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Following the end of World War II, Spain is the only European country with a Fascist government. It is a country behind the times, torn as it is by three years of civil strife, representing danger to no one. Except Spaniards themselves.

The Allies do not bother to liberate it. They merely subject it to a blockade.

In 1953, General Francisco Franco signs a treaty with the United States, allowing the U.S. to install bases on Spanish soil. It is the end of Spain's international blockade.

In 1955, thanks to the support of the U.S., Spain is admitted to the United Nations.



From 1956 on, American production companies begin filming in Spain. During this period, the Spanish capital is known as “The Madrid of the Americans”.

**Alexander the Great** (1956) with Richard Burton and **The Pride and the Passion** (1957) with Cary Grant, Sophia Loren and Frank Sinatra are among the first productions.

David Lean also films in Spain **Lawrence of Arabia** (1962) and **Doctor Zhivago** (1965).

It is said that the Americans come because of the favorable climate and variety of its landscapes, along with the skill of Spanish film industry professionals. While this may be true, it is also probable that the large multi-nationals come to amortize funds blocked by Francoist legislation.



Above all, it is producer Samuel Bronston who, after convincing Dupont to invest its blocked funds, installs himself in Spain, making the Estudios Chamartín in Madrid his headquarters. It is there where he films such super productions as **John Paul Jones** (1959), **King of Kings** (1961), **El Cid** (1961), **55 days at Peking** (1963), until the failures of **Circus World** (1964), and **The Fall of the Roman Empire** (1964), a premonitory title, put an end to the Bronston Empire.

**The Queen of Spain** is a comedy centering on the story of what could have been the shooting of a film from this era.

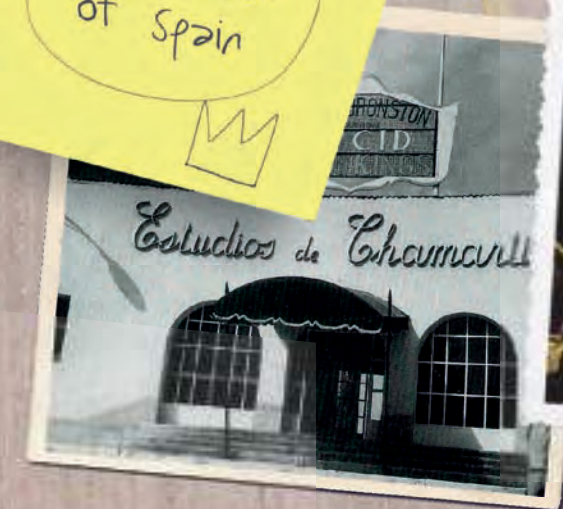
## THE QUEEN OF SPAIN

It is 1956, the international blockade of Franco is over. American film production companies begin arriving at a Spain that is immersed in a long and dark post-war period.

One of the producers is Sam Spiegelman who, down on his luck, comes to Spain with the intention of filming a biopic of Christopher Columbus. Seeking government grants, he will discover that Franco ("El Caudillo") is inclined to enthusiastically support the project ... as long as the subject is Isabella, the Catholic Queen, instead.

The American troupe arrives in Spain. Apart from Spiegelman, its main components are screenwriter Jordan Berman, a writer with Communist ideology, who, fleeing from Senator Eugene McCarthy's "witch-hunts", has sought refuge in Europe working most of the time as a ghost writer with a pseudonym, as many black-listed professionals in similar situations did at the time<sup>1</sup>; Gary Jones, renowned Hollywood leading man, specialist in pirate and swashbuckling adventures; and director John Scott: the man with the greatest number of Oscars, a living legend in Film. He is a man who was already at the top of his game during the silent era. Now, in his advanced years, he is a has-been alcoholic working as a way to remain active and maintain the lifestyle to which he is accustomed.

