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**PUERTO RICAN TRANSGENDER TEENS SPARKLE  
IN DOCUMENTARY ABOUT CHICAGO'S HUMBODLT PARK  
BEAUTY PAGEANT  
Coming to DVD and On Demand on October 6, 2015**

LOS ANGELES, CA (September 24, 2015) Four women preparing for a transgender beauty pageant in Chicago's Humboldt Park, a predominantly Puerto Rican community, share their unique stories, in *I AM THE QUEEN*. The 75 minute documentary, co-directed by Henrique Cirne-Lima and Josue Pellot, was an official selection at the Chicago Latino Film Festival and will be released on DVD and On Demand platforms on October 6.

The idea originated when Pellot saw a flier that read: *Beauty pageant for Puerto Rican transgender youth from Humboldt Park*. "That just grabbed my attention. Being Puerto Rican, being from Humboldt Park, then being transgender and young. It sounded like a lot to deal with," says Pellot, who grew up in Humboldt Park and is of Puerto Rican descent.

**SYNOPSIS:** In Chicago's Humboldt Park neighborhood, the Vida/SIDA Cacica Pageant brings together members of the Puerto Rican community to celebrate its transgender participants.

I Am The Queen follows Bianca, Julissa and Jolizza as they prepare for the pageant under the guidance of Ginger Valdez, an experienced transgender mentor from the neighborhood. These trans women share stories of their transition, their relatives' varying reactions, and how they find support from within the community.

Family dynamics, cultural heritage, and personal identity all play a part in how the contestants face the daily struggle that comes from being true to themselves.

At the time of filming, Vida/SIDA, a not-for-profit organization, was organizing its third annual Paseo Boricua pageant. The film focuses on three contestants—Julissa, Bianca, and Jolizza—and how they perceive themselves within the straight and gay communities and the challenges they face while transitioning from male to female.

They are guided by veteran Chicago HIV activist Ginger Valdez, who volunteers to coordinate the pageant. Valdez, who was a drag performer in New York City during the tumultuous years now depicted in STONEWALL, is emblematic of the hard work transgender women of color contributed to the LGBT movement.

Co-director Lima says the film, "... shows how complex it is for these women to become true to themselves, and what a high price they have to pay. And how hard it is for their families as well, who had no idea on how to handle this issue, seeing their sons becoming their daughters. How these women and their families negotiated this transition will be a major factor on how easy or hard their lives will be. The fact that one of the women in the film had a very supporting family helped the film to make this case. We hope that the film will help other families of transgender youth struggling with these same issues to see the value of acceptance and love. As the mother of Julissa says in the movie: If you don't find the support you need in the home you will find it in the streets, and the streets is the worst. "

**Trailer: INSERT**

**DVD Details:**

SRP: \$ 19.95  
Street Date: 10/6/15  
UPC: DVD: 881394120921  
Catalog: CLS 1208  
Genre: Documentary, LGBT  
TRT: 75 Minutes

**DVD EXTRAS:**

- Deleted / Alternate Scenes
- Trailers
- Photo Gallery
- Closed Captions
- 5.1 Audio

**ABOUT CINEMA LIBRE:** Cinema Libre Studio is a full-service mini-studio known for producing and distributing high concept feature films and social impact documentaries. Headquartered in the Los Angeles area, the team has released over 180 films including the Sundance Audience Award®-Winning FUEL, THE END OF POVERTY?, Rachid Bouchareb's LONDON RIVER and Oliver Stone's SOUTH OF THE BORDER. This year, the company has released CAN'T STAND LOSING YOU, a documentary based on a memoir by Andy Summers, the guitarist of the 80s band The Police, DAYS OF GRACE (DIAS DE GRACIA), an eight-time Ariel Award®-winning film by Mexican director Everardo Gout. The studio is currently in pre-production on CONFESSIONS OF AN ECONOMIC HIT MAN as a major motion picture which is based on the bestselling memoir by John Perkins as well as, ANGOLA 1, 2 & 3, based on real events about the three African American men who were held in solitary confinement for decades in Louisiana's State Prison for crimes they did not commit.

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