



FESTIVAL DE CANNES

OFFICIAL SELECTION

COMPETITION

# CHE

Directed by  
Steven Soderbergh

---

**CHE - PART 1**

AND

**CHE - PART 2**

---

**Country of origin:** US / France / Spain • **Year of production:** 2008

**Running time:** PART 1 - 137min • PART 2 - 131min

**Ratio:** 1.85 • **Sound:** Dolby 5.1 • **Production:** Laura Bickford Productions / Morena Films

A Wild Bunch and Telecinco Presentation of a Laura Bickford/Morena Films Production

## INTERNATIONAL PRESS

### THE PR CONTACT

CANNES OFFICE:  
All Suites Garden Studio  
All Suites Residence  
12 rue Latour Maubourg  
06400

Contact numbers, effective only on May 13 - 27:

PHIL SYMES	cell 06 16 78 85 17
RONALDO MOURAO	cell 06 16 02 80 85
VIRGINIA GARCIA	cell 06 34 27 85 51
EMMANUELLE BOUDIER	cell 06 34 28 85 21
	cell 06 34 29 84 87

[festival@theprcontact.com](mailto:festival@theprcontact.com)

## INTERNATIONAL SALES

wild bunch

CANNES SALES OFFICE:  
4 La Croisette, 2nd floor  
06400  
Phone +33 (0) 4 93 99 44 21

VINCENT MARAVAL cell +33 6 11 91 23 93  
[vmaraval@wildbunch.eu](mailto:vmaraval@wildbunch.eu)

GAEL NOUAILLE cell +33 6 21 23 04 72  
[gnouaille@wildbunch.eu](mailto:gnouaille@wildbunch.eu)

LAURENT BAUDENS / CAROLE BARATON  
cell +33 6 20 36 77 72  
[cbaraton@wildbunch.eu](mailto:cbaraton@wildbunch.eu)

SILVIA SIMONUTTI cell +33 6 20 74 95 08  
[ssimonutti@wildbunch.eu](mailto:ssimonutti@wildbunch.eu)

To download high resolution images please see  
the PRESS section at [www.wildbunch.biz](http://www.wildbunch.biz)

**“I was drawn to Che as a subject for a movie (or two) not only because his life reads like an adventure story, but because I am fascinated by the technical challenges that go along with implementing any large-scale political idea. I wanted to detail the mental and physical demands these two campaigns required, and illustrate the process by which a man born with an unshakable will discovers his own ability to inspire and lead others.”**

- STEVEN SODERBERGH

# CHE - PART 1

## SYNOPSIS

On November 26, 1956, Fidel Castro sails to Cuba with eighty rebels. One of those rebels is Ernesto "Che" Guevara, an Argentine doctor who shares a common goal with Fidel Castro - to overthrow the corrupt dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista.

Che proves indispensable as a fighter, and quickly grasps the art of guerrilla warfare. As he throws himself into the struggle, Che is embraced by his comrades and the Cuban people. The Argentine tracks Che's rise in the Cuban Revolution, from doctor to commander to revolutionary hero.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1952, General Fulgencio Batista orchestrated a coup in Cuba, took control of the presidency, and suspended free elections. Although his corrupt dictatorship was backed by a 40,000-man army, a young lawyer named Fidel Castro tried to incite a popular rebellion by attacking the Moncada barracks on July 26, 1953. The attack failed, and Castro spent two years in prison before going into exile in Mexico.

Meanwhile, a young Argentine idealist named Ernesto Guevara had become involved in political activity in Guatemala. In 1954, when the elected government of Jacobo Árbenz was overthrown in a CIA-organized military operation, Guevara escaped to Mexico. Following up a contact made in Guatemala, he sought out a group of exiled Cuban revolutionaries.

July 13, 1955 marked a quiet yet momentous event in the history of the Cuban Revolution. In a modest apartment in Mexico City, Ernesto Guevara was introduced to Fidel Castro by Fidel's younger brother, Raul. Guevara immediately enlisted in a guerrilla mission to overthrow the Cuban dictator. The Cubans nicknamed the young rebel 'Che', a popular form of address in Argentina.

On November 26, 1956, Fidel Castro sailed to Cuba with eighty rebels – only twelve of them survived. One of these was Che, who had joined the group as company doctor. Che quickly grasped the art of guerrilla warfare and proved indispensable as a fighter. As he threw himself into the struggle, he was embraced by his comrades and by the Cuban people.

