

COLD NIGHTS HOT SALSA



A Film by Edwin Gailits

Film Festivals:

Official Selection - Hollywood Film Festival (World Premier)
Winner - Best Documentary - Naperville Independent Film Festival
Official Selection - Beloit People's Choice Program
Official Selection - East Lansing Film Festival
Official Selection - Bronx International Film Festival
Official Selection - Beloit International Film Festival
Official Selection - Dingle International Film Festival, Ireland
Official Selection - Buffalo Niagara International Film Festival

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Film Title

Cold Nights Hot Salsa

Logline

Cold Nights Hot Salsa is the passionate story of two young salsa dancers from Montreal, Canada who set their sights on winning a World Salsa Championship.

Short Synopsis

Cold Nights Hot Salsa takes you inside the international Latin dance world of Victor and Katia, aspiring young salsa dancers from Montreal, Canada who seek to win a World Salsa Championship.

It's the story of Victor and Katia's love to dance and of how being lovers enhances and also complicates their lives, as they dedicate themselves to a grand ambition to conquer the Latin dance world.

Long Synopsis

Cold Nights Hot Salsa takes you inside the international dance world of Victor and Katia, aspiring young salsa dancers from Montreal, who seek to win a World Salsa Championship.

During their three-year quest Victor and Katia draw upon the talents of Eddie Torres, Tito & Tamara, Billy Fajardo, and Katie Marlow. Central figures in the salsa dance world, these mentors put their passion and professional dance skills before you and reveal what it takes to perform and compete at the highest level.

Victor and Katia's story is a love story. It's the story of their love to dance and of how being a couple enhances and also complicates their life together and dance ambitions. After winning the Canadian Salsa Championship, we watch as they first compete in the 3rd World Salsa Championship. They return home to Montreal to work on taking their dance skills to a higher level. After months of preparation, including working with a number of key mentors, they put their dreams on the line and travel to Florida to compete in the 4th World Salsa Championship.

Along with Victor and Katia's story, the film explores some of the social and historical roots of salsa, as told through Eddie Torres, Billy Fajardo, Tito Ortos, and Edson Vallon.

Long Synopsis

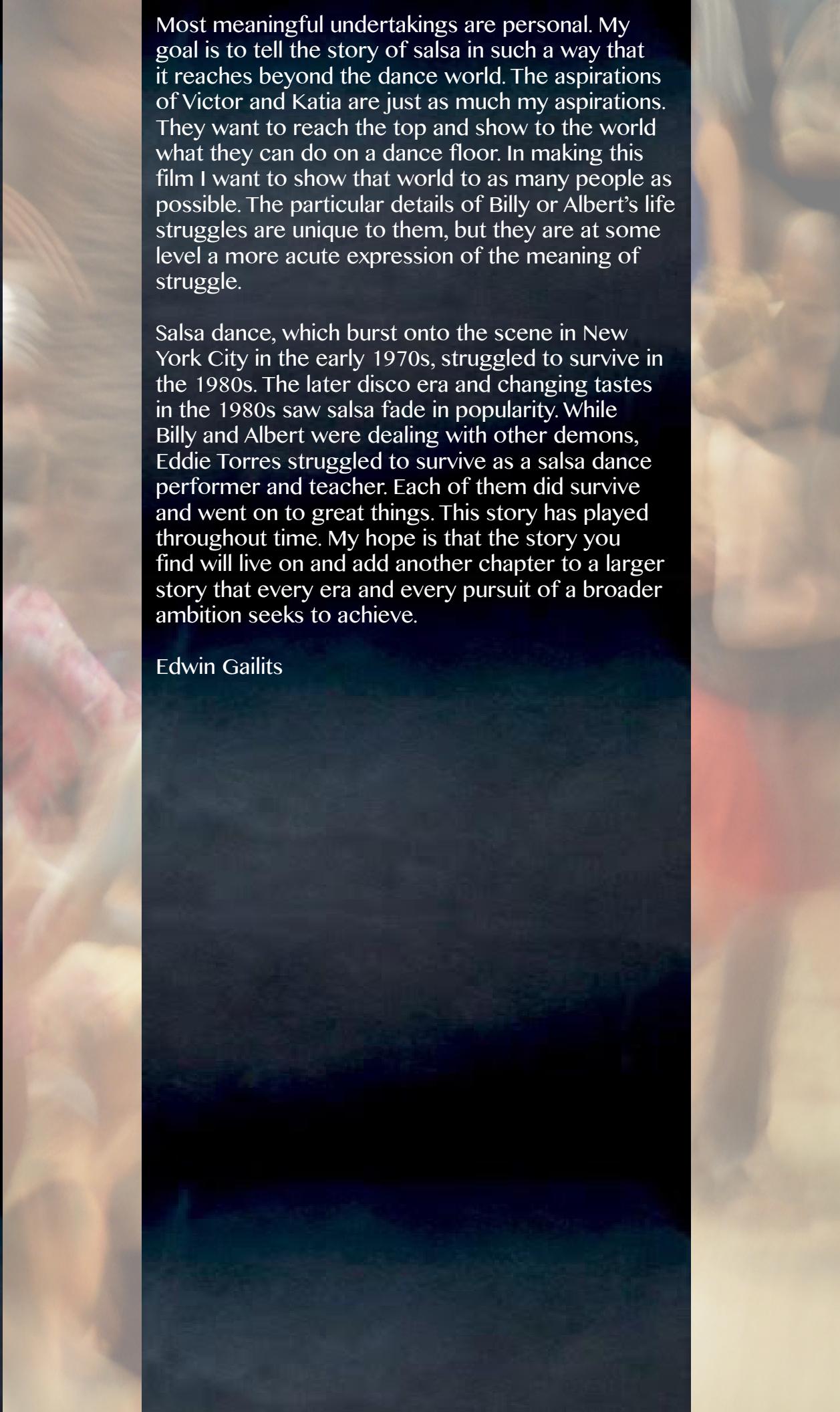
Experience the beauty and excitement of competitive dance, the compelling force of world leaders in salsa, and the romantic charm of two young dancers who want to make their mark on the Latin dance world.

