

## FESTIVAL DE CINE HISPANOAMERICANO “CUBA: FROM UTOPIA TO DYSTOPIA”

The eighth Annual Hispanic Film Festival at Stony Brook will for the first time offer a selection of films devoted to a single nation, Cuba, with a focus on recent independent cinema produced on the island.

“It seemed appropriate to dedicate this year’s festival to Cuban films, in view of the dramatic changes occurring in US-Cuban relations and in the country more generally,” states graduate student Gisele Blain de Dios, the chief organizer of the event. “Our goal is to promote a group of outstanding recent films and contribute to an awareness of the diversity of Latin American culture and cinema.”

The festival will take place on April 10, 11, 18 & 20 with one film screened each evening at 7:00 pm on the Stony Brook campus in Humanities 1006. The four films were directed over the last four years by filmmakers from different generations working with a variety of aesthetic approaches.

*El acompañante* (2015), director Pavel Giroud’s most recent feature, focuses on two men who are forced to cohabit in a single room in a center for individuals with HIV. In this setting, amid moments of humor and tension, a friendship is born.

*La pared de las palabras* (2014), directed by Fernando Pérez, is based on a short story by Zuzel Monné. It tells the story of Luis, who has suffered since infancy from a form of dystonia which has left him unable to communicate verbally. More than a film about disability, *The Wall of Words* is a meditation on the difficulty of human communication, the nature of suffering and the limits of sacrifice.

In *Conducta* (2014) Ernesto Daranas addresses the relation between a young boy and his teacher in a school in Havana. Eleven year old Chala lives alone with his addict mother and supports the family through the money he earns trainings dogs for dog fights. His sixth grade teacher, Carmela, provides an antidote to the violence surrounding Chala but when she becomes ill and is replaced by another teacher unable to handle his outbursts, the boy is sent to reform school.

*Esteban* (2016), Jonal Cosculluela’s debut feature, is the story of a nine year old boy who discovers his innate musical talent by chance. Despite the difficulties facing him in pursuit of his dream to become a musician, his perseverance ends up transforming his world and that of those around him.

The screenings are presented in partnership with the New York-based film production company Bach Media, and its founder, Jesús Hernández, who will also be guest speaker at the April 11 screening. Hernández will talk about the process of independent film production in today’s Cuba, using Pérez’s *La pared de las palabras* as a case study; the film is the first independent production directed by Pérez (*La vida es silbar, Suite Habana*), who is acclaimed as Cuba’s most influential living film director.

Bach Media is a film company dedicated to the future of Cuban cinema, working to bring greater global visibility to Cuban films produced both on and off the island. Since its founding in 2014, Bach Media has engaged in a range of projects both in the U.S. and internationally, and endeavored to encourage the promotion and understanding of Cuban cinema. The company has sponsored events, such as the 2016 Havana Film Festival New York, and it has co-sponsored a variety of projects in cooperation with the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, and the Spanish Cultural Center of Miami.

The Stony Brook University Hispanic Film Festival is free and open to the public.

**FESTIVAL DE CINE HISPANOAMERICANO**

# CUBA

**“FROM UTOPIA TO DYSTOPIA”**  
A CINEMATIC APPROACH TO CUBAN FUTURES

**EL ACOMPAÑANTE**  
(Pavel Giroud, 2015)  
April 10th, 2017

**LA PARED DE LAS PALABRAS**  
(Fernando Pérez, 2016)  
April 11th, 2017

**CONDUCTA**  
(Ernesto Daranas, 2014)  
April 18th, 2017

**ESTEBAN**  
(Jonal Cosculluela, 2005)  
April 20th, 2017

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**  
**JESÚS HERNÁNDEZ**  
award-winning film director  
and producer of  
**La pared de las palabras**  
April, 11th, 2017

**HUMANITIES**  
**RM 1006**  
**7:00PM**

**BACH MEDIA**

Open and free to the public. Refreshments will be served.  
All movies will be screened in original Spanish with English subtitles.  
Sponsored by: The Graduate Student Organization and the Department of Hispanic Literature & Languages.

**Stony Brook University**

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY HISPANIC FILM FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS CUBAN CULTURAL DIVERSITY THROUGH CONTEMPORARY CUBAN CINEMA.**

**New York, NY, March 8, 2017** — For the first time ever, Stony Brook University's Hispanic Film Festival dedicates its entire annual program to Cuba, featuring a selection of contemporary films from the island. Organized by Gisele Blain De Dios of the Department of Hispanic Languages and Literature at the University, which is located in Long Island, NY, the presentations and discussions focus on independent film production, and the themes health and education in Cuba.

The festival takes place on April 10, 11, 18, and 20, screening a different film each day. The selected films were produced by filmmakers of a variety of ages and aesthetic styles in the past ten years. The four films on the program are: *El acompañante* (The Companion) by Pavel Giroud (April 10); *La pared de las palabras* (The Wall of Words), by Fernando Pérez (April 11); *Conducta* (Behaviour), by Ernesto Daranas (April 18); and *Esteban*, by Jonal Cosculluela (April 20).

The screenings are presented in partnership with New York-based film production company Bach Media, and its founder, Jesús Hernández, who will also be guest speaker at the April 11 screening. Hernández will lecture on the process of independent film production in today's Cuba, using Pérez's *La pared de las palabras* as a case study; the film is the first independent production directed by Pérez, who is acclaimed as Cuba's most influential living film director.

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**For more details about this event, please visit [Bach Media](#).**

## Jesus Hernandez

Jesus Hernandez is an award-winning film director and producer. His short *Ella Trabaja* has been screened at numerous festivals in Cuba and around the world. During his career he has worked with directors like Fernando Perez, Fatih Akin and Paddy Breathnach in different capacities. He is living in New York City since November 2014 where he coordinated Documentary Fortnight at MOMA, and worked at Nantucket Film Festival and Cinema Tropical. He has founded Bach Media and the company has several projects in the USA as well as in Cuba in different stages of development. Most recently he worked in the marketing campaigns during DOCNYC 2015 and MIFF 2016 for the film *Touch the Light* by Jennifer Redfearn. He also co-sponsored with Bach Media the Havana Film Festival in NY. Jesus Hernandez is also working at Charlotte Street Films in closely collaboration with film director Eugene Jarecki.

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