

MADRID, A CITY IN THE SHADOWS: CINEMA AND OBSCURITY*

LUIS DELTELL ESCOLAR

ELIOS MENDIETA

GEMA FERNÁNDEZ HOYA

In the autumn of 1991, the Basque cinematographer Victor Erice and the Manchego painter Antonio López began filming one of Spanish cinema's most extraordinary films. In the area surrounding Chamartín station, in the courtyard garden of a property under renovation, stood a quince tree laden with mature fruits and, Antonio López, a notoriously slow painter, decided to trap its abundance on canvas. At the same time, Victor Erice, famous for producing a feature film only once every ten years, set himself the challenge of portraying the painter's process. The project would seem to be a bet against the inexorable march of time, and, from the first frame, the audience realise this bet is unwinnable as much for the painter as the director.

The Quince Tree Sun (El sol del membrillo) is a surprising film; focussed on a tree in a small, enclosed garden, it speaks profoundly of Madrid. In it we find not an attempt to depict the urban fabric—as we see in so many of López's oils—but nor

is it and idealised vision of the city. Antonio López remarked more than once that: "Madrid is not lovely, rather it is an attractive monster," (Rojas, 2021, 4th November). And, the city is very present in this film: in the sounds that can be heard beyond the garden walls; in the construction site, symbolising Madrid's eternal building works; and, above all, in the meeting between two artists, Erice and López, who while alien to Madrid in the sense that neither was born there, both developed creatively and as human beings in that city. A realist, López's most famous works are his views of Gran Vía, however, the vast majority of his urban canvasses show wastelands, vacant lots, or panoramas that are almost unrecognisable as Spain's capital. It is unlikely to spoil the film for anyone if we let slip that the painting does not get completed. Nevertheless, the truly artistic aspect of this film about an unfinished painting of a quince tree is that it reflects the essence of Madrid with genuine clarity.



Image 1. Still from *El sol del membrillo* (1992)

In contrast to the majority of the great European cities, Madrid does not give the impression of having been there forever, burdened with history, rather it seems more like a small town that, by chance, simply transformed into a metropolis overnight. While Rome, Paris, Lisbon, and London evoke grandeur and history from the first glance, Madrid might well have been born with us, with our parents, or, at best, with our grandparents. Edward Baker (2009) observed certain repeated behaviour patterns among Madrid's citizens and many other authors writing about the Spanish capital also maintain that the city has only just emerged, that, it evolved from town to city in an instant. Writing in 1999, Luis Antonio de Villena comments: "Let's be honest, Madrid has become a great city" and a similar argument was expressed

by the historian Santos Juliá more than a decade before: "Madrid went from a badly constructed town to the sketch of a great capital," (1988) and, earlier still, Manuel Azaña (Spain's prime minister between 1931 to 1933), although he loved walking through the city, wrote: "Madrid is a badly constructed town in which there is the outline of a great capital [...] it is the capital of abandonment, of improvisation, of incongruency; the casual stroller would be happy to see the beginnings of modernisation" (2002).

Yet, as Baker (2009) discovered in his work on Madrid, the most interesting feature of this discussion, is that the same idea was around even in the early part of the twentieth century when Juan Ramón Jiménez noted how Madrid's modernity came from nowhere, coming to resemble

Barcelona in moment: “Madrid today. Dying town of La Mancha. Blossoming Catalan city,” (1966: 66). Indeed, going back even further to the middle of the nineteenth century, we see authors already ruminating on Madrid’s explosive growth. For instance, Benito Pérez Galdós wrote in *Fortunata y Jacinta* (2003: 64): “Before long, this proud Court would leave behind its condition as a vulgar town to become a civilized capital. Because Madrid had nothing of the metropolis other than its name and a ridiculous vanity. It was a peasant wearing a gentleman’s cloak—the shirt underneath being torn and filthy”. For over almost two centuries, then, every visitor, and every Madrileño has felt the city was born with them—or in many cases, for them.