1. The "witch-hunts" forced even Charles Chaplin and Orson Welles to flee their country. Screenwriters such as Howard E. Koch (*Casablanca*, *Letter from an Unknown Woman*), Dalton Trumbo (*Roman Holiday*, *Exodus*, *Spartacus*), Ring Lardner Jr. (*The Cincinnati Kid*, *MASH*), Abraham Polonsky (*Force of Evil*), Carl Foreman (*High Noon*), Michael Wislon (*Salt of the Earth*), Hugo Butler (*The Southerner*, *The Young One*), etc... were among those persecuted by the Anti-American Activities Committee.





With them, comes the film's leading lady, the "American" mega-star Macarena Granada. A naturalized American citizen, she has spent more than a decade living and working in Hollywood. She has climbed the professional ladder, going from small roles to reaching the pinnacle of success, including marrying, divorcing along the way, even winning an Oscar. Who better than Macarena to play the role of Queen Isabella of Castille in this super-production?

Macarena returns to Spain, where she has not set foot since she left it during the Civil War. Accompanying her in this gilded exile is her inseparable assistant and maternal confidante, Trini, a village woman, sharp as a tack, acid, and entertaining... who also happens to be an authority in Hollywood gossip.





In Madrid, they will reunite with their old mates from the filming of *La Niña de tus ojos* (The Girl of Your Dreams), the picture the cast went to film in Berlin<sup>2</sup> at the UFA Studios in 1938. The film was halted when they all became involved, with Macarena leading the charge, in aiding the escape of Leo, a Jew who along with other gypsy and Jewish prisoners were used as extras in the Spanish-themed movie<sup>3</sup>.

2. During the Spanish Civil War, Florián Rey Benito Perojo shot five films at the German studios in Babelsberg.

3. Something similar occurred at the shoot of *Tiefland* by Leni Riefensthal. She personally chose the gypsies to be used as extras in the Maxglan-Leopoldskron concentration camp (near Salzburg). Riefensthal was charged at the Nuremberg Trials, but she testified that “her extras” were alive and well. It is known today that the majority of them died in Auschwitz.





They have not seen each other since then. Macarena fled to the U.S. with Trini and the rest were repatriated to a Spain in war. All except one, the director Blas Fontiveros, who was arrested in Berlin for masterminding the escape.

From his Berlin cell, Fontiveros was taken to a concentration camp. Following the end of the world war, he tries to get in contact with his family - a wife and two children - but discovers that he is presumed dead. His wife has remarried, this time the Secretary General of the Falangist Movement. The children, very young at the time of Fontiveros's absence, regard the new man in their lives as their father.

Fontiveros has not dared to return to Spain and spends a decade in France doing menial jobs and working as a lowly assistant in the film industry.

Upon learning that the now-famous and hallowed Macarena is returning to Spain to participate in a film project with "the Americans", Fontiveros can no longer resist the temptation and decides to return.

When he arrives in Madrid, he heads for the Studios Chamartin where preparations for the filming of The Queen of Spain are underway

There he finds many of his old colleagues immersed in one way or another in the production.





The actors Julián Torralba and Lucía Gandía have small roles. Torralba plays the role of Boabdil, the Moorish King of Granada. Lucía, Queen Isabella's maid-servant.

Julián was a leading man /heartthrob in his youth and is now reduced to playing men of a certain age, in the best of cases... Lucía, whose protector and lover, the producer Don Norberto has died in the line of duty (while making love) survives with small parts, here and there. Disappointed with men, her sexual preferences have changed. For the sake of appearances she has married her old friend Castillo, who is also gay, and is the production designer responsible for the sets of the new film.

The person in charge of production on the Spanish side is the indefatigable Bonilla, old workmate and friend of Fontiveros.

The last one to join the cast is Rosa Rosales, the First Lady of Spanish Theater. Following the war, she embarked for South America, where she set up her own theater company and showcased Spanish productions, ranging from classics to Lorca, on stages from México to Buenos Aires<sup>4</sup>.

Reinstated in her native country, she supplements her classical theater work with a small supporting role in this "American" movie where she earns more in three days than she does at the theater in three months.

