

Chupacabras family group.  
Drawing by Claudia Robiou.

# Monster Hunting

*in Latin America and Spain*

by Scott Corrales

The lobby of Mexico City's Hotel Majestic on the city's main square, El Zocalo, reflects the 19th century's most baroque tastes. The hotel, housed in an 18th-century structure, rises over the ashes of a forgotten Aztec palace as it looks directly at the city Cathedral and at the Presidential Palace—usurpers of the prime real estate once filled by the massive temples of ancient Tenochtitlan.

It was among this *fin-de-siècle* decor that I would meet one of Mexico's most energetic and restless researchers of mat-

ters cryptozoological: Dr. Rafael Lara Palmeros, Director of Research for that country's respected Center for the Study of Paranormal Phenomena (CEFP, by its Spanish acronym).

While Dr. Lara had been a long-distance colleague and the contributing editor to my newsletter, it was not until 1997 that we were actually able to meet face to face (something which is becoming of rapidly diminishing importance in these days of the Internet) to discuss the latest happenings in the world of high strangeness.

"You'll find," Dr. Lara explained, "that the divisions of opinion regarding UFO and paranormal phenomena are much more pronounced here than in the U.S., at least among the experts. Many former researchers have even joined the ranks of skeptics in order to achieve respectability."

"But the public is much more receptive to the subject," I interjected.

"Ah, but not to the Chupacabras, which is perceived as a smoke-and-mirrors technique by the government to distract popular attention from the current economic crisis—the legacy of the Salinas administration."

There could be no arguing that particular point. A visit to a small collectables store in Mexico City's fashionable Zona Rosa ("the Pink Zone") yielded a treasure trove of figurines representing the Chupacabras, most of them depicting former president Salinas' head grafted onto a clawed, animal-like body, holding bags of money pilfered from an already depleted treasury. Other depictions were equally creative and far more rude.

"Psychosis" was the word bandied about by the Mexican media to describe the public's reaction to the Goatsucker's trail of woe across Mexico in 1996. It was refreshing to hear a member of the medical profession use the term more seriously. "The animal deaths were real. My visits to the Tlaxicoyan region dispelled any doubts we may have had," Dr. Lara explained soberly.

The hotel lobby was now becoming filled with dozens of tourists forming part



Rafael Lara Palmeros.

of an excursion having little or no interest in the paranormal. We decided to move to the hotel's inner courtyard, where the silence was punctuated only by the songs of tropical birds living in cages among well-kept greenery.

"The bulk of CEFP's research," Lara continued, picking up the thread of our conversation, "was hampered by the fact that local residents thought we were government agents or undercover operatives for the Judicial Police. They refused to say anything at first."

Dr. Lara has vigorously pursued a number of cryptozoological oddities in his country—the elusive Bearman, the semi-legendary Onza, the Tecolutla "monster"—and exchanged the results of his research with luminaries of the field such as Richard Greenwell, Bernard Heuvelmans, and

Michel Raynal. His greatest adversary has not been skepticism but the carelessness of the scientific establishment: priceless evidence pertaining to the Onza was mishandled by a laboratory at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, for example. When the animal mutilations first began in Veracruz, the School of Veterinary Medicine of the State University—logically, the first official agency to have been contacted in the matter—claimed to be “out of the loop” when it came to the strange slayings and even asked Dr. Lara to keep them abreast of developments.

The establishment may be reticent about discussing the most recent wave of paranormal activity, but this does not characterize the Mexican public's response to the unknown. Willing to believe to the extent of being credulous, they have grown up with legends of dreaded La Llorona (a night-wandering spirit whose manifestations have been recorded since pre-colonial times), ghosts, mischievous *aluches* and *chaneques* (water elementals), and of course, the contemporary phenomenon of UFOs, which is not so contemporary. After all, the chronicles of Aztec emperors report a frightening apparition called Moyo-hualitohua, the “screamer in the darkness,” whose booming threats in the dark of night prompted the Aztecs to sacrifice 24,000 victims in 1492 in hopes of appeasing the unknown visitor. Two separate codexes depict this saucer-shaped intruder.

