

Latin HORROR

16TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON | FOUNDED 2008

October 1, 2024

Hon. Vanessa L. Gibson
Bronx Borough President
851 Grand Concourse, 3rd Floor
Bronx, New York 10451

Dear Ms. Gibson:

As the Spooky Season begins and we move closer to the fun and festive Halloween time celebrations, and look to honor the sacred Latin tradition of *Día de Los Muertos* (*Day of the Dead*, *All Souls Days*), I want to take a moment and provide the name of an individual who I believe would make a strong and viable candidate for the 2025 Bronx Walk of Fame induction ceremonies that take place annually on the magnificent Grand Concourse, as part of the borough's annual Bronx Week celebrations: filmmaker **GEORGE A. ROMERO**.

The mere mention of genre filmmaker GEORGE A. ROMERO evokes nostalgic childhood memories of the living dead—Zombies—walking the Earth in search of “**BRAAAAINS!**” And while the image of the Zombie has become a universally recognized horror icon, many do not know that Romero, who came into this world to make OTHERS kick and scream on February 4, 1940 (and passed away on July 16, 2017), was born in the wonderful borough of The Bronx to Lithuanian and Spanish/Cuban parents!

There is no doubt, however, that Romero's seminal black-and-white horror film, *Night of the Living Dead* (1968), started what is today a worldwide phenomenon and obsession with Zombies. As witnessed by the ever-expanding concentric circle of derivative content born out of his singular vision, you need only look at such prime examples as Michael Jackson's groundbreaking music video *THRILLER*, the cult cable TV program *The Walking Dead*, or view such films that pay homage to his creations like *28 Days Later* (England), *REC* (Spain), *Train to Busan* (South Korea), *The Horde* (France), *The Beyond* (Italy), *Pontypool* (Canada), and *Juan of the Dead*—the first horror film to be filmed in Cuba, among others, to witness his far-reaching influence and impact.

Romero's work as a visionary director, screenwriter, and editor has inspired the minds of several generations of filmmakers, writers, and other artists with the seeds he planted nearly 60 years ago. Romero's work continues to serve as a muse and point-of-departure for creatives working in genre-related vocations in entertainment, including the gaming industry that has jumped on the bandwagon during the last decade. Even the prolific and highly-regarded Mexican director Guillermo del Toro (*Pans Labyrinth*, *Blade 2*, *Pacific Rim*) paid homage to Romero's work with the three-part novel “THE STRAIN,” which subsequently became a mini-series on the FX Network.

In 2018, the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh dedicated a day of special panels and film screenings to recognizing the horror meister's vast contributions to the genre with a "Symposium on the Cinema of George A. Romero."

Additionally, "Zombie Walks" have become a cultural part of annual festivities throughout North America and have also begun to spread to other countries around the world, including England, Ireland, Chile, and Brazil. Argentina even attempted to officially enter the Guinness Book of World Records by staging the largest zombie gathering ever assembled—25,000 zombies—on October 28, 2012. And there is no end to where this pop-cultural phenomenon will lead to in the future.

It is a no-brainer (pun intended) that an induction ceremony that includes George A. Romero could innately have a built-in "zombie crawl" as part of the event's festivities, where dozens (if not hundreds) of Romero's loyal fans would potentially turn out to honor the Godfather of the Walking Dead! LATIN HORROR (my outlet), as well as multitudes of other horror-related media brands, would help promote the event and participate in any manner possible to make this induction a reality, and also making it a highly successful and memorable event.

I would like to emphasize the importance of considering George A. Romero for the 2025 Bronx Walk of Fame induction ceremonies. His significant contributions to the horror genre and pop culture make him a compelling candidate for this honor as a native born Bronxite. If the world is honoring Romero and his creative contributions, why not the cradle of his birth, too?

I can be reached at pagan@latinhorror.com or 646-853-8159 to answer any questions, provide added context, or programming ideas with you or members of the Bronx Week coordination team who may wish to discuss this nomination in further detail. I thank you in advance for your attention.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edwin Pagán', with a stylized, cursive script.

Edwin Pagán
Founder-In-Chief
LATIN HORROR
latinhorror.com

cc: Janet A. Peguero, Deputy Borough President
Justin Cortes, Chief of Staff
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