Director's Statement

At some point in the making of this film I asked myself; what is it about the salsa dance world that attracts many to the point of addiction, often avoiding alcohol or other drugs because these substances interfere with their deeper addiction? I found that some got their start growing up in a home where Latin dance was simply part of life. Others started by going in search of social possibilities, and others went looking to fill a void in their lives. But when music and motion come together in this form of Latin street dance, something else takes hold and leads to places few, including myself, have regretted going.

Looking for that thing that will fill a void is not unique. There are things in most people which drive them toward or away from powerful forces. How these forces have played out in each of the characters lives is what interests me.

My seduction and subsequent obsession with salsa started one night in a dark, smoke-filled nightclub in Havana, Cuba. It wasn't simply the dance club scene that took hold of me. It was also the walk through Havana's night streets, past open doors that poured out the sound of music and the sight of people dancing in their living rooms and on their balconies. I only later realized how deeply these early contacts began to inhabit me. Returning to Canada, I found a world as fully focused on breathing salsa, but hidden behind the closed doors of a colder climate. The warmth of the music and the people dancing to it has now opened remarkable doors, as I have come to learn first hand from many of the key figures in the history and evolution of salsa dance today.



Most meaningful undertakings are personal. My goal is to tell the story of salsa in such a way that it reaches beyond the dance world. The aspirations of Victor and Katia are just as much my aspirations. They want to reach the top and show to the world what they can do on a dance floor. In making this film I want to show that world to as many people as possible. The particular details of Billy or Albert's life struggles are unique to them, but they are at some level a more acute expression of the meaning of struggle.

Salsa dance, which burst onto the scene in New York City in the early 1970s, struggled to survive in the 1980s. The later disco era and changing tastes in the 1980s saw salsa fade in popularity. While Billy and Albert were dealing with other demons, Eddie Torres struggled to survive as a salsa dance performer and teacher. Each of them did survive and went on to great things. This story has played throughout time. My hope is that the story you find will live on and add another chapter to a larger story that every era and every pursuit of a broader ambition seeks to achieve.

Edwin Gailits

Subject Bios

Victor Alexis (Contreras) & Katia Morales

We meet Victor and Katia preparing for the 3rd World Salsa Championships. The young Montreal couple found one another in an amateur dance troupe, and grew together as



they decided to see how far they could take their dancing. The film follows them through their first international competition and subsequent decision to pursue their dance ambitions more fully. We witness their dedication, and the burden that competitive salsa dancing puts on their professional careers and personal relationship. Finding the strength and professional guidance to push themselves to the next level, all play out in the drama that unfolds.

