

11th London panish Film Festival

24 – 30 September 2015

Once again and for the 11th year, the London Spanish Film Festival returns with a selection of some of the best recent films from Spain including feature films as well as documentaries and shorts. This year some of the feature films (marked **) will be in competition and the winner will be decided by a Jury. We feel very honoured that the following Arts, Letters and Film professionals have accepted to be part of our Jury: Art Curator Andrew Dempsey, Vanity Fair's journalist Bridget Arsenault, film producer Frank Mannion and actors Nickolas Grace and Charles Dance.

Filmmakers and actors from nearly all corners of Spain will come to present their work and bring to the screenings some extra background and insight.

We are very happy to welcome filmmaker Isabel Coixet with one of her latest films, *Learning to Drive*. The Catalan filmmaker, who knows no frontiers and works in several countries and languages, will be on stage talking about her career with Prof. María Delgado on Sunday 27 September.

As usual, the Festival will take place at Ciné Lumière in South Kensington but this year we are also going to be at the recently opened Regent Street Cinema, a cinema full of history at the very heart of London.

The London Spanish Film Festival is organised by **Tristana Media** (www.tristanamedia.com) and will take place at **Ciné Lumière** and the **Regent Street Cinema**.

For the full programme go to: www.londonspanishfilmfestival.com

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PROGRAMME

MAGICAL GIRL* *

Dir. Carlos Vermut, with Bárbara Lennie, José Sacristán, Luis Bermejo | Spain-France | 2014 | 127 min. | col | cert. 18 | In Spanish with English subtitles

London première

At the same time that Bárbara struggles with a mental disorder that provokes anti-social behaviour and self-harm, an unemployed father despairs at his terminally ill daughter's wish for an expensive dress from her favourite Japanese TV series. Blackmail, prostitution and a former teacher of Bárbara recently released from prison mix in a cool, calm drama that won Best Film and Best Directing awards at last year's San Sebastian Film Festival.

Preceded by an introduction (tbc).

Thu 24 Sep | 6.00pm | £12, conc. £10 | Ciné Lumière

LAS OVEJAS NO PIERDEN EL TREN

Sidetracked

Dir. Álvaro Fernández Armero, with Raúl Arévalo, Inma Cuesta, Alberto San Juan, Candela Peña | Spain | 2014 | 103 min. | col | cert. 12 | In Spanish with English subtitles

UK premiere

Alberto and Luisa, a couple in a bit of a crisis. He is an unemployed writer and she is trying to earn some money by giving cut and confection classes instead of designing, which was her dream. They have somehow ended up living in the countryside, but life there is not as idyllic as it promised. Alberto's brother is separated with two daughters and dating a 25 year old girl who loves partying and which rhythm of life he struggles to follow. Luisa's sister, Sara, is obsessed with finding a man and engages in nearly everything that can lead her to the right one. A delightful comedy about overcoming the challenges of modern life with some of the best character actors in Spain.

Preceded by the short ***CON BUENAS INTENCIONES***

Dir. Virginia Romero, with Gorka Otxoa, Kiti Mánver, Holly Bodimeade, Jimmy Shaw | Spain-UK | 2015 | 15 min. | col | cert. 12 | In Spanish and English with English subtitles

UK premiere

An English family is lost in a remote region of Spain. After driving all night, Brad, his wife Annie & their precocious daughter Katy are tired & irritable. The girl's apparent distress and man's obvious discomfort soon fire Eulália's vivid imagination when they stop in her bar.

Preceded by an introduction.

Sat 26 Sep | 6.30pm | £11, conc. £10, University of Westminster students £7 | Regent Street Cinema

ÄRTICO* *

Dir. Gabriel Velázquez, with Juanlu Sevillano, Deborah Borges, Víctor García, Lucía Martínez | Spain | 2014 | 78 min. | col | cert. 15 | In Spanish with English subtitles

UK premiere

Gabriel Velázquez's fourth feature film is both minimal and bold at the same time. Powerful silences are charged with emotion in the stories of two teenage couples in which the boys, both involved in the small local *mafia*, have completely opposite views of family: one thinks that having a child at 16 ruined his life, the other one that without a family you are nothing. The splendid photography of David Azcano is both suggesting and precise, giving those spoiled lives a sense of beauty and dignity. The film won the Generation 14plus Best Film last year in Berlin.

