



March 11 – March 22, 2008

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www.dcenvironmentalfilmfest.org

SPOTLIGHT: Latin American Films

Friday, March 14, 6:30 p.m., Embassy of Argentina

THE TREE (EL ÁRBOL) (Argentina, 2006, 65 min.) *Washington, D.C. Premiere*

A very old acacia tree grows outside of Maria and Julio's house. Maria, 67, fears that the tree is decaying and will soon fall over, while Julio, 69, believes that it is still alive and he waters it as an act of faith. He planted it when his first son was born and does not want to erase the significance of the tree. As a symbol of the start of their lives as parents, the tree acts as a silent bond between Maria and Julio. Can memories of an entire lifetime be harnessed within one single object of affection? What happens when a family has to make a decision that could alter them forever? Slow, detailed and intensely moving, this poetic film essay chronicles the debate between Maria and Julio and attempts to answer these questions, painting the story of a couple forced to come to grips with their own reality, and ultimately their own mortality. Memories and ghosts blend together in a house that has been in the family for generations. The visit of a neighbor, a party, the changing seasons, variations of light and shade, rain and dreams build this plot so that everything, silent and irreversible, speaks to us of the running of time. *In Spanish with English subtitles. Directed by Gustavo Fontán. FREE.*

To register, visit the Embassy website at

www.embassyofargentina.us/registracion/login.aspx?cmd=subscribe and provide your email. On March 11, the embassy will send an email offering 75 seats for reservation. If reservations are not picked up by one-half hour before the screening time, they will be released to standby.

Embassy of Argentina, 1600 New Hampshire Ave., NW (METRO: Dupont Circle)

Monday, March 17, 7:30 p.m., Atlas Performing Arts Center

ANTÔNIA (Brazil, 2006, 90 min.) In Vila Brasilândia, on the outskirts of São Paulo, four talented young women—friends since childhood—struggle to fulfill their dream of living off of their music. After much opposition, their group, “Antônia,” seems on the verge of success, when their hopes are dashed again by the daily grind of poverty, violence, racism and chauvinism. With lively rap, hip-hop and rhythm and blues music, charisma to burn and an easy rapport between the four actresses, this story about struggle and resilience blends believably into the real environment of the favelas (shanty towns) and the accompanying dreams of a better life. — Museum of Modern Art Calendar
In Portuguese with English subtitles. Directed by Tata Amaral. With Negra Li, Cindy, Leilah Moreno, Quelynah. Winner, Best Feature Film, 2006 São Paulo International Film Festival. Best Score, 2006 Havana Film Festival.

FREE. Register online at reservations@atlasarts.org or call 202-399-7993.

Atlas Performing Arts Center, 1333 H St., NE

Saturday, March 22, 2:15 p.m., Carnegie Institution of Washington,
SWITCH-OFF (APAGA Y VAMONOS) (Chile, 2005, 87 min.) A tale about a usurped nation, a forgotten genocide, globalization and a river, this film centers around the Biobio, one of the longest rivers in Chile, which flows from the Andes to the Pacific. In 1997, the Spanish hydroelectric company ENDESA decided to build a dam on the Biobio River to form the RALCO hydroelectric power station. From the beginning, the original inhabitants, the indigenous Pehuenche-Mapuche people, made their opposition clear, seeking protection under indigenous law. When the flooding of the Ralco Valley started, 70 indigenous families were displaced and “invited to live in the high mountains” at 2,000 meters. Mapuche spokespeople who have denounced the situation of their brothers have been persecuted and convicted by Chilean courts. *Winner, Best Film, Ecocinema, Athens, 2005; Winner, Best Film, Planet in Focus, 2005. FREE.*
Carnegie Institution of Washington, Elihu Root Auditorium,
1530 P St., NW (METRO: Dupont Circle, Q St. exit)

