

Strand Releasing presents

# THE CONDEMNED

A film by Roberto Busó-García

## Starring

**Cristina Rodlo, René Monclova, Axel Anderson,  
Marisé Álvarez, Rocky Venegas, Luz Odilea Font,  
Dolores Pedro, Daisy Granados, José Caro**

**Country of Origin:** Puerto Rico  
**Format:** DCP/Color  
**Sound Format:** Dolby Surround  
**Running Time:** 91 minutes  
**Genre:** Psychological Thriller/Mystery  
Not Rated  
**In Spanish with English Subtitles**

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## **SYNOPSIS**

Ana, the beautiful daughter of a once-famous doctor, travels to the remote town of Rosales, Puerto Rico – her late mother's hometown. It was there that her father met and married her mother and opened his first free clinic for cancer research more than forty years ago. She plans to commemorate her dying father's legacy by converting their family's abandoned mansion into a museum honoring his achievements. With the help of the mansion's devoted caretaker, Ana begins the transformation only to be confronted by the secrets of the past. Her presence is unwelcome by the townspeople and the house itself, awakening dark forces that should have remained forever buried.

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

Inspired by the various ways the ghost story has been explored in literature through the ages, we set out to make a different kind of haunted house film. We strived to deliver an entertaining yet visceral exploration of Puerto Rico's dark present as it was forged by decisions in its colonial past. Using as references such works as Carlos Fuentes' *Aura*, Julio Cortázar's *Casa tomada*, Edith Wharton's ghost stories and Tarkovsky's *Stalker*, we aimed to weave a story about collective denial and coerced collaboration in the Caribbean. We also wanted to find a way to adapt the genre to the place: stress the heat, the isolation and the particular light and colors of this desolate town in Puerto Rico. Thus, while respecting the archetypes (seeing how they themselves became real, specific characters in our context) we had to make a ghost story without fog, smoke or metallic colors.

Besides scaring the audience (like the typical horror/thriller), we sought to create an exercise in tension where we could feel the past coming back to haunt us and to reclaim some sort of revenge. Using real incidents as inspiration (the ghastly experiment of Dr. Cornelius Rhoads, for one), we wove a narrative that constantly tightens the screws on the audience's curiosity, tensing up to an interesting and sad conclusion. A film that entertains and challenges at the same time, shot within the framework of a traditional and elegant style-- and yet, where content and composition are the elements that slowly challenge the establishment, formally.

## **ACTOR BIOGRAPHIES**

### **CRISTINA RODLO**

Born and raised in Torreón, México Cristina Rodlo started her career in the short film "Verano 79" when she was 17 years old. After graduating from high school, she moved to New York City where she studied acting at "The American Musical and Dramatic Academy." There she continued to gain experience in short films and in the independent feature, "Red Hook Black". Her sparkling work in "Los Condenados" marks her first lead in a feature-length film.

### **RENÉ MONCLOVA**

René Monclova is one of Puerto Rico's most popular actors. His comedic characters in television are legendary staples of current Puerto Rican culture while his dramatic turns on stage have cemented his reputation as one of the most talented and multi-faceted actors in the past fifty years. Born into an already famous dramatic family, Mr. Monclova started as an actor and musician early in his career. Aside from his long list of theater and television credits, Monclova has also an extensive list of feature-length credits, including parts in the Oscar-nominated "Lo que le pasó a Santiago" and Sydney Pollack's "Havanah." His striking and memorable turn as Cipriano marks his first leading role in a feature-length film.

### **AXEL ANDERSON**

For more than five decades, Axel Anderson has been one of Puerto Rico's most prolific, most beloved and most successful actors/directors. Born in Germany but raised in Latin America, Mr. Anderson started his acting career as a teenager, performing in Argentina, Colombia and the Dominican Republic. In the 1960s, he settled in Puerto Rico where he quickly became one of the most recognizable leading men in telenovelas as well as a pioneer director of plays and films. Anderson performed in radio, television, theater and film, both in local ("Maruja") and American productions, such as "Bananas" and "The Battle of the Bulge." Axel Anderson is still one of the top actors in Puerto Rico. His powerful turn as Dr. Puttnam in "Los Condenados" permeates every scene of the film.

### **ROCKY VENEGAS**

Known as one of Puerto Rico's best actors, Rocky Venegas has been an award-winning staple of the local theater scene. He has distinguished himself both in dramas and comedies, having played such diverse characters as Hamlet, Oscar Wilde and Robert in *Betrayal*. His work for Producciones Cisne has allowed him to perform at the Kennedy Center and Joseph Papp's Latino Theater Festival in NYC. Venegas also has an interesting trajectory in short films and television, having had parts in *telenovelas*, dramatic series and historical pieces. His creepy and layered turn as Víctor in "Los Condenados" marks his second work in a feature film.

### **LUZ ODILEA FONT**

One of Puerto Rico's legendary actresses from the golden age of radio and television, Luz Odilea Font has acted in hundreds of shows, series and plays. Her dramatic turns in the top rated radio shows and her leads in the successful telenovelas in the sixties and seventies cemented her stature as one of the Island's best known and most regarded dramatic actresses. She also tried her hand in televised comedies for Telemundo as well as turning in memorable theatrical performances in such important plays as "La carreta" and "Cristal roto en el tiempo." Ms. Font returns to the big screen with her chilling turn as Doña Clara in "Los Condenados."

### **MARISÉ ÁLVAREZ**

Marisé Álvarez is one of Puerto Rico's most exciting up-and-coming talents. Ms. Álvarez has been working in theater, film, television and radio for the last ten years. Her role as Neyshalí in the award-winning local feature film "Maldeamores" was well received. Soon after, she played Cuban revolutionary Vilma Espín in Steven Soderbergh's "CHE: Part One and Two." Her noted performance gave her the opportunity to play Elisa in the award-winning UK shortfilm, "Lover." Most recent appearances include Disney's "Wizards of Waverly Place: The Movie" and the European feature film "Meant to Be."

**CAST**

Cristina Rodlo	Ana
René Monclova	Cipriano
Axel Anderson	Dr. Puttnam
Rocky Venegas	Víctor
Luz Odilea Font	Doña Clara
Marisé Álvarez	Valeria
Dolores Pedro	Irene
Daisy Granados	
José Caro	Tasador
Miosoti Alvarado	
Andres Carrasquillo	
Andrea Robles	
Jana L. Torres Diaz	Niña Enferma
Segui Victor	Waiter 1

**CREW**

Director	Roberto Busó-García
Writers	Roberto Busó-García Danielle Schleif Luis R. Trelles
Producers	Adiela Marie Roberto Busó-García Roy Chacko
Executive Producers	Erica Motley Ivan de Paz Raúl Rosado Enrique Ubarri Miguel Villafañe
Original Music	Angélica Negrón
Cinematography	Pedro J. Villalón
Editing	David Franklin
Casting	Patricia Alonso
Production Design	Luis Lópex-Baquero
Costume Design	Suzanne Krim
Make Up	Lourdes I. Rodriguez
Sound Department	Debora Lilavois Jay Peck
Art Department	Oscar A. Colom Cruz Jorge Fernandez Amilcar Rivera