4. The fine Catalan actress Margarita Xirgu extensively collaborated with Federico García Lorca, and premiered his most important works. Following the war, she opted for exile and became a naturalized Uruguayan citizen.





Fontiveros is warmly received by his old colleagues, who celebrate his return and, above all, his still being alive. Spiegelman and Berman, upon learning that he is a concentration camp survivor and a legendary Spanish film director, offer him a position in the second unit, replacing an inept figure currently on the job.

Fontiveros makes contact with his former wife, who reacts by passing out when she sees her “resurrected” husband, but then begs him to disappear and not try to re-enter her new life.

Ana's new husband discovers the arrival of the intruder and decides to get him out of the way.

After his first day of shooting with the second unit, Fontiveros is visited by the Franco police, arrested and taken to the Guadarrama mountain range, specifically to a place named Cuelgamuros.

It is here where, during the 40s and 50s, Franco decided to erect a mausoleum dedicated to honoring the dead of the civil war (“the crusade” as he was was fond of calling it); in principle, the monument was reserved for those from his side, but following the victory of the Allies (and the subsequent removal of all Fascist or pro-Nazi symbols) it became one for “all” the dead, ultimately baptized The Valley of the Fallen.





The Valley of the Fallen consists basically of a giant cross, 150 meters in height, taller than the Egyptian pyramids, and a basilica that is larger than St. Peter's in Rome, fruit of the feverish, megalomaniacal and competitive mind of the dictator.

To excavate the rock, thousands of prisoners participated in a program know as "sentence-reduction work". Many died during the monument's construction.

Now, in 1956, the work is in an advanced state (the monument will be totally finished and inaugurated in 1959) and the prisoners are no longer of any use. Those who have not finished their sentences are being sent to other prisons and few remain. They have been replaced by qualified manual laborers.

This is where Fontiveros arrives "recommended" by a high-ranking official; the ideal place to have an accident and disappear discreetly.

The filming of *The Queen of Spain* begins. John Scott spends most of the time drunk or asleep in his director's chair. The person actually directing the picture is Jordan, the screenwriter.



The first thing that disrupts the routine of cast and crew is the disappearance of Fontiveros.

The film's leading lady fixates from the start of filming on the young and attractive head of the grip crew, Leo.

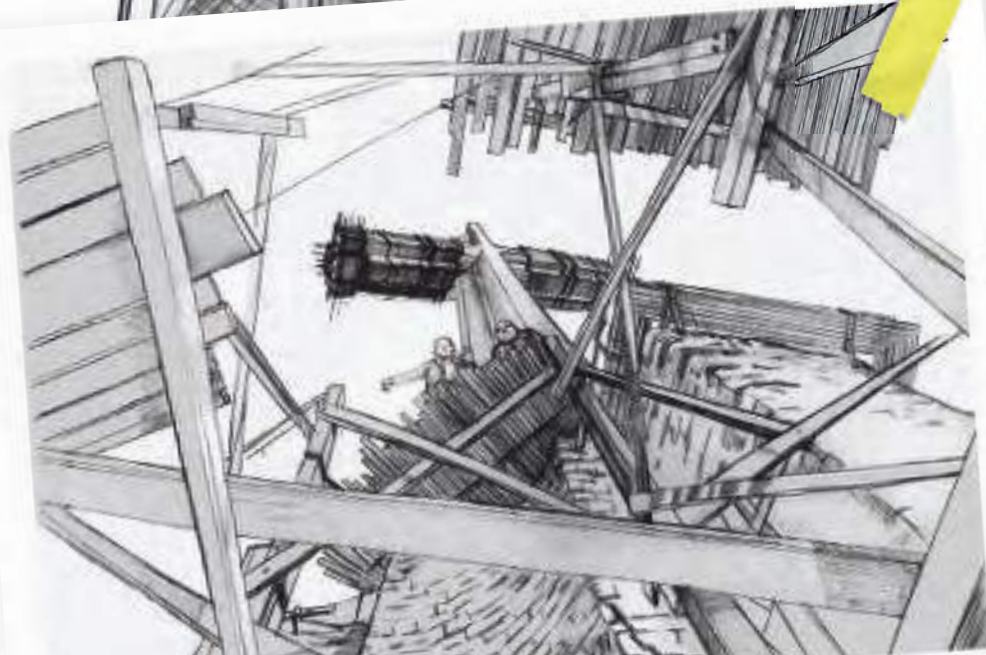
Little by little, a tug-of-war with romantic undertones begins to develop between them. The crew member will not allow himself to be bullied by the star, a quality which seems to attract her. Though the clashes are frequent, the sexual tension is always on the rise.

