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August 27, 2008

Oh, Diego



(Courtesy)

Diego Rivera at the easel.

In 1949, cinematographer Gabriel Figueroa, photographer Manuel Alvarez Bravo and muralist Diego Rivera joined their formidable forces to make a documentary with Rivera as subject.

For reasons probably having to do with time or money or both, the project was abandoned and the rolls of 16 mm film were left to gather dust. Fast forward about 50 years and Figueroa's widow finds the footage stashed away in a cupboard.

"She sent me these rolls of film to be inspected — to see what it was," said the cinematographer's son, photographer Gabriel Figueroa Flores, in a phone interview.

What Figueroa saw surprised him — color footage of Rivera painting in his studio as well as visiting the settings and sites of some of his most famous paintings and murals. When the artist's grandson Diego López Rivera, a childhood friend of Figueroa's, saw a clip of the footage, he suggested they collaborate on a documentary themselves.

As part of **FOTOSEPTIEMBRE USA**, "Un Retrato de Diego: la Revolución de la Mirada" ("A Portrait of Diego: The Revolutionary Gaze"), the film López and Figueroa co-produced and co-directed, will screen at 6:30 p.m. Sept. 5 at the Retama Auditorium, **UTSA**, 1604 Campus. A q&a session with López and Figueroa will follow immediately after the screening. In addition, the documentary will also be shown 5 p.m. Sept. 7 at the **Instituto Cultural de México**.

In Spanish with English subtitles, "Un Retrato de Diego" combines the vintage footage with contemporary interviews and clips from classic Mexican films.

In conjunction with the screenings, the Instituto Cultural de México will host "Centenario de Gabriel Figueroa," an exhibition of images from the



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cinematography of Gabriel Figueroa curated by his son. The opening reception is 4 p.m. Sept. 6 . The exhibit continues through Oct. 26. All of the events are free and open to the public.

— Elda Silva

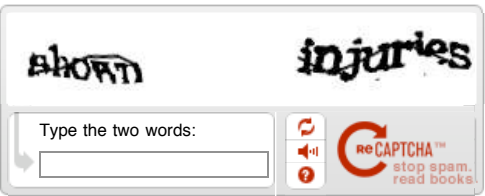
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