

**Language Laboratory Film Collection  
Wagner College Campus Hall 202**

**Spanish and Latin American films (updated April 2011)**

**AIDS in the Barrio: Eso no me pasa a mí (1990) Frances Negrón-Muntaner. USA**

A comprehensive examination of cultural, social and religious obstacles encountered when dealing with AIDS in a Hispanic community.

**All About my Mother/ Todo sobre mi madre (1999) Pedro Almodóvar. Spain**

Pedro Almodóvar directed this story of a woman and her circle of friends who find themselves suffering a variety of emotional crises. Manuela (Cecilia Roth) is a single mother who has raised her son, Esteban, to adulthood on her own and has come to emotionally depend on him. One night, Manuela and Esteban take in a production of *A Streetcar Named Desire*; after the show, Esteban is struck and killed by a passing motorist as he dashes into the street to get an autograph from Huma Rojo (Marisa Paredes), who played Blanche. Emotionally devastated, Manuela relocates to Barcelona in hopes of finding her ex-husband (and Esteban's father), who is now working as a female impersonator. Manuela becomes reacquainted with old friend La Agrado (Antonia San Juan), a transsexual, and is introduced to Sister Rosa (Penélope Cruz), a good-hearted nun who has to contend with her considerably more cynical mother. While looking for work, Manuela becomes acquainted with Huma Rojo. Huma, on the other hand, has troubles of her own, most involving her drug-addicted significant other, Nina. Displaying Almodóvar's trademark visual style and a unusually strong sense of character-driven drama, *Todo Sobre Mi Madre/All About My Mother* received a highly anticipated theatrical run in Spain before winning the Best Director award at the 1999 Cannes Film Festival; in 2000, Almodóvar would receive the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

**Amores Perros (2002) Alejandro González Iñárritu. Mexico**

Three interconnected stories about the different strata of life in Mexico City all resolve with a fatal car accident. Octavio is trying to raise enough money to run away with his sister-in-law, and decides to enter his dog Cofi into the world of dogfighting. After a dogfight goes bad, Octavio flees in his car, running a red light and causing the accident. Daniel and Valeria's new-found bliss is prematurely ended when she loses her leg in the accident. El Chivo is a homeless man who cares for stray dogs and is there to witness the collision.

**Ay, Carmela (1990) Carlos Saura. Spain**

Left leaning, though somewhat apolitical, cabaret artists Carmela (Carmen Maura) and Paulino (Andrés Pajares) agree to entertain the Republican troops at the Argon front during the Spanish Civil War. With them is Gustavete (Gabino Diego), an adolescent boy they rescued from a bombing attack earlier in the war. After stealing gasoline to escape the fighting, they are captured on their way to Valencia by the Fascists. When Gustavete, who now forms part of their act, mistakenly tells the Nationalists that they were coming from a town controlled by the Communists, they are imprisoned. Certain to be shot, they are given a chance to live when a former theater director, now a Lieutenant with the Italian troops fighting along with the Germans in support of Franco, asks them to put on a show glorifying Mussolini and Hitler. Taken from a stage play by Jose Sanchis Sinisterra, Saura expands the action to show the bombed and ruined towns, but this is the film is

still more of a character drama than a war film. Although he clearly favors the left, Saura tries to give the Fascists some identifiable human emotions. The title, *AY, CARMELA!*, comes from a song that was very popular with the Republican troops.

**Before the Night Falls/Antes que anochezca (2001) Julian Schnabel. USA**

The life of Reinaldo Arenas, an exiled Cuban homosexual writer, is chronicled in an adaptation of his memoir *BEFORE NIGHT FALLS*, directed by Julian Schnabel (BASQUIAT). Javier Bardem (in an Oscar-nominated performance) portrays Arenas as he journeys from poverty to university to the sexual revolution and homosexual subculture in Havana to persecution and imprisonment under the policies of Fidel Castro for being both gay and a writer. Despite the harsh conditions of prison, the courageous Arenas continued not only to write but also to publish his works abroad. Ultimately, he was allowed to leave Cuba for America, but there he faced new struggles as a man without a country battling AIDS. Schnabel's beautifully filmed sophomore directorial effort captures the essence of Cuba during the revolution. Johnny Depp is featured in the dual supporting roles of the cross-dressing prison inmate, Bon Bon, and the brutal officer, Lieutenant Victor. A well-disguised Sean Penn appears as Cuco Sanchez. Olivier Martinez as Lázaro Gómez Carillo and Andrea Di Stefano as Pepe Malas deliver standout performances. The film received accolades at the 2000 Venice and Toronto Film Festivals.

**Bombón the Dog / Bombón el perro (2004) Carlos Sorín. Argentina**

Life is no bed of roses for 52-year-old Juan "Coco" Villegas. He, who has been a gas station attendant for twenty years in Patagonia, finds himself jobless overnight. He first tries to survive by selling knives of his own making. But business is bad and he can't find real work. One day though, after fixing a vehicle on a farm, he gets paid by means of a ... beautiful Argentinian watch-dog! From this blessed day on, things start shaping well at last..

**The Buried Mirror: Reflections on Spain and the New World Vol. 1- The Virgin and the Bull (1991) Michael Gill.**

Part of a five-part documentary series that explores the influence of Hispanic culture on the United States and Europe, *The Buried Mirror: Reflections on Spain and the New World, Vol. 1 -- The Virgin and the Bull* transports viewers to Latin America. Commentary and picturesque footage tell the story of Latin America's beginnings. Mexican author Carlos Fuentes hosts the documentary. In this volume, he tours the caves of Altamira; visits Vera Cruz, Spain; and stops to observe a flamenco performer and to cheer a festive bullfight.

