

National Film Registry Saves 'Ferris Bueller' and First Chicano Feature Ever Made From Extinction

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We've all heard of the Baseball Hall of Fame, the Rock 'n Roll Hall of Fame, heck there's even a NASCAR Hall of Fame, but few may realize that American cinema has its own hallowed halls of distinction: **The National Film Registry** (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Film_Registry) at the Library of Congress. Each year, the Library of Congress chooses a handful of films that it deems "culturally, historically or aesthetically significant" for preservation in its archives, and this year, alongside cultural titans like *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, *Saving Private Ryan* and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, one of the inductees is a little known film entitled ***Please Don't Bury Me Alive*** (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1334044/>) (1976), widely considered to be the first ever Chicano feature film.



Produced and Directed by San Antonio-native **Efrain Gutierrez**, *Please Don't Bury Me Alive* takes a highly politicized and unflinching look at life in the Chicano barrios and the damage wreaked on communities by the Vietnam War. Largely forgotten for several decades, the film's resurgence was largely thanks to the work of UCLA film scholar **Chon Noriega** (<http://www.chicano.ucla.edu/about/director>), who spent nearly a decade tracking down Gutierrez in order to get his hands on an original print of the film.

Considered anomalous for the time, *Please Don't Bury Me Alive* was made in true independent fashion, entirely outside of the Hollywood studio system. Shot on-location in South Texas, the film was bilingual and quickly turned into a grassroots phenomenon when it was exhibited on the circuit of Spanish-language movie theaters spread throughout the Southwest.

For filmmakers, a nod for the National Film Registry is both literally and figuratively equivalent to cinematic immortality. With a staggering 50% of all America films made before 1950 considered lost due to decomposition, film preservation is essential to maintaining our cinematic heritage, and in addition to being considered preeminent works of America filmmaking, films selected for the National Film Registry will be preserved for posterity at the Library of Congress' Packard Campus of the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center in Virginia.



Take Two Show

The first Chicano movie is added to the National Film Registry – Dec 23, 2014