The place that evokes the city’s rapidly changing nature more than any other is Madrid’s Gran Vía, an emblem of fast-paced, fleeting modernity. Unlike large-scale urban developments in other European cities which were planned and executed meticulously, Gran Vía’s development was implemented hastily, and, in a very short time, this street became not only one of Madrid’s major arteries, but also the symbol of progress for the whole capital. The impetus of this street—its enthusiasm—emerged because its growth was accompanied by the blossoming of a new spectacle: the cinema. As Rafael Alberti said of himself in his autobiography: “I was born with cinema—respect me!” (1921), so it is with Gran Vía. Thus, in a very short space of time, on the central stretch of this street—the small distance between San Luis junc-

Image 2. Photograph of the Velussia cinema by Luis Lladó



tion and the Velussia Cinema where seven major lots offering 1500 commercial premises jostled for attention alongside a few other minor players—the most important buildings were the cinemas. At the same time as the cinemas appeared, distributors and producers—mostly foreign but also Spanish—also set up their headquarters on Gran Vía. It is no surprise then, only a few years after its foundation, this broad avenue—which its planners optimistically thought would never reach capacity—suffered its first traffic jams and it was necessary to regulate the flow of vehicles using all manner of technological innovation.

Cinema and Gran Vía grew together. Gran Vía's focal Carrión building, was planned to be—and was—the most *expensive* movie theatre in Spain and the most high-profile premieres took place there. In addition, in the nineteen thirties, the great Valencian film-making company, Cifesa, set up their headquarters in this symbolic skyscraper. Twenty years later, a couple of youngsters, Luis García Berlanga and Juan Antonio Bardem, made their way there to ask if the company would produce their first film. Fernando Fernán Gómez watched over his horse from the Carrión's oval windows, in *El último caballo* [The Last Horse] (Edgard Neville, 1950), almost half a century later, Santiago Segura hung from its central billboard in Alex de la Iglesias's *The Day of the Beast* (El día de la bestia, 1995), and in the third season of one of Spain's most popular television series of all times, *Money Heist* (La casa de papel, Álex Pina, Antena 3, and Netflix, 2017-2021), millions of Euros were cast into the skies over its iconic cross.

In the nineteen twenties, the Madrileño, Ramón Gómez de la Serna, published a book entitled *Cinelandia* [Cinema-land] (1923). It was set in an imagined Hollywood, but the truth is, for every one of its contemporary readers it would have conjured the image of Gran Vía, the street where films premiered week after week. However, looking back at the photographs of the street in those early days it is astonishing to note that Gran Vía's final

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stretch (named in honour of Eduardo Dato and which opens onto Plaza de España) was, until the mid-nineteen fifties, a wasteland. While the city emerged at high velocity, the La Mancha's countryside stubbornly remained with scarcely five hundred meters separating the glamour of Madrid's Cinema-land from the grind of agricultural labour on its dry plains. This profound contradiction between the modern, or cosmopolitan, on one hand and the traditional, or Castilian, on the other, is one of the key factors in understanding Madrid's identity. Taking José Luis Garci's film *El crack* [The crack] (1981) as an example, the main character, detective Areta has an office on Gran Vía and in an imitation of US film noir, this is where he meets his clients, but on the sidewalk of the same street he confesses to his lover that, in his life he has only one skill and one possession: "I only know one city [Madrid] and I have an address book" (*El crack*, 1981)

Almost logically, a recently constructed metropolis, populated by characters from a farce without any kind of shared past, brings with it a further phenomenon: anonymity. Almudena Grandes said of Madrid: "Like a vulgar fairy godmother," (2018) the city gives its citizens anonymity since, "in this plebian town, which prides itself on its condition as much as, or more than, others do on their ancient and aristocratic coats of arms, no one is more than anyone else. Madrileños care very little about the origins, family-names, the distinctiveness of their fellow citizens," (Grandes, 2018). Thus, while the great plazas of the continent are flanked by opera houses, in Madrid, the so-called *género chico*, farce, and operetta tri-

umphed. As some historians have observed, particularly, Ríos Carratalá (1997), Castro de Paz and Cerdán (2011) and García Fernández (2015), these popular artforms have had a direct influence on Spanish cinema. It is difficult, if not impossible to speak about Spanish realism or even Spanish neo-realism, since even Mur Oti's most powerful melodramas of are infiltrated by farce.