Who knows? Perhaps some early cryptozoologist whose name is forever lost to

history was hot on the tail of the Tlancantzolli or “divided men,” which were seen shortly before the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores, or even the bizarre bird with a mirrored head that showed Cortez's troops marching inexorably toward Anahuac.

The Center for the Study of Paranormal Phenomena also spearheaded a number of research initiatives into Mexico's enigmatic Zone of Silence in the Sonora Desert. This fabled location, the subject of much legend, is now clearly marked on AAA maps. CEFEP members produced a vast (and sadly unpublished) catalog of the strange creatures found in the area, such as the desert-dwelling tortoise, *Gopherus flavomarginatus*, whose triangular markings are unknown elsewhere in the world. Samples of other unusual insects and reptiles were collected for study, but the paranormal bent of its members was satisfied by the discovery of giant skeletons.

The skeletons found at the Zone of Silence were of a decidedly simian nature, according to Dr. Lara, probably corresponding to the *Gigantopithecus*. However, ancient Mexican lore discusses the existence of giant beings such as the Quinametzin and the Kinawe, who apparently existed well into human times. CEFEP hopes someday to release a publication of all its discoveries in this area.

Research into the controversial feline known as the Onza, a puma-sized animal allegedly native to the western Sierra Madre, provided Lara and CEFEP with

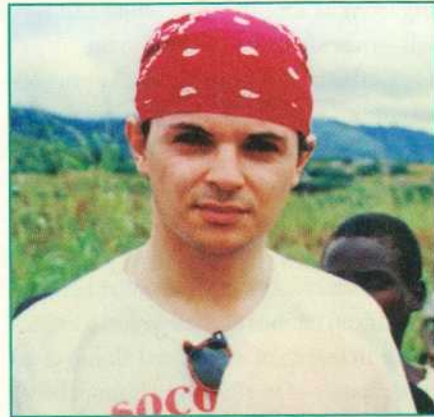
worldwide recognition. First reported in the mid-1700s by the Jesuit missionary Ignatz Pfefferkorn, it was not until two centuries later, in April 1995, that a Sinaloa rancher shot a specimen of a hitherto unknown cat in a nearby mountain valley. Samples of the mystery feline's inner organs were sent to a Mexican university lab to undergo analysis, but they were apparently "misplaced."

### Down Africa Way

Spain's Manuel Carballal is one of the most controversial figures of his country's "third generation" of UFO researchers. While his interests and energy have been directed toward the investigation of satanic cults and serving as an advisor to the police departments of several Spanish cities as an expert on occult crime, Carballal's career (which began at the age of 17) has also been marked by a profound interest in matters cryptozoological.

Carballal's research efforts include an interesting case which took place in September 1985 in the Gypsy neighborhood of Penamoa on the outskirts of La Coruña. Residents were awakened by the hysterical barking of their dogs only to witness mysterious balls of light—well over six feet tall—drifting in the scrub vegetation, accompanied by small simian beings. These perplexing sightings took place one night after another, accompanied by an increase in the number of mutilated animals.

Gypsy vigilantes fired countless rounds against one of the balls of light (known



Manuel Carballal in Africa.

as the "Penamoa Phantom") without any effect. A soldier standing guard at the La Grela military base one night was attacked by "something big and white." The attack prompted the soldier to fire all the ammo he had against the strange figure, which vanished as suddenly as it had appeared. The volley of gunfire soon attracted the attention of the rest of the sentries, who were able to find all of the spent rifle shells, but not the bullets fired against the "thing."

When Carballal and the members of his research group, FENIX, decided to investigate, they discovered that the apparitions had ceased thanks to the help of a religious order that had undertaken a strenuous series of exorcisms, which caused the apparitions to lessen before vanishing altogether.

