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March 2 & 3

U.P.C. Foreign Film Series

Screenings at 7 & 9 p.m.

Sunday matinee at 3 p.m.

Admission by series ticket.

SIMPARELE

Cuba 1974 30 minutes Color

Directed by Humberto Solás. Script by Humberto Solás. Photography by Livio Delgado. Music by Haitian folklore. Poems by Humberto Solás. Editing by Nelson Rodríguez. Print provided by Unifilm. Cast: Marta Jean Claude, Amateur Group of the Union of Haitians Living in Cuba.

Haiti is the poorest country in America today. How could this happen to a small country such as Haiti, a country where a great slave revolution took place at the closing of the 18th century? Marta Jean Claude, outstanding performer of Haitian folklore, answers this question in a film where song, poetry, theater and dance merge on a common aim: to tell the passionate story of the country where Toussaint L'Ouverture was born.

Sheldon Film Theater, Winter-Spring 1980

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER

1974 Cuba 78 minutes Black & White

Directed by Sara Gómez Yara. Produced by Instituto Cubano del Arte e Industria Cinematograficos (ICAIC), the Cuban Film Institute. Screenplay by Sara Gómez Yera & Tomás González Pérez. Dramatization by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea & Julio García Espinosa. Director of Photography, Luis García. Film Editor, Iván Arocha. Music by Sergio Vitier. Song by Sara González. Assistant Directors, Rigoberto López & Daniel Díaz Torres. Print provided by Unifilm. Cast: Mario Balmaseda, Yolanda Cuellar, Mario Limonta. Amateur Folklore Group, "Kumbaye".

Using the residential district of Miraflores — built by the Revolution for the inhabitants of the shantytown on the outskirts of Havana known as Las Yaguas — as the setting, *One Way or Another* presents a sociological

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analysis of life in marginal communities and of its manifestations in the psychological, moral and cultural behavior of people who formed part of that social sector in pre-revolutionary Cuba.

As a phenomenon that reveals in one of its most dramatic forms — particularly in under-developed countries — the injustice and inequality inherent in the capitalist system, marginalism generates a code of behavior that reflects most acutely the distortions in the social relations typical of that system. Individualism, an overestimation of personal friendship, the cult of a code of honor based on false values, and male chauvinism are, among others, typical characteristics of a society divided into classes, which take on an aberrant intensity in the marginal world. Needless to say, such attitudes are the most difficult and protracted hangovers to eradicate once a new social order is established in which the economic conditions that gave rise to them no longer exist.

The film reveals the new reality that the Revolution has placed within the reach of all those sectors of the population that, in the past, lived in the shantytowns; a reality that ranges from a radical change in living conditions to the enjoyment of public health services, education, and so on. Interpolating scenes of the demolition of dilapidated tenement buildings and the construction of new apartment buildings, the film presents the clash between a value system doomed to disappear — just like the socioeconomic order responsible for its existence has done — and a new value system that is beginning to assert itself as a part of the aspirations of the new society in the process of reconstruction.

This conflict is dramatically expressed in the development of the relationships between the three protagonists, each of whom represents a different degree of evolution within the social environment where they live. Yolanda (Yolanda Cuellar) is a woman who fully identifies with the revolutionary process, who is trying, not without difficulties, to bring changes in that world to which she is attached by her work as well as by emotional ties. Mario (Mario Balmaseda) is a man going through a

stage of transition, torn between the perceptions and values originating from the world he was born in and those of the new reality, while, at the same time, he contributes enthusiastically to the construction of socialist society. Humberto (Mario Limonta), in turn, is the prototype of the alienated individual, a man who cannot, at least initially, adapt to the new norms of social conduct other than through coercion.

With the exception of Humberto, whose characterization is intentionally aimed at depicting a black-and-white prototype, the treatment given the other two protagonists enhances their personalities from a psychological point of view by reflecting their clashes with their environment and with each other. The film centers its attention mainly on Mario, following the course of his love relationship with Yolanda, and his friendship with Humberto, as two separate subjects. Mario's struggle with Yolanda and with himself and the attitude he adopts in regard to his friend reveal the crisis in his marginal values, some of which he is beginning to have no use for, while still desperately clinging to others. His transformation involves tearing part of himself away, and this becomes evident in every step and concession that separates him further from the concepts he once upheld so firmly.

In order to reflect the objective reality of the environment it deals with, the film makes use of the documentary style, using forms of *cinema verite* and, at other times, puts aside fiction with the evident purpose of informing and educating (as in its documentary analysis of the Afro-Cuban obscurantist Abakua sect). The way in which the styles have been combined makes for an interruption of the story that is aimed at giving the spectator a chance to reflect upon what he or she has just seen.

One of the things that makes *One Way or Another* so convincing is its degree of authenticity in the presentation of real-life characters, who play themselves, as well as that of the actors. As to the former, the skillful work of the director has made it possible for their statements to spring forth spontaneously and for what there is of the pathetic in their

individual stories to move the spectator deeply simply by the way it is expressed. As to the latter, their excellent performances in general makes for very effective characterization.

The solution of the conflicts dealt with in the film — just like the solution to any clash of ideas in the human mind — is not achieved either immediately or through drastic measures, because it has to be the result of the very development of the process of change that has brought about the conflict, of the gradual effects of that process and, therefore, it entails a long struggle of conflicting emotions. This is why the film ends the way it does, offering, to all appearances, no evident results and yet revealing the solution in the discussion between the two young people as they walk between buildings built by the Revolution.

One Way or Another has contributed to one of the Cuban film industry's fundamental purposes, that is, to approach our present problems from a critical standpoint. The film achieves this both artistically and efficiently due to the talent of its director, the late Sara Gomez, whose sensitivity, intelligence and creative capacity are convincingly demonstrated in this, her only feature-length film.

—Carlos Galiano