**The Buried Mirror: Reflections on Spain and the New World Vol. 2- Conflict of the Gods (1991) Michael Gill.**

The second volume in a five-part documentary series that explores the influence of Hispanic culture on the United States and Europe, *The Buried Mirror: Reflections on Spain and the New World, Vol. 2 -- Conflict of the Gods* outlines the history of the Aztec world. The program, hosted by Mexican author Carlos Fuentes, discusses the origins of Aztec civilization, from the beginning to the time of Cortes and the mighty conquistadors, who took control of the previously undiscovered region.

**The Buried Mirror: Reflections on Spain and the New World Vol. 4- The Price of Freedom (1991) Michael Gill.**

The fourth volume in a five-part documentary series that explores the influence of Hispanic culture on the United States and Europe, *The Buried Mirror: Reflections on Spain and the New World, Vol. 4 -- The Price of Freedom* follows the path of Simón Bolívar, one of South America's greatest generals, and José de San Martín, an important South American liberator. Mexican author Carlos Fuentes hosts the program. In addition to reporting on important military leaders of yore, Fuentes dances the tango and tours modern-day Argentina

**The Buried Mirror: Reflections on Spain and the New World Vol. 5- Unfinished Business (1991) Michael Gill.**

The fifth volume in a five-part documentary series that explores the influence of Hispanic culture on the United States and Europe, *The Buried Mirror: Reflections on Spain and the New World, Vol. 5 -- Unfinished Business* focuses on contemporary Hispanic peoples who make their homes throughout the Western world. Mexican author Carlos Fuentes hosts the documentary, discussing several diverse topics, including the hard issue of illegal immigration and the elaborate artwork and musical creations Hispanic artists have bestowed upon the United States and the European world.

**Butterfly Wings/Alas de mariposa (1991) Juanma Bajo Ulloa. Spain**

When Carmen becomes pregnant, she hopes for a boy to carry on her husband's name. She keeps her thoughts from her sensitive six year-old daughter but when the new baby is born, a series of horrible events ensue. A disturbing drama about a dysfunctional family and its isolated members, *Butterfly Wings* won the Best Picture Award at the San Sebastian Film Festival

**Camila (1984) Maria Luisa Bemberg. Argentina**

In 1847, when Argentina was under the dictatorship of Juan Manuel de Rosas, a beautiful, well-born young woman named Camila O'Gorman, the daughter of a wealthy Buenos Aires family, eloped with Ladislao Gutierrez, whose family was as aristocratic as Camila's, but who was also a Jesuit priest. For a few, halcyon months, the couple lived under assumed names in a provincial village where they ran a school. Eventually discovered by the authorities, they were arrested for the crime of sacrilege - and their story became an Argentine legend.

**Central America, Costa Rica (1991) Documentary**

The topics of economic development, education, and self-help are featured in this program. We see how the country uses coffee and banana exports to propel itself forward as a developing nation; how and why it chose educating its people over building an army; and how it remains a peaceful democratic anomaly in Latin America. A second segment shows how the country uses its bamboo supplies to construct homes for the poor. (20 minutes)

**Central Station/Central do Brasil (1998) Walter Salles. Brazil**

An emotive journey of a former school teacher, who write letters for illiterate people at Rio de Janeiro's central station, Central do Brasil; and a young boy, whose mother has just died in a car accident, to Brazil's remote Northeast, in search for the father he never knew.

### **Che (2008) Steven Soderbergh. USA**

In 1967, Ernesto 'Che' Guevara leads a small partisan army to fight an ill-fated revolutionary guerrilla war in Bolivia. *Che* is a two-part biopic about the legendary figure, starring Benicio del Toro. Rather than follow a standard chronological order, the film offers an oblique series of interspersed moments along the overall timeline. A monumental production.

### **Un Chien Andalou/Un perro andaluz (1929) Luis Buñuel. France-Spain**

Un Chien Andalou was the calling card of two desperate, unknown Spanish artists. It "came from an encounter between two dreams." The script was an easy and joyful joint collaboration between Buñuel and Dali (Buñuel would continue to write scripts in collaboration for the rest of his life), and Buñuel shot the film quickly over two weeks on a small budget supplied by his mother. Dali later claimed to have had a greater involvement in the filming, but by all contemporaneous accounts this does not seem to have been the case.

### **The City/ La ciudad (1998) David Riker. USA**

*The City* tells stories of loss, love, frustration, and hope as four people recently arrived in a large city struggle to build their lives, their communities and their dreams.

### **City of no Limits/La ciudad sin límites (2002) Antonio Hernández. Spain**

Victor is a man who gets to Paris to join his family around their seriously ill father, Max. As the chance of selling the family business begins to disrupt the family relationships, Victor is desperately asked for help by Max. What seems in the beginning mere delusions of an old man losing his mind, begin to show traces of some sort of real 'secret' that is troubling Max's last days. Victor decides to help his father to find that something (maybe just peace) he is searching for.

### **Danzón (1991) María Novaro. Mexico**

Julia (Rojo) is a phone operator in Mexico City who divides her time between her job, her daughter and the danzon: a Cuban dance very popular in Mexico and Central America. Every Wednesday Julia does the danzon with Carmelo (Rergis) in the old "Salon Colonia". They've danced for years but barely know each other. One night Carmelo disappears without a trace. Feeling lonely and sad, Julia takes a train to Veracruz, where she knows Carmelo has a brother. That sudden trip will change Julia's life forever.

