREJA).

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