

3rd Sydney Latin American Film Festival

MEDIA RELEASE

4th February, 2008

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE 'FRUITS OF WAR'

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6th – 16th of March 2008

In it's third year, the Sydney Latin American Film Festival announces an explosive ten-day film Festival including the Australian premiere of "**Fruits of War**". We have the great pleasure in welcoming Josiah Hooper, director of 'Fruits of War', to our Sydney shores. Hooper will join us on to present his film at the 'Microcinema' at East-Side Arts Centre (11th March) and will join a panel discussion afterwards on Central America, issues of migration and gang culture. He will also present "Fruits of War" at Club Marconi in Fairfield (5pm, 15th March).

"**Fruits of War**" will make its Australian premier at the Sydney Latin American Film Festival along with an exciting program of feature films, documentaries, shorts and animations and live fiestas, all whilst raising funds for community development projects in Latin American and Australia.

"**Fruits of War**" is the story of four young men's struggle to survive, when they are deported back to El Salvador after spending most of their lives as members of two street gangs. The men share their personal journeys of self discovery and examine their transformation from gang members to being deportees and to their current and most important role, as peacemakers. Their evolution is set in motion as they learn of the effects of the U.S. government's policies during the civil war in El Salvador and its policies today that directly impacted their lives, and continue to shape the future of others like them both in the U.S. and beyond. This is not the usual street gang movie heavy with images of wanton violence, drug dealing and drug use. Our focus is on the personal stories of these four young men who have seen enough violence to fill a lifetime. They relate their stories of hope and regret as their friends perish and their families wait in the United States, wondering if they will ever return.

Visiting Filmmaker

Josiah Hooper is a freelance television producer who has had work broadcast nationally on cable and public television in the US. His most recent broadcast was a piece on the micro-lending website kiva.org for PBS' Frontline World. He co-produced "Gunshots" a film about black market gun dealing that won a Society of Professional Journalist award and was used in congressional testimony on gun legislation in 2001. Currently, he is working on a story about a human rights abuse database in Guatemala for Frontline World. He has been involved in television production for the past ten years after attending the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism.

Eros Hoagland - Co-Producer/Still Photographer

Eros Hoagland began working as a photojournalist in 1993 covering the aftermath of El Salvador's civil war. He has since worked in countries stained by violence and unrest across the globe including Haiti, Eritrea and Colombia. As well as documenting the political climate and social impact of conflict, Eros looks for an emotional narrative when approaching reportage projects. He also works on travel and adventure sport stories as well as business and lifestyle pieces. His clients include Time, Newsweek, The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, FORTUNE, Men's Journal and PBS' Frontline.

<http://www.eroshoagland.com/main.php>

Other events featured as part of the Festival include a special fundraiser night '**Shorts and Sounds**' at the Uruguayan Club with live performances and film, **a tribute to Hector Lavoe** in the Oxford Art Factory (27th Feb) anticipating the eagerly awaited premiere of the screening of 'El Cantante' with an awesome lineup of musicians from Watussi, Mucho Mambo and many more, and the famous **Mid-Festival Fiesta** presenting an energetic live performance of one of Sydney's most celebrated Latin bands Watussi at the East-Side Arts Centre 13th March.

Full program details are available at www.sydneylatinofilmfestival.org and tickets are available online from

Mid-February.

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Please phone to arrange an interview with Josiah Hooper.