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SELECTIONS FROM THE AFI TOP 100 LIST

Curated by Chon A. Noriega,
*Executive Director, Aztlan
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In Fall 1998, the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center announced the formation of the Aztlan Film Institute, the other AFI, if you will. In order to celebrate the achievements of Chicano filmmakers, we decided to create a "top 100" list of the greatest Chicano film and video of all time.

Working around the clock, we developed a pool from which to make final selections, sending the list of these titles to a blue ribbon panel of some 1,500 leaders from the Aztlan film community, along with President Clinton, Vice-President Gore, and the Taco Bell Chihuahua. We included films and videos in four categories: documentary, experimental, short or television narrative, and feature film. We also stressed diversity, including male and female, straight and queer, Chicano and a few non-Chicano media artists. After considerable debate, we even included Tejanos.

We asked our blue ribbon panel to review our pool of 100 titles and make 100 final selections, ranking them in order of importance. But Aztlan is a strange place and it operates on a different set of rules than the mainstream. If

only the pretense of democracy is offered, the citizens of Aztlan will not play along, since that is how most atrocities have been committed in this century. Instead, we received nearly 2,500 ballots, since the "community" was bigger than we imagined. Almost all ballots included several dozen write-in candidates, resulting in a group of 149 titles in no particular order. The list is by no means exhaustive. For example, experimental media artists Harry Gamboa, Jr. and Willie Varela have produced nearly 200 titles between them since the early 1970s. Rather, the list presents a provisional sense of a Chicano film and video heritage, one that remains outside the official histories of the American cinema.

The "top 149" list was to have been televised last summer on ABC as part of a three-hour special hosted by Edward James Olmos. In a separate arrangement, Blockbuster and the major studios had agreed to release the entire list on video. This deal, as well as the televised special, have been put on hold in the wake of protests over the absence of minorities on new prime time series slated for this Fall. Our lawyers prevent us from saying more.

During Cine Acción's Festival ¡Cine Latino! we present a brief and eclectic selection from the AFI list. ■

Join us for Top 100 Screenings

Program 1: Saturday, Sept. 18, 3pm, Yerba Buena; Program 2: Saturday, Sept. 25, 1pm, Fine Arts Cinema; Program 3: Sunday, Sept. 26, 1pm, Fine Arts Cinema.



SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 18

3pm, Yerba Buena, Center for the Arts

CINE ACCION FESTIVAL
PROGRAM 1 *CINE LATINO*
OF THE TOP 100 *9/29*

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Everyday Rituals: Lourdes Portillo and Willie Varela

Explores the everyday rituals of life and death through the poetic lens of Lourdes Portillo and Willie Varela. Please see accompanying article on page 20.

Guest curator: Chon Noriega.

LA OFRENDA: THE DAYS OF THE DEAD

*U.S., 1988, English, documentary,
16mm, 50 min.*

**DIRECTORS: LOURDES PORTILLO
AND SUSANA MUÑOZ**

GHOST TOWN

*U.S., 1974, experimental, silent,
Super-8, 3 min.*

DIRECTOR: WILLIE VARELA

RECUERDOS DE FLORES MUERTAS

*U.S., 1982, English, experimental,
Super-8, 7 min.*

DIRECTOR: WILLIE VARELA

JUNTOS EN LA VIDA, UNIDOS EN LA MUERTE

*U.S., 1985, silent, experimental,
Super-8, 10 min.*

DIRECTOR: WILLIE VARELA

IN PROGRESS

*U.S., 1985, English, experimental,
Super-8, 10 min.*

DIRECTOR: WILLIE VARELA

REAFFIRMATION

*U.S., 1990, silent, experimental,
Super-8, 10 min.*

DIRECTOR: WILLIE VARELA