The film will be followed by a Q&A with the director.

Sat 26 Sep | 8.30pm | £12, conc. £10 | Ciné Lumière

TODO EL MUNDO LO SABE**

Everybody Knows

Dir. Miguel Larraya, with Bárbara Santa-Cruz, Diego Toucedo, Juan Blanco | Spain | 2014 | 75 min. | col | cert. PG | In Spanish with English subtitles

UK premiere

Marta has been dumped by her lover, a married businessman involved in some illegal transactions and she confides in a friend from her home town. At the same, *El Polilla* ("The Moth") shares information with a pal about the businessman and his confidences during the time they shared a prison cell. Jorge, a journalist who is in a precarious situation at the newspaper he works for is ready to buy *El Polilla's* story. The film focuses on illegally taped conversations and offers us a potent, compelling and fresh look at the culture of corruption, intrigue and excess spending.

The film will be introduced by the director (tbc).

Sun 27 Sep | 6.00pm | £11, conc. £10, University of Westminster students £7 | Regent Street Cinema

SNACKS: BOCADOS DE UNA REVOLUCIÓN

Dir. Cristina Jolonch & Verónica Escuer | Spain | 2015 | 46 min. | doc | col | cert. PG | In Spanish and English with English subtitles

UK premiere

Jolonch, a gastronomic journalist, and Escuer, Director of the Film & Cook festival in Madrid and Barcelona, have joined forces to offer much more than a mere trip through some of the most prestigious restaurants of Spain and their inviting and voluptuous dishes. Together they explore the revolution that Spain's cuisine has enjoyed, the bases allowing that freedom of creativity and the influences, dreams and aspirations of now world-renowned cooks like José Mari Arzak, Ferran Adrià, Joan Roca, and Eneko Atxa, among others.

The screening will be followed by a round table led by Enrique Ruiz de Lera, Director of the Spanish Tourist Office, with chefs and gastronomic journalists about this culinary revolution and the influence it has represented worldwide.

Event organised in collaboration with Spain Now!

PACO DE LUCÍA: LA BÚSQUEDA

Paco de Lucía: A Journey

Dir. Curro Sánchez | Spain | 2014 | 95 min. | doc | col/b&w | cert. PG | In Spanish and English with English subtitles | *Courtesy of Doc'n Roll Films*

This is an exceptionally intimate look at the life of the legendary flamenco guitarist Paco de Lucía, who was well known for his shyness as well as his humble and down-to-earth approach to life, as it was shot "in family" and directed by his own son, Curro Sánchez Varela. Through recent interviews with the guitarist himself, who died suddenly last year, and a wealth of archival footage, we see the amazing journey of a post-war poor child who picked up a guitar aged seven and learned to play by ear to international stardom and recognition.

The film will be preceded by an introduction (tbc).

Tue 29 Sep | 8.30pm | £12, conc. £10 | Ciné Lumière

LAS ALTAS PRESIONES**

The High Pressures

Dir. Ángel Santos, with Andrés Gertrudix, Hugo Torres, Diana Gómez | Spain | 2014 | 85 min. | col | cert. 7 | In Spanish with English subtitles

UK premiere

Solitary and disillusioned, Miguel returns to his home town in Galicia, charged with finding locations for a film he is not the director of. Completely disconnected from the real world, the character reconnects with his former friends and observes their lives through his camera. While everyone seems to live a meaningful life, Miguel has long since let his own life drift. This marks the beginning of an emotional journey and an in-depth analysis about his life. In his second feature, Santos invites us into a subtle modern tale, set to the rhythm of poetic photography.

Preceded by the short **GALICIA. PORTOBELLO ROAD**

Dir. Adriana Páramo, with Mariana Carballal, Estíbaliz Veiga | Spain | 2015 | 9 min. | col | cert. PG | In Galician with English subtitles

UK premiere

Mother and daughter discuss whether to go back to Galicia or staying in London and what it means for them.

