BAMcinémathek presents ¡Sí Se Puede!: Pioneers of Chicano Cinema, a series chronicling the unique struggles and experiences of Chicano life, Mar 16—22

February 13, 2018/Brooklyn, NY—From Friday, March 16 through Thursday, March 22 BAMcinémathek explores the work of Chicano and Chicana filmmakers. The Chicano Movement of the 1960s was a time of Mexican-American political activism and a cultural renaissance in which Chicano filmmakers were emboldened to tell their own stories. The filmmakers who emerged in the 1970s and 80s represented a community that had been ignored in mainstream cinema. The series begins with trailblazing writer-director Luis Valdez, who marched on the picket lines with Caesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, debut film *Zoot Suit* (1981—Mar 16), the film adaptation of the stage musical about the 1940s Los Angeles Zoot Suit Riots, was also the first Mexican-American film to be produced by a major studio. The series also includes Valdez’s musical biopic of rock ‘n’ roll legend Ritchie Valens *La Bamba* (1987—Mar 17). The series also includes three films directed by Gregory Nava: *El Norte* (1983—Mar 18), the first independent film to be nominated for the Oscar for Best Original Screenplay, about a brother and sister who escape political violence in Guatemala to make a new life for themselves in America; *Mi Familia* (1995—Mar 22), which follows three generations of a Mexican-American family in Los Angeles and starring Jimmy Smits; and *Selena* (1997—Mar 17), the biopic of Selena Quintanilla that made Jennifer Lopez a star.

BAMcinémathek programmer Jesse Trussell explains, “These were necessary films at the time, and still resonate to this day, providing a voice and a point of view that are underrepresented in film. The filmmakers in this series are an inspiring generation of artists that moved seamlessly across spaces of activism, art and entertainment. At a time where xenophobia and racism run rampant in America, we can look to the work of these artists for multifaceted, humanist views of Latinx American identity.”

Series highlight includes the work of Chicana filmmakers Lourdes Portillo and Sylvia Morales. We will show Portillo’s murder mystery documentary *The Devil Never Sleeps* (1994—Mar 20) investigating the mysterious death of her uncle Oscar. Also showing Portillo’s *After the Earthquake* (1979) and *CORPUS: A Home Movie for Selena* (1999) also screening March 20. The Sylvia Morales program includes her short films *Chicana* (1979) and *A Crushing Love* (2009) both screening March 21.


For further press information, please contact:
Maureen Masters at 718.724.8023 / mmasters@BAM.org
Lindsay Brayton at 718.724.8026 / lbrayton@BAM.org
**!Sí Se Puede!: Pioneers of Chicano Cinema Schedule**

**Fri, Mar 16**
7pm: Zoot Suit

**Sat, Mar 17**
1:30, 7pm: Selena
4:30, 9:45pm: La Bamba

**Sun, Mar 18**
2pm: Chicano Movement Shorts Program
4:30pm: El Norte
7:30pm: Roots of Blood + Agueda Martinez: Our People, Our Country

**Mon, Mar 19**
7pm: Please, Don’t Bury Me Alive!

**Tue, Mar 20**
7pm: Lourdes Portillo Program
9pm: The Devil Never Sleeps

**Wed, Mar 21**
7pm: Sylvia Morales Program
9pm: Cinco Vidas + Yo Soy Chicano

**Thu, Mar 22**
7pm: Mi Familia

**Film Descriptions**

**AGUEDA MARTINEZ: OUR PEOPLE, OUR COUNTRY** (1977) Dir. Esperanza Vasquez. An Oscar-nominated portrait of the celebrated New Mexico artist and weaver Agueda Martinez. 18min. Sun, Mar 18 at 7:30pm
* Screens with Roots of Blood

**CHICANO MOVEMENT SHORTS PROGRAM**: Of the myriad civil rights struggles that took root in the 1960s, one of the most frequently overlooked is the Chicano Movement, an ongoing fight for political, economic, and cultural recognition, the origins of which are immortalized in these empowering odes to resistance. **I AM JOAQUIN** (1969) Dir. Luis Valdez. El Teatro Campesino—the theatrical group founded by Luis Valdez in conjunction with César Chávez's United Farm Workers—adapt the eponymous poem, a paean to Mexican-American identity that became a rallying cry of the Chicano Movement. + **SI SE PUEDE** (1972) Dirs. Rick Tejada-Flores & Gayanne Fietinghoff. This stirring account of political protest documents a 24-day hunger strike by César Chávez in support of Chicano farm workers’ right to strike. + **LA RAZA UNIDA** (1972) Dir. Jesús Salvador Treviño. A chronicle of the first national convention of La Raza Unida, the grassroots political party established to advance Chicano rights. 92min. Sun, Mar 18 at 2pm