CHE - PART 1 tracks Che's rise in the Cuban Revolution, from doctor to Rebel Army Commander to revolutionary hero.

## ABOUT THE FILM

“Forty years after his death, there are many reasons why Che remains a potent symbol today,” explains Laura Bickford, one of the producers of Steven Soderbergh’s CHE - PART 1. “He’s clearly an image of youthful rebellion and idealism and I think those two things are eternal, timeless. We aren’t interested in the current politics in Cuba. We’re filmmakers making a movie about a specific period of time seen from Che’s point of view.

“We’ve talked to everybody on every side and all of our research went into the script. We’ll never make everybody happy. It’s impossible to get every detail exact. We spent three years researching what eventually became CHE - PART 2. The original idea was that we would explore one part of Che’s life in great detail. What we found was that by just doing PART 2, you didn’t understand the context in which he made the decision to go to Bolivia.

“When we decided to add Cuba and New York and began working on the structure, it just kept getting bigger and bigger. That’s when we realized we needed to make two movies.

“When Benicio and I first became interested in Che and were approaching various writers, Peter Buchman, who had written “ALEXANDER”, was recommended to us. Peter spent a year reading all of the books in preparation for writing the screenplay. When producing “TRAFFIC” became a reality, we were sidetracked for a few years. When we came back to the project, Steven had agreed to direct the film. It was Steven who wanted to look at Cuba and New York and re-examine Bolivia.

“One of the biggest difficulties for Steven and Benicio in terms of the screenplay was that we had so much information and we’d met so many people who had told us their amazing stories,” continues Bickford. “How to condense things yet still tell this sweeping story and make it feel real was extremely challenging.

“Every writer in town wanted to help Steven write his version but it would have taken them at least a year to get up to speed. Then Peter called to remind me that he had already done all the research. I was very grateful. He was absolutely brilliant in helping us to structure the movie.”

Recalls Buchman: “I remember that when I called Laura five years or so after I had done the research, I told her that if they just wanted a writer to sit in a room with Steven and brainstorm I’d be happy to have him use me as a sounding board. That was two and a half years ago. I flew to New York and met with him and Benicio. My biggest issue with doing just Bolivia was that it presents a tragic ending to a story that I wanted to know more about. I felt it didn’t have enough of a sense of loss because we didn’t really know what came before.

“I went away and wrote a single script with three storylines: Che’s life and the Cuban revolution in one, his fall in another and in between, the trip to New York to speak at the United Nations.

“The one disadvantage of doing a single movie with that much story is that whenever you have to condense time you start distorting history. We all knew there was a lot at stake with the material. I always try to stay true to the spirit of history but in this case there are so many people on both sides of the fence who are still passionate about this subject.

“Steven thought we weren’t doing each major story justice in a single script and said he had an idea for two movies. Because the United Nations was about to undergo a major renovation, we went ahead and shot the scenes of Che speaking to the General Assembly in 1964. Laura turned to me and said, “Isn’t this a celebratory moment?” and I said I’d have thought it was a great moment too - if I didn’t have to go home now and write two screenplays!

“I had to rethink the whole structure of the Cuban story because initially I had written such a condensed version of it. I had to go back to the history and this was a process that Steven and Benicio and Laura were very involved with.”

## 7 YEARS OF RESEARCH

“The process of playing Che was very different for me than other movies I have made,” allows producer and star Benicio Del Toro. “In this case, as a real person, you start with the man himself and what he wrote. This led us to seven years of research into what other people wrote about him. Even so, I always returned to what he had written himself.”

“Over the past seven years,” says Bickford, “we’ve gone to Cuba and Bolivia and Paris and Miami - pretty much everywhere there was somebody on either side of the story who had something to tell us. One of the amazing things about making a story about the Cuban Revolution is that so many people are still alive who fought in it. If you do a story about the American Revolution, the French Revolution, the Mexican Revolution, there’s nobody left to talk to.

“There’s a huge amount of documentation and photos. The rebels were pretty good at documenting their experience.

“There are three men who met Che during the Cuban Revolution who followed him to Bolivia and survived: Pombo, Urbano and Benigno. All three are in both PART 1 and PART 2. We’ve interviewed them individually and occasionally Pombo and Urbano together about what happened to them in Cuba and Bolivia. Urbano was an advisor in Spain. What that did for us, and what it did for the actors, was infuse them with a sense of reality that you can only get from someone who was there. The truth is you could make an entire film about each of them; each one has his own story.