The Spanish civil war violently erased any possibility of building a world capital of cinema in Spain. In Madrid, trenches dug from east to west and the narrow front-line—which didn't move for three years—divided Spain in two. This war between two parts of the same whole was foreseen with surprising prescience by that most Madrileño of all Aragonese painters, Francisco de Goya, in his work *A garrotazos* (Fight with cudg-

els,1819) on display in the capital's Prado Museum. Bunkers replaced the trees in Madrid's parks, and, in University City, the International Brigades raided the libraries to construct barricades using the books and doctoral theses produced by thinkers of the nascent Madrid school of philosophy. Francoism's first films such as *Frente de Madrid* (Madrid's frontline, Edgar Neville, 1939), tried to explain all this horror (Fernández-Hoya and Deltell Escolar, 2021) but, very rapidly, the regime decided to reconvert the city, which had seen some of the most enthusiastic celebrations of the proclamation of the Second Republic, into an imperial capital—but without an empire. Naturally, in this process, Spanish cinema experienced a series of deep ruptures, but also maintained a strong degree of continuity (Torreiro Gómez, 2016).

Image 4. Still from *Surcos* (1951)



Francoism, and the dictator himself, were aware of cinema's vital role in the construction of a new Spain. However, despite the iron control of the censors, the creation of cinema schools and unions—overseen and controlled by those in power—some cinematographers did manage to avoid producing the expected patriotic exaltations. Thus, we see cinematic depictions of Madrid as a conflicted city, and even some containing presages of the unrest that would eventually boil over in Francoist Spain. José Antonio Nieves Condes *Surcos* [Furrows] (1951), for instance, was conceived as a novel story about that miserable, brutalised city. A few years later, shortly before the first protest march by anti-Franco students, Juan Antonio Bardem shot *Muerte de un ciclista* [Death of a cyclist] (1955) in which a group of youngsters protest against the authorities and, although their activism did not address their lack of freedom, but rather academic questions, this film does give Spanish cinema its first representation of protest in the capital. In this way, even in the middle of the Francoist era, a group of dissident cinematographers emerged, and it seems the censors and the administration accepted it, tolerated it—or perhaps didn't even notice it (Herederó, 1993).

One of the themes running through all periods of Spanish cinema is Madrid's lack of decent housing. This had always been a problem for the city, but from the nineteen fifties the situation became unsustainable, and it is one issue that democracy has, so far, still failed to solve (Deltell Escolar, 2005). Even today, this theme appears in films set in the capital, including Juan Diego Botto's recent feature, *On the Fringe* (*En los márgenes*, 2022). In this way, over the years the fictions created by cinema show Madrileños resorting to all manner of tactics—some quite extreme—in order to secure a home: subletting, as in *Esa pareja feliz* [That Happy Couple] (Luis García Berlanga and Juan Antonio Bardem, 1951); facing down a bull in the ring, or literally setting up their home on the street, as we see in *El inquilino* [The Tenant] (José

Antonio Nieves Conde, 1957); marrying an old lady to inherit her rental agreement, as in *The Little Apartment* (*El pisito*, Marco Ferreri and Isidro M. Ferry, 1958); or, most dramatically of all, becoming a state executioner to obtain a grace and favour apartment as is the case in *The Executioner* (*El verdugo*, Luis García Berlanga, 1963). These last two films, penned by the Riojan screenwriter Rafael Azcona were key to shining a light on some of the more mad, cruel, and grotesque aspects of Spanish society of the time.