Preceded by an introduction by filmmakers Ángel Santos and Adriana Páramo.

Wed 30 Sep | 6.20pm | £12, conc. £10 | Ciné Lumière

CARMINA Y AMÉN

Carmina and Amén

Dir. Paco León, with Carmina Barrios, Paco Casaus, María León | Spain | 2014 | 100 min. | col | cert. 15 | In Spanish with English subtitles

UK premiere

After the hugely successful *Carmina o revienta (Carmina or Blow Up)*, actor Paco León gathers together again his own family in this comedy drama in which Carmina, an eccentric and larger than life matriarch living in Seville, refuses to report the death at home of her husband, as she doesn't want to lose his pension payment coming the following Monday. A superb story involving accusations, guilt, tears, complicity and money, always

with a sophisticated Andalusian dark sense of humour, the film revolves around the witty Carmina and her daughter, two women that are used to struggling in life and won't stop despite any scruples (at one point Carmina says to her daughter threateningly, "I don't lie. When I say something, it becomes true").

The film will be preceded by the announcement of the winner of this year's Festival award.

Wed 30 Sep | 8.40pm | £12, conc. £10 | Ciné Lumière

CATALAN WINDOW

MARSELLA**

Marseille

Dir. Belén Macías, with María León, Noa Fontanals, Goya Toledo | Spain-France | 2014 | 95 min. | col | cert. 15 | In Spanish and French with English subtitles

UK premiere

Sara is a young mother who had her daughter Claire taken from her and put up for adoption while she was spending some time in jail. Now Sara is out and determined to take Claire with her and raise her. The first thing they do is to set off to France in search of Claire's father. In the format of a road movie, Belén Macías' second feature film after *El patio de mi cárcel*, is a brave exploration of the relationship between the irresponsible and defiant biological mother, the bourgeois adoptive mother and the mature daughter.

Introduced by director Belén Macías.

Thu 24 Sep | 8.45pm | £12, conc. £10 | Ciné Lumière

REQUISITOS PARA SER UNA PERSONA NORMAL**

Requirements to Be a Normal Person

Dir. Leticia Dolera, with Leticia Dolera, Manuel Burque, Silvia Munt | Spain | 2015 | 90 min. | col | cert. 12 | In Spanish with English subtitles

UK première

María is an unemployed thirty-something that has to go back to live with her mother and intellectually disabled brother. She feels she's not normal and sets out to achieve "normality" following a list of "requirements" for what she thinks normality is. Well-known in Spain for her work as an actress, Leticia Dolera has been writing and directing shorts for several years, always with a very personal, clever and well-defined style. *Requisitos...* is a fresh, off-beat and brave film about being true to oneself with a deliciously subtle sense of humour.

Preceded by an introduction by actor Manuel Burque.

Fri 25 Sep | 8.30pm | £12, conc. £10 | Ciné Lumière

LA MUERTE EN LA ALCARRIA**

Death in La Alcarria

Dir. Fernando Pomares Piñol, with The Cubero Brothers | Spain | 2015 | 83 min. | b&w | cert. PG | In Spanish with English subtitles

UK premiere

A mix of musical western and road movie, *La muerte en La Alcarria* takes us on a spiritual journey through this splendid and captivating natural region in Castille as well as through a lost childhood world and a way of life that has disappeared. The travellers, of course, are The Cubero Brothers who enrich the film and exalt that sense of a time lost with their wonderful music. With deadpan humour and dazzling black and white photography, the film is reminiscent of Jim Jarmusch, Sam Peckinpah or even John Ford's westerns.

The film will be introduced by the director.

Sat 26 Sep | 4.30pm | £11, conc. £10, University of Westminster students £7 | Regent Street Cinema

BASQUE WINDOW

OCHO APELLIDOS VASCOS

Spanish Affair

Dir. Emilio Martínez Lázaro, with Clara Lago, Dani Rovira, Karra Elejalde, Carmen Machi | Spain | 2014 | 98 min. | col | cert. 12 | In Spanish and Basque with English subtitles

Veteran Emilio Martínez Lázaro delights us in this screwball comedy with the cultural challenges and prejudices in the love story between Andalusian Rafa and Basque Amaia. Scriptwriters Diego San Juan and Borja Cobeaga (see film *Negociador* in programme) treat audiences with a wealth of a sparkling and witty Spanish sense of humour while actors engage us with exuberant performances. The film was an enormous success in Spanish cinemas last year becoming a must-see.

