

## Movie shot in Cuba against embargo screened in Miami Beach

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MIAMI -- Filmmaker Luis Moro may have created movie history.

Moro wrote a love story set in Cuba. Then, defying the decades-old U.S. embargo on the Communist island, a cast and crew of about 15 people traveled there in 2003 and shot ``Love & Suicide," creating what could be the first American movie filmed in Cuba since Fidel Castro's revolution.

Although the movie is not political, Moro said hopes that by shooting it in Cuba, he will highlight what he thinks is an ineffective embargo.

Moro \_ whose parents emigrated to America 1968 after he was born \_ said he understands why the embargo was once needed, but it is now ``close to insanity."

``Indirectly, I hope, I trust it will make a difference that people realize the embargo is making no difference," Moro said in an interview during the American Black Film Festival in Miami Beach. The movie premiered at the festival, which ends Sunday.

Moro called it a ``very unique love story" about ``a guy goes to Cuba and he discovers the one thing that was missing." He declined to reveal more details of the plot.

Director Lisa France shot the movie with a small digital camera in 21 days while she was in Cuba attending the 2003 Havana Film Festival. Moro wrote and acted the film, along with Kamar De Los Reyes, Daisy McClakin and Moro's wife Barbara Miller Moro.

They had a list of places where they wanted to shoot scenes and juggled working and attending the film festival.

Cuban authorities knew they were filming, but did not bother them, Moro said. ``We didn't hide anything. We did it very publicly," Moro said. ``It was never an issue with the Cubans."

The group was defying a Cold War-era U.S. embargo on travel and trade to the Communist nation.

U.S. officials say unfettered trade and travel to the island would prop up Castro's

government. The imprisonment of dissidents and restrictions on economic and political freedoms are also used to justify the embargo.

But critics argue that the embargo, aimed at forcing a change in Cuba's leadership, is outdated and has not worked in more than 40 years.

Moro said he was certain some Americans would make an issue of the film being shot in Cuba, but his advice to them is to instead ``worry about Iraq."



``We're willing to spending \$100 billion to free Iraq, but all we have to do is change one law to free Cuba," Moro said.

Moro said his mother died at age 54 without seeing her family in Cuba again and he does not want his grandmother to face the same fate.

``All the people for the embargo, I would bet their families are here," Moro said.  
``Let them get financially strong and that will help them topple Castro."