Thursday, March 13, 6:00 p.m., Johns Hopkins University, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS)
Selection from the 2007 UNAFF Traveling Film Festival
SALUD! (Cuba/USA, 2006, 93 min.) *Washington D.C. Premiere* How does Cuba, a cash-strapped country, possess what the BBC calls “one of the world’s best health systems”? This timely examination of human values and the health issues that affect us all explores the competing agendas that mark the battle for global health, and the complex realities confronting the movement to make healthcare everyone’s birth right. From Africa to the Americas, *Salud!*, hits the road with some of the 28,000 Cuban health professionals serving in 68 countries and explores the hearts and minds of international medical students in Cuba—now numbering 30,000, including a nearly a hundred from the United States. *Directed by Connie Field and produced by Connie Field and Gail Reed. FREE.* **School of Advanced International Studies,** Rome Auditorium,
1619 Massachusetts Ave., NW (METRO: Dupont Circle)

Saturday, March 22, 11:00 a.m. Carnegie Institution of Washington
World Water Day Tribute
AGUAS CON EL AGUA (Mexico, 2006, 50 sec.) *United States Premiere* The fun ends when two animated characters run out of water. *Directed by Ruben Silva. FREE.*
Carnegie Institution of Washington, Elihu Root Auditorium,
1530 P St., NW (METRO: Dupont Circle, Q St. exit)

Sunday, March 16, 2:00 p.m., National Museum of Natural History
Winner from 2007 Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival
“GALAPAGOS”: BORN OF FIRE (UK, 2006, 49 min.) Witness giant Galapagos tortoises, the largest on earth, being groomed by Darwin’s finches; the magical courtship display of the waved albatross and the dramatic eruption of the largest Galapagos volcano, Sierra Negra, blowing smoke and ash seven miles into the sky. This opening episode of the “Galapagos” series examines the fascinating stages in the development of these islands and reveals how creatures have found the most enterprising ways to come to grips with their restless Pacific outpost. *Produced by BBC Natural History Unit with National Geographic and BBC Worldwide. Grand Teton Award. FREE.* **National Museum of Natural History,** Baird Auditorium,
10th St. & Constitution Ave., NW (METRO: Federal Triangle or Smithsonian)

Thursday, March 20, 12:00 noon, Inter-American Development Bank

PERU: SACRED GEOGRAPHY (USA, 2006, 47 min.) At a time when indigenous traditions throughout the world are being lost, the pan-Andean culture found in South America continues to thrive. In *Peru: Sacred Geography*, part of the 'Light at the End of the World' series, National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence Wade Davis accompanies villagers from the town of Chinchero, Peru, as they make the trek to the annual Qoyllur Riti festival, which attracts more than 25,000 people a year across the Andes Mountains. A rich illustration of beautiful rituals, this festival showcases the cultural fusion of pan-Andean culture. The customs date as far back as the ancient Incas and Spanish Conquistadors, and are an eclectic mix of Inca and Catholic tradition. Contributing historical perspective, Davis and other experts provide insight into the development of this vibrant culture, which emphasizes the vital relationship between humans and the earth. *Hosted by Wade Davis. Directed by Andrew Gregg and produced by 90th Parallel Film and Television Productions, Ltd. Courtesy Smithsonian Networks.* **FREE.**

Inter-American Development Bank, Enrique V. Iglesias Conference Center, 1330 New York Ave., NW (METRO: Metro Center)

Tuesday, March 11, 12:00 noon, National Geographic Society

ISLAND AT THE END OF THE WORLD (USA, 2008, 57 min.) Carved by fearsome winds, this last great wilderness of its kind is a rare and precious haven for some of earth's most indestructible creatures. Covering more than half a million square miles of Chile and Argentina, this wild place is known as Patagonia. But there is trouble in paradise as human activity is transforming the landscapes and seascapes, perhaps forever. The animals, including guanaco, condor, penguins, orcas, parrots and elephant seals that have endured for millions of years in this realm of endless, punishing winds face the biggest challenge of their lives. Now champions of wildlife are fanning out across this spectacular place, racing to save an eden at the end of the world. Through a partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society and the investment bank Goldman Sachs, more than 700,000 acres of Patagonia have been set aside for preservation. *Produced by National Geographic Television. Producer: Doug Bertran; Executive Producers: John Bredar and Keenan Smart, National Geographic Natural History Unit.* **FREE.**

