

MEDIA RELEASE
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AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE 'SECRETOS DE LUCHA'

3rd Sydney Latin American Film Festival
6th – 16th of March 2008

In its third year, the Sydney Latin American Film Festival announces an explosive ten-day film Festival including the Australian premiere of **'Secretos de Lucha'** directed and edited by Maiana Bidegain who is currently living in Sydney and will present this engaging documentary Sunday 16th March at 6pm in Club Marconi, Fairfield. The screening will be followed by a Q&A with the filmmaker.

'Secretos de Lucha' 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.

'Secretos de Lucha', the journey of a young woman trying to recover the memory of what really happened to her family, her father and his brothers and sisters, during the darkest years of the Uruguayan dictatorship, in the seventies. Through her father's eyes and her seven aunts and uncles' confessions, she tries to understand why they kept their memories silent for so long. From the French Bask country to South America, she follows their steps and explores their individual struggles, whether these were through union or legal political actions, or through clandestine activities within an urban guerrilla organisation called the Tupamaros. A silence that has left so many wounds yet to be healed. This documentary invites the audience to share in an intimate perspective of a family's struggle against oppression, and gives a voice to those who were both witnesses and pawn in a story that was stolen from them. A documentary to overcome the last fears, and give the way to the new generation in a fight for social justice yet to be won.

Introduction Secretos de Lucha by Maiana Bidegain:

"What I am telling you here, you know, I never told anyone. I didn't tell my own brothers, and I certainly didn't tell my children."

" But why? Did my father do any action like that?"

"I think so. I don't really know. I never asked him. What he did do, was giving me some advice on how to resist under torture.

I am glad I never had to use his advice..."

"Tortures? Advice? My father?"

And Jeanne Marie, my aunt started telling me stories that seemed unbelievable to me. Demonstrations. Weapons construction. Hold ups. Prisoners' escapes. Executions. It was like a western, I couldn't believe she was really talking about my own family. I was 22, I was in Chile for 2 months doing an internship, and I was discovering an aspect of my father's life that had been left untold until then...

Coming back from Chile where Jeanne Marie first told me those stories about her actions as a student and with the Tupamaros, I went to see my father with a great need. I needed to fill those empty spaces that I was aware of for the first time in my life. I knew that he had been a priest before he got married. I knew he had spent a couple of days in prison in Uruguay under the dictatorship, and that he had chosen the exile, with my family, to live free, until the democracy would return. I had no idea of the details of the struggle that he had undertaken, of the reasons that had pushed him to fight how he did, and I didn't know he had been tortured. And me his own daughter, born in France a few months after his arrival, I only knew sparkles of a truth still too hard to tell. The Uruguayan dictatorship seemed so far away from the reality of the 90s in France...Little by little, in a very slow process, my father started telling some stories of what had been his everyday life under the dictatorship. In France, he was only a bus driver with a Spanish accent, an old man with a white beard and a sparkling eye. In Uruguay, he had been the first worker priest of the country. Sharing the workers' life, in a sugar

Other events featured as part of the Festival include the 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 line-up 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.

Fill out our Audience Award Form to vote for your favourite film at the Festival and win a 3 – week trip to South America for two persons worth over \$8000!

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

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Please phone or email to arrange an interview with Maiana Bidegain.