The news of Fontiveros's arrest and where he has been sent upsets the group.

Meanwhile, in Cuelgamuros, accidents occur that Fontiveros manages to elude miraculously.

Ana, his ex-wife, upon learning of Fontiveros' misfortune, decides to visit her old rival, Macarena, and proposes that she go to see Fontiveros on Visitors' Day, passing herself off as his daughter.

Fontiveros cannot believe his eyes when he sees his "daughter". He manages to persuade her to have one last roll in the hay, for old times' sake.





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Macarena tries to convince her colleagues of the need to spring Fontiveros from Cuelgamuros. They react with incredulity, considering the idea insane, attempting to dissuade Macarena by reminding her of the Spain they live in.

Following a new accident, which takes the life of one of his mates, Fontiveros realizes the danger he is in and why he has been brought to Cuelgamuros.

Meanwhile, Macarena begins hatching a plan to free Fontiveros.

Leo, who turns out to be a clandestine anti-Franco militant, offers his assistance to help her carry out the plan.

They decide to take advantage of a second-unit shoot to ride in into Cuelgamuros on horseback and rescue Fontiveros in an effort to sneak him out of Spain later.



# Penélope Cruz

This is her third film with Fernando Trueba, following **Belle Époque** and **La Niña de tus ojos**, for which she received the Goya Award (Spain's Academy Award) for Best Actress in 1999.

Winner of an Academy Award© and BAFTA Award for Best Supporting Actress in 2008 for her work with Woody Allen in **Vicky Cristina Barcelona** (2008); Cannes Film Festival Best Actress and the European Film Awards Best Actress in 2006 for **Volver** by Pedro Almodóvar.

For her performance in **Non ti muovere** (2004) by Sergio Castellito she earned the David di Donatello Award for Best Actress.

She's been in movies by Stephen Frears, Billy Bob Thornton, Ridley Scott, John Madden, Cameron Crowe, John Duigan and Matthieu Kassovitz, among others.

In **The Queen of Spain**, she plays Macarena Granada, a Spanish-born Hollywood star.





## *Antonio Resines*

Made his film debut with **Opera Prima** by Fernando Trueba. They teamed up again for **Sal Gorda, Sé infiel y no mires con quién, La niña de tus ojos** and **El embrujo de Shanghai**.

Winner of the Goya Award for Best Actor in **La buena estrella** (1997) by Ricardo Franco, he has twice received the Best Actor Award from the Academy of Television ATV Awards, (2003 and 1998).

One of the Spanish film industry's most beloved actors, Antonio Resines has appeared extensively on television in recent years.

In **The Queen of Spain**, he plays Fontiveros, a film director who has seen better days.



## *Jorge Sanz*

He appeared in his first film at the age of 9, alongside Jane Birkin. At the age of 12, he played the young Conan in **Conan the Barbarian** by John Millius and right after, shared the screen with Anthony Quinn in **Valentina**.

Goya Award for Best Actor (1989) recognizing his performance in **Si te dicen que caí** by Vicente Aranda, with whom he has collaborated on other occasions, most notably in **Lovers**. He has worked with Fernando Trueba in four films (**El año de las luces, Belle Epoque, La niña de tus ojos, El embrujo de Shanghai**)

He was the title character in David Trueba's six-part series **¿Qué fue de Jorge Sanz?**

In **The Queen of Spain**, he plays Julián Torralba, a former leading man who faces the twilight of his professional career.



