



# This excellent documentary about Omara Portuondo will open the new edition of the GuadaLAjara Film Festival



An image from the documentary "Omara". (GLAFF)

BY SERGIO BURSTEIN | STAFF WRITER AND ASSISTANT EDITOR

SEP 28, 2022 6:20 PM PT

In Southern California, Hispanic Heritage Month is full of events related to Latino culture, and the world of cinema is no exception. A few days ago, we announced the holding of [a one-day mini-festival](#), organized by the association NewFilmmakers LA, which was completely dedicated to the presentation of short films made by Hispanics; And just a few hours ago, we presented you with an analysis of the best titles that will be available at [the 2022 edition of Hola México Film Festival](#), which will take place between October 2 and 10 in different auditoriums in our city.

But, before this, the 12th edition of an event that was known until recently as FICG in LA (Guadalajara International Film Festival in Los Angeles), but which now bears the name of GuadaLAjara Film Festival (GLAFF), and that in addition to recovering some of the outstanding films of the most recent edition of the original event in Jalisco, has been paying particular attention to American productions from Latin minds.

In this way, the current celebration of the three-day festival, which begins this Thursday, is headed on its opening day (that is, tomorrow) by a documentary that, despite being of local origin, is mostly spoken in English and has a deeply international character, because it portrays the life and experiences of one of the most acclaimed and beloved Cuban singers of all time.

And it is that "Omara", the film to which we refer, is neither more nor less than Mrs. Portuondo, also known as "The Bride of Feeling" for the immense capacity she has had to transmit feelings through her voice to throughout seven uninterrupted decades. The exceptional singer is, of course, Cuban, and at 91 years of age, she still lives in Havana, although she frequently travels to different places on the planet, since, as she herself has said, she plans to die on stage. .

The documentary by Cuban-American filmmaker Hugo Pérez ("Once Upon a Time in Uganda") takes us precisely through different cities and countries -including Mexico City and Tokyo- to show the devotion generated by an artist who, in addition to her obvious interpretive qualities, it is tremendously charismatic and funny. Beyond a brief reference to the situation of discontent of a part of the Cuban population that occurred after the triumph of the Revolution -and that, among other things, caused a long separation between Omara and her sister Haydée, with whom she headed the Quartet d'Aida throughout the '50s-, there is no political comment.

But the typical strategy of the 'talking heads', with declarations both of their own and of their collaborators who are still alive, is enlivened with the incorporation of old interviews, archival material of undoubted value, careful and at the same time entertaining recounts of the career of a singer who was rediscovered worldwide thanks to the Buena Vista Social Club project, various and striking shots of her recent trips and, of course, details of the well-deserved recognition that she herself has been receiving in the United States, such as the Award for Musical Excellence that was given to him by the Latin Recording Academy during the week dedicated to the 2019 edition of the Latin Grammy.

"Omara" will be screened on September 29 at 8 pm at The Theater, an auditorium located inside the ACE Hotel (929 S Broadway, Los Angeles, CA 90015). Proof of vaccination is required to enter. You can purchase tickets [here](#).

ENTERTAINMENT

CINEMA



Serge Burstein

[Twitter](#) [E-mail](#)

He writes entertainment articles for the Los Angeles Times en Español and previously did so for all the print editions of HOY Los Angeles. Previously, he worked as a contributor to the newspaper La Opinion. He began his journalistic career as a writer and then editor of the entertainment supplement "Visto & Bueno", published by the newspaper El Comercio de Lima, where he also did film reviews.