Produced at the same time as the films mentioned above, there is also a massive body of work that avoided the complexities of Spain's social, and urban realities and instead focussed on more palatable stories. While many of these films had clear propagandist aims, others were designed to be harmlessly entertaining, however, all were firmly in line with the Francoist regime. Thus, we see films such as *Murió hace quince años* [He Died Fifteen Years Ago] (Rafael Gil, 1954) presenting the city as still restless, still suffering from the open wounds of fratricidal conflict alongside other more genial titles including *¿Dónde vas Alfonso XII?* [Where Are You Going Alfonso XII?] (Luis César Amadori, 1958) or even, *Los últimos días del cuplé* [The Last Days of Cuplé] (Juan de Orduña, 1957) which demonstrate a clearly conservative-leaning view of Madrid. The intention was to stage a renewal of Madrid's former grandeur under the Bourbon restoration—a grandeur that never really existed.

It is impossible to talk about a unique strand of comedy in the Spanish cinema of the fifties and sixties. Indeed, styles changed and shifted so much it would be pointless to attempt to find a clear line uniting the available examples, however, a series of films does exist—films that were greeted with deafening applause—in which the city of Madrid takes an important role. Of these, we would highlight *Historias de la radio* [Radio Stories] (José Luis Sáenz de Heredia, 1955), *Las chicas de la Cruz Roja* [Red Cross Girls] (Rafael J. Salvia,

1958), *Robbery at 3 O'clock* (Atraco a las tres, José María Forqué, 1962), *La ciudad no es para mí* [The city is not for me] (Pedro Lazaga, 1966), and *No desearás al vecino del quinto* [Thou shalt not covet thy fifth floor neighbour] (Tito Fernández, 1970). All of these films, with their merits—as well as their defects—show the changing city. For the most part, they present Madrid as modern and European; a depiction somewhat at odds with the reality.

Perhaps, this is why the films of Carlos Saura at the beginning of the nineteen sixties caused such a profound sensation among the censors, critics, and the tiny audiences that were able to see them. Taking the case of *The Delinquents* (Los golfos, 1960), this film was shot almost entirely on the streets of Madrid and follows a gang of youths as they goof around aimlessly in Lavapiés, Legazpi, and La Elipa, working-class neighbourhoods unsuitable as settings for either farce or European modernity. Even more devastating was Carlos Saura's *The Hunt* (La caza, 1966), in which a group of Madrileños leaves the city to hunt in the wastelands around the Espartinas Saltworks in Ciempozuelos. In contrast to the ersatz comedies of sixties Spanish cinema produced in glaring Eastmancolor, Saura's films were shot by the exceptionally skilled Luis Cuadrado in an uncompromising black and white which demanded total attention and inspired no hope in their audiences.

The portrait of Madrid during the Francoist era is also marked by the creation of two organ-

isations: the national TV broadcaster, Televisión Española (TVE) and the Official School of Cinematography (Escuela Oficial de Cinematografía: EOC). The EOC—which began life as the Institute of Cinematographic Research and Experimentation (Instituto de Investigaciones y Experiencias Cinematográficas: IIEC)—emerged due to the initiative of various cinema enthusiasts and as required by the regime, aimed to consolidate a national cinema industry dominated by young cinematographers aligned with Francoism. However, from its first generation of students, its general tone was more one of dissidence—as Fernando Méndez-Leite, the current director general of the Spanish Cinema Academy and former student of the EOC, confesses in an in-depth interview included in this issue. Indeed, if the point needed proving, among the school's inaugural cohort of students were none other than Juan Antonio Bardem and Luis García Berlanga.