## *Rosa María Sardá*

A giant in theater, film and television, she has worked with one of Spanish cinema's great film directors, Luis Garcia Berlanga, in **Moros y Cristianos** and with Pedro Amodóvar in **Todo sobre mi madre**. She is a staple figure in films by Ventura Pons. She has worked on two prior occasions with Fernando Trueba.

Winner of two Goya Awards for Best Supporting Actress.

In theater, she has won the Max Award for Best Actress and the Honorary Max Award for her professional career. She has also won The Golden Medal for Merit in the Fine Arts (2009).

In **The Queen of Spain**, she plays the First Lady of Theater, Rosa Rosales.



## *Santiago Segura*

He is the most successful example of director-actor-screenwriter in the history of Spanish cinema. His five-part **Torrente** saga has broken all box-office records, making him one of the most beloved characters in Spain.

Winner of two Goya Awards (Best New Director and Best New Actor)

In **The Queen of Spain**, he plays Castillo, the production designer.



## *Loles León*

A familiar face in Pedro Almodóvar films (**Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown, Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!, Talk to her...**), she has worked on several occasions with Vicente Aranda, David Trueba.

Nominated three times for Best Supporting Actress at the Goya Awards.

In **The Queen of Spain**, she reprises the role of Trini, the inseparable assistant-confidante of Macarena.



## *Neus Asensi*

Film, theater, and television actress with an extensive filmography. She has stood out in comedies such as **Suspiros de España (y Portugal)**, by José Luis García Sánchez, **Torrente: El brazo tonto de la ley**, by Santiago Segura, with whom she repeated in **Torrente 2** and **Torrente 5**, along with **La niña de tus ojos**, by Fernando Trueba. She has also collaborated with Daniel Monzón in **El corazón del guerrero** and **El robo más grande jamás contado**.

In **The Queen of Spain**, she plays Lucía Gandía, an actress eternally destined to play supporting roles.



## *Jesús Bonilla*

After shining in the theater with **Esta noche gran velada** by Fermin Cabal and **Bajarse al moro** by José Luis Alonso de Santos, he became a must-have supporting actor in cinema and television, working with Gonzalo Suarez, José Luis Cuerda, Emilio Martínez Lázaro, David Trueba, Fernando Trueba, and Alex de la Iglesia, among many others.

He has directed the films, **El oro de Moscú** and **La daga de Rasputín**.

In **The Queen of Spain**, he plays Bonilla, head of production, old mate and partner-in-crime of Fontiveros.



# Zbigniew Preisner

Preisner became known with his music for films by Krzysztof Kieslowski such as the series **Dekalog**, **The Double Life of Veronique** and the trilogy, **Three Colors: Blue, Red and White...**

He has been a regular collaborator with Agnieszka Holland in **Europa, Europa, Olivier, Olivier and The Secret Garden**; Héctor Babenco in **At Play in the Fields of the Lord**, **Corazón iluminado** and **My Hindu Friend**; and Jean Becker in **Elisa and Effroyables jardins**.

He has also worked with Louis Malle (**Damage**), Claude Miller (**Un secret**), Søren Kragh-Jacobsen (**The Island on Bird Street**), Thomas Vinterberg (**It's All About Love**), among others.

Twice-winner of a César Award for Best Music and the Silver Bear Award at the Berlin International Film Festival.

Among his work outside cinema, the following should be highlighted: **Requiem for My Friend**, composed in memory of Kieslowski, **Quartet in 4 Movements**, **10 Easy Pieces for Piano** and **Diaries of Hope**.

In another illustration of his versatility, he directed and made the string arrangements for ex-Pink Floyd David Gilmour's **Live in Gdansk** in 2006.



He has written and directed 15 films since making his debut with **Opera Prima** in 1980, which received awards in Venice and Chicago.