“The information the actors needed from them was very specific. Details like: how would they hold their guns in a certain situation? How did they know how to get from here to there? Would they have deployed a leapfrog formation or would they have gone through the bushes? Very specific tactical information, and it really energized the cast. In our group of actors portraying this piece of the Cuban Revolution and this piece of Che’s life, we have the whole political spectrum. Every single political perspective on the Cuban issue is represented by somebody on this movie.”

## ABOUT THE FILMING

“I don’t think we could have made these two movies with the amount of money we had had he (Soderbergh) not been directing. The speed with which we needed to move was a big challenge every day for the cast and crew,” says Bickford.

It was always Soderbergh’s intention to film as much as possible using only natural light. Most of the action of both films takes place outdoors. In the end, lamps were used only very occasionally.

One way that the production was able to cut down on time was through Soderbergh’s use of an innovative new camera: the RED. Initially they had hoped to be able to use it, but the camera wasn’t available on time. Recalls Bickford, “We had a very happy accident because our Spanish work papers and visas hadn’t come through on schedule. Steven and Benicio and I were grounded in Los Angeles for a week and that week they called to say the prototype was ready.”

The RED camera is a high performance digital cine camera with the quality of 35mm film and convenience of pure digital. The body was designed for flexibility and functionality. It’s a streamlined package and weighs around 9 lbs.

“Shooting with RED is like hearing The Beatles for the first time,” says Soderbergh. “RED sees the way I see. Someday I hope to find out exactly how they made something so technologically advanced seem so organic, so beautifully attuned to that most natural of phenomena - light. But for now I’m just glad I’ve got my hands on it because it actually made the films better.”

## ABOUT THE FILM MAKERS

Director **STEVEN SODERBERGH** won an Academy Award® for Best Director for his 2000 ensemble drama “TRAFFIC.” He had earned dual Best Director Oscar® nominations that year, also receiving one for “ERIN BROCKOVICH,” starring Julia Roberts in her Oscar®-winning performance. Soderbergh had earlier garnered an Academy Award® nomination for Best Original Screenplay for “SEX, LIES, AND VIDEOTAPE,” his feature film directorial debut, which also won the Palme d’Or at the 1989 Cannes Film Festival.

CHE - PART 1 is Soderbergh’s eighteenth film, following, amongst others, “OCEAN’S THIRTEEN”, “THE GOOD GERMAN”, “BUBBLE”, “OCEAN’S TWELVE”, “SOLARIS”, “FULL FRONTAL”, “OCEAN’S ELEVEN”, “THE LIMEY”, “OUT OF SIGHT”, “GRAY’S ANATOMY”, “SCHIZOPOLIS”, “THE UNDERNEATH”, “KING OF THE HILL” and “KAFKA”.

In addition, Soderbergh has produced or executive produced a wide range of features, including Todd Haynes’ “I’M NOT THERE”, Tony Gilroy’s “MICHAEL CLAYTON” and Marina Zenovich’s documentary “ROMAN POLANSKI: WANTED AND DESIRED”. Further producer or executive producer credits include Gregory Jacobs’ “WIND CHILL” and “CRIMINAL”, George Clooney’s “GOOD NIGHT AND GOOD LUCK” and “CONFESSIONS OF A DANGEROUS MIND”, Richard Linklater’s “A SCANNER DARKLY”, Rob Reiner’s “RUMOR HAS IT”, Stephen Gaghan’s “SYRIANA”, Lodge Kerrigan’s “KEANE”, Todd Haynes’ “FAR FROM HEAVEN”, Christopher Nolan’s “INSOMNIA”, Anthony and Joseph Russo’s “WELCOME TO COLLINWOOD”, Gary Ross’ “PLEASANTVILLE” and Greg Mottola’s “THE DAYTRIPPERS”.

Producer **BENICIO DEL TORO**, who also plays Che, has earned critical acclaim for his poignant and powerful performances throughout his career. Winning an Academy Award® for Best Supporting Actor in Steven Soderbergh’s “TRAFFIC”, his performance also garnered him Golden Globe, Screen Actors Guild, BAFTA, New York Film Critics Circle, National Society of Film Critics, Chicago Film Critics Association, and Silver Bear [Berlin International Film Festival] awards.

