

American Museum of the

Moving Image

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LOLAFILMS: CREATING A NEW SPANISH CINEMA

April 30–May 9, 2004

Special thanks to Leon Siminiani for curatorial assistance.

Sunday, May 2, 2004

2:00 p.m.

THE NAKED EYE (LA MIRADA DEL OTRO)

1998, Spain, 104 mins. 35mm print courtesy Lolafilms and Ventura Entertainment. Directed by Vicente Aranda. Written by Álvaro del Amo and Vicente Aranda, from the novel by Fernando G. Delgado. Produced by Andrés Vicente Gómez. Original Music by José Nieto. Photographed by Flavio Martínez Labiano. Edited by Teresa Font. Principal Cast: Laura Morante (as Begoña), Blanca Apiláñez (Isabel), Alicia Bogo (Clara), Miguel Bosé (Santiago), Alonso Caparrós (Luciano), Berta Casals (Girl), Miguel Cazorla (Boy), José Coronado (Elio) Miguel Ángel García (Daniel), Sancho Gracia (Ignacio), Pedro Miguel Martínez (Luis).

4:15 p.m.

TORRENTE 2: MISSION IN MARBELLA

2001, Spain, 99 mins. 35mm print courtesy Lolafilms and Ventura Entertainment. Written and directed by Santiago Segura. Produced by Juan Dakas and Andrés Vicente Gómez. Original Music by Roque Baños, Joaquín Sabina and Santiago Segura. Photographed by Guillermo Granillo. Edited by Fidel Collados. Art Direction by José Luis Arrizabalaga, Biaffra, and Claudio Contreras. Costume Design by Lala Huete. Principal Cast: Santiago Segura (as José Luis Torrente), Gabino Diego (Cuco), Tony Leblanc (Mauricio Torrente), José Luis Moreno (Spinelli), Inés Sastre (Bella cantante), Arturo Valls (Fabrizio), Juanito Navarro (Alcalde de Marbella).

The Naked Eye

From the Berlin Film Festival catalogue:

"I haven't chosen a character, I've chosen a movie," says Italian actress Laura Morante about her participation in Vicente Aranda's new film. "The role is risky in many ways, but then again, it's risk that I like."

The 30-ish Begoña is a role full of psychological complexity and sexual frankness. With a video camera, she documents her exploits, which push her to the boundary between pleasure and pain. Laura Morante is the epitome of the female enigma: contradictory, unscrupulous, vulnerable, lascivious and tender.

Without letting herself be exploited by the inquisitive camera lens, the 34-year-old former Armani model bares not only her body, but also her soul in a brilliant performance. She gives the sometimes extreme erotic scenes a touchingly brave and honest magic. Her performance also lessens the blow of the end of one of the longest and most creative liaisons in Spanish—Vicente Aranda and his muse of the past 20 years, Victoria Abril, who worked together on ten films. The eight-week shooting of the \$4.5 million project was jeopardized when Arante and Abril parted company. But Laura Morante was a godsend for the vacant leading role. "Laura is a fine actress

and showed such enthusiasm when she accepted the part that it was fundamental to me,” the 71-year-old Vicente Aranda explains. He sees his erotic thriller as a portrait of “a woman who wishes not to discover her true self, but who wants others to discover it for her. She believes in herself as long as others believe in her. It’s those men who explain who she is.”

Begoña, the main protagonist in Vicente Aranda’s *La mirada del otro*, has one primary objective in life—to get laid. She gets herself a toyboy, picks up a young hipster and his wife, struts around dodgy backstreets tarted up as a puta and still keeps coming back for more. She also records everything in her video diary. But satisfaction is fleeting. “The fingers that have caressed me have left no marks,” she confesses onscreen to her diary.

In answer to critics who might try to label his film as artsy soft porn, Aranda explains: “This is not an erotic film. It’s psycho-erotic.” The 71-year-old director, when questioned about his films—especially, implicitly, their perversions—wears the spectacles, cardigan and mild-mannered exasperation of a university professor whose student just doesn’t get it—and probably never will.

“Begoña’s ambition is transparency,” he says. “Not the idea of ‘getting to know oneself’, but insisting on others knowing who you really are. She’s not afraid of the truth. She asks what her role is in life and replies with vitality. She wants to enjoy life in its widest expression, and looks for clarity through sex, to be herself and for others to see her as she is. That’s why I feel sympathy for her.”

Torrente 2: The Mission in Marbella

From a review by Mark Deming for the website *All Movie Guide* (www.allmovie.com), 2000:

Torrente, the thick-headed cop from the successful Spanish comedy *Torrente: El Brazo Tonto De La Ley*, is back on the beat in this sequel, which actually outdoes the low comedy of the first film. In his second go-round, Torrente (once again played by Santiago Segura, who also wrote and directed the film) has managed to squander his savings while enjoying life (and chasing women) in the resort town of Marbella, so he goes back to work, finding employment as a private detective, with dope-addled ne’er-do-well Cuco (Gabino Diego) signing on as his assistant. Through a series of misunderstandings, Torrente ends up crossing paths with Spinelli (Jose Luis Moreno), a corrupt international arms dealer, and when Spinelli threatens to blow up Torrente unless he receives a ransom of two billion pesetas, the bumbling skirt-chaser becomes the only man who can prevent the destruction. *Torrente 2: Mision En Marbella* features cameo appearances from a number of popular Spanish comics and television personalities; the first film was one of the biggest grossing homegrown features ever in Spain, and the sequel’s box-office success led many to predict Torrente could become the subject of a long-running series.

From the website of *Lolafilms* (www.lolafilms.com):

Just when you thought Spanish cinema was getting better... along comes *Torrente*.

People read into *Torrente* in very different ways. To begin with, it was a very strong criticism of a specific type of Spaniard, the extremely fascist Spaniard, but then those same people saw *Torrente* as a hero. It was surprising to discover they could laugh at that and then other people regarded it completely devoid of irony. I’m very happy to hear the Brazilians, the English, and the Americans were laughing. On the festival circuit I realized that it wasn’t a local phenomenon, that *Torrente*’s wretchedness and pitifulness is universal!” says Segura of this phenomenon. Three years later he has come up with *Torrente 2*’s tagline: “Never were second parts worse.”

Torrente 2 was filmed on location in Marbella, which created a stir amongst the inhabitants. The film’s publicist says: “Torrente is a social phenomenon. Santiago can’t walk to the shops without getting mobbed. The excitement and expectation for *Torrente 2* is unrivalled.”

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