With **El Año de las Luces** (1986), he won the Silver Bear Award at the Berlin Film Festival and one Goya Award (Spain's Academy Award). With **The Mad Monkey** (1989) he earned five Goyas including Best Film, Best Director and Best Screenplay.

**Belle Epoque** (1992) received the Academy Award® for Best Foreign Language Film of 1993 and the BAFTA Award for Best Film Not in the English Language, along with nine Goya Academy Awards including Best Film, Best Director, Best Screenplay, Best Actress, Best Supporting Actor and Best Supporting Actress.

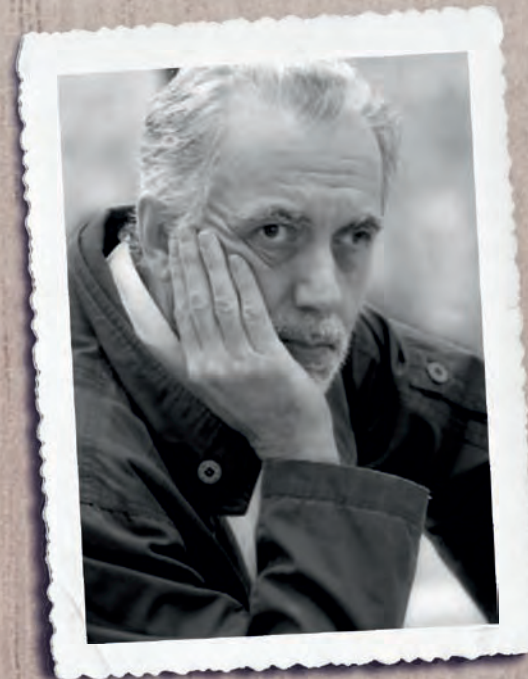
**La niña de tus ojos** (1998), won seven Goyas including Best Film, Best Actress and Best Supporting Actor.

The documentary **Calle 54** (2000) earned a Goya, a Best Film Award from the USA Jazz Journalists Association and **El embrujo de Shanghai** (2002), three Goyas. **El milagro de Candeal** (2004) won two Goyas: Best Documentary and Best Original Song.

He was nominated again for an Oscar® for Best Feature Animation with **Chico & Rita** (2010); won the Best Animation Film Award at the European Film Awards and the Goyas, along with the Grand Prix HANF (Holland Animation Film Festival), Anima (Bruxelles Film Festival, Meilleur Long Métrage Prix du Public), Best Animated Feature (TrickFilm Stuttgart), and others.

For his last film, **L'artiste et son modèle** (2011), he received the Best Director Award at the San Sebastian International Film Festival.

As Musical Producer, he has won two Grammy® and five Latin Grammy® awards.



*Fernando Trueba*

**The Queen of Spain** is a comedy.

It's curious that the great classics of Spanish cinema are comedies: **Plácido** and **El verdugo**, by Berlanga, **El pisito** and **El cochecito**, by Ferreri, **El extraño viaje** by Fernán Gómez...

Perhaps it all comes from our literature: **El Quijote** or the picaresque novel... Kundera wrote that in the beginning, the novel is humorous: Rabelais, Cervantes, Diderot...

It is interesting that "Spanish" surrealism also has a humorous slant: Buñuel, Dalí. What are they if not great humorists? Before all else.

Comedy is the genre par excellence of Spanish cinema.

In my "identity", which is neither national nor nationalist, classic American comedy (Lubitsch, Wilder, Sturges etc.) has as much, if not more, substance.

Ditto for commedia all'italiana: Monicelli, Risi, early Fellini.

Some great comedies, in addition to making us laugh and portraying human frailty, tell us the story, but in another way. They do so by portraying small-scale characters amid historical periods or events.

**The Organizer** or **La grande guerra** by Monicelli, **La marcia su Roma** by Risi, **Tutti a casa** by Comencini, say more about the history of Italy than all the historical films.

In American film, we can cite from **A foreign Affair** by Wilder to **To be or not to be** by Lubitsch.