National Geographic Society, Gilbert H. Grosvenor Auditorium, 1600 M St., NW (METRO: Farragut North)

Saturday, March 22, 10:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., The Textile Museum

AUSANGATE (USA, 2006, 61 min.) *Washington, D.C. Premiere* The Quechua people of southeastern Peru live above the tree line at over 14,000 feet in a stark, almost brutal environment of rocks, bare fields and mountains. To the locals, the landscape has great significance: the lakes and mountains and even the rocks are holy. The people maintain a deep integrity through their interconnectedness with natural forces and their ritual relationship to the sacred peak, Ausangate. During an annual pilgrimage up the mountain, a select group ascends to the mountain's glacier to collect sacred ice. Based on 20 years of anthropological research, the film documents the richness of the Quechua people's culture as shown in their colorful textile designs and religious rituals. Their spirituality infuses the community and influences the way people treat each other and how they respond to their impoverished conditions. Their textiles are encoded with

symbolic images that reinforce ancestral beliefs. Beautifully shot with excellent narration, the film provides a glimpse into a community imbued with tenacity and cheerfulness in the midst of a forbidding landscape. *Directed by Andrea Heckman and Tad Fettig.*

FREE. Reservations required. Seating is limited. Please call 202-667-0441, Ext. 64.
The Textile Museum, 2320 S St., NW (METRO: Dupont Circle, Q St. Exit)

Saturday, March 22, 12:15 p.m., National Museum of Natural History
Selections from 2007 MOUNTAINFILM in Telluride

PAPA TORTUGA (USA, 2006, 20 min.) Fernando Manzano was only 16 years old when he found his calling. For the past 31 years, he has dedicated himself to bringing the leatherback sea turtle back from the edge of extinction. In the small town of Tecolutla, Mexico, he has battled relentlessly against weather, natural predators and poachers—with no outside support. *Directed by Rob Wilson.* **FREE.**

National Museum of Natural History, Baird Auditorium,
10th St. & Constitution Ave., NW (METRO: Federal Triangle or Smithsonian)

Sunday, March 16, 4:45 p.m., Avalon Theatre

THE PRICE OF SUGAR (USA, 2007, 90 min.) Thousands of impoverished Haitians are lured to neighboring Dominican Republic with the promise of good jobs, then stripped of their identification papers and put to work on sugar plantations in a modern-day version of slave labor. Harvesting cane at gunpoint and imprisoned in barbed wire concentration camps, these “sugar slaves” are starved, beaten and denied clean drinking water while privileged foreigners frolic in the waters of the tropical tourist paradise nearby. The exploitation of Haitian immigrants by sugar companies in the Dominican Republic is documented in this simultaneously enraging and uplifting film, narrated by Paul Newman. The film also profiles the eloquent and charismatic Father Christopher Hartley, a Spanish rebel priest who struggles to champion the human rights and union rights of these terrorized migrant workers, teaching them to stand up for themselves and improve their lives. The machinations of the white elite that controls not only the sugar industry, but also the media, to mold public opinion in their favor, setting two impoverished cultures of the Dominicans and Haitians against each other, expands the film’s scope to larger issues. *Directed and produced by Bill Haney, co-produced with Eric Grunebaum.*

Avalon members, \$6.50; Avalon Senior Members, \$5.50; Seniors/Students/Military, \$7; Nonmembers, \$9.75 For tickets, please visit www.theavalon.org and click on “Special Events” or purchase at the door.

Avalon Theatre, 5612 Connecticut Ave., NW