



### ***Cronos***

**(Mexico 1993, 92 Minutes, Spanish with English subtitles)**

**Director: Guillermo del Toro**

### **Study Guide**

#### **Synopsis**

*Cronos* begins with an alchemist who invents the Cronos device, a hand-held golden machine which secretes a life-giving substance into a human host in exchange for blood. Hidden for many years the Cronos resurfaces in the present-day antique shop of Jesus Gris, an older man surrounded by the articles of previous centuries. He discovers the benefits of the Cronos as his life rejuvenates into a youthful existence. However, he is mysteriously plagued by an intense craving for fresh blood. Meanwhile, a powerful but dying industrialist is also aware of the Cronos device and orders a frantic search for the machine. The struggle for the device intensifies as the industrialist's nephew Angel closes in just as Jesus' addiction becomes overwhelming and his ability to maintain any form of "life" begins to deteriorate.

#### **Themes in the film**

Vampire mythology

Alchemy

Symbolism

#### **Study Questions**

- What are some Vampire story clichés?
- What is alchemy? What do you know about the mythology of alchemy in terms of gold and the quest for eternal life?
- Why do you think our culture has a pre-occupation with stories of eternal life or youth, and how does that play into the popularity of vampire stories and imagery?

#### **Discussion Questions**

- How do the themes of alchemy and the pursuit for purity play throughout the course of the film?
- How does the film portray the vampiric elements in its plot? How does it change or play with the horror genre?
- Did you notice any religious symbolism within the film? Why do you think the Cronos device is hidden in a statue of an angel? Why might the antique dealer's name be Jesus, or the industrialist's nephew's name be Angel? How do these names fit and also conflict with their traditional associations?

- Both Jesus and the industrialist have relatives who are at their side in the quest for the Cronos device. How does each man's supporter affect his quest?