



13th ANNUAL
MENDOCINO FILM FESTIVAL
June 1-3, 2018

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Images available upon request

The 13th Annual Mendocino Film Festival announces a retrospective screening of the sweeping saga *Mi Familia (My Family)*, a 1995 independent American drama directed and co-written by Oscar-nominated director Gregory Nava (*El Norte*). Nava will be on hand in Mendocino to discuss the film with festival audiences, along with the film's stars Jimmy Smits and Esai Morales. *Mi Familia* also stars Edward James Olmos, Constance Marie, and Jennifer Lopez in her first major film role.

The film will be shown at 11:00 a.m. Friday, June 1 at Crown Hall in Mendocino, with a Q&A with the director and actors after the show.

The movie depicts three generations of the Mexican-American Sanchez family with humanity, wit, and grace. The narrative begins with the journey on foot of patriarch José, from Mexico to California, and his subsequent marriage to Maria. The Sanchez family settles in East Los Angeles during the 1920s. Narrated by their son Paco, an aspiring writer, *Mi Familia* explores the triumphs and tragedies of an immigrant family making their way in the United States. Entertainment Weekly called *Mi Familia* "uplifting, life-affirming," and "unshakable in its inspirational intensity," and the film today is timelier than ever.

"*Mi Familia* was blessed with probably the most incredible ensemble of Latino actors ever put on screen: Jimmie Smits, Esai Morales, Edward James Olmos, Jennifer Lopez, Constance Marie, Elpidia Carrillo, and many more," Nava says. "as director, it was a joy to work with these amazing talents. To have this celebratory screening in Mendocino and appear with two of the great actors whose memorable performances helped propel My Family into being the classic it

is—Jimmie Smits and Esai Morales, is a wonderful honor. I can't wait for the screening—the audience in Mendocino is in for a real treat.”

When the film was released, Nava received kudos for the authenticity of the all-Latino cast. The story focused on a Mexican-American family, yet its themes are universal.

“Jimmy Smits gives one of his greatest performances in *Mi Familia*. Before the film was released we had a test screening in East L.A. and it was filled with tattooed gang members. We were terrified about how this tough crowd would respond to the film. In Jimmie’s emotional scene with Elpedia Carrillo after their love scene, he brought this hardened audience to tears. They said afterwards that he expressed what they all feel. This scene has been bringing audiences to tears ever since. Jimmie is a master.”

Roger Ebert said of *Mi Familia*: “Their story is told in images of startling beauty and great overflowing energy; it is rare to hear so much laughter from an audience that is also sometimes moved to tears. Few movies like this get made because few filmmakers have the ambition to open their arms wide and embrace so much life. This is the great American story, told again and again, of how our families came to this land and tried to make it better for their children.”

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL:

The 13th Annual Mendocino Film Festival, June 1-3, will screen 55 films from 18 countries, including documentaries, shorts, animated films, California premieres, a children’s program and many Sundance selections in multiple venues on the ruggedly picturesque Mendocino Coast of northern California.

The Mendocino Film Festival has established a reputation for presenting riveting, thought-provoking and award-winning independent and international films. The festival draws increasing numbers of filmmakers and avid attendees from around the world, while maintaining its commitment to the local community. Featuring a varied line-up of films, panels, and special events, the festival offers a unique opportunity to meet filmmakers and film aficionados in the intimate and strikingly beautiful setting of seaside Mendocino and Fort Bragg, California.

Ticket sales are open and tickets are selling briskly. Purchase tickets early, as many events sell out in advance. For more information, including this year’s complete program, visit www.MendocinoFilmFestival.org

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