Del Toro also earned an Academy Award® nomination for his role in Alejandro Gonzales Inarritu’s “21 GRAMS”, for which he also won the Audience Award for Best Actor at the 2003 Venice International Film Festival. He has also received two Independent Spirit Awards for Best Supporting Actor: for Bryan Singer’s “THE USUAL SUSPECTS” and Julian Schnabel’s “BASQUIAT”. He has most recently appeared in Susanne Bier’s “THINGS WE LOST IN THE FIRE” and Robert Rodriguez’s “SIN CITY”.

Del Toro made his motion picture debut in John Glen’s “LICENCE TO KILL”, opposite Timothy Dalton as James Bond. Subsequent films include Peter Weir’s “FEARLESS”, George Huang’s “SWIMMING WITH SHARKS”, Abel Ferrara’s “THE FUNERAL”, Marco Brambilla’s “EXCESS BAGGAGE”, Terry Gilliam’s “FEAR AND LOATHING IN LAS VEGAS”, Christopher McQuarrie’s “THE WAY OF THE GUN”, Guy Ritchie’s “SNATCH”,

William Friedkin’s “THE HUNTED” and “THE INDIAN RUNNER” and “THE PLEDGE”, both directed by Sean Penn.

Born in Puerto Rico, Del Toro grew up in Pennsylvania. He attended the University of California at San Diego and studied acting at the Stella Adler Conservatory under the tutelage of Arthur Mendoza. He currently resides in Los Angeles.

Producer **LAURA BICKFORD** is the Academy Award® nominated producer of the critically-acclaimed “TRAFFIC”, her first collaboration with Soderbergh and Del Toro. The film earned four out of five Oscars® for which it was nominated.

One of the film industry’s leading producers, Laura Bickford Productions was merged with River Road Entertainment for two years during which time they financed Ang Lee’s multi-award-winning “BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN”, Steven Shainberg’s “FUR: AN IMAGINARY PORTRAIT OF DIANE ARBUS”, starring Nicole Kidman, and Robert Altman’s swan song “A PRAIRIE HOME COMPANION”.

Bickford made her producing debut in 1995 with “CITIZEN X” for HBO Pictures. Based on the true story of Russian serial killer Andrei Chikatila, the film was written and directed by Chris Gerolmo. “CITIZEN X” received a Cable Ace Award for Best Picture and earned multiple Emmy and Golden Globe Award nominations.

Consultant **JON LEE ANDERSON** has been writing for the *New Yorker* since 1998, covering conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan and Lebanon. He has also reported from Liberia, Angola, Colombia, Venezuela, Cuba and Iran, and written numerous profiles of political leaders including Hugo Chavez, Fidel Castro, Augusto Pinochet, King Juan Carlos, Saddam Hussein, Hamid Karzai and Jalal Talabani.

Anderson is also the author of several books, including “Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life”, “The Lion’s Grave: Dispatches From Afghanistan”, “Guerrillas: Journeys in the Insurgent World” and, most recently, “The Fall of Baghdad”.

His biography of Ernesto Che Guevara was the result of five years’ research, three of which he spent in Havana. For the book, Anderson also traveled to Argentina, Bolivia, Mexico, Paraguay, Spain, Sweden, the US and Russia. In 1995, he broke the story, in the *The New York Times*, of the whereabouts of Guevara’s secretly buried remains in Bolivia. “Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life” was first published by Grove Press, New York, and has since been translated into many languages, including Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Swedish, Finnish, Danish, German, Serbo-Croatian, Turkish, and Farsi.

Anderson reported on Central America’s civil wars for *Time* magazine during the 1980s and went on to cover the conflicts in Northern Ireland, Uganda, Western Sahara, Sri Lanka, Burma, Israel and Bosnia. His work has been published in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Harper’s*, *The Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, *El Pais* and other journals.



## CAST

### **BENICIO DEL TORO (CHE)**

SIN CITY (2005), 21 GRAMS (2003), TRAFFIC (2000), BASQUIAT (1996), THE USUAL SUSPECTS (1995)

### **DEMIÁN BICHIR (FIDEL CASTRO)**

SIN NOTICIAS DE DIOS (2001), SEXO, PUDOR Y LÁGRIMAS (1999) AKA SEX, SHAME & TEARS, PERDITA DURANGO (1997)

### **SANTIAGO CABRERA (CAMILLO CIENFUEGOS)**

HEROES (2006-2007) (TV), GOAL II: LIVING THE DREAM (2007)

