At once blistering and poetic, the ravages of colonialism cast a dark shadow over the South American landscape in *Embrace of the Serpent*, the third feature by Ciro Guerra. Filmed in stunning black-and-white, *Serpent* centers on Karamakate, an Amazonian shaman and the last survivor of his people, and the two scientists who, over the course of 40 years, build a friendship with him. The film was inspired by the real-life journals of two explorers (Theodor Koch-Grünberg and Richard Evans Schultes) who traveled through the Colombian Amazon during the last century in search of the sacred and difficult-to-find psychedelic Yakruna plant.

**October 6, 8:00- 10:00pm ~ Desde Allá (From Afar), dir. by Lorenzo Vigas**

Wealthy middle-aged Armando lures young men to his home with money. He doesn't want to touch, only watch from a strict distance. He also follows an elderly businessman with whom he seems to have had a traumatic relationship. Armando’s first encounter with street thug Elder is violent, but this doesn’t discourage the lonely man’s fascination with the tough handsome teenager. Financial interest keeps Elder visiting him regularly and an unexpected intimacy emerges. But Armando’s haunted past looms large, and Elder commits the ultimate act of affection on Armando’s behalf. Desde Allá won the prestigious Venice Film Festival: Golden Lion - Best Picture and the Best First Feature at La Havana Film Festival, both in 2015.

**November 3, 8:00- 10:00pm ~ Jauja, dir. Lisandro Alonso**

An astonishingly beautiful and gripping Western starring Viggo Mortensen, *Jauja* begins in remote outpost in Patagonia during the late 1800s. Captain Gunnar Dinesen has come from abroad with his fifteen year-old daughter to take an engineering job with the Argentine army. Being the only female in the area, Ingeborg creates quite a stir among the men. She falls in love with a young soldier, and one night they run away together. When Dinesen realizes what has happened, he decides to venture into enemy territory, against his men’s wishes, to find the young couple. *Jauja* (the name suggests a fabled city of riches sought by European explorers) is the story of a man’s desperate search for his daughter, a solitary quest that takes him to a place beyond time, where the past vanishes and the future has no meaning.

**December 1, 8:00- 10:00pm ~ Ixcanul, dir. Jayro Bustamante**

"Ixcanul" by Jayro Bustamante won the award for debut film at the Berlin Film Festival and is Guatemala’s first Oscar submission. The film tells the story of Maria (María Mercedes Coroy) who is set to marry a much older foreman at the coffee plantation. However, when she learns she is pregnant from another man, she must make many hard decisions.