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The fact that I cannot be here today - much against my will - forces me to write these lines as an introduction to my film.

VAMPIR is an effort of reflection on cinematic language. Perhaps, since it was made during the shooting of Jesus Franco's production COUNT DRACULA, it is also an attempt to analyze that genre of fantasy denigrated by most horror films, an exploration and rethinking of the problem of the 'vampire film'. But fundamentally - and I want to point this out - VAMPIR is one of the first independent films made in my country. And I must alert you to the fact that to work outside the establishment is not a voluntary choice but something imposed by our political, social and cultural situation.

The only way out for an independent cinema in Spain is not to work under the government's patronage and its censorship and not through the big distributors. Also, to keep our roots in our specific reality with a way of producing films that is consistent with our ideologies and necessities, we must refuse any concessions by the government to work with it because these concessions would be, at best, nothing other than another extension of power and its repressive policies. We must work within very limited means, our own, and tho' these methods are outside the system we will transform the traditional conception of production. That is the only way, the only alternative, that will enable us to undertake the research

of a specific film grammar that would reflect, would correspond with, an awareness of Spanish reality. This must be related to roots of the revolutionary 'avant-garde' that does not exempt the director, the filmmaker, from his historical responsibility in everyday life. We must unmask as hollow that avant-garde that ignores the masses and grows ^{in its own preciousity} outside social and political concerns. This active position is evolving ~~only~~ outside the 'legality' of a system that does not even maintain a minimum of democratic processes and has no way of accomodating criticism except through a repression that is commonplace today in Spain.

This position forces one to assume the consequences of staying outside the system, being independent, in a country where basic rights and freedom simply do not exist; staying outside a system in a country where a meeting of no more than 19 people without the Government's permission constitutes the crime of illegal assembly; where a strike can be a crime of military sedition; where censorship has a free hand and has no respect nor understanding of personality; where it is ^{not only} impossible to have a legal homage to Picasso but where when a leading art critic and his students presided over a public function honoring the Spanish painter at Madrid University, they were all jailed. In the cultural sphere, the list of banned books, confiscated magazines have paralyzed publishing companies. Plays and movies have been forbidden, professors arrested and intellectuals jailed - the examples of repression are endless. But repression is even worse for the workers

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While the present regime with its foreign ~~business~~ policy leaning toward trying to be admitted to the European Common Market and thus strengthen the economy, ^{gives the impression of liberality} still every day the repression lingers as the democratic movements grow stronger.

If you keep these statements in mind, the fact that I and so many colleagues ^{who have been} engaged in intellectual activities, have been denied a passport to travel out of Spain is explained ^{as} is my not being here in New York today. The repression of the mass media makes it so that VAMPIR, the film you are about to see, has no legal existence in my country. And this strange predicament must not be seen as an isolated fact, but as a thing that can better ^{reflect} represent the reality of Spain today than any ~~official~~ ^{film officially representing & presenting} Spain at an international Festival. Thus, here is VAMPIR, not in spite of everything, but as a result of everything.

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Tuesday, January 25, 1972

We have just seen the Spanish film VAMPIR, by Pedro Portabella. We are dismayed and concerned that such an interesting and talented artist has been refused a passport. Pedro Portabella was invited as a guest of the Department of Film of The Museum of Modern Art in order to introduce his film to an American public.

Our signatures to this note indicate our solicitude and our hope that such a regrettable incident as this - an artist being refused the means to attend an event of importance to him and to a film community at large - will not be repeated.

NAME

William M. Jacobson

Bruce Fenn

Michele Malkin

William Berkowitz

Jack Jones

Limura

Sheela Ascher

Dennis Strass

Aure de M. G. G. G.

Jona Mexas

Regina Canell