

London Spanish Film Festival

17TH LONDON SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL

23 – 29 September 2021

at Ciné Lumière, South Kensington, London

The 17th edition of the London Spanish Film Festival comes again with a selection of some of the most exciting and interesting films recently made in Spain. Most of them UK premieres, they're the product of new as well as established filmmakers and, in the variety their genres, including a very special documentary, they will make you laugh, keep you on the edge of your seat and probably invite you to think about life and taking decisions as well as risks.

For the 13th year we have programmed a Catalan Window and, for the 12th, a Basque Window, highlighting the wonderful cinema made in both Catalonia and the Basque Country.

For the full programme go to www.londonspanishfilmfestival.com

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PROGRAM

CUÑADOS

Brothers-In-Law

dir. Toño López, with Miguel de Lira, Xosé A. Touriñán, Federico Pérez Rey | Spain | 2021 | 95 min
| cert. PG | UK premiere | In Galician and Spanish with English subtitles

Brothers-in-law Eduardo and Sabonis are married to sisters Cuca and Peque. Their business acumen is appalling and they find themselves in need of money – a lot of money. Sabonis, in a fit of rage, improvises a plan that he assumes will fix all their problems: they kidnap Modesto, brother-in-law to a corrupted and unscrupulous business woman, Alicia – incidentally the one that screwed them over in the first place. However Alicia seems to have no intention of paying any rescue for her brother-in-law's life. Toño López's opera prima, co-written with Araceli Gonda (Jorge Coira's *18 comidas*), is a straightforward comedy full great moments as well as Ribeiro wine and great Galician food.

Thu 23 Sep | 6.30pm

LA ISLA DE LAS MENTIRAS

The Island of Lies

dir. Paula Cons, with Nerea Barros, Ana Oca, Sergio Quintana, Celso Bugallo, Darío Grandinetti | Spain/Argentina/Portugal | 2020 | 93 min | cert. 15 | UK premiere | In Galician and Spanish with English subtitles

In a winter morning of 1921, amid the thick fog of the Galician coastline, a boat with 260 emigrants bound to Buenos Aires sinks in the cost of Sálvora, a very small island 3 km off the mainland. As that night the men of the island had all been to the mainland to celebrate Christmas, three courageous women use a small boat and row by ear to try to save as many people as they can. An Argentine journalist takes interest in covering the case and starts to investigate the many fatal coincidences that happened on the night of the shipwreck. Producer, writer and director Paula Cons portrays in a superb way the cold tragedy in the magnificent natural coastline of this island in the Atlantic as well as the terrible ignorance of a community banished from progress.

Fri 24 Sep | 6.30pm

UN EFECTO ÓPTICO

An Optical Illusion

dir. Juan Cavestany, with Carmen Machi, Pepón Nieto, Luis Bermejo | Spain | 2020 | 80 min | cert. 15 | UK premiere | In Spanish with English subtitles

Alfredo and Teresa, a married couple from Burgos, decide to finally take their long-dreamed and well deserved trip to New York. Shortly after their arrival Teresa starts to feel strangely uncomfortable. Then Alfredo's pictures of monuments don't match what they remember they saw... Cavestany's film is a distinctive and daring take on tourism, globalised provincialism, the banality of a steady couple's daily life... and much more.

Sat 25 Sep | 6.30pm

EL SUSTITUTO

The Replacement

dir. Oscar Aibar, with Ricardo Gómez, Pere Ponce, Joaquín Climent, Bruna Cusí, Vicky Luengo, Pol López | Spain | 2021 | 117 min | cert. 18 | UK premiere | In Spanish with English subtitles

In 1982 a young father and hardened police officer moves with his family from Madrid to a small Mediterranean sea town where he is to replace an inspector that has been murdered in mysterious circumstances. As he keeps going on with his work, strange links between the inspector's assassination, drugs and property speculation come up. Based on real facts, Oscar Aibar's beautifully made thriller takes us to a heavenly and happy retirement spot on the Mediterranean coast that Nazi elders got thanks to the Franco regime and kept through the Transition.

Sat 25 Sep | 8.30pm

Mon 27 Sep | 6.05pm

EL PLANETA

Planet

dir. Amalia Ulman, with Ale Ulman, Amalia Ulman, Nacho Vigalondo, Zhou Chen | USA | 2021 | 79 min | cert. 15 | London premiere | In English and Spanish with English subtitles

A jobless young woman is forced to leave London and return home after the death of her father to live with her eccentric mother. Although they are on the verge of facing eviction, they can't renounce to the lifestyle they love and believe to deserve, bonding over their common tragedy and living and enjoying the moment. Set in Gijón, *El Planeta* explores contemporary poverty, class awareness and female desires as well as mother-daughter relationships in post-crisis Spain all throughout with a charming and subtle sense of humour.

Sun 26 Sep | 6.20pm

NIEVA EN BENIDORM

It Snows in Benidorm

dir. Isabel Coixet, with Timothy Spall, Sarita Choudhury, Anna Torrent, Carmen Machi, Pedro Casablanc | Spain/UK | 2020 | 117 min | cert. 15 | UK premiere | In English and Spanish with English subtitles

When Peter is "awarded" an early retirement from the Manchester bank he's always worked for, he decides to visit his brother in Benidorm. However once there he finds out he's disappeared and this trip turns out to be far from what he had imagined. A poetic take by veteran Isabel Coixet on Benidorm's particular beauty, its gloomy side and its "unpoetic" real estate mafias as well as on love at an older age.

