
Narcos' Star Says His Film on Brazilian Communist Faces Boycott

19/09/2016



Wagner Moura says financiers don't want to back his film about Carlos Marighella, who fought against Brazil's military dictatorship.

Wagner Moura, best known for his portrayal of Pablo Escobar in Netflix's "Narcos" series, says he is having trouble securing financing for his directorial debut film: a biopic about Carlos Marighella, a communist lawmaker turned guerrilla who was assassinated by Brazil's military dictatorship.

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Moura, who has never shied away from political topics, told Brazil's UOL that he became interested in making a film about the famous leftist after reading a biography by Mario Magalhães.

"I was very interested in the figure of Marighella, who was also from Bahia, like me. A person who moves away a bit from figure of the classic guerrilla: Che Guevara," said Moura.

Marighella once served as a federal lawmaker for the Brazilian Communist Party but was forced into clandestine activity after persecution and an attempt on his life by the dictatorship's secret police and subsequent arrest in 1964.

He is perhaps best known for writing the "Mini-Manual of the Urban Guerrilla" that sought to inspire and guide revolutionaries opposed to Brazil's military regime. Unlike Guevara, Marighella saw urban centers, not the countryside, as the focal point of revolutionary struggle.

Moura did not name names but said that he has met resistance from financiers who did not want to make a film about Marighella precisely because of his life-long commitment to revolution.

Right-wing politicians, as well as supporters and beneficiaries of the dictatorship, still view Marighella as a

"terrorist" and Moura said he has received emails from people referring to the revolutionary as such.

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Often labeled as a leftist himself by Brazil's right-wing media, Moura says he has always been interested in the history of the 1964-1985 military dictatorship in Brazil and, in particular, the generation that fought the military regime.

"What were they like? Why would a young person leave everything behind and dedicate their lives to a cause?" asks Moura.

The Brazilian actor said the film is ultimately "about sacrifice."

Moura added that he thinks his country is suffering from a collective amnesia about the dictatorship era in Brazil's history and seeks to set the record straight about people like Marighella.

He said those efforts to mislead people about history is connected to the way Brazil's media is trying to frame the current political crisis, which saw an unelected regime install itself in power after ousting democratically elected President Dilma Rousseff.

Moura, who has been vocal in his opposition to the coup regime, argued that the media in Brazil acts like Fox News in the U.S.

"I tell my U.S. friends, imagine if the only way you could find out what has happening in the U.S. was through Fox News," said Moura.

"That's what's happening in Brazil, as if people had a giant Fox News informing them."