### **ELVIRA MINGUEZ (CELIA SANCHEZ)**

GRIMM (2003), THE RECKONING (2003), THE DANCER UPSTAIRS (2002)

### **JORGE PERUGORRÍA (JOAQUIN)**

REINAS (2005) AKA QUEENS, FRESA Y CHOCOLATE (1994) AKA STRAWBERRY AND CHOCOLATE

### **EDGAR RAMIREZ (CIRO REDONDO)**

VANTAGE POINT (2008), THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM (2007), DOMINO (2005)

### **VICTOR RASUK (ROGELIO ACEVEDO)**

ADRIFT IN MANHATTAN (2007), EMIL (2006), BONNEVILLE (2006), LORDS OF DOGTOWN (2005), RAISING VICTOR VARGAS (2002)

### **ARMANDO RIESCO (BENIGNO)**

### **CATALINA SANDINO MORENO (ALEIDA GUEVARA)**

LOVE IN THE TIME OF CHOLERA (2007), THE HOTTEST STATE (2006), FAST FOOD NATION (2006), PARIS, JE T'AIME (2006), MARIA FULL OF GRACE (2004)

SELECTED AWARDS FOR MARIA FULL OF GRACE - ACADEMY AWARD® FOR BEST ACTRESS - NOMINATED, 2005 • SCREEN ACTORS GUILD - OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE BY A FEMALE ACTOR IN A LEADING ROLE - NOMINATED, 2005 • INDEPENDENT SPIRIT - BEST FEMALE LEAD - WON, 2004 • AUDIENCE AWARD - SUNDANCE FF - WON, 2004 • SILVER BEAR FOR BEST ACTRESS - BERLIN IFF - WON

### **RODRIGO SANTORO (RAUL CASTRO)**

LOST (2006-2007) (TV), 300 (2006), SCARFACE: THE WORLD IS YOURS (2006), LOVE ACTUALLY (2003), CHARLIE'S ANGELS: FULL THROTTLE (2003)

### **UNAX UGALDE (LITTLE COWBOY)**

LOVE IN THE TIME OF CHOLERA (2007), SAVAGE GRACE (2007), GOYA'S GHOSTS (2006), ALATRISTE (2006), ROSARIO, TIJERAS (2005), REINAS (2005) AKA QUEENS

### **YUL VÁZQUEZ (ALEJANDRO RAMIREZ)**

AMERICAN GANGSTER (2007), MUSIC WITHIN (2007), WAR OF THE WORLDS (2005), BAD BOYS II (2003), THE SOPRANOS (2002) (TV), TRAFFIC (2000), RUNAWAY BRIDE (1999), FRESH (1994), THE MAMBO KINGS (1992)

## CREW

**DIRECTOR STEVEN SODERBERGH**

**PRODUCER LAURA BICKFORD**

**PRODUCER BENICIO DEL TORO**

**EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS**

**ÁLVARO AUGUSTÍN** - Telecinco

PAN'S LABYRINTH (2006), THE ORPHANAGE (2007)

**BELÉN ATIENZA** - Telecinco

**FREDERIC W. BROST**

**GREGORY JACOBS**

**ALVARO LONGORIA** - Morena Films

**SCREENWRITER PETER BUCHMAN**

ERAGON (2006) (SCREENPLAY), JURASSIC PARK III (2001)

Inspired by THE CUBAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR  
by Ernesto Che Guevara

**DP PETER ANDREWS**

**PRODUCTION DESIGNER ANTXÓN GÓMEZ**

SALVADOR (2006), LA MALA EDUCACIÓN (2004) AKA BAD EDUCATION, HABLE CON ELLA (2002) AKA TALK TO HER, TODO SOBRE MI MADRE (1999) AKA ALL ABOUT MY MOTHER

**COSTUME DESIGNER BINA DAIGELER**

VOLVER (2006), PRINCESAS (2005), FRÁGIL (2004), IMAGINING ARGENTINA (2003), GRIMM (2003), DESEO (2002) AKA DESIRE, THE DANCER UPSTAIRS (2002), NOVIOS (1999), TODO SOBRE MI MADRE (1999) AKA ALL ABOUT MY MOTHER

