

Robert De Niro, Edgar Ramirez Team For Roberto Duran Pic 'Hands Of Stone'

By MIKE FLEMING JR | Monday April 8, 2013 @ 6:00pm PDT

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EXCLUSIVE: If you love sports films like I do, here is one that has knockout potential. [Robert De Niro](#) and [Edgar Ramirez](#) have signed on to star in [Hands Of Stone](#), a drama written and to be directed by Jonathan Jakubowicz. Boxing fans will know where we are going from the title. Ramirez will play champ [Roberto Duran](#). De Niro will play his trainer [Ray Arcel](#) in a drama that focuses

on how each man changed the life of the other. It is set during boxing's Golden Era, when Duran was among top notch fighters including Sugar Ray Leonard, Thomas Hearns, Marvin Hagler, Hector Camacho, Vinny Pazienza. Duran fought them all and won 103 of his 119 fights. The focus will be on the Panamanian boxer's incredible brawls with Leonard, culminating in an inexplicable ending of the famous fight where Duran quit in the ring and cried "No mas," on a night when Leonard was having his way. That was a terrible ending to a rivalry that was everything depicted by De Niro in *Raging Bull*, when Jake LaMotta had those classic brawls with Sugar Ray Robinson. This was back when boxing mattered, and well before it got eclipsed by mixed martial arts fighting, which is way more accessible to the public and more smartly run than is pro boxing. CAA is handling domestic rights on the film.



The film will begin production in September in Panama. It will be produced by Jay Weisleder and Jakubowicz of La Piedra Films. "The story of Roberto Duran and Ray Arcel is not only a homage to the golden days of boxing; it is most importantly the story of a fatherless man who teaches every single one of us the true meaning of never giving up," Weisleder said. Jakubowicz said, "The infamous "No Mas" fight is the biggest enigma in the history of boxing. This movie will answer the enigma, with the



best talent any director can possibly dream." Executive producers include Claudine Jakubowicz, Ben Silverman, Cassian Elwes, Carlos Garcia de Paredes, Max Keller and George Edee. Roberto Duran's son, Robin Duran will be serving as Associate Producer. Bill Johnson and Jim Seible will be marketing the film internationally through their company, Lotus Entertainment.



De Niro recently wrapped another boxing-themed pic, [Grudge Match](#), with Sylvester Stallone, along with *Last Vegas* for CBS Films, Relativity Media's *Malavita* and Lionsgate's *The Big Wedding*. He's repped by CAA. Ramirez is an intriguing choice for Duran. The intense star of *Carlos* is coming off a turn in Kathryn Bigelow's *Zero Dark Thirty* and next stars in *Libertador*. He's repped by Impression Entertainment, CAA and Hirsch Wallerstein Hayum Matlof and Fishman.

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