### **Dark Side of the Heart/ El lado oscuro del corazón (1992) Eliseo Subiela. Argentina**

Oliveiro is a young poet living in Buenos Aires where sometimes he has to sell his ideas to an advertising agency to make a living or exchange his poems for a steak. In Montevideo, he meets a prostitute, Ana, with whom he falls in love. Back in Buenos Aires, he accepts a contract with a publicity agency to get the money for three days of love with her. Will he get what he is searching for when his ideal of love's pleasure is literally going in levitation while making love?

**Dark Blue Almost Black/ Azul oscuro casi negro (2006) Daniel Sánchez Arévalo. Spain**

Jorge is a young man whose plans for the future are put on hold when his father has a stroke. For seven years, he diligently nurses his father and works as a janitor while studying parttime to get a business degree. When Natalia, his childhood crush, returns from studying abroad, Jorge begins to yearn for something better. Winner of 3 Spanish Goya Awards.

**Dark Habits/Entre tinieblas (1983) Pedro Almodóvar. Spain**

Yolanda sings in a seedy nightclub. When her boyfriend dies of an overdose, she fears the police and seeks refuge in a convent that saves women from the streets. These off-beat nuns include a heroin using abbess who loves Yolanda, one who writes romance novels under a pseudonym, another raising a tiger in the convent yard, and one who designs fabulous fashions and is in love with the local priest. They plan an evening extravaganza starring Yolanda to celebrate the abbess's birthday and to convince their wealthy patron not to abandon them.

**Days of Santiago/ Días de Santiago (2004) Josué Méndez. Peru**

Santiago returns home from the Peruvian army ill-prepared to cope with the realities of life. Haunted by his violent military past, he is conflicted by his desire for education and his temptation to join his comrades in a decadent life of crime.

**Details of a Duel/ Detalles de un duelo (1989) Sergio Cabrera. Colombia**

The Colombian film "Details of a Duel" takes place on a single morning, during which two decent and well-liked citizens of a small Andean village prepare to die. The schoolteacher (Frank Ramirez) and the butcher (Humberto Dorado) have, for reasons that are not explained, challenged each other to a fatal contest.

**Discovering Spain/ Descubriendo España (2001) Documentary.**

120 minute DVD taking you through Madrid, Barcelona and the Feast of St. George. View the art of Velazquez, El Greco, and Goya in Madrid. Visit El Escorial - a palace monastery so grand, it's called the 8th wonder of the world... plus lots more! This travelogue of Spain explores the grand art produced in the region - that of Velazquez, El Greco and Goya - all in Madrid, before moving on to Segovia, Toledo and Cordoba. It's a must for those interested in Spanish culture and surroundings.

**Dream of Light / El sol del membrillo (1992) Victor Erice. Spain**

In *Dream of Light*, Victor Erice achieves the miraculous: a direct look at how an artist creates. Antonio López García is Spain's leading painter who, for several weeks one autumn, tries to paint the sun filtering through the leaves of a quince tree. Erice's observations are elegantly restrained, at one matter-of-fact and lyrically evocative.

**The Escape / Fuga (2005) Pablo Larrain. Chile**

An Argentine music student realizes that an unfinished composition by a tormented composer is actually a gateway to madness after callously passing off the intriguing piece of work as his own. Eliseo and his sister came from a wealthy Chilean family. It seemed that both children had bright futures in the world of music - Eliseo as a composer and his sister as a pianist - but then tragedy

struck. Eliseo's sister was raped and murdered, a crime that has haunted Eliseo well into his adult life. When Eliseo's lover too suffers a tragic death, the composer is driven to insanity and committed to an asylum. As the years pass by, the haunted composer attempts to pen his magnum opus on the walls of his lonely hospital room. Meanwhile, in the outside world, struggling Argentine music student Ricardo discovers the fragments of Eliseo's lost symphony and slyly passes off the masterful composition as his own. But the ruse can only go on for so long, and in time Ricardo realizes that his only hope of making amends for his transgression is to track down Eliseo and find out what became of the composer. As a result, Ricardo finds himself gradually drawn into a compelling world of mystery and madness.

### **Flamenco (1995) Carlos Saura. Spain**

As a hall fills with performers, a narrator says that flamenco came from Andalucia, a mix of Greek psalms, Mozarabic dirges, Castillian ballads, Jewish laments, Gregorian chants, African rhythms, and Iranian and Romany melodies. The film presents thirteen rhythms of flamenco, each with song, guitar, and dance: the up-tempo bularías, a brooding farruca, an anguished martinete, and a satiric fandango de huelva. There are tangos, a taranta, alegrías, siguiriyas, soleás, a guajira of patrician women, a petenera about a sentence to death, villancicos, and a final rumba. Families present numbers, both festive and fierce. The camera and the other performers are the only audience.

### **The Frescos of Diego Rivera/ Los frescos de Rivera(1982) Documentary.**

A video profile of mural painter Diego Rivera, a leader of the Mexican Renaissance. We see the artist working on Ford Motor Company murals, and look at some of his great murals. We hear about the artist's controversial politics.