Descriptions of the "Penamoa Phantom" ran the gamut: red eyes as large as saucers, two small manes of hair, fire issu-

tween .008 and .012. A local couple, Carlos and María Santiago, trailed a low-flying UFO over the Vega farm one evening as they drove through Moca's Barrio Mamey. The couple allegedly saw the object land and disgorge a diminutive and odd-looking occupant, who ran back into the conveyance upon seeing the two humans. The craft rose into the air, circled the area a few times, and shot off into the night sky. The Santiagos' account was corroborated by Eugenia Méndez and Juanito Pabón, other residents of Barrio Mamey, who told the media that they had also seen a strange vehicle land in the vicinity of their respective homes only to rise into the heavens once more.

A false moment of hope marked this critical period in the Moca crisis: Luis Torres, the same farmer who had reported seeing a UFO over Moca's outlying regions, became the man of the hour after slaying two enormous snakes (Puerto Rican boas) measuring an unheard-of six-foot length. Torres had captured the creatures as they stood ready to attack a 600-pound heifer. The media hailed this act of heroism as the "solution to the mutilation riddle"; citizens could finally issue a collective sigh of relief.

However, the Moca Vampire had its own agenda. On March 18, 1975, two goats belonging to Hector Vega, a resident of Moca's Barrio Pueblo, were found drained of blood. Puncture marks on the goats' necks were the unmistakable sign that the strange creature causing the deaths was still



Chupacabras on a T-shirt.

at large and hungrier than ever: it returned to Vega's farm the following night to finish off ten more goats and wound another seven. The horrified farmer also discovered that ten additional goats had gone missing.

By April 1975, the "vampire" had transcended the narrow confines of Moca, embarking on an island-wide spree of animal killings. Among its first depredations outside the San Juan metropolitan area was the slaying of a pig on a farm belonging to one Benigno Lozada in Guaynabo. Meanwhile, an all-out effort to apprehend the suspected human element behind the mutilations had been set into motion by the police, while the media bent over backward to find a "rational" or "scientific" explanation. When

ing from its mouth, shiny white and very tall—over six feet tall—and so on.

Carballal has reasoned that a number of entities were in fact responsible for the apparitions, but that out of a need for simplification, the local residents amalgamated them into a single one.

In the early '90s Carballal visited the area which constitutes the frontier between the African nations of Malawi and Mozambique in search of a rumored albino creature capable of swallowing a human being in a single gulp. The Chichewa-speaking natives described the entity in a way that made it seem similar to a giant white rhinoceros with an enormous maw.

The journey in search of the abominable man-eater led Carballal and his expedition down the Lambwe River. Aside from the countless snakes and alligators along the way, the most frightening beastie they faced was an angry hippopotamus that let out an earth-shaking roar.

While this Spanish expedition did not strike cryptozoological pay dirt, Carballal remains undaunted. "If we were able to separate the paranormal and mythological overtones that adorn the description of a real event, we would be in the position to acquire a wealth of information on nature which is otherwise concealed in traditional African lore," he observes.

### On the Trail of a Vampire

UFO investigator Sebastián Robiou was inducted into the ranks of cryptozoology through his work on Puerto Rico's

Moca Vampire—an entity which may have been responsible for hundreds of mutilations in the mid-1970s. Unlike the Chupacabras 20 years later, the Moca Vampire did not linger long enough to allow witnesses to get a look at it. It will forever remain among the scariest of monsters—the ones allowed to acquire protean qualities within the dark corners of the human mind.

The Moca Vampire was a Puerto Rican manifestation of the animal mutilation phenomenon which circled the globe at the time. The preliminaries to its activity can be found in a series of strange deaths during 1972 in Brazil's Rio Grande do Sul, where countless sheep turned up dead—drained of their blood through a single puncture wound. In all cases, there was no evidence of a struggle or spilled blood.