As a result, the EOC failed to cement the Francoist vision of Madrid, rather the opposite. The school's young cinematographers set about filming on the city's streets developing a combative neorealism that was never seen in official, commercial Spanish cinema. Indeed, such work would have been banned by the censors, but the censors were not involved in the majority of practical work carried out by the students of the IIEC or the EOC. Furthermore, the EOC was important for Madrid not only in terms of the work produced within the institution itself, but also because it provided a cinematographic environment: a space to watch films, make comment, and debate.

The creation of TVE was also key to training new filmmakers and thus important for the development of Spanish cinema, as well as for the portrayal of the city of Madrid. Many of the creative people who studied at the EOC were unable to go directly into the film industry and so their careers took them via TVE. This was the case for Méndez-Leite, whom we mentioned above, as it was for both Pilar Miró and Josefina Molina and,

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when these directors finally made the leap into cinema their films were set in Madrid: *El hombre de moda* [Man of Fashion] (Méndez-Leite, 1980), *El pájaro de la felicidad* [The Bird of Happiness] (Pilar Miró, 1993) and the exquisitely produced *Esquilache* (Josefina Molina, 1989). Indeed, it seems highly significant that the first two cinematographers to make their names solely as directors—that is, without combining acting and directing—Miró and Molina, had to first demonstrate their worth in TVE. It would appear that, at the time, a qualification from the EOC was considered merely decorative.

Sometimes, even the made-for-TV films produced by TVE itself were in fact master works, for instance, the medium-length film *La cabina* [The Telephone Box] (1972). Directed by Antonio Mercero, a student of the EOC, with the self-taught cinephile and cinematographer José Luis Garci as his co-writer, this film became one of the most influential in the history of Spanish audio-visual production. José Luis López Vázquez, in the lead role—an actor who came to represent the average Madrileño in the screenplays of Rafael Azcona—finds himself locked in a telephone box in the middle of Conde del Valle de Shuchil plaza in the centre of Madrid. As the film unfolds, we appreciate that Vázquez's character, a perfectly normal, innocent citizen, is being imprisoned and tortured by a powerful organisation before the avid gaze of his neighbours. Although, at the time of its broadcast, cinematographers denied the film was a critique of Francoism, today this seems obvious. Consciously or unconsciously, *La cabina* demonstrates the complexity of those last years of Franco's dictatorship.

Few cities can boast a trilogy of films so accurately depicting a specific period of their history or detailing the expectations this moment awoke in its citizens than that comprising the three works written and directed by Garci showing Madrid during Spain's transition to democracy: *Asignatura pendiente* [Unfinished Business] (1977),

Solos en la madrugada [Alone in the Dark] (1978) and *Las verdes praderas* [Green Meadows] (1979). These features, the first by this cinematographer, emerged as a clear response to a radical shift in Spanish society. Never again would anyone be trapped inside a phone box in Madrid. Garci's cinema provides a clear reflection of a universe of freedom and change that invited Madrileños to be sociable and kind. Perhaps even too much so.

IT IS NOT A MATTER OF THE ALMODÓVARIAN MADRID SOMEHOW BEING MORE OR LESS LIKE A SUPPOSED REAL MADRID, RATHER THAT, IN MANY INSTANCES, THE CITY AND ITS CITIZENS HAVE BEGUN IMITATING THE MADRID AND ITS CHARACTERS AS DREAMED UP BY ALMODÓVAR

In most places across the world, when a person prefers to be on their own, all they have to do is say so. In Madrid the situation is more complicated. The Madrileño screenwriter Jorge Semprún once told a conference at the Residencia de Estudiantes (a cultural centre in Madrid) that he had never managed to finish a book or a screenplay while living in Madrid, saying he was confounded by the suspicion with which you are treated if you turn down an invitation to go out for a drink, or to leave work and go to the cinema or theatre: "When I come to Madrid I know I have to assume I won't write a line since it's quicker to go out to see a film than explain to a Madrileño that there's nothing wrong but, just for one evening, you want to stay in to write," (Semprún, 2003). Semprún was born and bred in Madrid's Retiro district, but his observation is shared by the Peruvian writer, Julio Ramón Ribeyro, celebrated for his depictions of Liman personalities and Parisian downpours, and who lived in Madrid during two significant periods of his life:

