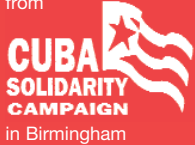


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Information about the bfi touring programme can be found on www.bfi.org.uk
More about Cuban Cinema is available at www.cubacine.cu. A Cuban Film
Poster Display will be on at Birmingham Central Library Feb 17th-28th
For more information about Cuba, visit www.cuba-solidarity.org.uk

...programme continued

Thu Mar 30th House Swap (Se permuta)

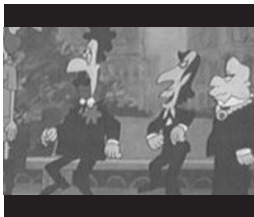


The problem: how to find a better-class suitor for your daughter in a society that professes everyone to be equal. The answer: the Cuban version of

a house-buying chain, the house-swap, which here provides the motor for a social comedy that reflects on controversial characteristics of contemporary Cuban society in the 80s.

Cuba 1983/Dir Juan Carlos Tabio.
With Rosita Fornes, Isabel Santos, Mario Balmaseda. 103mins. 35mm English subtitles.
Advised Certificate 15

Tue Apr 4th Vampires in Havana (Vampiros en la Habana)



An hilarious animated spoof of horror and gangster movies, with outrageous and bawdy caricatures, set in 1933 Cuba. Featuring a war

between a consortium of European vampires and their Chicago-based rivals, the two gangs converge on Havana, where an expatriate vampire scientist has developed a wonder drug allowing bloodsuckers immunity from the sun ... 'No Cubans, please, they taste of sugar,' one protests. American tourists are more appealing...

Cuba 1985/Dir Juan Padrón. 69 mins,
English subtitles. Certificate tbc

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Mon Apr 10th Havana Suite (Suite Habana)

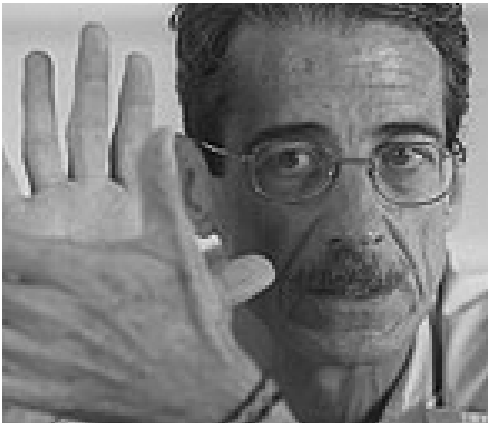


A city film in the great tradition that goes back to Ruttman and Vertov, a wordless visual tapestry which captures the ambiguous mood of present-day Havana

through portraits of a cross-section of characters facing the daily grind of existence and finding time for their dreams, while volunteers guard Havana's new statue of John Lennon to prevent the theft of his glasses. The outstanding Cuban documentary of recent years, with an extraordinary soundtrack of music and urban sounds.

Cuba 2003/Dir Fernando Pérez. 83mins.
35mm. Advised Certificate PG

Film notes by Michael Chanan (except notes on *Vampiros en la Habana*) with thanks to Jorge Yglesias, Luciano Castillo and Alberto Ramos Ruiz. Season curated by Ann Cross and Michael Chanan with the assistance of Vladimir Smith, in collaboration with ICAIC (Cuban Institute of Cinematography) and bfi (British Film Institute).



Front: Juan Carlos Cremata, director 'Nada' with Gonzalo Justiniano, director 'El Leyton' (Chile). Photo by Pamela Gentile.
Back: Fernando Perez, director 'Madagascar' and 'Havana Suite'. Parasol illustration by Mina Lyudova.

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An authentic Cuban cinema came into existence with the Revolution of 1959 and the creation of the Cuban film institute, ICAIC, unleashing furious creative energy among a new generation of film-makers. While US hostility threw the island into the arms of the Soviet Union, the film-makers steered clear of the communist orthodoxy of socialist realism, and instead paid homage equally to Eisenstein and Fellini, the French New Wave and Brazilian Cinema Novo. A bevy of internationally renowned directors quickly emerged, including Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, the documentarist Santiago Alvarez, and the always polemical Julio García Espinosa.

There were political casualties, of course, but most of what has been claimed about censorship in Cuban cinema is exaggerated and itself politically motivated. In fact the Institute was a place of safety for non-conformists, and a second home for other Latin American film-makers escaping political repression. Its small but steady output in the 70s and 80s included, predictably, genre movies about revolutionary heroes, but also experimental films by black directors and a new genre, what might be called the critical social comedy. Films like the anarchic Plaff, lampooning the sacred cows of communist orthodoxy while upholding socialist values, met with huge popular success.