By 1975, cattle mutilations were in full swing in the United States, and similar reports were coming in from as far away as Spain. Farmers in the Malaga region lost over 40 animals—chickens, rabbits, and goats—to an unknown predator. Authorities dismissed it as the activity of a "wolf or feral dog."

On March 19, 1975, Hector Vega Rosado, a resident of Moca, lost ten goats that were never seen again. Ten more were found dead on the terrain, and still seven more were found wounded. Luis Urbina, a radiology instructor for the Puerto Rican Civil Defense, visited the Vega farm and passed a Geiger counter over the slain animals, discovering radiation levels be-

some "odd bats" were discovered in a limestone cave near Moca, hope welled in newsrooms throughout the island. However, it was soon pointed out that the bats were in fact of the ordinary kind, who live on fruit and do not attack animals.

Robiou and members of his CEOVNI team carefully recorded the varied activity taking place on the island, mindful of the significant number of UFO sightings and Marian phenomena being reported as well. Robiou noted the similarities in all the cases: a puncture mark surrounding the creature's neck area; no traces of blood despite the depth of the wound; and the perfectly circular nature of the puncture marks, which gave the impression of having been produced by a tool capable of removing flesh and cauterizing the wound simultaneously.

Almost 30 years later, the Moca vampire mystery remains unexplained except by speculation. Sebastián Robiou withdrew from paranormal research in the early 1980s to become a successful businessman in San Juan.

### "A Teddy Bear With a Bad Attitude"

Guillermo Aldunati has been one of Argentina's most visible researchers owing to the fact that he is a tireless globetrotter and conference-goer. Active since the late 1960s, Aldunati is the director of the Argentinean branch of Operation Right-to-Know (ORTK) and is not afraid to let his interest in UFOs interfere with his in-

terest in matters cryptozoological.

According to Aldunati, he and members of ORTK paid a visit to the town of Roldán in response to the appearance of a strange entity seen by a number of witnesses in early April 1997.

It all began when two sisters found themselves in the vicinity of route AO 12, facing a silo factory, when they were startled by the appearance of a diminutive creature, entirely covered in hair and with shiny eyes. The younger of the two sisters felt compelled to go toward the entity, as if something were overcoming her will. Her older sister shouted at her and seized her arm to keep her from going any closer.

The younger of the two women experienced a nervous breakdown as a result of the experience and was hospitalized.

The two sisters recall that the creature made no hostile gestures upon seeing them, aside from that strange power of attraction. At a given moment, the creature made a surprising jump and landed on the other side of the road (a leap in excess of 40 feet), losing itself in the soybean fields.

Days later, Mrs. Coronel, another witness, was in her country home late at night when she felt a strange compulsion to open the door and go outside. It was then that she saw the strange creature she would later refer to as "the bear" staring fixedly at her at a distance of some 65 feet. Mrs. Coronel reported feeling "mesmerized" by the entity and only emerged from the trance when her husband called her insistently from within the home.

According to this eyewitness' description, the being stood on its rear extremities during the encounters. She was able to notice that its face resembled that of a "small bear."

There exist others—all women—who have seen this entity. While the reports differ in certain aspects, they all describe an anomalous entity which could well be a wild dog, wolf, bear, or even a kangaroo, as suggested by another witness.

The research team, consisting of Guillermo Aldunati, Dr. Nestor Berlanda, Juan Carlos Gauna, and Leandro Palmero, felt certain that the witnesses saw an anomalous phenomenon but were unable to interpret exactly what they had seen. The possibility that it might be the same creature reported in Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Europe was considered, although when drawings of the Chupacabras were shown to them, the witnesses denied any similarity to what they had seen. In some cases, the witnesses noticed a set of wings that joined the front legs like membranes.