### **The Flower of my Secret/ La flor de mi secreto (1995) Pedro Almodóvar. Spain**

Leo is a bestselling author of romantic fiction, but has been writing under a pseudonym name for years. Now in the middle of her life, Leo has reached a creative and emotional crisis. Tired of producing popular fiction when her heart yearns to write truly great literature, her very success has become a burden to her; unable to accept that her marriage to Paco (Imanol Arias) is rapidly disintegrating, Leo finds herself at a crossroads in her life. Even Leo's mother and sister can offer no consolation as they constantly bicker with one another. The one ray of hope in Leo's life comes from Angel (Juan Echanove), the editor of the newspaper EL PAIS, who offers her a job as a critic for a national arts supplement. Leo's first assignment brings her face to face with her alter-ego causing an examination of her true identity, her deepest motivations and, most importantly, the direction of her life after Paco.

### **The Grandfather/El abuelo (1998) José Luis Garci. Spain**

An elderly man returns to Spain after visiting the US during the Gold Rush and losing his fortune. He returns because his son has died leaving two daughters, and the son has left a note stating that one of the two is a bastard child. The grandfather hopes to find out which is his true granddaughter.

### **Guantanamera (1997) Tomás Gutiérrez Alea y Juan Carlos Tabío. Cuba**

A Cuban road movie, *Guantanamera* tosses love, farce and social comment into the broth, cooking up a satisfying and heart-warming meal. In Guantanamu, preparations are underway to welcome home the internationally famous singer Yoyita (Conchita Brando). Absent for 50 years, she is met by her niece Georgina (Mirtha Ibbara), an ex-economics lecturer. While Gina's husband Adolfo

(Carlos Cruz), an undertaker, struggles with a recalcitrant committee, she and Yoyita stroll through the town. By chance, Yoyita bumps into her childhood sweetheart Candido (Raul Eguren) and pretty soon they're swapping memories. However, just at the moment when Candido is pledging his undying love, Yoyita keels over. While this is a great shame for Candido, it's also a fine opportunity for Adolfo to test out his new corpse transportation plan. The idea is that when a body has to travel long-distance, the provinces in-between only ferry the coffin apart their section of the journey. It involves a lot of organisation and hearse swapping but, according to Adolfo, will save both time and fuel. Since Yoyita has to be taken all the way back to Havana, a convoy of the hearse and following taxi soon departs Guantanamo. Driven by black-marketeer Tony (Luis Alberto Garcia), the trip should be an interesting one.

### **The Headless Woman/ La mujer sin cabeza (2008) Lucrecia Martel. Argentina**

After running into something with her car, Vero experiences a particular psychological state. She realizes she might have killed someone. *The Headless Woman* is a fascinating and engrossing film that explores issues such as guilt, repression and denial. A full appreciation of Lucrecia Martel's elegant, rain-soaked film requires the concentration and eye for detail of a forensic detective. Every frame of this brilliant, maddeningly enigmatic puzzle of a movie contains crucial information, much of it glimpsed on the periphery and sometimes passing so quickly you barely have time to blink.

### **The Holy Girl/ La niña santa (2004) Lucrecia Martel. Argentina**

The film takes place in the small town of Ciénaga, at the Hotel Termas, a dilapidated Argentine hotel, during a medical conference. Two young teenage girls begin to explore their new sexuality and, at the same time, have Catholic religious passion. Martel's visual style is oblique, as she frames characters through half opened doors, at odd angles and in asymmetrical close-ups. Her exploration of the senses is exquisite.

### **The Hours of the Day/ Horas del día (2003) Jaime Rosales. Spain**

Abel (Alex Brendemuhl) lives with his mother in a small town just outside of Barcelona. His mundane life centers around the same few locations day after day--the dress shop where he works with his mother, his home, his girlfriend's apartment, and a few restaurants. As the repetition of his seemingly small, insignificant life wears him down psychologically, he is driven to murder. Deliberately paced, but effective in its portrayal of the stifling boredom of its antihero's existence, Jaime Rosales's debut is a unique entry in the serial killer genre.

### **The House of Bernarda Alba/La casa de Bernarda Alba (1987) Mario Camus. Spain**

"The House of Bernarda Alba" begins with the funeral of a man who surely wielded little influence, since his widow, Bernarda Alba (Irene Gutierrez Caba), is such a formidable tyrant. Feared by her five daughters, hated by her servants, Bernarda Alba rules her household with an iron hand. Upon the death of her husband, the widow declares a lengthy mourning period during which her daughters are forbidden any contact with men. So the important male character in the drama, the handsome and calculating young Pepe el Romano, is never allowed to appear. Instead, Pepe lingers at the edges of the story, appearing at the window of one daughter or another in the middle of the night, and serving as the catalyst who drives the women to the edge of rebellion.

### **In the City/ En la ciudad (2003) Cesc Gay. Spain**

A web of romantic entanglements covers a growing circle of friends in this romantic comedy drama from Spain. Tomás is a college instructor who has been secretly dating one of his students, Ana. Making the matter more complicated is the fact that Ana's uncle is Mario, one of Tomás' best friends. Mario has long been involved with Sara, but he has reason to believe she is having an affair, and he's desperate to hold on to her. At the same time, Mario has met Cristina, and is trying to fight his interest in her. Irene and Manu are another seemingly happy couple fighting infidelity when she begins having second thoughts about their relationship. And Andres has fallen for Sofia, a clerk at his favorite bookstore, but he learns she's still pining for Eric, who talked her into bed one night but has yet to come back to her. Beautifully filmed in the city of Barcelona.