The 90s threw the whole Cuban economy into crisis, when the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe left Cuba in desperate isolation, and the Institute turned its efforts to co-productions with mainly European commercial partners. Cuban film-makers have responded to the crisis with a shared existential tendency to re-imagine the divided nation in the face of an uncertain future. This is especially the case in the films of Fernando Pérez (*Havana Suite*), who, following Alea's death in 1996 (after his powerful critique of homophobia in *Strawberry and Chocolate*), must now be considered Cuba's foremost film-maker.

Michael Chanan

Fri Feb 24th Lucía



An astonishing first feature by the 26-year-old Humberto Solás, and another of the definitive Cuban films of the 60s, this is a trilogy of tales about

women called Lucía at different moments in Cuba's history: 1895, 1933 and the 60s. Each is a love story – the first tragic, the second melodramatic, the third a social comedy – which together add up to a powerful allegory on Cuban history, where women's experience is seen as the node of social contradictions and changes.

Cuba 1968/Dir Humberto Solás.
With Raquel Revuelta, Eslanda Nuñez, Adela Legra. 160 mins. 35mm. English subtitles.
Certificate 18

Sun Feb 26th Madagascar

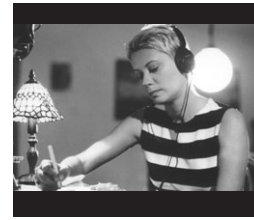


A wistful portrait of three women of different generations, evoking the model of Lucia but here comprising daughter, mother

and grandmother in 90s Havana. Beautifully shot, and one of the key films of the decade, Fernando Pérez's short feature is a study of generational conflict and an allegory on Cuba in the 90s, where the future has been postponed.

Cuba 1994/Dir Fernando Pérez.
With Zaida Castellanos, Laura de la Uz, Elena Bolaños. 52mins. English subtitles Beta SP.
Advised Certificate 18

Fri Mar 3rd Nada



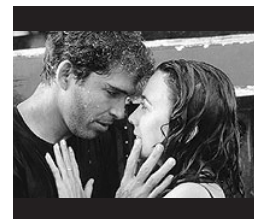
A postmodern fantasy feature debut from the director of the highly-acclaimed Viva Cuba concerns a young post-office employee, Carla,

who believes in the possibilities of poetry, true love and happiness even within the confinements of a bleak state institution. Will she leave it all behind when given the unique chance to emigrate to the US?

Cuba-Spain-France-Italy 2001/Dir Juan Carlos Cremata.
With Thais Valdés, Nacho Lugo, Daisy Granados. 90mins. English subtitles.
Advised Certificate 15

Sun Mar 5th

The Waiting List (Lista de espera)



A social comedy with echoes of Buñuel, in which a group of travellers are unable to leave a provincial bus station for lack of buses, and spend

their time doing it up instead. A metaphor for the history of Cuba over the last few years, where socialism has had to be postponed, and as lead actor Vladimir Cruz puts it, 'what we've constructed, rather than the dream, is the waiting room to the dream.'

Cuba-Spain-France-Mexico-Germany 2000/Dir Juan Carlos Tabío.
With Vladimir Cruz, Thaimi Alvarino, Jorge Perugorria. 105mins. 35mm. English subtitles.
Advised Certificate 15

Thu Mar 9th

Portrait of Teresa (Retrato de Teresa)

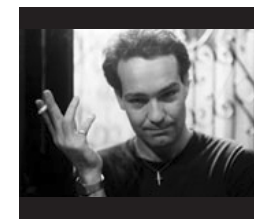


A piece of raw realism about the break-up of a marriage which proved to be Cuba's most controversial movie in 20 years. Featuring an

outstanding performance by Daisy Granados as a mother, factory worker and dance aficionado confronting the intransigence of her machista husband, this feminist critique of traditional Cuban male privilege provoked weeks of debate in the island's media.

Cuba 1979/Dir Pastor Vega.
With Adolfo Llaurado. 103mins. 35mm.
English subtitles. Certificate PG

Sun Mar 26th Strawberry and Chocolate (Fresa y chocolate)



A Young Communist university student is picked up in an ice-cream parlour for a bet by a gay photographer. What follows is not a gay film but a drama

pleading for tolerance and dialogue which touches deep social wellsprings. Alea's penultimate film ostensibly takes place in the 90s, but the subtle use of anachronism makes it a story that could have taken place any time over the last few decades.

Cuba-Mexico-Spain 1994/Dir Tomás Gutiérrez Alea, Juan Carlos Tabío.
With Jorge Perugorria, Vladimir Cruz, Mirta Ibarra. 110mins. 35mm. English subtitles.
Certificate 18