INTRODUCTION

It's curious, but in Madrid, I lose my ability to concentrate and tend to become more extrovert. I find it difficult to be alone, to reflect, and as a consequence, maintain a regular daily schedule. The proof is in the fact that during the eight months of my first sojourn in Madrid (November 1952 to July 1953) I didn't write a single line in my notebook and spent most of my time in cafés with friends. In Paris, everything is different. It's a great school for solitude [...] In Madrid, in contrast, the boundaries between personal and social life are blurred and a person rapidly identifies with the spirit of the city (Ribeyro, 2013).

Going out, playing the fool, or meandering round the city seem as Madrileño as *patatas bravas*. Thus, so-called Madrileño comedy, and the films of the nineteen eighties represent this city as a space where solitude is impossible. Fernando Colomo, Fernando Trueba, and Emilio Martínez Lázaro all show Madrid as paradigmatically divorced from the Francoist cannon, generating a new environment that is luminous, easy going, and happy.

Yet there is only one director who has succeeded in bringing Madrid international status, and he is Pedro Almodóvar. Few Madrileños will recognise themselves in the first films of this

Manchego director, but, over time, his personal and creative visions have gained momentum, first outside of Spain and then, little by little they have come to change the city itself and its inhabitants to the point where Madrileños have ended up adopting Almodóvar's creations as their own. It is not a matter of the *Almodóvarian* Madrid somehow being more or less like a supposed real Madrid, rather that, in many instances, the city and its citizens have begun imitating the Madrid and its characters as dreamed up by Almodóvar. The humour, the exaggerations, and, above all, the lung-full of freedom breathing life into his films have consolidated an image of Madrid that is far freer, and human, than this city could ever possibly be in reality. Although there are several interesting works concerning the Madrid of Almodóvar's films—for example those of Camarero Gómez (2019) and Sánchez Noriega (2017)—there is space for a study relating the importance of Almodóvar's filmography to the city of Madrid. His films, *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* (*Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios*, 1988), *The Flower of my Secret* (*La flor de mi secreto*, 1995) and *Volver* (2006) are not only portraits of the city but have also helped construct it.

Image 4. Still from *Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios* (1988)



In the nineteen nineties, three cinematographers hit the jackpot in their engaging portrayals of Spain's capital: Álex de la Iglesia, Fernando León de Aranoa, and Alejandro Amenábar. Each of these directors approached the city from a very distinctive perspective but all three achieved success with their features winning various prizes. In *The Day of the Beast*, the Basque director, de la Iglesia convinced audiences the antichrist would be born in Madrid the following Christmas eve and demonstrated how humour and horror could intermingle at the feet of the emblematic—and diabolic—Kio Towers. Amenábar's debut work, *Tesis* (*Tesis*, 1996), set in the Faculty of Information Sciences in Madrid, received the greatest number of Goya prizes ever awarded to a debut film. Everything about this film is steeped in the city, while at the same time, the grammar of the feature clearly imitates the style of a US thriller. The success of *Tesis* enabled Amenábar to go on to tackle the large-scale project *Open Your Eyes* (*Abre los ojos*, 1997), the opening scenes of which show the main protagonist walking down a deserted Gran Vía in the middle of Madrid. One year later, Fernando León de Aranoa, presented *Barrio* [Neighbourhood] (1998), a film about a band of bored, dissolute youths wandering Madrid's streets during a torrid summer. Here, it is almost impossible to forget the films of Ferreri, Azcona, and the other cinematographers working under Franco's dictatorship who attempted to film the tedious urbanity of this city dreaming of modernity.