### **In the City of Sylvia/ En la ciudad de Sylvia (2007) José Luis Guerín. Spain**

This film captures is the harmony between the observer and the environment: a total immersion in its atmosphere. In an era where portable audio devices eliminate people's attention to their surroundings, *In the City of Sylvia* almost feels like a timely persuasion: watch what you see, and listen to what you hear. Remember the essence of cinema: sound, images, and movements. The film also bears a sign of timelessness through its universal theme: a romantic's pursuit of his dreams in la vie quotidienne. As an ostensibly subjective film, it also includes many mysterious scenes where the identify of the observer is ambiguous. Some people think that those scenes come from the imagination of our protagonist - or could it be the filmmaker, or the viewer? This movie is nothing less than a timely and timeless masterpiece. It provides compelling evidence that cinema is far from dying; as a matter of fact, it has hardly been as exciting and alive

### **In Search of Contemporary Spain (1991) Documentary**

Andalusia, home of bullfighting and flamenco dancing, is the focus of this program, which looks at the changes wrought during and since Franco's time on a fighting bull ranch and its employees. When the old owner died, his daughter took his place. How has a woman coped in the macho world of horses and bull-rearing? Why does she continue to attend Europe's most spectacular Fiesta, the Seville Fair, while her chief rancher does not? What are the truths behind the flamenco dress and the bullfighter's suit of lights? Above all, what is the relationship between the tourist poster images and the real people who live in Andalusia today?

### **Innocent Voices/ Voces Inocentes (2004) Luis Mandoki. El Salvador**

A young boy, in an effort to have a normal childhood in 1980's El Salvador, is caught up in a dramatic fight for his life as he desperately tries to avoid the war, which is raging all around him.

### **Intimate Stories/ Historias mínimas (2002) Carlos Sorín. Argentina**

Near the provincial town of San Julian, three vibrant characters undertake seemingly mundane journeys that turn out to be subtly life changing. A lonely, fastidious traveling salesman quests for the perfect cream cake to win the widow of his dreams. A grizzly grandfather hitchhikes to town to find his forgotten lost dog and seek forgiveness. A poor young mother hopes to win the grand prize--a microprocessor--as a contestant on a TV game show. In the end, the three will get more or less what they set out for, but it will come to them in ways that they never expected



### **Jealousy/Celos (1999) Gonzalo Martínez. Spain**

Celos takes place in contemporary Los Angeles, where a young Mexican immigrant couple, Teresa and Gerardo are building a life together. Unexpectedly, they receive a phone call from Sebastian, a long time friend of Gerardo, who tells them he's coming to the US and needs a place to stay. They take him in, but over a brief period of time, the dynamics of their relationships change, creating jealousy conditions that spiral out of control. Gerardo is convinced that his young beautiful wife and his best friend are having an affair and becomes consumed with rage, and sets out on a rampage of revenge. In the end however, in the tradition of a classic Telenovela, things are not what they seem.

### **A King and his Movie/ La película del rey (1986) Carlos Sorín. Argentina**

Buenos Aires movie director, very fond of the legend of the King of Patagonia and Araucania, decides to make a movie about it. Despite of financial troubles, technical problems, misfortune and desertions, he undertakes the journey to Patagonia for the film with a second-rate actor company. Neglected by the producer and shortly after by the company, he will make the movie alone, in a surreal landscape like mad.

### **KIKA (1993) Pedro Almodóvar. Spain**

Kika, a young cosmetologist, is called to the mansion of Nicolas, an American writer to make-up the corpse of his stepson, Ramon. Ramon, who is not dead, is revived by Kika's attentions and she then moves in with him. They might live happily ever after but first they have to cope with Kika's affair with Nicolas, the suspicious death of Ramon's mother and the intrusive gaze of tabloid-TV star and Ramon's ex-psychologist Andrea Scarface.

### **Kiss of the Spider Woman/El beso de la mujer araña (1985) Héctor Babenco. USA**

Hector Babenco's Oscar-nominated drama, adapted from Manuel Puig's novel and set in an unspecified Latin American country, takes a penetrating look at the role of entertainment in a politically oppressive regime. When activist Valentin (Raul Julia) is tossed in a cell, already beaten and tortured by prison guards anxious to get information out of him, he ends up sharing the space with Molina (William Hurt), a homosexual deeply engaged with popular culture--especially the movies. The two men have widely divergent views of life: while the leftist Valentin strives to bring forth a revolution, Molina buries himself in elaborate fantasies taken directly from the cinema. In particular, he relates two fanciful narratives--one a Nazi melodrama, the other an escapist fable about a glamorous "spider woman" (Sonia Braga), harkening back to the glory days of film noir and murderous femme fatales. The impatient and dedicated Valentin tries to raise his cellmate's conscience, and gradually the two men come together and, in a stunning and shocking conclusion, each one truly learns to put himself in the other's place. Hurt delivers an Oscar-winning performance in this captivating tribute to the power of film and fantasy as an escape from inhumane conditions.

### **KM. 0 (Kilometer 0)/ Kilómetro Cero (2000) Yolanda García Serrano y Juan Luis Iborra. Spain**

The title refers to Madrid's central square (from which all distances within Spain are measured). Zero may also describe the state of the lives of 14 strangers. The stories of these fourteen collide at this meeting point on a sultry August afternoon. Mistaken identities and second chances are among the results of this comedy of errors featuring, among other characters, a horny & gay university

student, an internet-love seeker flamenco dancer, a macho but lovelorn gigolo, an actress, and a businessman starved for new sexual experiences.

