

TEQUILA
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MEXICO'S NUEVO EDGE™

FOUR DIRECTORS TALK ABOUT BREAKING
 THROUGH HOLLYWOOD'S SOUND BARRIER
 ON THEIR OWN TERMS.

GUILLERMO DEL TORO

Recent Film: *Pan's Labyrinth*
Born in: Guadalajara, Mexico

As a young child, Guillermo del Toro was fascinated by fairytales. To this day, the 42-year old director continues adding to his collection of original works, with some dating back to the 19th Century. It's not surprising then that many of his best-known films—*Hellboy* (2004), *Blade II* (2002), *Cronos* (1993) and *The Devil's Backbone* (2001)—explore fanciful, alternate realities which often cross into horror.

"I see horror as part of legitimate film," del Toro has said. "I don't see it as an independent genre that has nothing to do with the rest of cinema." In fact, he not only "loves

: FAST TAKE :

CURRENT PROJECT: *Hellboy 2: The Golden Army*

ADVICE TO YOUNG DIRECTORS: "It's very important to forget the limits that geography gives you, but it's very important to keep the roots that your origin gives you."

ACTOR HE LOVES TO WORK WITH: Ron Perlman

INSPIRATIONAL DIRECTOR: Luis Buñuel

MOVIE HE LOVES: James Whale's *Frankenstein*

RANDOM FACT: Del Toro was offered the chance to direct *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, but turned it down to do *Hellboy*.

monsters" but identifies with them. "I remember when I did *Mimic* after *Cronos*, some people asked me if I was worried that I might be branded a horror director. I said no that's what I've wanted to be all my life."



Born in Guadalajara, Mexico, the larger-than life del Toro started down the movie-making path at eight years old, borrowing his father's Super 8 camera to film his toys. "I was directing before I knew it was called that." Later he studied special effects and worked as a makeup supervisor before honing his skill as a director on Mexican TV shows. His first feature film, *Cronos*, garnered instant acclaim for its stylish and engaging revision of the traditional vampire genre.

Cronos may have brought him critical attention, but it was *Blade II* and *Hellboy*, in particular, that drew in the fans. "The *Hellboy* audience is such a faithful and fanatic audience . . . you have to really be very open about what you do," del Toro has said. He also indicates that *Hellboy 2* will introduce a new character and a batch of killer robots.

Current fantasy, *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006), has been called del Toro's most resonant film to date. Some reviewers at the 2006 Festival de Cannes even called it "brilliant." With *Pan's Labyrinth*, del Toro has said he was able to explore his unique dark and light views of humanity. "I'm not a brand name," he has said, "I'm an acquired taste."



AURORA GUERRERO

Recent Film: *Viernes girl*
Born in: San Francisco, California

Aurora Guerrero is making her first feature length film and, for her, it's about never losing faith. In herself, her talent and the film, *Mosquita y Mari*. "It's about . . . being relentless about your dream and committed to the power of your art."

The 35-year old director, who was born in San Francisco, graduated with a psychology degree, but later turned to filmmaking after a pivotal stint in a youth arts program. Two award-winning films followed: *Pura Lengua* (2005), an official selection of the 2005 Sundance Film Festival, and *Viernes girl*, 2005 winner of the HBO/NYLIFF short film competition.

:FAST FACTS:

CURRENT PROJECT: *Mosquita y Mari*

ADVICE TO YOUNG DIRECTORS: "Take your time to develop your craft before you make a feature."

ACTOR SHE'D LOVE TO WORK WITH:

Elpidia Carrillo

INFLUENTIAL DIRECTOR: Pedro Almodovar.

"He's a master at taking risks and I love that about him."

RANDOM FACT: Guerrero considers her first short, *En La Madrugada* (1999), to be the one that hits closest to home. "The concept of family is something I am constantly redefining for myself."

For Guerrero, the hardest part of being a director is surviving as an artist. But more than that it's about being "committed to telling non-commercial stories." In fact, her current project is about two young women in a 1980s Mexican immigrant community in San Francisco. Guerrero plans to film part of it in Guadalajara, Mexico, which evokes the San Francisco Latino barrio of her youth before "it was devoured by gentrification" in the 1990s.

Despite having traveled to Mexico numerous times, Guerrero is still discovering her parents' native country. Although her home base is Los Angeles, she also owns a place in Ayutla, Jalisco, where her father grew up surrounded by a culture of Charros (Mexican cowboys). She's also attracted to the vibrancy and richness of the Caribbean and indigenous cultures found in Veracruz, where her mother was raised. "I consider myself a bicultural Mexican and damn proud of it," says Guerrero, whose work clearly mirrors her feelings.

released this past year. "It was definitely my most challenging," he says of the film that took five years to make. Filming in three countries meant working in English, Spanish and Portuguese, which Bolado learned so he could communicate with his crew in Brazil. Not an easy task, even for a man who directed and, in many cases, co-wrote nine films.

The hardest part of being a director? Creating harmony between the film's different factions, says Bolado. "At least for me ... it's not just about talent and creativity. It's about communication." He feels strongly that film schools should expand their curriculum to include management and administrative classes. "You should have to take Contract 1 and Contract 2," he laughs, but quickly adds that this should not detract from students' creativity. "To really be good, you have to have a certain curiosity about the world."