**COMPOSER ALBERTO IGLESIAS**

THE KITE RUNNER (2007), VOLVER (2006), THE CONSTANT GARDENER (2005), LA MALA EDUCACIÓN (2004) AKA BAD EDUCATION, COMANDANTE (2003), HABLE CON ELLA (2002) AKA TALK TO HER, THE DANCER UPSTAIRS (2002), LUCÍA Y EL SEXO (2001) AKA SEX AND LUCIA, TODO SOBRE MI MADRE (1999) AKA ALL ABOUT MY MOTHER, LOS AMANTES DEL CÍRCULO POLAR (1998) AKA THE LOVERS OF THE ARCTIC CIRCLE, THE CHAMBERMAID ON THE TITANIC (1997), CARNE TRÉMULA (1997) AKA LIVE FLESH, TIERRA (1996), LA FLOR DE MI SECRETO (1995) AKA THE FLOWER OF MY SECRET  
SELECTED AWARDS: 2008 - ACADEMY AWARDS® - ORIGINAL SCORE, THE KITE RUNNER - NOMINATED; 2008 • GOLDEN GLOBES - BEST SCORE, THE KITE RUNNER - NOMINATED; 2007 • ACADEMY AWARDS® - ORIGINAL SCORE, THE CONSTANT GARDENER - NOMINATED; 2006 • CANNES FF - PRIX FRANCE MUSIQUE, THE CONSTANT GARDENER - WON; 2006 • EUROPEAN FILM AWARDS - BEST SCORE, VOLVER - WON; 2004 • EUROPEAN FILM AWARDS - BEST SCORE, BAD EDUCATION - NOMINATED; 2002 • VENICE FF - ROTA SOUNDTRACK, THE DANCER UPSTAIRS - WON

# CHE - PART 2

## SYNOPSIS

After the Cuban Revolution, Che is at the height of his fame and power. Then he disappears, re-emerging incognito in Bolivia, where he organizes a small group of Cuban comrades and Bolivian recruits to start the great Latin American Revolution.

The story of the Bolivian campaign is a tale of tenacity, sacrifice, idealism, and of guerrilla warfare that ultimately fails, bringing Che to his death. Through this story, we come to understand how Che remains a symbol of idealism and heroism that lives in the hearts of people around the world.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

CHE - PART 2 finds Che at the height of his fame and power after the Cuban Revolution. More than a soldier, Che is a glamorous figure on the world stage. Suddenly, he disappears, seemingly off the face of the earth. Why has he left Cuba? Where has he gone? Is he even alive?

Che re-emerges incognito in Bolivia, unrecognizable and operating entirely underground. He organizes a small group of Cuban comrades and Bolivian recruits to begin the great Latin American Revolution.

Che's Bolivian campaign is a tale of tenacity, sacrifice, idealism, and guerrilla warfare that ultimately fails, bringing Che to his death. Through this story, we come to understand how Che remains a symbol of idealism and heroism that lives in the hearts of people around the world.



## ABOUT THE STORY

Discussing CHE - PART 1 and CHE - PART 2, producer Laura Bickford says, PART 2 is more of a thriller, while PART 1 is more of an action film with big battle scenes.

“This is a project that Benicio, Laura and Steven have been working on for ten years,” relates screenwriter Peter Buchman. “Benicio has been intimately involved with the development of the screenplay from the beginning and because his focus was initially on the Bolivian side of the story, he’s been an invaluable resource for me.”

“I’ve never been to Bolivia,” adds Buchman, “so I had to get what background and information I could from Che’s diaries and from Benicio and Laura who had been there and done interviews before I was involved in the project. I read sources from just about every side of the issue, including some declassified documents from the State Department about Che’s trip to New York, and memos from the time he was in Bolivia. We needed to track what the United States knew - and when - about Che’s involvement in Bolivia.”

“We talked to everybody on every side of the political spectrum,” says Bickford. “We met the Bolivian captain who captured Che as well as the three Cubans (Urbano, Benigno and Pombo) who went with him to Bolivia and escaped back home after his execution. Urbano, who lives in Cuba came to Spain as an advisor.”

Adds Buchman, “There were already different rebel groups operating in several Latin American countries. Che’s idea was to go to Bolivia, the center of the continent, and establish an umbrella organization, a training ground for these groups. They would train in Bolivia for six months to a year and then determine when to initiate hostilities. They didn’t expect to be discovered as soon as they were.”

“Che didn’t pick Bolivia, Fidel did,” explains Jon Lee Anderson, author of the definitive biography of Che Guevara and the man responsible for finding Che’s remains in Bolivia and returning them to Cuba.