### **Labyrinth of Passions/ El laberinto de pasiones (1982) Pedro Almodóvar. Spain**

Spanish director Pedro Almodovar's films are colorful, sexy, and very funny, and this one is a perfect introduction to his work. An emperor's son, Reza Niro (Imanol Arias), comes to Madrid in disguise and sleeps with Sadeq (Antonio Banderas), an Islamic terrorist with a highly developed sense of smell. Sadeq's group wants to kidnap Reza, who disguises himself as a punk rock singer and falls in love with Sexilia (Cecilia Roth), a nymphomaniac singer for a rival band. There's also a wealthy woman (Helga Line) who wants Reza's sperm for an artificial insemination, a delirious dry-cleaner who sleeps with his own daughter, and other bizarre characters. Almodovar takes delight in intersecting lives, chance meetings, and humor that springs from the strangest of situations. He also has the rare talent of presenting potentially offensive material in such a whimsical and affectionate fashion that no matter what his characters do, the audience loves them as much as he does.

### **Life Sentence/ Cadena perpétua (1979) Arturo Ripstein. Mexico**

"El Tarzan" Lira is an ex-convict who decides to give up his criminal past and reform his life. However, a corrupt policeman blackmails him leaving "El Tarzan" no other option but to continue committing robberies. Adapting the genre conventions of the film noir to the Mexican context, Ripstein's film focuses on Mexican police corruption and questions the judicial system.

### **The Lighthouse/ El Faro (1998) Eduardo Mignogna. Argentina**

Two Argentine sisters, Memé and Aneta, lose their mother in a car crash. Memé, the elder, is also left lame with one badly scarred leg. The orphaned girls go to Uruguay to stay with their aunts. The sisters often bicker, but they are actually very close. Memé flirts but has no luck with boys because of her injury... On their own now, Memé works as a waitress where she gets to know Andy. Returning to Montevideo, they meet Dolores, a friend of their late mother. Memé's affair with a man complicates her relationship with her sister. Then Andy invites the pair to his seaside retreat, a lighthouse...

### **Like Water for Chocolate/Como agua para chocolate (1992) Alfonso Arau. Mexico**

Tita, as the youngest of three daughters, is condemned by family tradition never to marry, but to spend her life caring for her mother. However, Tita has fallen in love with a young man and he with her. When Tita's mother refuses to let them wed, and suggests that he marry her other daughter instead, Tita takes revenge: by allowing her passions to surface through her cooking, she manipulates the emotions of all who eat her food -- with some very strange and magical results.

### **Lion's Den/ Leonera (2008) Pablo Trapero. Argentina**

Julia, a 25 year-old university student, two weeks pregnant, with no criminal record, is sent to prison for having murdered the father of her child. This gripping story addresses maternity, jail and justice; confinement, guilt and solitude; but above all it deals with Julia and her son, Thomas, born inside an Argentinean prison. Directed by Argentina's Pablo Trapero, *Lion's Den* is an impressively yet quietly assured film, one that takes its time and makes us live along with its characters. There's a rough-hewn realism in *Lion's Den*, but there's also a subtle lyrical quality to it;

the performances are impressive but unforced, the camerawork contemplated without being showy.

**Lisboa (1999) Antonio Hernández. Argentina**

Joao sells video tapes in road bars between Portugal and Spain. One day he finds a middle aged woman in the middle of nowhere. Somebody is looking for her and she has to escape to Lisboa. But what is the secret of this woman? Why does she want to go to Lisboa?

**Live Flesh (2 copies)/Carne Trémula (1997) Pedro Almodóvar. Spain**

A shooting in the Madrid apartment of Elena (Francesca Neri), an Italian dope addict, leaves policeman David (Javier Bardem) a paraplegic and Victor (Liberto Rabal), her would-be date, in prison. Years later, Victor gets out of jail but is obsessed with Elena, now clean, sober, and married to David, who has transcended his handicap by becoming a wheelchair basketball champion. The brooding, resentful Victor starts sleeping with their friend Clara (Ángela Molina), the sexually restless wife of David's jealous, alcoholic former cop partner, and finds out some harsh truths about what really happened that fateful night. Eventually love, desire, obsession, and betrayal all whirlwind into confrontations, both deadly and intensely sexual. Based on the novel by Ruth Rendell, this colorful, vibrant film from Spanish director Pedro Almodóvar overflows with rich, sensual performances and beauty captured by graceful camerawork, enhanced by a sizzling musical score by Alberto Iglesias. Penélope Cruz appears as Victor's mother, a prostitute who gives birth to him on a bus in the film's brilliant opening.

**Live-In Maid/ Cama adentro (2004) Jorge Gaggero. Argentina**

*Live-in Maid* Jorge Gaggero's remarkably assured first film, examines the complicated relationship between Beba and Dora, an upper-class Buenos Aires woman and her longtime housekeeper. The two women share a roomy apartment, which Dora keeps in immaculate order while Beba primps and sighs like an opera diva with an audience of one, or the queen of a small, secret nation. The intimacy between them is largely unspoken but is nonetheless implicit in nearly every scene. So too, however, is the distance that makes an honest and reciprocal friendship nearly impossible. Their bond, after all, is officially secured not by love or loyalty but rather by money, and their differences of status and background limit what they can say to each other.