**CINCO VIDAS** (1972) Dir. José Luis Ruiz. The richness and diversity of East Los Angeles' Chicano community is revealed through profiles of five residents, ranging from a grandmother to law student to a school principal, in this Emmy winning documentary. Digital. 51min. Wed, Mar 21 at 9pm
*Screens with Yo Soy Chicano
THE DEVIL NEVER SLEEPS (1994) Dir. Lourdes Portillo. In this documentary murder mystery, Chicana director Lourdes Portillo investigates the mysterious death of her multimillionaire uncle Oscar, uncovering, in the process, a hidden history of family secrets, suspicions, and scandals. Portillo interweaves home movies, gumshoe noir style, and fragments of telenovelas to tell what's both an engrossing true crime tale and an autobiographical X-ray of a Mexican-American family. Digital. 82min. Tue, Mar 20 at 9pm

EL NORTE (1983) Dir. Gregory Nava. With Zaide Silvia Gutiérrez, David Villalpando, Ernesto Gómez Cruz. An indigenous brother and sister (Villalpando and Gutiérrez) escape political violence in their native Guatemala—but discover new hardships as they try to make a life for themselves in America. A landmark of independent filmmaking, this stunningly photographed work of magical realism is a groundbreaking look at the Latino immigrant experience and a profoundly moving reflection on the elusive nature of the American Dream. 35mm. 139min. Sun, Mar 18 at 4:30pm

LA BAMBA (1987) Dir. Luis Valdez. With Lou Diamond Phillips, Esai Morales, Rosanna DeSoto. The brief but brilliant life of Chicano rock ‘n’ roll legend Ritchie Valens yields one of the all-time best musical biopics thanks to the culturally specific direction of Luis Valdez. Lou Diamond Phillips gives a star-making performance as Valens (born Richard Valenzuela), a Mexican-American teen in 1950s California who becomes America’s first Latino rock star—until his meteoric career is cut tragically short one fateful winter night. DCP. 108min. Sat, Mar 17 at 4:30 & 9:45pm

LOURDES PORTILLO PROGRAM: The innovative works of Lourdes Portillo—which draw on avant-garde, documentary, narrative, and political filmmaking traditions—address issues at the center of Latinx life from a feminist, activist point of view. AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE (1979) Dir. Lourdes Portillo. With Vilma Coronado. Portillo’s first film charts the experiences of a young Guatemalan woman (Coronado) as she adjusts to life in Los Angeles, offering an incisive comparison of American and Latin American cultures. + CORPUS: A HOME MOVIE FOR SELENA (1999) Dir. Lourdes Portillo. This probing documentary explores the legacy of Selena, the late Tejano music superstar, and her enduring centrality to Chicano culture through rare archival footage and interviews with her family and fans. Digital. 69min. Tue, Mar 20 at 7pm

MI FAMILIA (1995) Dir. Gregory Nava. With Jimmy Smits, Esai Morales, Edward James Olmos. Gregory Nava’s novelistic epic traces the journey of a Mexican-American family across three generations, from the 1920s to the 1980s, as they put down roots in Los Angeles, face deportation, weather LAPD violence, strike out into the world, and, above all, endure. With overflowing sincerity and and a vibrant visual style, Nava crafts an openhearted, richly textured microcosm of the Southern California Chicano experience. 35mm. 128min. Thu, Mar 22 at 7pm

PLEASE, DON’T BURY ME ALIVE! (1976) Dir. Efrain Gutiérrez. With Efrain Gutiérrez, Jose Armando, David Moss. The very first Chicano feature ever made is an against-all-odds miracle of regional independent filmmaking and a vital record of Mexican-American life in 1970s America. Set in the barrio of San Antonio, Texas, it chronicles the experiences of a young Chicano (director Gutiérrez, who also produced and distributed the film) as he grapples with racism, poverty, and the effects of the Vietnam War on his community. 35mm. 81min. Mon, Mar 19 at 7pm

ROOTS OF BLOOD (1978) Dir. Jesús Salvador Treviño. With Richard Yñiguez, Malena Doria, Adriana Rojo. Director Jesús Salvador Treviño had long been active in the Chicano civil rights movement when he made this revolutionary cri de coeur. Set along the Texas-Mexico divide, it’s a hard-hitting, neorealist dramatization of the struggles faced by garment factory workers on both sides of the border as they fight to form an international union—a powerful portrayal of Mexican-Chicano solidarity. Digital. 94min. Sun, Mar 18 at 7:30pm

*Screens with Agueda Martinez: Our People, Our Country
SELENA (1997) Dir. Gregory Nava. With Jennifer Lopez, Edward James Olmos, Jon Seda. Jennifer Lopez gives a luminous breakout performance as Tejano singing sensation Selena, whose music made her an icon in the Chicano community and whose tragic death made her a legend. More than just a star-is-born showbiz saga, Selena becomes, in the hands of El Norte director Gregory Nava, something almost never seen in a major studio movie: a warm, wonderfully observed portrait of Tejano family and culture. 35mm. 127min. Sat, Mar 17 at 1:30 & 7pm

SYLVIA MORALES PROGRAM: Among the first filmmakers to portray the experiences and of Mexican-American women, Sylvia Morales makes crucial documentaries that shed light on the important role women have played throughout Chichano history and in the ongoing push for liberation. CHICANA (1979) Dir. Sylvia Morales. A vital corrective to the male-dominated work of much of the Chicano Movement, this watershed alternative history illustrates the contributions of Latina women from the Aztec era to the present, with an emphasis on their roles as revolutionary leaders. + A CRUSHING LOVE (2009) Dir. Sylvia Morales. A companion to Chicana, A Crushing Love profiles five contemporary Latina activists, single mothers who balance family with their tireless work of advancing Chicano rights. 81min. Wed, Mar 21 at 7pm