In my case, there is a cycle in my films in where comedy has a historical backdrop: **Belle Epoque**, for instance, takes place in the 1930s with the arrival of the Republic; in **El año de las luces** or **El Embrujo de Shanghai**, we are in the 1940s post-civil war era.

The only time that the war is present in my films is in *La niña de tus ojos*. Again, history is the backdrop for telling a story about small-scale characters.

But **La niña de tus ojos** is also a film about cinema. About people from the world of cinema.

The film focused on a forgotten anecdote from the folkloric movies that were filmed in Nazi Germany during the Spanish Civil War. It is an episode which might also be described as surrealistic.

The movie was additionally a portrait of a group of filmmakers, actors and technicians. It was very special to talk about our past vis a vis people from the world of cinema.

But something very special happened, something that had never occurred to me before. The characters of **La niña de tus ojos** did not abandon me once the film had been made. What happened to them? Had the director Blas Fontiveros died in Germany? What became of Macarena in America?

Without realizing it, in the following years, the script began to take shape in my head, along with the gags, dialogues, and sequences, without my being aware of it, like a plant growing in my garden.



It had never crossed my mind to do a sequel, a second part. And I believe **The Queen of Spain** is not one. It is an independent film. It merely continues telling the history of our country through the history of our cinema, and of its people.

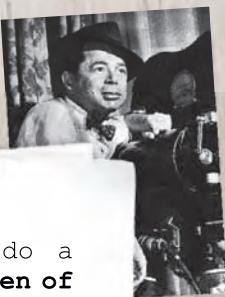
Through them, it also tells the history of this country during a period of transformation, the 1950s, when the end of the blockade casts a faint light at the end of the dark tunnel of the post-civil war, one which is an illusion still very far away.

The Americans are in the middle of a McCarthyist black night, the world is submerged in the Cold War and Spain is absolutely nothing globally. It is merely a forgotten pawn on the chess table of history. Spain still has twenty years left of dictatorship, a police state and a "silent period" to go through.

The movie takes place during those years in which the country is one immense jail, but it is also the onset of the student uprisings, television being launched and an exiled poet - Juan Ramón Jiménez - winning the Nobel Prize and the Americans coming to make movies in Spain...

Movies that are films about film at one time suffered a bad reputation. There is, however, an unerring maxim for writers and filmmakers - and for life in general - which says that one should talk about those things one is familiar with.

French cinema has some notable examples of films about film. **Day for Night** by Truffaut and **Contempt** by Godard are the first to come to mind, but isn't **French Cancan** by Renoir one too?



In Italy, **Variety Lights** by Lattuada, **Vita de cani** or **The Passionate Thief**, by Monicelli, **The White Sheik** by Fellini, **Bellissima** by Visconti... are all films about the world of actors. Which film describes better the Italy of today than **Il caimano** by Moretti? It is a film about cinema.

Movies - along with jazz - are the quintessence of American art. That is why from **Sunset Boulevard** by Wilder, **Sullivan's Travels** by Sturges or **The Bad and the Beautiful** by Minnelli, to **Ed Wood** by Tim Burton or **State and Main** by Mamet, Americans have never been shy when it came to talking about themselves through their cinema.

The reason is American literature took cinema seriously way before anybody else, as illustrated by Scott Fitzgerald in **The Last Tycoon**, Nathaniel West in **The Day of the Locust** or Budd Schulberg in **The Disenchanted**.

For myself, cinema and life are often the same. Cinema is a window to the exterior, but also to the interior. Painters and sculptors, musicians and writers, filmmakers and so on, have been common characters in my films. But who cares what these characters do for a living? In the end, what matters is that we speak about human beings, and their emotions, weaknesses, vicissitudes, passions, etc.

A large portion of my films are comedies. For a while, I was away from the genre. Now, however, I feel a physical and moral necessity to return to comedy and hear people in the audience laughing again.

*Fernando Trueba*

Fernando Trueba