Scenes from *Solo Dios Sabe* Courtesy of Sincronia Films

:FAST TAKE:

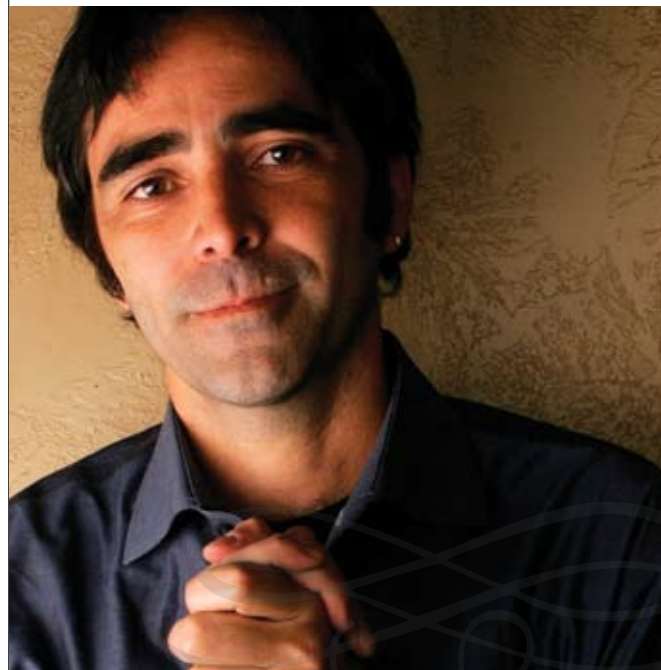
CURRENT PROJECT: At this time, Carlos is working on two documentaries - one untitled film about the Klamath River, and another, *Imaginary Line*, about the Mexican/American border and ports of entry. He is also currently developing his next feature film.

ADVICE TO YOUNG DIRECTORS: "Research, research, research."

ACTOR HE'D LOVE TO HAVE WORKED WITH: Marcello Mastroianni

INSPIRATIONAL DIRECTOR: François Truffaut

RANDOM FACT: His friends nicknamed him "Bolex" after the name of a Swiss camera they used during film school.



CARLOS BOLADO

Recent Film: *Sólo Dios Sabe*
Born in: Veracruz, Mexico

While directing his first feature-length film, *Baja California* (1998), Carlos Bolado's \$500,000 budget didn't cover the helicopters required to travel the remote areas of the Baja peninsula. Instead, he and his crew resorted to donkeys and mules to get to the film's location. One hundred, to be exact. "It was an amazingly great experience," says the 42-year old Veracruz, Mexico native who shuttles between San Francisco, where his five-year old son lives with his ex-wife, and a home base in Santa Monica, California.

Of course, that's when he's not pursuing his latest project from one continent to the next. "I'm really a nomad," says Bolado, whose most recent film, *Sólo Dios Sabe*, was

JUAN CARLOS RULFO

Recent Film: *In the Pit*
Born in: Mexico City, Mexico



:FAST TAKE:

CURRENT PROJECTS: A docudrama about "souls" from different parts of Mexico, tentatively called *Once Upon a Country*.

ADVICE TO YOUNG DIRECTORS: "Make good friends of the people you work with in the movie."

INSPIRATIONAL DIRECTOR: Werner Herzog

MOVIE THAT CONSTANTLY AMAZES HIM: *The Sacrifice*

RANDOM FACT: "I would like to be a pilot."

If he could have just one wish granted, Juan Carlos Rulfo would want \$10 million to make documentaries. "I believe documentary filmmaking is the best thing," said the 42-year old director who lives in Morelea, Mexico. "This genre has given me the chance to experiment because nothing is planned and the scenes aren't set up. Life characters are much more powerful than any I could ever create myself."

His latest foray, for example, focuses on construction workers building a bridge in Mexico City. *In the Pit* (2006) captures the quiet desperation of these men as well as the risks and injustice they face. "What I liked about this experience is the chance to work with people that are not easy to get along with," he has said. Nevertheless, he proudly points to the fact that the workers became more than just actors to him. "Each and every one is a good friend of mine now," he notes, adding that this was a key to making the powerful film.

One of the toughest things about producing the film, however, was getting the financial backing to make it. At times, he admits, he wasn't sure the film would be completed. Still, with six movies under his belt and another in production, Rulfo is driven to find ways to circumvent these hurdles. Right now, the hurdle is trying to access remote, mountainous areas in Mexico to film his latest docudrama. "What I really would love is a [4x4] truck," he laughs. Even without it, however, he's confident his latest project will find its way into people's consciousness. ■

THE "OTHER"
MEXICO

Asked to list her favorite places in Mexico, director Aurora Guerrero responded: "Pull out a detailed map, close your eyes and let your finger land on a place. Chances are super high you won't be disappointed." And she's right. But we've decided to help you choose by listing some insider favorites that often fall under the tourist radar.

Surf the Mexican pipeline at Zicatela Beach in PUERTO ESCONDIDO, OAXACA.

Bike the rugged terrain, travel back roads to small towns and see the world's newest volcano (Volcan Paricutin) in MICHOACAN.

Enjoy the theater, museums and vibrant culture of Xalapa (or Jalapa), the capital of VERACRUZ.

Drink in the rich architectural history and visit a Mummy Museum in GUANAJUATO, a walled city in the mountains.

Soak up the low-key charm of ZIHUATANEJO, an authentic fishing village that's only four miles from Ixtapa, but is the polar opposite of that popular resort.

Snorkel and scuba dive in the clear, unspoiled waters surrounding ISLA MUJERES, a tiny island with a downtown consisting of only four or five blocks.

Listen to unique, local music in TAMAZUNCHALE in the state of San Luis Potosi

Go saltwater fly fishing in XCALAK, a rustic town along the Mexican Caribbean.

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