Difficulties of Investigation

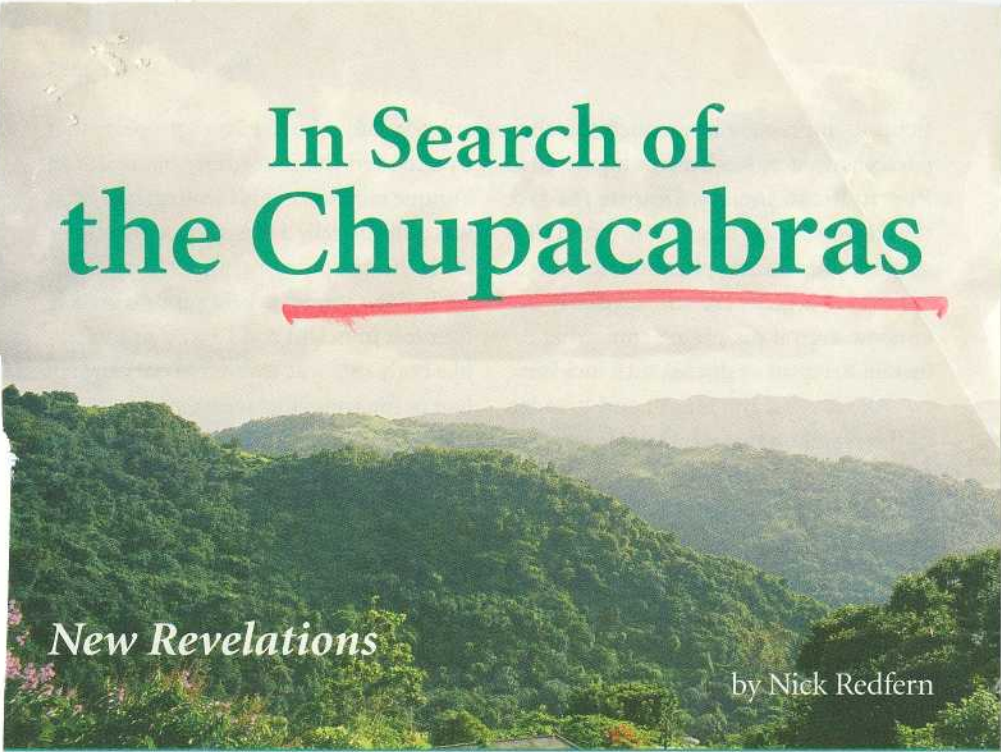
The state of cryptozoology in the Spanish-speaking world, as can be seen from the above examples, is as strong as it has ever been. To the chagrin of purists, there are no qualms about mixing controversial subjects such as ufology or witchcraft as part of the discipline, since the latter appears to be a component in many countries.

The issue of who can be an "investigator" is always a point of debate: in Spain, an investigator is someone carrying out research on behalf of a government agency or university; anyone with an interest in the field and without official credentials is considered a meddling enthusiast, at best. This dichotomy does not appear to be as pronounced in Latin America, although research into anomalous creatures is usually conducted by people with affiliations of some sort, perhaps owing to the expense of reaching the locations in which events usually take place and the very real hazards involved.

A U.S. researcher just has to point his car in the right direction to investigate a Bigfoot sighting. The lack of highways and the distances involved in some South American countries (and even Mexico and Central America, to a lesser extent) preclude such forays. Banditry and civil unrest make certain locales more dangerous than others, as is the case with any hot spots along Mexico's western Sierra Madre or even the Peruvian and Ecuadorian Andes.

Thanks to better exposure in the print media and the Internet, cryptozoology in the world's Spanish-speaking regions is finally receiving the recognition it so richly deserves.

Scott Corrales is a frequent contributor to FATE. He is the editor of Inexplicata: The Journal of Hispanic Ufology.



New Revelations

by Nick Redfern

Does the chupacabras lurk within Puerto Rico's El Yunque rain forest?

