



## Ex-voto for Three Souls

Director: Diego Rivera Kohn, Canada/Mexico, 2008, 45 minutes

In Mexico, many men and women live within the fragility of a precarious existence, hoping for a miracle to change their destiny. But for miracles to occur, one must stand firm in one's beliefs, despite life's uncertain outcome.

*Ex-voto for Three Souls* weaves together the stories of three people who share a deep reliance on faith as they wait for a miracle to unfold. Cristian, a young man literally trying to fight his way out of poverty, places every hope in winning a championship title that will establish him as a professional boxer. Meanwhile, eighty year-old María-Teresa searches deep within herself for the faith to enlighten her doctors as they prepare for her surgery to prevent another heart attack. Luis, the fisherman, serenely awaits the end of food shortages and for fish to finally succumb to his net.

With a languid mise-en-scene reminiscent of a Frederick Wiseman film and brilliant transitions that would inspire Errol Morris, *Ex-voto for Three Souls* is documentary making at its best. Director Diego Rivera Kohn sweeps the viewer into the mental states of Cristian, María-Teresa, and Luis: three fighters who never abandon the dreams that keep them alive. In this way, the film reveals the transcendental aim in each person's existence: the capacity to imagine that destiny can change.

### DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY

Diego Rivera was born in Mexico City. He completed a bachelor's degree in Audiovisual Media Production in Buenos Aires, Argentina and his studies were subsequently certified by the The Institut

National de l'Audiovisuel in Paris, France. He's attended different courses in documentary film production and visual anthropology imparted by Mexican and foreign institutions. He's produced different short films that have been screened in North and South America, Europe and Asia. Most recently, he completed a Master's degree in Fine Arts at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada.

### FILMMAKER IN ATTENDANCE

### PRECEDED BY:

#### **Slaves**

Directors: Hanna Heilborn & David Aronowitsch, Sweden, 2008, 15 minutes

"We were abducted — my mother, father, sister and me. They killed my parents and separated me from my sister," About tells us in a low voice. *Slaves* is an animated film about nine year old About and fifteen year old Machiek who, like thousands of children, were kidnapped by government-sponsored militia in Sudan. Though their horrific experiences are raw, the children have dreams for the future and when asked what they would like to be when they grow up, they reply; 'teacher' and 'doctor'.

Winner, Best Short Documentary, IDFA

### COMMUNITY PARTNER

