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The International Latino Film Society Announces Mexican Actor & Director Diego Luna Will be its Guest of Honor at the Opening Night of the 11th International Film Festival

SAN FRANCISCO, August 27, 2007—The International Latino Film Society is proud to announce that famed Mexican actor **Diego Luna** will be its guest of honor on the Opening Night celebration of the **11th International Latino Film Festival**. The Festival kicks off in celebration of *Day of the Dead (Día de los Muertos)* with a high-profile opening at the majestic Castro Theater in San Francisco on Nov. 2, 2007.

Luna will present his directorial debut, ***Chávez***, as part of the Festival on Nov. 3, and participate in a post-film question and answer session with the audience. The screening of *Chávez* will culminate the Festival's National Emerging Filmmakers Conference, an all-day opportunity for local filmmakers to engage in dialogue with established filmmakers and industry professionals.

"We are honored to bring this astounding actor, producer and budding filmmaker to the 11th International Latino Film Festival as he enters into a new phase of his career," said Festival Founder and Artistic Director Sylvia Perel.

In his acclaimed documentary *Chávez*, Luna chronicles the life and career of Mexican boxer Julio César Chávez, who rose from humble circumstances to thirty-seven world title fights and is now considered one of boxing's all-time greats. Luna follows Chávez through the final stretches of his career and his retirement, during which time he finds enormous joy teaching and watching his son, Julio César Chávez, Jr., follow in his footsteps. *Chávez* premiered to rave reviews at the 2007 Tribeca Film Festival.

Diego Luna was introduced to American audiences with his starring role in Alfonso Cuarón's Oscar-nominated ***Y tu mamá también***, alongside his childhood friend Gael García Bernal. He began his professional acting career on stage at the age of seven, and made his television debut at the age of 12 in the Mexican soap opera ***El abuelo y yo***. Luna's transition into screen acting began with his Oscar-nominated film ***Before Night Falls***. He then went on to star in ***Y tu mamá también***, which was loved by audiences worldwide. His other screen acting credits include Warner Independent Pictures' ***Criminal, Nicotina***, which premiered at the San Sebastian Film Festival; ***Before Night Falls*** for director Julian Schnabel; Luis Estrada's ***Ambar***; Erwin Neumaier's ***Un hilito de sangre***; Gabriel Retes' ***Un dulce olor a muerte***; Marisa Sistach's ***El Cometa***; and Fernando Sarinana's ***Todo el poder***. His additional feature films include ***The Terminal*** for director Steven Spielberg; ***Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights, Open Range*** alongside director and star Kevin Costner, Robert Duvall and Annette Bening; and ***Frida*** opposite Salma Hayek for director Julie Taymor. He will next star in director Harmony Korine's ***Mr. Lonely***, and the Spanish-language films ***El búfalo de la noche*** and ***Sólo Dios sabe***.

Luna and García Bernal recently launched their own production company in Mexico, Canana Films, in an effort to help Mexican filmmakers produce movies without worrying about Hollywood's commercial constraints. Their company is part of a wider movement to bring the success enjoyed by some individual Mexicans abroad back

home. Canana Films is the producer of a number of documentaries and films, including films such as *Pedro páramo* (2009), *Rudo y cursi* (2008), *In the Playground* (2008), *Cochochi* (2007), *Déficit* (2007), *Voy a explotar* (2007), *Drama/Mex* (2006), among others.

*****More program information and film times/dates/venues will be available in September 2007. Images and film screeners are available to members of the media. Please contact Mona Baroudi at mona.baroudi@sbcglobal.net or at 415.615.2735.**

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

The 11th International Latino Film Festival is an annual festival showcasing an unprecedented array of films expressing many views from the Latino world. This year's Festival runs through Nov. 18 and features approximately 90 films from 20 countries in nine Bay Area cities: San Francisco, Redwood City, San Jose, Larkspur, Berkeley, San Rafael, San Bruno and Sacramento. Themes in this year's Festival include: *Animation, Art & Poetry, Cine Chicano, Day of the Dead Emerging Latino Filmmakers, Environment, Erótica, Family, Global Lens, Fútbol (Football), Human Rights, the Immigrant Experience, the Jewish Experience, Local Latino Filmmakers, Música Latina, Málaga FF Series, Queer Latino Cinema, Spiritual, Thrillers, Mexican Cinema, War & Politics, Women & Film*, among others.

THE INTERNATIONAL LATINO FILM SOCIETY/FILM FESTIVAL

Presented by the International Latino Film Society, The International Latino Film Festival was founded in 1997 by Sylvia Perel to benefit the San Francisco Bay Area by promoting cinema of significant artistic merit created by, or about Latinos, and to celebrate cultural understanding through the art of film and filmmaking. The International Latino Film Festival began in Marin County with eight films over three days in one venue and has grown to more than 90 films over 16 days in nine cities across the Greater San Francisco Bay Area. For additional information about the Festival visit www.LatinoFilmFestival.org.

THE 11th INTERNATIONAL LATINO FILM FESTIVAL SPONSORS

The 11th International Latino Film Festival Sponsors include the Board of Supervisors of Marin, City of Redwood City, Wells Fargo, Castellano Family Foundation, Don Julio, Macy's, Macy's.com, Continental Airlines, Southwest Airlines, Cinema12 San Jose, San Jose State University, City College of San Francisco, The Mercury News, Univision, W San Francisco, Telefuturo, Univision Radio, Consulate General of Spain, Consulate General of Mexico San Francisco and San Jose.