

'Chico & Rita' to screen at Tobago Jazz Film Festival

Published on Apr 20, 2017, 10:00 pm AST

Article

0 Comments

Share:

Facebook

Twitter



'SEXY AND SWEET': A still from the animated film Chico & Rita.

A brilliant piano player and a beautiful singer from Cuba chase their dreams –and each other–across the globe in the majestic animation *Chico & Rita*, which screens on Tuesday from 7 p.m., at the Waves Restaurant and Bar, Black Rock, as part of the Tobago Jazz Film Festival, presented by the trinidad + tobago film festival and its corporate sponsor, Flow.

The film, which is in Spanish with English subtitles, is for persons 14 years and over.

Admission is free and dinner reservations can be booked in advance for those who wish to take in the movie over drinks and dinner.

Chico & Rita tells the story of two star-crossed lovers whose love for each other and their music set them on a journey that takes them from Havana in the 1940s, to the bright lights of New York, Paris and beyond. Love and passion unite them, but success and the social and political upheavals of the time threaten to tear them apart. It's an epic love story, set against the backdrop of an original soundtrack by legendary Cuban pianist, bandleader and composer, Bebo Valdes, capturing a definitive moment in the evolution of jazz music. The film features music by jazz and Latin jazz legends – Chucho Valdés, Chano Pozo, Tito Puente, Thelonius Monk, Charlie Parker, Cole Porter, Dizzy Gillespie and Freddy Cole.

Described by the New York Times as “Sexy, sweet and laced with a sadness at once specific to its place and time” and “an animated valentine to Cuba and its music”, it won Spain's Goya Award for Best Animated Film at the 25th Goya Awards, and was nominated for an Oscar for Best Animated Feature at the 84th Academy Awards (the first nomination for a Spanish full-length animated film).

From the beginning, the producers were excited by the idea of making a film set against the Havana music scene of the late 1940s and 50s.

“That age is beautiful in design and architecture..... And in music it's a moment that's fantastic: it's the moment where Cuban musicians go to New York and join the ... jazz musicians. This fusion changed the music at that time.”

In setting out to create the animation, the filmmakers visited Cuba. Although many of Havana's pre-revolutionary buildings had decayed, they discovered that the Havana city government had assembled an archive of photographs to help with street repairs. Pictures of every street corner in Havana since 1949 were archived, conveying the look and mood of the era. The team also found pictures taken inside the planes ferrying Americans to the “party island” as Cuba was often called at the time.

Planes arriving from New York, Washington and Miami during that period were filled with Cuban musicians entertaining the passengers. They provided much historical information about the Cubans of that era: the clothes, the faces, the streets, billboards, cars, bars, the way they lived, and the sensational life of Havana – great source material for the filmmakers.

The screening of Chico and Rita on Tuesday, will bring the Tobago Jazz Film Festival to a close. For the Festival programme and full lineup of films, please visit: tobagojazz.ttfilmfestival.com/