**Liverpool (2008) Lisandro Alonso. Argentina**

A merchant sailor returns to his home in Tierra del Fuego after spending most of his life at sea. Born in 1975, Lisandro Alonso is one of the most prominent filmmakers to emerge from Argentina cinema in the last few years. The imagery in *Liverpool* is meticulous, the pacing carefully measured, and the mood generally melancholy and enigmatic.

**Love in the Time of Cholera (2007) Mike Newell, USA**

Based on the novel by Colombian Nobel Prize author Gabriel García Márquez, the movie tells the story of Florentino, who, rejected by the beautiful Fermina at a young age, devotes much of his adult life to carnal affairs as a desperate attempt to heal his broken heart. Starring Javier Bardem and Giovanna Mezzogiorno. In English.

**Lovers of the Arctic Circle/Los amantes del círculo polar (1999) Julio Medem. Spain**

Two children meet by chance and form a bond which carries them through all sorts of trials and coincidences. Only after becoming teens and step-siblings, do they profess their love for each other, embarking on an erotic odyssey that will take them to the ends of the Earth.

**Luis Valdéz and El Teatro Campesino (1991) Documentary. USA**

Luis Valdéz is the celebrated founder of the Teatro Campesino, the West Coast theatrical group that has given voice to the struggles of Chicano farm workers. As a child, Valdez picked fruit alongside his father in California's fertile valleys. In this program, he describes how he overcame the handicaps of migrant life to become a playwright and director, and explains how his plays retrace the experiences of Chicano families as they contend with the adversities of rural life or the equally squalid and deprived circumstances of life in the city. (26 minutes)

**Machuca (2004) Andrés Wood. Chile**

Set in 1973 Santiago during Salvador Allende's socialist government and shortly before General Augusto Pinochet's military coup, the film tells the story of two friends, one of them the very poor Pedro Machuca who is integrated into the elite school of his friend Gonzalo Infante.

**The Maid/ La nana (2009) Sebastian Silva. Chile**

After 23 years working as housemaid in an upper class Santiago, Chile household, Raquel (Catalina Saavedra) is as much a part of the Valdez family as the wife, husband, and kids she lives with and looks after. On the occasion of Raquel's 41st birthday Pilar Valdez, her husband Mundo and their oldest son Lucas force the sullen, withdrawn maid to emerge from her kitchen sanctum and join the family for a brief celebration at the close of dinner. But Raquel's discomfort is as strong as her "family's" need to acknowledge their awkward dependence on her and she soon withdraws to her room. Plagued by migraines and dizziness, Raquel nevertheless devotes herself to her domestic responsibilities and to a complex series of relationships with the individual family members she serves. For insecure Pilar the maid has become the de facto head of the household. For teenage Lucas Raquel has transformed from surrogate mother to crush-object. For daughter Camila, Raquel is a bitterly resented opponent in an ongoing and undeclared psyche war. *La nana* offers a microcosm of Latin American social hierarchy while also focusing one woman's journey to free herself from a mental servitude of her own making. Winner of the 2009 Sundance Film Festival for best foreign film.

**Man of Principle/ Cóndores no entierran todos los días (1984) Francisco Nordén. Colombia**

Leon María Lozano is a humble worker and a Colombian Conservative Party member who lives in Tuluá, Colombia, in a time where liberals rule and close 1946 presidential election. For his activism is discriminated against by the majority of people saved by Gertrude Potes, senior militant liberal and a few other liberals.

**María Full of Grace/María llena eres de gracia (2004) Joshua Marston. Colombia**

In a small village in Colombia, the pregnant seventeen years old Maria (Catalina Sandino Moreno) supports her family with her salary working in a floriculture. She is fired and with a total lack of perspective of finding a new job, she decides to accept the offer to work as a drug mule, flying to USA with sixty-two pellets of cocaine in her stomach. Once in New York, things do not happen as planned.

**Matador (1986) Pedro Almodóvar. Spain**

Ex-bullfighter who is getting turned on by killing, lady lawyer with same problem and young man driven insane by over-religious upbringing - these are the main characters in this stylish black comedy about dark sides of human nature. Diego and Maria have not yet met, but it's clear from the initial sequences of "Matador," Pedro Almodovar's insistently raffish, 1986 Spanish comedy, that they were made for each other. Each equates the act of killing with an act of sex in which death is the ultimate orgasm.

**Memories of Underdevelopment/ Memorias del subdesarrollo (1968) Tomás Gutiérrez Alea. Cuba**

Sergio, a wealthy bourgeois aspiring writer, decides to stay in Cuba even though his wife and friends flee to Miami. Sergio looks back over the changes in Cuba from the Castro revolution to the Cuban missile crisis, the effect of living in an underdeveloped country, and his relations with his girlfriends Elena and Hanna.

**Men with Guns/ Hombres armados (1997) John Sayles. USA**

Humberto Fuentes is a wealthy doctor whose wife has recently died. In spite of the advice of his children, he takes a trip to visit his former students who now work in impoverished villages. His trip soon becomes a quest, politically awakening him when he finds out that one of his students was killed by the army.

