

A woman in a tropical costume is the central figure. She wears a headdress made of a silver basket filled with various fruits like oranges, apples, and pineapples, with green leaves on top. She is smiling and looking upwards. She wears a sleeveless dress covered in silver sequins and has her arms outstretched. In the background, a crowd of people is visible, some wearing hats, against a backdrop of stylized mountains and a palm tree.

LATIN AMERICA ON FILM

2.2

FILM AND ITS CONTEXT



- The earliest films ever recorded were in the 1880s in Europe. But film technology improved very fast.
- When people first saw these “moving images”, they were astounded – many ran away in terror!
- Film became an important way of telling stories, especially as they related to social or cultural concerns of a particular time and place.
 - Can you think of any films today that speak to our society’s social or cultural concerns?



LATIN AMERICA ON FILM

- Let's think back to the map provided in every Panagra ad. What message is this map trying to tell us? How does it connect to previous readings we have done in class?
- **Connectedness** – How can film help further this idea of connection, central to Pan Americanism?
 - “Informal empire” – bringing ideas about life, culture, politics, etc. across extended regions. Exporting US beliefs and “American way of life” to Latin America; “understanding” Latin America better.
 - Film language, like all language, is political because is grounded on political, ideological, commercial motivations.

How and why certain films are made, how and why they represent Latin American peoples, cultures, histories.

LATIN AMERICA ON FILM



- Let's watch the following clip from the film *That Night in Rio* (1941). The singer is Carmen Miranda, the first Latin diva in the United States. Miranda was from Brazil, and became a symbol of her country in the US. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KHJLm6WNEv4>
- What is this song "Chica chica boom chic" about? What is the message, how does it represent Latin America, how does it showcase collaboration, and what might be its intended reception?

LATIN AMERICA ON FILM

- Cultural reciprocity – benefits of cultural exchange for economic and political purposes (inviting artists, publishing, etc.)
 - Mutually beneficial, friendly, loyal, peaceful
- Role of mass culture and culture industry - film. **Visual knowledge.**
 - Portuguese-born Brazilian singer Carmen Miranda (1909-1955), first Latin diva. Popularized the samba style of music and dance. Cultural ambassador.
 - Exoticized, joyful, sensual representation of the Latin woman. Body put to work for Pan Americanism.
 - Loved in the US, criticized in Latin America (appropriation/sanitization of lower class and Afro-Brazilian customs).



THE GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY

- Official foreign policy of the US to replace the “big stick” or “dollars for bullets”. Pushed by FDR as a way to create commercial, political and cultural connections based on mutual understanding and not extraction.
- “Your Americanism and mine must be a structure built of confidence, cemented by a sympathy that recognizes only equality and fraternity” (1933).
- Why? Great Depression, need for commerce, untenable anti-US violence in Central America.
- Recognized the **sovereignty** of all countries (rather than dependencies) and called for a principle of non-aggression. Answer to G/J expansionism.

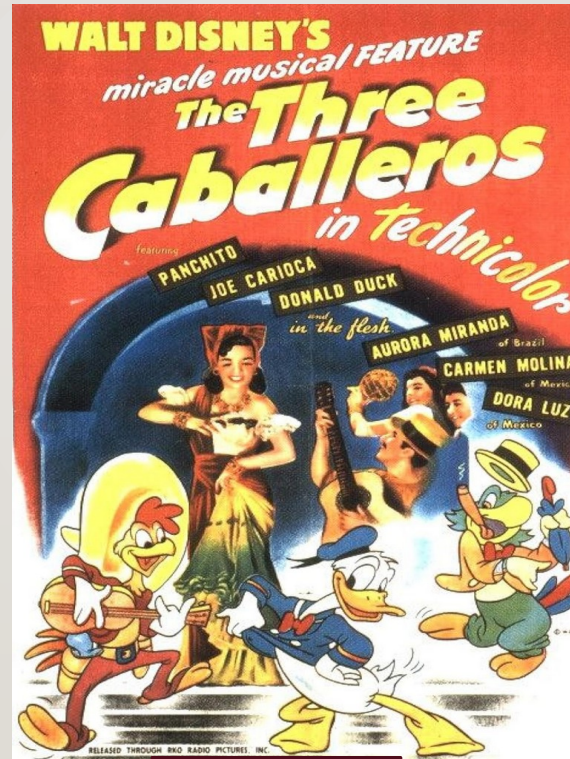


NYT, June 10
1934

THE FILMS



1933



1944



1954

LATIN AMERICA ON FILM



Key points while watching:

- Representation – how are Latin American subjects represented, and how does this fit (or does not fit) within the Good Neighbor Policy?
- Collaboration – how do local Latin American actors and technical staff participate in the making of these films? Why is this significant in the context of good Neighbor?
- Reception – what may be the intended reception of these films? Who are they aimed at? Is their visual language convincing?
- Connection – What connections can you draw to class topics?

FOR NEXT CLASS

- Rent film in Amazon.
- Write a reflection for homework.
- Collecting 3-4 notebooks today. If you hand it in, write your reflection in a separate piece of paper and then paste it.