



The State of Texas
House of Representatives
Austin

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**Rep. Elliott Naishtat and the Austin Film Society invite you to a special screening of the
new documentary
"Writ Writer"
February 27th at 2:00 p.m.
Texas Capitol Extension Auditorium, Room E1.004**

"Writ Writer" portrays the historic conflict that emerged in the 1960s when Texas prisoners, inspired by the Civil Rights movement, challenged inhumane prison conditions. Long before the *Ruiz v. Estelle* lawsuit was filed, inmate Fred Arispe Cruz waged the legal battle that would be key to successful prisoner litigation in the 1970s and '80s. Prison officials retaliated by subjecting Cruz to months of solitary confinement and other punishments in an attempt to coerce him to drop his lawsuits. This attracted the attention of civil rights attorneys Frances Jalet and William Bennett Turner who came to assist Cruz.

The film, described by national news magazine *The Week* as "a brutal, revealing look at the Texas prison system as well as an inspiring portrait of human endurance," was broadcast on the Emmy Award-winning PBS series *Independent Lens* last summer.

Austin-based documentary filmmaker Susanne Mason will host a Q&A at 3:00 p.m., following the screening, joined by special guests Steve Martin, Texas attorney and prison consultant, and Jorge Antonio Renaud, former inmate and author.

"Writ Writer" is a co-production of Passage Productions and the Independent Television Service (ITVS), in association with Latino Public Broadcasting, with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). Additional funders include Humanities Texas, the City of Austin Cultural Arts Division, Texas Commission on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, Southern Humanities Media Fund, Summerlee Foundation, Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media, and Texas Filmmakers' Production Fund.

