

Luis Moro

Putting Black Cubans on the Map

In an unusual showcase of talent in filmmaking, Luis Moro is making history. He represents a rare breed of Black Cubans in film bringing a voice to an emerging generation. This creative force of nature with multiple talents is charting a course for artistic success as a filmmaker, actor, writer and producer.

"Love and Suicide"



IN FOCUS: Luis, how did you find yourself becoming an independent film maker?

Moro: I've always loved telling stories, creating art, writing, and performing, but I wasn't born into the film business, or mentored into it. Nobody needs permission to make films, hence I made films. All communicators (writers, photographers, dancers, and painters) are artists. I chose the canvas of film to express my art.

Moro: A great film will become a life of its own and thus far, three of my films continue to grow. You gave me 90 minutes, and I will give you access to a transformation in your life.

IN FOCUS: Tell us a little about your film *Love and Suicide* and what motivated you to tell this story?

Moro: I wanted to tell a story that showed the real Cuba; the real people living their real lives in their real situations and what it's like when some tourists come to Cuba. Though politics is not discussed in the film, you can see with your own eyes the detrimental effects of the current Cuban government and the injudicious results of the U.S. embargo on Cuba. One point the film demonstrates is how we can transform Cuba by allowing the free flow of capitalism and travel to the island.

IN FOCUS: What real issues came with being black and Cuban as you worked in the world of film?

Moro: I was raised in an environment that valued results, relationships, and one's character. I wondered why didn't see any black Latinos on TV, in films or represented in any significant way in any media for that matter. People who work only give breaks to people who work. I get my breaks because I work for it. As Black Latinos, we must contribute, and participate and do whatever it takes to get represented. The same applies to all ethnic communities.

IN FOCUS: What's in the future for Luis Moro?

Moro: My films are getting larger. I'm working on "Whispers like Thunder" - the true story of the first woman to present a case in front of the Supreme Court. She was an American Indian. The case took 64 years to win. This story is one of the most empowering woman's stories I ever read. It needs to be on the big screen. All investors are welcome.

IN FOCUS: What are your proudest achievements as a filmmaker?

Moro: Making *Love & Suicide* in Cuba without the permission of the Cuban government is certainly a wonderful achievement. Getting the full-blessing support, and praise from Buddy Elias, Anne Franks' only living relative after he saw the award winning film "Anne B. Keat" is another proud moment. This film is the story of a female rapper inspired by the diaries of Anne Frank. I co-wrote the award winning rap lyrics for that film.

IN FOCUS: Financing and distribution are big concerns for any filmmaker. How did you overcome those challenges for your films?

Moro: I'm still overcoming them. I'm not sure if that will ever end. Distribution is simply a part of the game of filmmaking and a critical part of any business.

IN FOCUS: Is the film business as hard as people say it is?

Moro: If you love telling stories, if you can live with out a paycheck for months at a time with a family of five kids and still keep going, if you are willing to fail and have a love affair with people telling you no over and over again; if you love staying up all night; if you love to work hard just to get work, then it's not hard. I love doing all that, so to me the film business is really easy.

IN FOCUS: What role does your wife play in your filmmaking process?

Moro: She's a woman who has had five kids. Need I need to say more? Anything we deal with in the film business is easy compared to that. Our life is a production set. She is my sounding board for everything. I ask her for her advice and opinions all the time. Her creative input is priceless and she also has her own singing career. She's a great artist in her own right.

IN FOCUS: Is there anything else we need to know about your career-past, present and future?

Moro: I work hard and I support my family selling DVD's direct on line. Someday, I will be at the next level of filmmaking but I will still sell DVD's directly to the consumer. What I love about the direct relationship with the public is that I can hear directly from audiences what they think about our films.