Fri 25 Sep | 6.30pm | £11, conc. £10, University of Westminster students £7 | Regent Street Cinema

A ESCONDIDAS**

Hidden Away

Dir. Mikel Rueda, with Germán Alcarazu, Adil Koukouh, Joseba Ugalde | Spain | 2014 | 96 min. | col | cert. 15 | In Spanish and Arabic with English subtitles

UK premiere

In Mikel Rueda's second feature film racism and gender issues overlap in the story of the friendship between Rafa and Ibrahim. Rafa is a 14 year-old learning about his own sexuality as well as about life and the importance of having a view of one's own. Ibrahim is also 14, lives illegally in Spain and is constantly under the threat of aggression in a way or another. With an appealing indi pop score, Rueda explores relevant issues in a close society and the effects on teenagers of concealing emotions both at home and at the school-yard.

The film will be introduced by director Mikel Rueda.

Sun 27 Sep | 4.15pm | £12, conc. £10 | Ciné Lumière

EL ÚLTIMO ADIÓS A BETTE DAVIES

When Bette Davies Bids Farewell

Dir. Pedro González Bermúdez | Spain | 2014 | 76 min. | doc | col/b&w | cert. PG | In Spanish and English with English subtitles

UK premiere

González Bermúdez records in this documentary Bette Davies' final days at the San Sebastian International Film Festival and the intricacies and improvisations behind all of Davies' demands and the enthusiasm with which Spaniards received such a glamorous Hollywood star. A fascinating and impressive work by the director, who interviewed practically everyone who had any direct contact with Davies, many of whom were not aware at the time of the cultural significance of Bette Davies' last public appearance and farewell.

Introduced by the director (tbc).

Mon 28 Sep | 6.30pm | £11, conc. £10, University of Westminster students £7 | Regent Street Cinema

NEGOCIADOR**

Dir. Borja Cobeaga, Ramón Barea, Josean Bengoetxea, Carlos Areces, Raúl Arévalo | Spain | 2014 | 79 min. | col | cert. 12 | In Spanish, Basque, English and French with English subtitles

UK premiere

After all the violence and blood shed, the negotiations between separatist organisation ETA and the Spanish government were extremely serious in Spain. Nonetheless, writer and filmmaker Borja Cobeaga, who was nominated to the Oscars for his short *Éramos pocos*, delights us here with a superb, lightly humoured look at the intricacies during the talks between the representative of Spain's government, an easy-going man with a very small budget for expenses, that of ETA, a rather tight and quiet man, and an unlikely intermediary, his interpreter and her boyfriend. Unsurprisingly it was named Best Basque Film last year at San Sebastian's film festival.

The film will be introduced by the director.

Mon 28 Sep | 8.30pm | £11, conc. £10, University of Westminster students £7 | Regent Street Cinema

SPECIAL SESSION

LEARNING TO DRIVE

Dir. Isabel Coixet, with Patricia Clarkson, Ben Kingsley, Grace Gummer | USA-UK | 2014 | 90 min. | col | cert. PG | In English

London premiere

When Wendy's marriage breaks down she decides to take driving lessons as she cannot depend on her husband anymore. Her instructor ends up being Darwan, an Indian Sikh, who is about to welcome his future wife coming from India. As unlikely as it seemed initially, the immigrant will become instrumental in the self-empowerment of the Manhattan book critic. Coixet's superb work is enhanced by the nuanced interpretations of Patricia Clarkson and Ben Kingsley, with whom she had already worked in her film *Elegy*.

The film will be preceded by an on-stage conversation between director Isabel Coixet and Prof. María Delgado (Queen Mary) about Coixet's career.

Sun 27 Sep | 8.00pm | £11, conc. £10, University of Westminster students £7 | Regent Street Cinema