

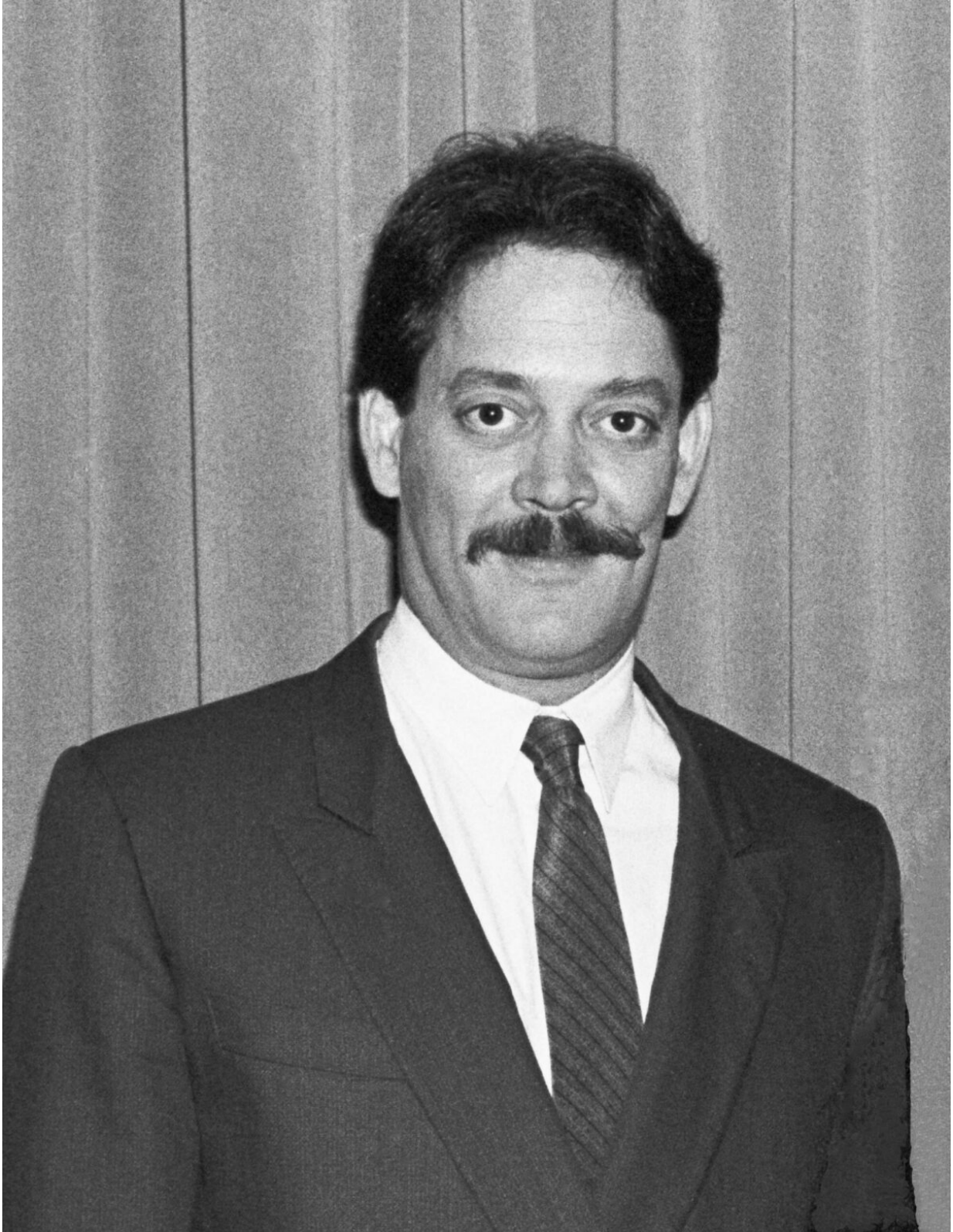
Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Raúl Juliá remembered

Elisa Leonelli · Sunday, October 17th, 2021

I interviewed Puerto Rican actor [Raúl Juliá](#) many times, like for [The Addams Family](#) (1991) and [Addams Family Values](#) (1993), where he played an exuberant Gomez opposite Anjelica Huston as Morticia Addams, and he was always engaging, but he was at his most passionate when the strength of his political and religious convictions inspired his acting. As an imprisoned leftist revolutionary during the Brazilian military dictatorship in [Kiss of the Spider Woman](#) (1985) directed by Héctor Babenco, co-starring William Hurt and Sonia Braga, as the Archbishop of Salvador Oscar Romero murdered for organizing peaceful protests against the violent government in [Romero](#) (1989), as Chico Mendes, who fought to protect the Amazon rainforest, in [The Burning Season](#) (1994) by John Frankenheimer with Edward James Olmos and Sonia Braga.



Raúl Juliá © HFPA 1985

In December 1994, after his untimely death at age 54 on October 24, 1994, I wrote a posthumous interview for LATIN STYLE, the sister publication of VENICE, Los Angeles Arts and Entertainment Magazine, conceived by publisher Walter Martinez for the English-speaking Latinos in Los Angeles. [Read it at this link](#). Here's some excerpts.

“Many people have talents, but that doesn't make them extraordinary. Saints and great men, you can name me anybody, Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Chico Mendes, they are all ordinary people. They had flaws, they had problems, some of them even had vices, like they couldn't live without

their coffee or their cigarettes, their cigars or their drink. So we have to stop the idea that you have to be perfect in order to make a contribution.”

“My basic involvement is ‘The Hunger Project’, an organization committed to ending hunger in the planet, that also inspired the ‘End Hunger Network’ that Jeff Bridges is involved with. It creates an atmosphere, through communication and education and inspiration, for people to find out their own more appropriate form of participation, how they can best contribute to the end of hunger.”



Raúl Juliá © HFPA 1986

More recently, to remember Juliá, I chose some quotes from his interview about *Romero*, exclusive to the journalists of the Hollywood Foreign Press. [Read it here](#) as published on the Golden Globes

website.



Merel Poloway, Raúl Juliá's widow © HFPA 1995

His widow Merel Poloway accepted the Golden Globe, posthumously awarded in January 1995 to Raúl Juliá by the journalists of the Hollywood Foreign Press as Best Actor in a TV movie for *The Burning Season: The Chico Mendes Story*. He had been nominated three more times, check his [nominee's bio](#) that I wrote.

Featured image: Raúl Juliá © HFPA 1989

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