

Oliver Stone Examines Banana Republics in Documentary

Written by Film Review by Kam Williams



South of the Border

If you've read "Confessions of an Economic Hitman" by John Perkins, then you are well aware of the lengths to which CIA and other agents operating on behalf of the U.S. government and Fortune 500 corporations have gone to install puppets as heads of state in countries all across Latin America. But those unaware of America's role in countless coups in the region, might enjoy the history lesson offered by *South of the Border*, as informative a history lesson as anybody could hope for.

This damning documentary was directed by three-time Oscar-winner Oliver Stone (for *Platoon*, *Midnight Express* and *Born on the Fourth of July*), a man who has never been afraid to tackle controversial aspects of presidential politics in thought-provoking fashion, whether JFK, Nixon or W. What makes this piece unique is its documentary format, as the aforementioned entries were docudramas, criticized by some for indulging in speculation and paranoid conspiracy theories.

Here, Stone sticks to the facts, and makes it quite clear where his loyalties lie, namely, with Chavez in Venezuela, with Castro in Cuba, with Morales in Bolivia and with other South American leaders of populist movements. Why? Because he ostensibly admires how these freedom fighters have somehow managed to break the cycle of exploitation of their countries' people and natural resources for the benefit of white Western nations.

Over the course of the film, Stone not only narrates, but interviews 7 democratically-elected presidents in order to highlight how they ascended to power as a consequence of a mandate from the majority. Ad infinitum, he drives home the point that we aren't dealing with dictators or strongmen as is often suggested by the mainstream media so fond of vilifying these working-class heroes.

An optimistic, cinematic outing of America's predatory exportation of capitalism in a manner which has ravaged the Rainforest while leaving the indigenous peoples of the continent with bleak prospects for survival.

Oliver Stone Examines Banana Republics in Documentary

Written by Film Review by Kam Williams

Excellent (3.5 stars)

Unrated

In English, Spanish and Portuguese with subtitles.

Running time: 78 Minutes

Studio: Cinema Libre Studio

To see a trailer for South of the Border, visit: <http://southoftheborderdoc.com/press-clips/>

Or: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hwhau48LUAA>