Billy Fajardo & Katie Marlow

Billy and Katie are leading figures in the competitive salsa dance world. Head judges at the World Salsa Championships, they have been a prime force behind establishing the rules and judging criteria for competitive divisions



in Salsa, Hustle and other dance genre. Together they have raised the level of competitive salsa dance worldwide. After facing numerous personal challenges that forced him to leave the dance world, Billy found Katie and formed a dynamic partnership. Together they first won multiple World titles in different dance divisions, and have since gone on to become leading figures in the Latin dance world. Their influence, through the development and teaching of dance technique, can be seen on dance floors and stages around the world.

Tito Ortos & Tamara Livolsi

Tito & Tamara bring a perfect marriage to their dance. Tamara brings her classical training to their partnership on stage, and Tito brings the street. Together they have married the best of both worlds. But they also bring something else. Like many of the best performers in any art, they bring their humanity and give fully in every performance. In addition, Tito's skill as a singer and knowledge of the history of salsa and the dance forms that came before is deep. It's for a good reason that Tito and Tamara are fixtures at Congresses and competitive events around the world. Tito's infectious smile, and Tamara's skill and style as a dancer, makes every encounter a welcomed event.



Albert Torres

Albert Torres is one of the key figures responsible for the explosion of interest and promotion of salsa dance worldwide. He has spent the better part of the last 20 years tirelessly promoting salsa dance internationally. He has served as the MC, and/or co-producer scores of salsa congresses worldwide, and is constantly on a plane to the next event. He played a key role in helping to establish the World Salsa Championships and to see it broadcasted by ESPN. Albert's knowledge of Latin music and its history is broad, and he shares it at many of the events he attends. There is something in the passion that Albert brings to spreading salsa across the world that at time may be reminded of missionary work.



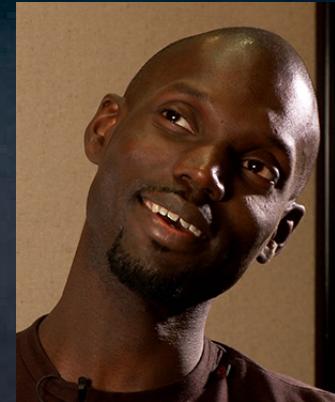
Eddie Torres

Eddie “Mambo King” Torres is the father of modern Salsa. Eddie started dancing at an early age and was soon winning dance events in New York City. His skill and smooth style brought him together with partners far beyond his years. One such woman is June Laberta who discovered Eddie on the dance floor of a club in NYC. That became a pivotal meeting. Eddie’s biggest contribution to the salsa dance world is his pioneering work to codify the way mambo, and later salsa, was taught. He brought the dance from the streets to the classroom and, helped by his mentor June Laberta, a Ballroom instructor, established names for many hundreds of dance steps that are used to teach. An entire generation of dancers learned from Eddie or from someone who had been taught by Eddie. You can’t overestimate the impact he has had on Latin dance worldwide.



Edson Vallon

I can’t say what it was he saw in me, but from the start of making this film Edson has given much of himself. From patiently explaining the rules of competitive dance divisions, to offering his insightful perspective on every element of salsa dance etiquette and social history, he has been consistent. He watches what others do in their dance and both learns from them, and then creates something different. This is not part of a strategy, it’s the way his mind works. And if he can’t bring some element of humour to whatever he does, he would have to stop breathing. His gifts are great. From the heart he shows his dance partners and students, to those he dances with socially, to the filmmakers he helps, his gifts are great. Edson is summa salsa.



Edwin Gailits has followed numerous roads to his current role as the producer, director, and editor of **COLD NIGHTS HOT SALSA**. He began his career as a professional still photographer and then gravitated to theatre, where, for almost a decade, he produced and directed classics theatre productions.



For the past 15 years he has been producing, directing, and editing films for others in a broad range of subject areas. He has profiled the work of a Shibori fabric artist, examined the relationship between satellite data imagery, mathematics and watercolour painting. In addition he produced a health care documentary that looks at some of the underlying structural problems in the US health care system.

COLD NIGHTS HOT SALSA, is a passion project, and his first full length personal film.