More recent Spanish cinema, particularly the films of Jonás Trueba, Arantxa Echevarría and Carlos Vermut, have focussed on a different Madrid. Their films bear no comparison with those of their predecessors and each of their respective depictions of the city are very different from those of previous eras. As exemplified in *Carmen & Lola* (*Carmen y Lola*, Arantxa Echevarría, 2018), these cinematographers attempt an entirely novel reading of the city. The farcical and the traditional have been banished, even when the con-

text is typically Madrileño—the city's summer street festivals, for example, as is the case in *The August Virgin* (*La virgen de agosto*, Jonás Trueba, 2019)—there is no trace of the influence of Edgar Neville or the Quintero brothers in their imagery. Perhaps. The most radical voice in this distancing movement is that of Carlos Vermut, who while always setting his films in recognisable places and choosing itineraries very characteristic of central Madrid, particularly the Arganzuela district, these locations seem to represent other places that have nothing to do with the traditional way in which the Spanish capital is depicted.

All cities have a powerful and intense relationship with cinema. Films and TV series not only enable us to understand their urban (Larson, 2021) and geographic (Gámir and Manuel Valdés, 2007) development, but also help us to get a genuine feeling for them (Berthier, 2021). Thus, in a city as open as Madrid it is not strange that so many of the important cinematographers who have chosen to portray it—Nieves Conde, Berlanga, Azcona, Ferreri, Bartolomé, Molina, Almodóvar and Amenábar—were not actually born there. But then, being a Madrileño is not about birth certificates, family names, or genetic inheritance. Anyone can be a Madrileño (or stop being one at will). As the magnificent actor, Manuel Alexandre, once said, Madrid is a contagious city and after a few days walking its streets, any visitor, if they wish, can become one of us. ■

NOTES

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MADRID, A CITY IN THE SHADOWS: CINEMA AND OBSCURITY

Abstract

The city of Madrid is widely depicted in Spanish cinema. This choice has been a constant from the inception of cinema but became especially accentuated after the Second Spanish Republic. The motivations behind this are diverse: sometimes commercial, at other times social, and occasionally even political. While the model for its representation has altered with each historical period and, indeed, many directors offer different visions of the city in their different films, what is true is that farce and comedy have been the most influential genres in its visual construction. Some cinematographers such as José Antonio Nieves Conde, José Luis Garci, and Pedro Almodóvar have achieved such an intensely individualised portrait of the city that we can talk of a Madrid belonging to each one of them.

Key words

Madrid; city; Spanish cinema; farce; localization; Pedro Almodóvar.

Authors

Luis Deltell Escolar is a full professor at the Complutense University, Madrid. He is co-director of the Complutense's ESCINE research group, a group dedicated to cinematographic studies. His field of research focuses on the history of the image, cinema, and the analysis of new information technologies. Furthermore, he has directed several documentaries and short films, which have won him a score of international prizes. He was visiting scholar at Stanford University and Berkeley, University of California. Currently he is working on the project about audiovisual fiction in the Community of Madrid (*La ficción audiovisual en la Comunidad de Madrid: lugares de rodaje y desarrollo del turismo cinematográfico*: FICMATURCM. Ref: H2019/HUM5788). Contact details: ldeltell@ucm.es

Elios Mendieta Rodríguez holds a PhD in literary studies from the Complutense University of Madrid and a degree in journalism from the University of Málaga. He is currently a Margarita Salas postdoctoral fellow at the UCM, with a residence at the University of Granada. He is the author of the monograph *Paolo Sorrentino* (Cátedra, 2022) and his latest work, *Memoria y guerra civil en la obra de Jorge Semprún* is currently in press at the publishing house, Guillermo Escolar (Guillermo Escolar, 2023). His areas of research are the relationship between cinema and literature and the history of cinema. He is a contributor to *El Confidencial* and *Letras Libres*. Contact: Eliosmen@ucm.es