In July 2004, I traveled to the island of Puerto Rico for a week with fellow cryptozoologist, good friend, and director of the British-based Center for Fortean Zoology, Jonathan Downes, and a production team from the Sci-Fi Channel's new *Proof Positive* television series. The purpose of our trip was to make a 20-minute segment for *Proof Positive* on the still-ongoing mystery of the diabolical chupacabras. To say that our excursion to the island was extraordinary would be an understatement.

This was my first visit to Puerto Rico

specifically looking for the elusive beast. Jon, however, had undertaken a similar quest in 1998 with a British television crew and had seen firsthand both the horrific, physical handiwork of the creature and the psychological and financial effects that the chupacabras attacks had on the local populace.

Indeed, until a person actually spends time traveling the island and personally speaking with witnesses, government employees, police officers, and ranchers (all of whom have been implicated in the mystery to varying degrees), it is incredibly dif-

difficult to appreciate how much the chupacabras mystery has become ingrained in Puerto Rican society. Despite the fact that it was during the mid-to-late 1990s that the chupacabras phenomenon was at its height, attacks are still regularly occurring, even if people are somewhat reluctant to report or discuss such incidents.

We traveled the length and breadth of the island on our weeklong journey of discovery and interviewed numerous ranchers whose animals (including chickens, cows, pigs, and even peacocks) had been found slaughtered and whose deaths had been attributed to the chupacabras. Typically, two small puncture wounds were found on the necks of the animals in question; massive amounts of blood had been drained from their bodies with fantastic speed; and major bodily organs had been removed, sometimes with incredible and disturbing precision.

### Locked Cages Opened

In one particularly notable case, we spoke in depth with a farmer whose chickens had been mutilated and killed during the hours of darkness in this precise fashion. What made this incident stand out as particularly unusual, however, was the fact that whatever had killed the chickens had first carefully and quietly opened the complex locks on each of the cages in which the animals were held. This suggested a sophisticated degree of cunning, intelligence, and dexterity at work.

The other case that really stood out in-

involved a lady who lived on a property that overlooked the incredibly beautiful El Yunque rain forest. This woman had what was quite literally a face-to-face encounter with the chupacabras in 1975. She described the animal as being approximately four feet in height and having a monkey-like body that was covered in dark brown hair or fur, wings that were a cross between those of a bat and those of a bird, glowing eyes that bulged from a bat-style face, and fingers with sharp, claw-like appendages. Whatever the creature was, it left a deep, lasting impression upon the woman, who recalled the near-30-year-old encounter as if it had occurred only yesterday.

For a week we traveled across Puerto Rico. We headed deep into the El Yunque rain forest and the caves of the island and spoke with countless witnesses to the creature and its deadly habits. At the end of our foray into the world of the chupacabras, I could only come to one conclusion: regardless of the many theories that have been postulated concerning the origin of the creature, the chupacabras is a very real animal—and a very dangerous one, too.

Ironically, what was perhaps the most notable account that I uncovered on the chupacabras mystery came not during the shoot with the *Proof Positive* team, but a week later. In a lengthy telephone conversation after I had returned home to Dallas, I spoke with a lady named Rosa who had a remarkable tale to tell.

It was 1991 and Rosa (who works in a small restaurant on the island) was driving home with a friend after a night in San Juan. For a reason that to this day Rosa is unable to determine, both she and her friend felt compelled to drive their car high into the El Yunque rain forest—something she would never have normally done, certainly not at 1:00 a.m. on a Saturday.

### A Cloaked Creature

Nevertheless, the pair duly headed along the snaking roads that lead up to the forest and were confronted by a horrific sight as they rounded one particular bend: a four-to-five-foot-tall animal that crossed the road in front of them at a distance of about 50 to 60 feet with an awkward, shuffling gait. The creature appeared to be very dark gray in color and had two large wings that seemed to be wrapped around its back, giving the appearance of a long cloak that dragged on the surface of the road as it walked.