YO SOY CHICANO (1971) Dir. Jesús Salvador Treviño. Director Jesús Salvador Treviño offers a comprehensive view of Chicano history and identity, tracing the culture from its pre-Columbian origins to the political activism of the 1960s and 70s. Digital. 59min. Wed, Mar 21 at 9pm

*Screen with Cinco Vidas

ZOOT SUIT (1981) Dir. Luis Valdez. With Edward James Olmos, Daniel Valdez, Tyne Daly. Trailblazing writer-director Luis Valdez's stage musical was the first by a Mexican-American to bow on Broadway, and his film adaptation was the first to be produced by a major studio. It's a brash, politically charged retelling of the 1940s Los Angeles Zoot Suit Riots—in which a band of Chicano youths were wrongly accused of murder, setting off a wave of anti-Mexican violence—that illuminates a decisive moment in Chicano history with dazzling invention. 35mm. 103min. Fri, Mar 16 at 7pm

About BAMcinématek

Since 1998 BAM Rose Cinemas has been Brooklyn’s home for alternative, documentary, art-house, and independent films. Combining new releases with BAMcinématek year-round repertory program, the four-screen venue hosts new and rarely seen contemporary films, classics, work by local artists, and festivals of films from around the world, often with special appearances by directors, actors, and other guests. BAMcinématek has hosted major retrospectives of filmmakers like Spike Lee, Chantal Akerman, John Carpenter, Manoel de Oliveira, Luis Buñuel, King Hu, and Vincente Minnelli (winning a National Film Critics’ Circle Award prize for the retrospective), and hosted the first US retrospectives of directors Arnaud Desplechin, Hong Sang-soo, Andrzej Zulawski, and Jiang Wen. Since 2009 the program has also produced BAMcinemaFest, New York's home for American independent film, and has championed the work of filmmakers like Janicza Bravo, Andrew Dosunmu, Lena Dunham, and Alex Ross Perry. The 12-day festival of New York premieres, now in its ninth year, ran from June 14—25, 2017.

Credits

Leadership support for BAM Cinema programs provided by The Thompson Family Foundation.

Time Warner Foundation is the Major Sponsor of BAMcinematek.

Delta Air Lines is the Official Airline of BAM. The Brooklyn Hospital Center is the Official Healthcare Provider of BAM.

BAM Rose Cinemas are named in recognition of a major gift in honor of Jonathan F.P. and Diana Calthorpe Rose. BAM Rose Cinemas would also like to acknowledge the generous support of The Peter Jay Sharp Foundation, The Estate of Richard B. Fisher, Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams, Brooklyn Delegation of the New York City Council, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York State Council on the Arts, and Bloomberg. Additional support for BAMcinématek is provided by The Grodzins Fund, and the Julian Price Family Foundation.
Your tax dollars make BAM programs possible through funding from the City of New York Department of Cultural Affairs and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. The BAM facilities are owned by the City of New York and benefit from public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs with support from Mayor Bill de Blasio; Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl; the New York City Council including Council Speaker Melissa Mark Viverito, Finance Committee Chair Julissa Ferreras, Cultural Affairs Committee Chair Jimmy Van Bramer, Councilmember Laurie Cumbo, and the Brooklyn Delegation of the Council; and Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams. BAM would like to thank the Brooklyn Delegations of the New York State Assembly, Joseph R. Lentol, Delegation Leader; and New York Senate, Senator Velmanette Montgomery.

Special Thanks Luis Valdez; Todd Wiener & Steven Hill/UCLA Film; Brian Belovarac, Ben Crossley-Marra & Emily Woodburne/Janus Films; Jesse Chow/Universal Pictures; Dave Jennings/Sony Pictures Repertory; Kristie Nakamura/Warner Bros. Classics; Rick Tejada-Flores/Alturas Films; Paul F. Chavez/Cesar Chavez Foundation; Cassie Blake/Academy Film Archive; Tom Sveen/Cinema Guild; Kristen Fitzpatrick/Women Make Movies; Lourdes Portillo; Moctesuma Esparza; Elena Rossi-Snook & David Callahan/New York Public Library.

General Information:
BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. BAM Harvey Theater is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Greenlight Bookstore at BAM kiosks. BAM Fisher, located at 321 Ashland Place, is the newest addition to the BAM campus and houses the Judith and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio.
BAM Rose Cinemas is Brooklyn’s only movie house dedicated to first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, offers varied light fare and bar service prior to BAM Howard Gilman Opera House evening performances.

Subway: 2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue – Barclays Center (2, 3, 4, 5 to Nevins St for Harvey Theater) D, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue
Train: Long Island Railroad to Atlantic Terminal – Barclays Center
Bus: B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM
Car: Limited commercial parking lots are located near BAM. Visit BAM.org for information.

For ticket information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit BAM.org.