

*Today Mediático begins a short series focusing on film criticism in Peru. We are delighted to start this short series with a post by regular contributor [Natalia Ames](#) reviewing the most recent book by Ricardo Bedoya, Peru's most well-known film critic. Natalia is a Peruvian film critic and journalist, a graduate of the MA in Film Studies, University of Sussex and a former general coordinator at the Audiovisual Direction in Peru's Ministry of Culture. Bedoya has published ten books about Peruvian and Latin American cinema. He writes a film blog [Páginas del diario de Satán](#) and teaches film at the University of Lima. He is the host of TV Peru's long running television programme about film [El placer de los ojos](#), which he resumed in early 2021 after resigning for political reasons in 2020. Next week we have [Sarah Barrow](#), Professor at the University of East Anglia on another facet of contemporary film criticism in Peru.*



*El cine latinoamericano del siglo XXI:  
Tendencias y tratamientos* by Ricardo Bedoya

Universidad de Lima, 2020, e-book, pp 520

Reviewed by Natalia Ames Ramello

*El cine latinoamericano del siglo XXI: Tendencias y tratamientos* (Latin American Cinema of the 21st Century: Trends and Approaches), by Ricardo Bedoya and edited by the University of Lima, gives an account of film production in Latin America over the last two decades. In Bedoya's own words, the book presents a "plural reality of diverse filmmaking styles" mostly coming from new voices, from filmmakers who started their careers in the new century or by the end of the previous one.

Organised into five chapters that analyse 200 films from Argentina, Brasil, México, Perú, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay, and other countries, the "trends and approaches" Bedoya identifies certain traits within contemporary Latin American cinema that distinguish it from Latin American films made during the 1960s. These traits include greater attention to issues of identity and personal memory, as opposed to more social or popular interests; a growing desire to explore hybrid forms and different expressive formats, from the possibilities given by the digital environment to the appropriation of film footage ; a clear influence from international filmmakers and a growing dialogue between non-hegemonic cinematic traditions, facilitated by diverse circuits such as festivals and illegal downloads; and a more personal and private way to understand political topics in cinema.



*Los rubios* (Albertina Carri, Argentina/United States, 2003)

Bedoya does not seek to establish fixed or steady categories in which to classify/classify/group/catalogue each filmmaker's work; on the contrary, his effort to locate the movies within different trends provides a reading that emphasizes film analysis over evaluative criticism. His approach also calls attention upon the common traits and the different ways in which contemporary Latin American cinema establishes dialogues and debates with the cinema of other regions or different periods.

The task undertaken by the author in this book is, evidently, very ambitious. I can also imagine that the book's ending must have been difficult to determine. The final product

offers a panoramic view of the first 20 years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, while his previous book *El cine peruano en tiempos digitales* (2015) (*Peruvian Cinema in Digital Times*) limits its analysis to films released before 2015. Bedoya's work in both books has an academic emphasis which allows the reader to note features shared across the films being analysed. Equipped with these new analytical tools, the reader will be able to approach films being released following the book's publication. As with other works by the author, this publication is a commendable contribution to the fields of film criticism, analysis and teaching.



*Whisky* (Pablo Stoll and Juan Pablo Rebella, Uruguay 2004)

That Bedoya's work identifying contemporary features in Latin American cinema is so useful

became immediately apparent to me when I watched the competing films at 2020 [Lima Film Festival](#) including those applying to the *Cine en Construcción* (work in progress) section of the same festival. When watching these films, not yet commercially released and many unfinished, I was able to recognise some of the very same trends and approaches to filmmaking Bedoya identifies in the book, such as non-fiction films' use of intimate narratives of self-portrait and/or family memories but reconstructed through fragments and in contradictory ways (chapter 1, "Discursos del yo: Intimidades en la no ficción", p. 23; some notable examples mentioned by Bedoya are Albertina Carri's *Los rubios* and Yulene Olaizola's *Intimidades de Shakespeare y Victor Hugo*); the deterritorialisation of film practice and influences, through the mixture of resources and locations (such as the influence of peripheral cinemas on Latin American filmmakers, as mentioned in the Introduction, p. 15); the choice for subtractive styles (adopted by filmmakers such as Juan Pablo Rebella and Pablo Stoll, Alonso Ruizpalacios and Fernando Eimbcke, as mentioned in the section "Rutinas pasivas y melancolía", p.428), and for a reflexive cinema that makes a point of showing its own artifice (section "Dispositivos hipertextuales", p. 197, which explores the cinema of Raúl Ruiz and Raúl Perrone); as well as the reappropriation of generic codes and conventions from an auteur's point of view (chapter 4, "Relecturas genéricas", p. 227, which starts with an analysis of Mariano Llinás' *Historias extraordinarias* and *La flor*). Two recently awarded movies, *A Febre* by Maya Darin and *Las mil y una* by Clarisa Navas evidence the same exploration of film spaces with expressive goals, that Bedoya identifies in the book's final chapter ("Tratamientos espaciales alternativos", p. 313).



*Historias extraordinarias* (Mariano Llinás, Argentina, 2008)

In the introduction Bedoya points out that the book aims to be a cinematographic analysis of the 21st century's Latin American cinema itself, more than an analysis of its funding structures or its distribution characteristics. However, when reading the book, the problematic issue of access to Latin American cinema and its distribution circuits inevitably comes up. With mainstream theatres mostly dominated by Hollywood films, and only the most commercial Latin American films released, festivals have functioned as a showcase enabling the only access to recent works from the region, albeit a very limited access. In the current context of the pandemic, many virtual festivals and online platforms are allowing audiences to actually see many more movies from our countries that would ordinarily be possible; in that sense, Ricardo Bedoya's book is an excellent companion for this rediscovery of our cinema.

**The e-book is available for purchase on Amazon, iBooks, Scribd, and others through [this link](#)**

## **Ricardo Bedoya's other books, and other Reading on Peruvian Film Criticism and Peruvian Cinema**

Sarah Barrow (2018) *Contemporary Peruvian Cinema: History, Identity and Violence on Screen* Bloomsbury  
100 años de cine en el Perú (1992)

Ricardo Bedoya (1997) *Un cine reencontrado: diccionario ilustrado de las películas peruanas*

Ricardo Bedoya (1997) *Entre fauces y colmillos: las películas de Francisco Lombardi*

Ricardo Bedoya (1999) *Imágenes del cine en el Perú*

Ricardo Bedoya (2003) *Ojos bien abiertos: El lenguaje de las imágenes en movimiento*

Ricardo Bedoya (2005) *Breve encuentro: una mirada al cortometraje peruano*

Ricardo Bedoya (2009) *El cine silente en el Perú*

*El cine sonoro en el Perú* (2015) *El cine peruano en tiempos digitales*

Jeff Middents (2009) *Writing National Cinema: Film Journals and Film Culture in Peru*  
Dartmouth College Press

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