“It was possible that the Foco Theory, the theory of a small group of men beginning a guerrilla front, fighting and securing some liberated territory and training other internationalists from surrounding countries, would work there. The front would radiate outwards to Peru, to Argentina, to Chile, Brazil and so on.

“The Peruvian guerrilla group, which had been backed by the Cubans, had just failed, the Argentine Foco led by Jorge Masetti had failed a year and a half earlier and its members been routed, and the Venezuelans did not want him to come there. Fidel sent word to Che that he had spoken with Mario Monje, the head of the Bolivian Communist Party and that he agreed to Che going there. On the basis of that agreement, Che secretly returned to Cuba to organize and select men to take with him to Bolivia.”

“Che arrived in Bolivia as a Uruguayan businessman, with a fake passport and his hairline completely changed. But his clandestine arrival turned out not to be such a secret after all,” continues Anderson. “It was beginning to be an open

secret that he was in Bolivia. When Regis Debray, a recognized international leftist close to Fidel Castro, was arrested in Bolivia it became clear that he had been with Che.”

One of the first problems Che encountered in Bolivia was that Mario Monje withdrew the promised support of the Bolivian Communist Party. According to Anderson, “Monje was aligned with Moscow and opposed to what he saw as splinter radicals, possibly pro-Chinese, who were aided and abetted by Cuba to bring revolution to his country. He broke with Che at their meeting and demanded that those Bolivians who were with him leave the party. Historically, the great shame of the Bolivian Communist Party is that it did not provide them with its urban support network, which was extensive and nation-wide. Suddenly, Che and his group were on their own.

“Without real warning, they were forced to engage in battle much earlier than they had planned and without the Bolivians they had thought would be joining them. They had lost the urban network that was supposed to supply them with food and recruits if necessary. Adding to their difficulty was the fact that they were in an area that was much tougher and more isolated than they had anticipated. It was beastly hot in the summer and miserable with cold and wet in the winter.

“I’ve been there and the inhospitable terrain is made up of great sloping vistas with treeless expanses where you can see people from miles away,” continues Anderson. “It was very difficult to hide. There were very few inhabitants and those few had very little political consciousness. The people who were more politically minded were the miners but they were in a different part of the country.”

“It didn’t help,” adds Buchman “that when President Barrientos found out Che’s army was made up mostly of Cubans, he called it an invasion of Cuban Communists, a part of the international Communist movement. This was frightening news to the locals on whose support they had counted. The people had fled from the villages and they were going through one ambush after the other, betrayed by the locals.

“They were forced to go on the run before training was completed, before they had a chance to build up a support network,” relates Anderson.

“Also, Che had severe asthma and guerrilla life exacerbated it dreadfully. There were times when he was terribly weak and had to be carried. His body had wasted away; by the end he was really emaciated.

“Once the rear guard was wiped out, only one column remained. From then on, their only option was hooking up with the miners in the Andes and getting out of Bolivia. They were hanging on by a very slim thread.

“By the time they had arrived at La Higuera and the Yuro Ravine they were demoralized. They had been watching their comrades and close friends being killed in front of them day after day, week after week. It was Che’s incredible willpower that kept them going a lot of the time.”

## CAST

### **BENICIO DEL TORO (CHE)**

SIN CITY (2005), 21 GRAMS (2003), TRAFFIC (2000), BASQUIAT (1996), THE USUAL SUSPECTS (1995)

### **CARLOS BARDEM (MOISES GUEVARA)**

LA ZONA (2007), GOYA'S GHOSTS (2006), ALATRISTE (2006) PRINCESAS (2005), JUEGO DE LUNA (2001) AKA LUNA'S GAME, VOLAVÉRUNT (1999), TORRENTE, EL BRAZO TONTO DE LA LEY (1998), PERDITA DURANGO (1997)

### **DEMIÁN BICHIR (FIDEL CASTRO)**

*SEE CHE - PART 1*

### **JOAQUIM DE ALMEIDA (BARRIENTOS)**

BEHIND ENEMY LINES (2001), CAPITÃES DE ABRIL (2000) AKA CAPTAINS OF APRIL, SOSTIENE PEREIRA (1996), DESPERADO (1995), CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER (1994), THE HONORARY CONSUL (1983)

### **EDUARD FERNÁNDEZ (CIRO ALGARANAZ)**

ALATRISTE (2006), EN LA CIUDAD (2003) AKA IN THE CITY, FAUSTO 5.0 (2001)