Rosa and her friend were terrified and watched in horror as the beast continued to very slowly cross the road. The creature glared at them for a split second with a pair of what appeared to be self-illuminating, glowing red eyes. Too shocked to do anything but stare in awe, the pair continued to watch as the animal shuffled into the trees and bushes and was lost from sight.

Thirteen years after her experience, Rosa spoke in a nervous voice as she related her account to me. Other than her family and several close friends (including



Jonathan Downes, director of the Center for Fortean Zoology.

a friend of one of the interviewees encountered during our visit to Puerto Rico), Rosa had discussed the encounter with no one. For her, the most bizarre aspect of the encounter was not the sighting itself, but the fact that the creature somehow impelled her (she believes) to drive to the El Yunque rain forest with the express intention of ensuring that she saw it, for purposes that neither I nor she can adequately determine. If nothing else, it demonstrates that the mystery of the chupacabras is a truly strange one.

In early December 2004, no fewer than 11 goats were found slaughtered inside their wooden pen at the Illusion children's



The cast and crew of the forthcoming movie, *Cabras*.

Permission given for use.

toriously ferocious beast?

Polania explained: "The unknown has always intrigued me. The mysteries behind such things as crop circles, spirits, and paranormal activities led me to look at the chupacabras. There are so many questions: Is it a beast? Is it a demon? Does it have an alien source? Or, is it even possibly the devil himself? And how can one entity cause so much havoc and never get captured? For the past 15 years, the mutilations and deaths have terrorized us. And so our story begins."

Polania expanded further on his desire to document the mystery of the chupacabras:

"Let me ask you this: When you stare

in a dark room and you see things, you ask yourself: 'Is it really there?' And to most people, the mystery behind the chupacabras is in their minds. But the proof is here. The animal mutilations alone are proof—to me—that this is something extraterrestrial. Personally, I believe it's real. I think it's waiting to reveal itself. But why it hasn't already, I don't know. But there is something out there far beyond what we can even imagine. My belief is that the chupacabras is extraterrestrial; but I also believe that there is something much higher to this—maybe spiritual, maybe biblical, even. And it is said that at the end of time a beast would walk the earth."

Intriguing words, indeed.

park in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico. The discovery had been made by the owner of the park's petting zoo, Fausto Radaelli. Radaelli had taken the goats to the park the previous Monday with the intention of recreating "a manger scene for the Christmas holiday." Two days later, however, the animals were dead.

The *Primera Hora* newspaper of December 3 stated: "Three of the goats presented large bite marks, dismemberment, and one of them had half of its body devoured; all of its internal organs, excepting its stomach, were gone. The rest of the goats had bite marks and fang marks on the rear of their bodies. The marks resembled the ones found on animals allegedly attacked by the infamous chupacabras."

### A Sick Varmint

However, Ernesto Marquez, a biologist and a specialist in exotic animals, concluded that the goats were attacked by "a wolf, a coyote, a hybrid, or very large feral dogs...these are regular fang marks. Canids kill animals by the rear, seizing them to hold them down and eat them. The animal leaped; it is an agile animal, attacking from the rear. It's astute and knows human beings. This is vicious. The animal isn't psychologically well."

The site was also examined by Julio Diaz of the Animal Control Solutions Company and veterinary technician Herman Sulsona of the San Juan Animal Control Center. Although Marquez was convinced that the killings had a down-to-

earth explanation, there were no signs of forcible entry in the pen; more intriguingly, no prints or hairs were found of any other animal aside from the goats themselves.

Moving away from the world of fact to the realm of fiction, a new movie on the chupacabras that is scheduled to appear later this year is already making big waves and is sure to further intensify the debate surrounding the mysterious beast.

### Monsters on Film

Titled *Cabras*, the movie is the first in a trilogy of productions on the chupacabras to be made by Polania Pictures. Thanks to the assistant producer, Monica Polania, in December 2004 I was able to conduct an exclusive interview with the director, producer, cinematographer, and editor of *Cabras*, Fredy Polania, who stated that: "If I were to classify the movie in a short description, I would say that it is *The Exorcist* meets *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*."