Credits

PRODUCER / DIRECTOR

Edwin Gailits

EDITOR

Katharine Asals

Edwin Gailits

SUPERVISING EDITOR

Ricardo Acosta

ORIGINAL MUSIC

Bill Parsons

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Martin Trow-Lepine

Edwin Gailits

Terry Zazulak

Sabeeh Khan

ADDITIONAL CAMERA

Cory VanderPloeg

Pierre Louis Beranek

Joel Fendelman

Jose Garcia-Lozano

Bill Metcalfe

Dan Voshart

LOCATION SOUND

Alejandro Jaegerman

Edwin Gailits

Alex Shapcott

ADDITIONAL EDITING

Marie Lyons Cooper

Davoud Geramifard

George Kaltsounakis

TRANSCRIPTIONS

Sam Yerraguntla

Fresh Productions

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Ludmila Armata

Maire Noonan

Efrain Rosado Mestre

STILL PHOTOGRAPHY

Vivian Kellner

Edwin Gailits

Maire Noonan

Credits

MUSIC CLEARANCES
Edwin Gailits

SOUND EDITOR & MIX
Matthew Chan

ONLINE
Victory Social Club

LEGAL
Brenda Blake

“EL LIDER”
WRITTEN BY BOBBY SANABRIA
PERFORMED BY BOBBY SANABRIA
USED BY PERMISSION OF JAZZHEADS INC.

“AY AY”
WRITTEN BY H.DURAN / Y.DURAN
PERFORMED BY THE LUIS TORRES BAND
PERMISSION OF MOOD ENTERTAINMENT

“PAU PAU”
WRITTEN BY ROBERTO LINARES BROWN
PERFORMED BY & PERMISSION OF ROBERTO
LINARES BROWN

“RUM & COKE CUBA LIBRA”
WRITTEN BY ED CALLE
PERFORMED BY ED CALLE
USED BY PERMISSION OF ED CALLE

“QUE NO SE PIERDA LA ESENCIA”
WRITTEN BY ROBERTO LINARES BROWN
PERFORMED BY & PERMISSION OF ROBERTO
LINARES BROWN

“EL ACHE DE SANABRIA EN MODERACION”
WRITTEN BY EUGENE MARLOW
PERFORMED BY BOBBY SANABRIA
USED BY PERMISSION OF MEII ENTERPRISES AND
JAZZHEADS INC.

“ESA NINA ES CHOCOLE”
WRITTEN BY ROBERTO LINARES BROWN
PERFORMED BY & PERMISSION OF ROBERTO
LINARES BROWN

“MY LOVE IS REAL”
WRITTEN BY DAVID ALTER
PERFORMED BY DAVID ALTER
USED BY PERMISSION OF DAVID ALTER

“OBSCURIDAD”
WRITTEN BY JESUS A PEREZ
PERFORMED BY JOHNNY POLANCO Y SU
CONJUNTO AMISTAD
PERMISSION OF JOHNNY POLANCO

“OTR BREAK TUNE”
WRITTEN BY H. RIVERA
PERFORMED BY ORQUESTA TABACO Y RON
USED BY PERMISSION OF DIMLO! RECORDS
ARRANGEMENT WITH THE PICO BLVD GROUP

“CON COMPUTADORA NO”
WRITTEN BY JESUS A PEREZ
PERFORMED BY JOHNNY POLANCO Y SU
CONJUNTO AMISTAD
PERMISSION OF JOHNNY POLANCO

“EL GUSTO DE ME SALSA”
WRITTEN BY JESUS A PEREZ
PERFORMED BY JOHNNY POLANCO Y SU
CONJUNTO AMISTAD
PERMISSION OF JOHNNY POLANCO

“SUENA MI TAMBOR”
WRITTEN BY JESUS A PEREZ
PERFORMED BY JOHNNY POLANCO Y SU
CONJUNTO AMISTAD
PERMISSION OF JOHNNY POLANCO

SPECIAL THANKS

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Jennifer Aucoin
Vanesa Stay
Kathleen Campbell
Mike (SalsaTO)
Richard Cowan
Six Degrees Club (Toronto)
Jean Marc Genereau
Giovani Torres
Sonia Kyriacou
Moris Alverenga
Marie-Jos e Strazzero
Roberto Arenas Jr
Marie-Denise Blemur
Club 649 (Montreal)
Stracy Diaz Hernandez
Nelson Flores
Juan Calderon
Osmer Perrones
Jason Molina
Lori Brizzi
Burju Hurturk
Victor Perez
Ana Massicot
Joel Massicot
Oliver Pineda
Jack Dunn
Cliford Jasmin
Rob Beiner
Wong Gee Lee (Spin)
Luisa Torres
Debbie Torres
Ronald Bermudez
Pamela Aguilar
Jimmy Bosh
Henry Knowles
Jay Danley
Hilario Dur n
Richard Morales
Luis Orbegoso
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