



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Public Library

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Documentary Film “Al Otro Lado” Looks at Illegal Immigration, Drug Trafficking and Border Music

Free Film will be Screened at Central Library on July 26

SAN DIEGO – The City of San Diego Public Library and the San Diego Latino Film Festival will screen the documentary film “Al Otro Lado” on Wednesday, July 26. This screening will take place at 6:30 p.m., in the third floor auditorium of the Central Library, located at 820 E St., in downtown San Diego. This event is free and open to the public. “Al Otro Lado” was an Official Selection of the Tribeca Film Festival.

“Al Otro Lado” (To the Other Side) tells the human story behind illegal immigration and drug trafficking between the U.S. and Mexico through the eyes of Magdiel, a 23-year-old fisherman and aspiring composer who dreams of a better life. For people south of the border, the “other side” is the dream of an impossibly rich United States, where even menial jobs can support families and whole communities that have been left behind. For people north of the border, “Al Otro Lado” sheds light on harsh choices that their neighbors to the south often face because of economic crisis.

In Natalia Almada’s documentary the border is a place where one people’s dreams collide with another people’s politics, and the 200-year-old tradition of *corrido* music vibrantly chronicles it all. In fact, if you really want to understand what is happening on the U.S.-Mexico border, listen to the *corridos*, troubadour-like ballads that have become the voice of people whose views are rarely heard in mainstream media.

In “Al Otro Lado” the fantasy of the “American Dream” and the economic crisis that drives thousands across the border looking for work has landed Magdiel at an impossible crossroads in his life. A fourth-generation fisherman with aspirations for a home of his own, a car, and an education for his younger sister, he must pick a road if he is to realize his goals—to become a drug trafficker like many of his friends, or to cross the border illegally to the United States. Magdiel lives in Sinaloa, the drug capital of Mexico, where he can no longer subsist on the shrimp that have been depleted by global demands and poor fishing practices. He is also a self-taught composer. Reflecting the life around him, Magdiel sings of fishermen who have turned their *pangas* (fishing boats) into drug-running boats and made the treacherous journey to deliver the merchandise to the “gringos.”

For more information, call the Central Library at 619-236-5800 or visit the Library on the City’s Web site at www.sandiego.gov/public-library.

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Since 1988, POV has brought the best of independent point-of-view documentaries to a national audience, featuring the work of America’s most innovative documentary filmmakers to build new communities in conversation about today’s most pressing social issues. “Al Otro Lado” is scheduled to debut on national public television on Aug. 1, 2006.