Fri 24 Sep | 8.35pm

CATALAN WINDOW

SENTIMENTAL

The People Upstairs

dir. Cesc Gay, with Javier Cámara, Griselda Siciliani, Alberto San Juan, Belén Cuesta | Spain | 2020 | 82 min | cert. 15 | UK premiere | In Spanish with English subtitles

Ana and Julio are a couple and apparently they spend most of their time together arguing. Salva and Laura seem to spend their time having noisy sex, reason for which Julio is extremely annoyed when Ana invites them for dinner. During the turbulent evening secrets, fears and insecurities come to the surface, everything spiced up by a witty dialogue written by the director, Cesc Gay. The result is a highly enjoyable and intimate comedy exploring the complexities of modern relationships.

Thu 23 Sep | 8.30pm

UN BLUES PARA TEHERÁN

Tehran Blues

dir. Javier Tolentino, with Golmehr Alami, Sina Derakhshan, Pezhman Dishad | 2020 | 80 min | cert. PG | doc | UK premiere | In Spanish, Persian and Kurdish with English subtitles

By the hand of Erfan, a young Kurdish man who sings, writes poetry and wants to be a film director, we'll visit some of Iran's remote corners discovering a truly sophisticated culture through its music. *Tehran Blues* is a production by the always surprising Luis Miñarro of Javier Tolentino's first film. He is one of Spain's most established journalists and film critics and this documentary is a true poem to an ever present culture that cannot be effaced nor ignored.

Sun 26 Sep | 4.10pm

CHAVALAS

Girlfriends

dir. Carol Rodríguez Colás, with Vicky Luengo, Carolina Yuste, Elisabet Casanovas, Cristina Plazas, José Mota | Spain | 2021 | 91 min | cert. PG | UK premiere | In Spanish with English subtitles

After an initial stint as a professional photographer, jobless Marta finds herself having to go back to live with her parents in a suburban flat in Barcelona, the working class neighbourhood she grew up in. There she finds her childhood girlfriends Desi, Soraya and Bea, with whom she shared a very special bond in their teenage years. Benefiting from the fresh performances of the actresses, Carol Rodríguez Colás's first feature film is a sincere and tragicomic take on friendship and roots through the life decisions Marta takes to become the woman she wants to be.

Tue 28 Sep | 8.45pm

LA REINA DE LOS LAGARTOS

The Queen of Lizards

dir. Burnin' Percebes (Juan González and Nando Martínez), with Javier Botet, Bruna Cusí, Miki Esparbé | Spain | 2019 | 63 min | cert. 15 | UK premiere | In Catalan and Spanish with English subtitles

Berta, an independent and determined single mother, and Javi, an alien, are getting ready to end their summer love affair as a spaceship should come to pick him up soon. However the spaceship does not appear and Berta starts wondering her possibilities as she faces a steady relationship. *La reina de los lagartos* is a memorable, absurd love story beautifully shot in Super-8 and in a surprising and unconventional way.

Fri 24 Sep | 4.45pm

Sat 25 Sep | 4.30pm

BASQUE WINDOW

ANE

Ane is Missing

dir. David Pérez Sañudo, with Patricia López Arnaiz, Jone Laspiur, Mikel Losada, Luis Callejo | Spain | 2020 | 100 min | cert. 15 | UK premiere | In Basque and Spanish with English subtitles

When Lide discovers that her teenage daughter, Ane, is missing, she teams up with her ex-husband, Fernando, to try to find her whereabouts. As the troubled Lide's determination grows Fernando's fear of Ane becomes more evident. Throughout most of the film Ane feels like a ghost and an oppressing and spectral unseen presence. After several awards for his shorts, David Pérez Sañudo succeeds perfectly in moving from mystery to family drama and then to political thriller.

Preceded by the short:

QUEBRANTOS

Breaches

dir. Koldo Almandoz, Maria Elorza | Spain | 2021 | 7 min | doc | cert. PG | In Basque with English subtitles

Living with fear... Based on an interview on Euskadi Irratia Radio.

Tue 28 Sep | 6.30pm

NORA

dir. Lara Izaguirre, with Ane Pikaza, Héctor Alterio, Ramón Barea, Itziar Ituño | Spain | 2020 | 100 min | cert. 15 | UK premiere | In Spanish, Basque and French with English subtitles and English

A clumsy job interview, a trip never made to Argentina, her grandfather's death, the keys to the old blue Dyane 6... That's how the trip that will change Nora's life begins. After welcoming Lara Izaguirre with her first feature film in our 2016 edition, we are proud to program her gripping second feature film, made by a creative team led by women, which is a fresh and optimistic reflection on life and the courage to take decisions and risks. As the saying goes, "bad weather, good face" (in Spanish, "*al mal tiempo, buena cara*").

Wed 29 Sep | 8.30pm