Polania added: "I was born of Colombian parents who resided in Napa, California, for 18 years, and the world of cinema has inspired me ever since I was a child. And I guess what really got me involved in filmmaking was the director Francis Ford Coppola, who also lives in Napa. His way of making movies really taught me a true sense of what I call guerilla filmmaking."

And what was it that prompted Polania to cross paths with Puerto Rico's no-

### Movie Casted Itself

Polania had equally intriguing comments to make on the way in which the cast and crew came together on the movie:

"Before a single shot was ever even captured, I had put together a crew; but not by the usual way of placing ads in newspapers. It had to be something much more special and I put together the crew through my own intuition. And what we found was that the movie started to manifest itself. I call my crew my research team, as they are something much more than just a crew. Beginning in the summer of 2000, we traveled to different parts of the world and took eyewitness accounts and collected stories from people. What we found shocked us. I can tell you that the world has been going about this the wrong way. If people knew what was really going on out there, they would not treat the chupacabras as a joke."

In similar vein, Polania stated: "The cast feel like they've done this already and it's almost as if we've all met before and as if we were brought together by fate. [It] was almost as if we were brought together by something greater."

I asked Polania how he thought the movie would be viewed and interpreted by those with an interest in the chupacabras mystery as well as by the general public and the media. Would it be perceived as just another horror movie? Polania was unequivocal in his views:

"I think this movie is going to be an eye-opener. I want to stress that *Cabras* is not a movie about death. It's a movie about

something that lives amongst us. I think that with our movie the public will find a new perspective on what the paranormal is really about."

"Is this going to be shown in theaters or is it going to be a movie for people to buy or rent as a video or DVD?" I inquired.

"The movie's trailers have already been seen in over 120 countries worldwide," Polania revealed. "The response has been astronomical. Even before it's been officially released, the movie is becoming almost like a cult: the truth, the legend, the beginning. I feel this movie is too complex for it to go straight to DVD. We are currently negotiating a domestic theater release. This is actually a three-movie series and I want the beginning of the story to be shown the right way."

Polania added: "The official website of the movie is online right now—at [www.cabrasmovie.com](http://www.cabrasmovie.com)—and people can learn more about it there. But in a few months' time—and closer to the release date of the movie—we will unleash behind-the-scenes footage, interviews, eyewitness accounts, and an interactive forum. Regarding the release, it will be towards the end of 2005. You'll find that the next few films to be released by Polania Pictures will all be supernaturally based."

### Closeness and Trust

On the subject of Polania Pictures, he explained to me that: "Our crew is quite small. Our philosophy is that you don't need a million dollars to make a great film.



The official logo for Cabras.

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The company is based on the trust of friends and it is the love of movies that brought us all together. We all dedicated four years of our lives with no pay to make this movie. The movie could never have been done without the closeness and trust we had in each other. *Cabras* is the first film from this group of friends and family."

Fredy Polania stated in closing: "This is something I was born to do. The unknown and the mystery of it is something I have to tell. And what better way than in a movie?"

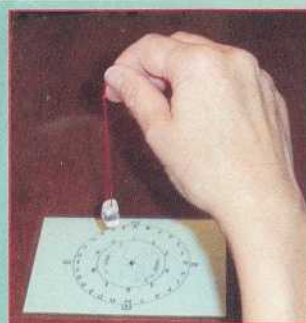
What better way, indeed? Look out for

*Cabras* at a theater near you later this year. Whatever the true nature of the chupacabras, both off-screen and on-screen it seems that the exploits of the creature are certain to continue.

**Nick Redfern's** latest book is *Three Men Seeking Monsters* (Paraview-Pocket Books, March 2004). He lives in Dallas and can be contacted at [www.nickredfern.com](http://www.nickredfern.com).



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