

*why to endorse this project:*

**The Tree of Red Stars**

a film by  
Gustavo Camelot

The holocaust of Latin Americans during the Cold War has not received the artistic attention given to the Jewish Holocaust after World War II. While there is a divergence in the numbers of the tortured, disappeared, and dead, conservative estimates reveal the number of Latin American victims to be at least two million, less conservative estimates make it at least twice as high.

Events in Iraq bring to light striking parallels between the Cold War and what is now called a "war on terrorism" - secret trials and tribunals; suspension of civil liberties and legal rights; secrecy; torture; disappearances...- basically, an ongoing infringement of human rights. Just as the Bush administration is currently doing, the South American military justified its human rights violations as the necessary cost of fighting terrorism, which it defined as any activity that questioned their right to impose whatever measures they considered necessary to achieve their own political ends.

*This project has already been declared of "National Interest", by the Presidency of the Republic Oriental of Uruguay.*



Contact: Gustavo Camelot

511 Ocean Front Walk, #3, Venice Beach CA 90291, USA +1 - 310 - 396 1186

*TheSeventhBottle@yahoo.com*

*www.TheTreeofRedStars.com*

Based on the award-winning novel by Tessa Bridal, **The Tree of Red Stars** is set in Uruguay between 1960 and 1981, and is a story of ideals under fire, examining the effects of the Cold War on the lives of four friends, Magdalena, Marco, Emilia and Cora. Below a surface of calm, in a peaceful neighborhood near the beaches of a comfortable Montevideo suburb, movements toward social justice are stirring. Willingly or not, all four friends are caught in the consequences of the unrest triggered by the Cuban revolution and its effects on the politics of the United States and the Soviet Union.

After nine years in exile, Magdalena returns to Montevideo. She is met by her childhood friend Emilia, with whom she begins a journey into memory. Together they return to their childhood and the adventures they embarked upon with their neighbor Marco when they began visiting the hillside home of Gabriela, the beggar woman who frequents their neighborhood. When a family of Jewish World War II refugees, moves into a house on the same block, the girls include the only child, Cora, in their group. Cora possesses a determination and insight new to their experience and it is largely under her influence that Magdalena and Emilia attend a speech given at the university by Ché Guevara. All emerge from the experience changed. Cora has met the Tupamaro leader with whom she will elope. Emilia has proved her suspicions regarding her mother's involvement with the guerrillas. And Magdalena has witnessed the fatal shooting of a student. For Marco, the consequences of attending the speech are also grave. His intolerant and domineering father demands that he enlist in the Army. Marco immediately sees it as an opportunity of being where he can do the most good. He knows that there are men in the army determined to defend the constitution against those who would take over the country.

Marco does everything he can to shield Magdalena. He has been in love with her ever since he can remember and doesn't want her to become involved in the Tupamaro movement. When she discovers how U.S. State Department police trainer Dan Mitrione has used Gabriela in his experiments with electricity and tortured her to death, Marco realizes that nothing will prevent Magdalena from assisting Cora and her husband with their plot to kidnap Dan Mitrione. Emilia, in love with David Ward, a British diplomat, removes herself from everything to do with the unrest growing in the country. She attends a party at David's home thinking he is planning to propose. Instead, she discovers that David has been investigating her mother and believes that Emilia herself was involved in the recent kidnapping of British Ambassador Geoffrey Jackson. Emilia is arrested and released only after Marco includes her in a secret deal between the military and the Tupamaros for the release of prisoners in exchange for Jackson's life. Magdalena and Cora are also arrested, and both disappear. Cora forever; Magdalena, until Marco tracks her down and exchanges his liberty for hers.

**From being known as the "Switzerland of the Americas," Uruguay became infamous as the country with the highest per capita torture rate. Trained at the School of the Americas in Panama, the country's military dictators took Uruguay on a downward spiral of human rights abuses, and became one of the six countries involved in the Condor conspiracy. Those of us who lived through these troubled times, have a strong historical perspective to contribute by exposing the interests and the men behind both the Cold War and the current war on terrorism. Doing so by means of a human-interest story, involving the lives of people we are brought to care about, is our strongest and most effective tool.**