### **MARC-ANDRÉ GRONDIN (REGIS DEBRAY)**

C.R.A.Z.Y. (2005)

### **ÓSCAR JAENADA (DARIO)**

### **KAHLIL MENDEZ (URBANO)**

### **ELVIRA MÍNGUEZ (CELIA SANCHEZ)**

*SEE CHE - PART 1*

### **MATT DAMON (GUEST APPEARANCE)**

### **JORDI MOLLÀ (CAPT. VARGAS)**

ELIZABETH: THE GOLDEN AGE (2007), THE TULSE LUPER SUITCASES, PARTS 1, 2, 3 (2003/2004), THE TULSE LUPER SUITCASES: ANTWERP (2003), BAD BOYS II (2003), BLOW (2001), SEGUNDA PIEL (1999) AKA SECOND SKIN, NADIE CONOCE A NADIE (1999) AKA NOBODY KNOWS ANYBODY, VOLAVÉRUNT (1999), EL PIANISTA (1998) AKA THE PIANIST, LA FLOR DE MI SECRETO (1995) AKA THE FLOWER OF MY SECRET, HISTORIAS DEL KRONEN (1995) AKA STORIES FROM THE KRONEN, JAMÓN, JAMÓN (1992)

### **RUBÉN OCHANDIANO (ROLANDO)**

*SEE CHE - PART 1*

### **JULIA ORMOND (LISA HOWARD)**

INLAND EMPIRE (2006), THE BARBER OF SIBERIA (1998), SMILLA'S SENSE OF SNOW (1997), SABRINA (1995), FIRST KNIGHT (1995), LEGENDS OF THE FALL (1994), THE BABY OF MÁCON (1993)

### **GASTON PAULS (CIROS BUSTOS)**

NUEVE REINAS (2000) AKA NINE QUEENS, FRONTERA SUR (1998), TERRITORIO COMANCHE (1997) AKA COMANCHE TERRITORY, BEAUTIFUL (1993)

### **ANTONIO PEREDO**

### **JORGE PERUGORRÍA (JOAQUIN)**

*SEE CHE - PART 1*

### **LOU DIAMOND PHILIPPS (MARIO MONJE)**

LAW & ORDER (2006) (TV), 24 (2002) (TV), THE BIG HIT (1998), COURAGE UNDER FIRE (1996), YOUNG GUNS (1988), LA BAMBA (1987)

### **FRANKA POTENTE (TANIA)**

EICHMANN (2007), ROMULUS, MY FATHER (2007), ELEMENTARTEILCHEN (2006) AKA ELEMENTARY PARTICLES, CREEP (2004), THE BOURNE SUPREMACY (2004), THE TULSE LUPER SUITCASES, PART 2 (2004), THE BOURNE IDENTITY (2002), STORYTELLING (2001), BLOW (2001), THE PRINCESS AND THE WARRIOR (2000), ANATOMIE (2000) AKA ANATOMY, RUN, LOLA, RUN (1998)

### **OTHELLO RENSOLI**

### **ARMANDO RIESCO (BENIGNO)**

*SEE CHE - PART 1*

### **RODRIGO SANTORO (RAUL CASTRO)**

*SEE CHE - PART 1*

### **MARK UMBERS (ROTH)**

CASSANDRA'S DREAM (2007), COLOUR ME KUBRICK (2005), LOVE IS THE DEVIL (1998)

### **YUL VÁZQUEZ (ALEJANDRO RAMIREZ)**

*SEE CHE - PART 1*

## CREW

### **DIRECTOR STEVEN SODERBERGH**

### **PRODUCER LAURA BICKFORD**

### **PRODUCER BENICIO DEL TORO**

### **EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS**

#### **ÁLVARO AUGUSTÍN** - Telecinco

PAN'S LABYRINTH (2006), THE ORPHANAGE (2007)

#### **BELÉN ATIENZA** - Telecinco

#### **FREDERIC W. BROST**

#### **GREGORY JACOBS**

#### **ALVARO LONGORIA** - Morena Films

### **SCREENWRITER PETER BUCHMAN**

Inspired by THE BOLIVIAN DIARY by Ernesto Che Guevara

### **PRODUCTION DESIGNER ANTXÓN GÓMEZ**

### **COSTUME DESIGNER BINA DAIGELER**

### **CONSULTANT JON LEE ANDERSON**

### **COMPOSER ALBERTO IGLESIAS**