MADRID, UNA CIUDAD EN LA SOMBRA. CINE Y ANONIMATO

Resumen

Madrid es una ciudad muy retratada por la filmografía española. Esta elección ha sido casi constante desde los inicios del cine, pero se ha producido muy especialmente desde la Segunda República Española. Los motivos han sido diversos: a veces industriales, otros sociales e, incluso, políticos. Aunque el modelo de representación ha ido fluctuando en cada período histórico e, incluso, muchos de los directores ofrecen miradas distintas de la ciudad en sus diversos films, lo cierto es que lo sainetesco y la comedia han sido los géneros que más han influido en esta construcción visual. Algunos cineastas, como José Antonio Nieves Conde, José Luis Garci o Pedro Almodóvar, han logrado codificar en sus películas un retrato tan intenso de esta villa que se puede hablar del Madrid de cada uno de ellos.

Palabras clave

Madrid; City; Spanish cinema; Farce; Localization; Pedro Almodóvar.

Autores

Luis Deltell Escolar es profesor titular en la Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Codirige el grupo complutense de investigación ESCINE sobre estudios cinematográficos. Su campo de investigación es la historia de la imagen, el cine y el análisis de las nuevas tecnologías de las ciencias de la información. Además, ha dirigido documentales y cortometrajes con los que ha logrado una veintena de premios internacionales. Ha sido *visiting scholar* en Stanford University y Berkeley, University of California. En la actualidad trabaja en el proyecto *La ficción audiovisual en la Comunidad de Madrid: lugares de rodaje y desarrollo del turismo cinematográfico*. Acrónimo: FICMATURCM. Ref: H2019/HUM5788. Contacto: ldeltell@ucm.es

Elios Mendieta Rodríguez es doctor en Estudios Literarios por la Universidad Complutense de Madrid y licenciado en Periodismo por la Universidad de Málaga. Actualmente es contratado postdoctoral Margarita Salas en la UCM, con estancia en la Universidad de Granada. Es autor de la monografía *Paolo Sorrentino* (Cátedra, 2022) y tiene otro en prensa titulado *Memoria y guerra civil en la obra de Jorge Semprún*. Sus áreas de investigación son la Literatura comparada y la Historia del cine. Ha publicado artículos en revistas indexadas académicas y pronunciado conferencias nacionales e internacionales sobre diferentes cineastas. Colabora en *El Confidencial* y en la revista *Letras Libres*. Contacto: Eliosmen@ucm.es

INTRODUCTION

Gema Fernández-Hoya (Madrid, 1972) holds a doctorate in the History, Theory, and Aesthetics of Cinematography from the Complutense University, Madrid (UCM), and is a graduate of dramatic arts (RESAD). Now a professor at UCM, she teaches the subjects of Spanish film history and acting techniques. She is a member of the Complutense ESCINE research group and is the author of a number of publications in a variety of journals such as *Historia y Comunicación Social* (2021) and *Communication & Society* (2022). She is also author of the books *Tono, un humorista de la vanguardia* (Renacimiento, 2019) and *Técnicas Eficaces de Comunicación* (Síntesis, 2020). Contact details: gemafern@ucm.es

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Gema Fernández-Hoya (Madrid, 1972) es doctora en Historia, Teoría y Estética Cinematográfica (UCM) y licenciada en Arte Dramático (RESAD). Es profesora de Historia del Cine Español y de Técnicas de Interpretación Actoral en el Máster de Comunicación Audiovisual para la Era Digital, dentro del Departamento de Ciencias de la Comunicación Aplicada (UCM). Forma parte del Grupo Complutense de Estudios Cinematográficos (ESCINE). Es autora en diversos artículos publicados en revistas como *Historia y Comunicación Social* (2021) y *Communication & Society* (2022). Ha publicado los libros *Tono, un humorista de la vanguardia* (Renacimiento, 2019) y *Técnicas Eficaces de Comunicación* (Síntesis, 2020). Contacto: gemafern@ucm.es

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