**Merry Christmas/ Felicidades (2000) Lucho Bender. Argentina**

Some lonely souls in Buenos Aires all try to make the best of it on one hot, muggy Christmas Eve when a series of wry coincidences forces them to cross paths sometimes without even knowing it. An overworked stand up comic can't make his audience laugh. A writer ruins all his relationships with women despite his commercial successes. A father is desperate to find his son the latest robot toy that's sold out of every store in town. A shy and handsome young doctor can't relate to women. A lonely handicapped artist wants to relate to other people and make a friend. And a hardened cop tries to make the best of it in a corrupt police force. All of these stories and more emerge from the humming heat of a black Buenos Aires night like blood sucking bats from an abandoned church. In his debut film about love, loss, desperation, and desire Lucho Bender, an internationally acclaimed director of commercials, reveals a style and sensibility that shares Robert Altman's genius for interweaving the lives of many and Jim Jarmusch's depiction of alienation and wackiness. This film screened in New York City in May 2001 as part of the Recent Argentine Cinema film festival (Passionate Stories--a Passion for Storytelling) organized by the Film Society of Lincoln Center.

### **Midaq Alley/ El Callejón de Los Milagros (1995) Jorge Fons. Mexico**

The lives of the inhabitants of El Callejón de los Milagros, in downtown Mexico City, are closely knitted as the threads of a rug. Fifty-something Don Ru (Gomez Cruz) owns a small "cantina" where all the men spend afternoons playing domino. He's tired of his longtime marriage with Eusebia (Casanova) and has recently discovered new feelings inside his heart. It doesn't matter if these feelings are not aimed to a young lady but to a young clerk (Soberanes): after all, as one of the characters says, "it's platonic love". Don Ru's son Chava (Bernal) doesn't like what he sees and almost kills his father's lover. Running away from Don Ru's anger, Chava escapes to the USA with his friend Abel (Bichir) who's deeply in love with beautiful Alma (Hayek), the daughter of Dona Cata (Rojo), a tarot reader with bad luck in love. Susanita (Sanz), the ugly landlady looking for love; Guicho (Tovar), Don Ru's clinic employee, Maru (Scanda), Don Fidel (Obregon), Dona Flor (Morett), Zacarias (Woolrich) and mean Jose Luis (Gimenez Cacho) complete the cast of characters of this complex portrait of lives.

### **The Milk of Sorrow/ La teta asustada (2009) Claudia Llosa. Spain-Peru**

Fausta is suffering from a rare disease called the Milk of Sorrow, which is transmitted through the breast milk of pregnant women who were abused or raped during or soon after pregnancy. While living in constant fear and confusion due to this disease, she must face the sudden death of her mother. She chooses to take drastic measures to not follow in her mother's footsteps. The film is based on the book *Entre Prójimos* by Kimberly Theidon, Associate Professor at the Department of Anthropology at Harvard University and Director of Praxis, Institute for Social Justice. In her book, Theidon documents a number of testimonies from women who were raped by as many as thirty men at a time, atrocities that often resulted in pregnancies. Theidon states that "when survivors of sexual violence speak about their experiences, they place a responsibility on their listeners to respond to what they have heard." Llosa's film, too, is an attempt to respond to such testimonies.

### **Mission/Misión (1986) Roland Joffé. United Kingdom**

Featuring a majestic score by Ennio Morricone and lush Oscar-winning cinematography by Chris Menges, Roland Joffé's *The Mission* examines the events surrounding the Treaty of Madrid in 1750, when Spain ceded part of South America to Portugal, and turns this episode into an allegory for the mid-'80s struggles of Latin America. Two European forces are on hand to win the South American natives over to imperialist ways. The plunderers want to extract riches and slaves from the New World. The missionaries, on the other hand, want to convert the Indians to Christianity and win over their souls. Mendoza (Robert De Niro) is an exploiter dabbling in the slave trade. But after he kills his brother Felipe (Aidan Quinn) in a fit of rage, he seeks redemption and calls upon the missionaries to assist him. After repeatedly climbing a cliff with a heavy weight as penance, Mendoza finds redemption and becomes a devout missionary at a settlement run by Gabriel (Jeremy Irons). The missionaries want to promote a new society in which the natives will live together in peace with the Spanish and the Portuguese. But this concept frightens the royal governors, who would rather enslave the natives than encourage peaceful coexistence between the Europeans and the Indians. They order the mission to be burned to the ground. But this event causes a rift between Gabriel, who wants to pray and pursue peaceful resistance, and Mendoza, who wants to take up arms and fight the Europeans.

### **The Motorcycle Diaries/ Los diarios de la motocicleta (2004) Walter Salles. USA**

The Motorcycle Diaries is an adaptation of a journal written by Ernesto "Che" Guevara de la Serna when he was 23 years old. He and his friend, Alberto Granado are typical college students who, seeking fun and adventure before graduation, decide to travel across Argentina, Chile, Peru, Colombia, and Venezuela in order to do their medical residency at a leper colony. Beginning as a buddy/road movie in which Ernesto and Alberto are looking for chicks, fun and adventure before they must grow up and have a more serious life. As is said in the film itself, it's about "two lives running parallel for a while." The two best friends start off with the same goals and aspirations, but by the time the film is over, it's clear what each man's destiny has become.

### **Nine Queens/Las nueve reinas (2000) Fabián Bielinsky. Argentina**

Early one morning, Marcos observes Juan successfully pulling off a bill-changing scam on a cashier, and then getting caught as he attempts to pull the same trick on the next shift. Marcos steps in, claiming to be a policeman, and drags Juan out of the store. Once they are back on the street, Marcos reveals himself to be a fellow swindler with a game of much higher stakes in mind, and he invites Juan to be his partner in crime. A once-in-a-lifetime scheme seemingly falls into their laps - an old-time con man enlists them to sell a forged set of extremely valuable rare stamps, The Nine Queens. The tricky negotiations that ensue bring into the picture a cast of suspicious characters, including Marcos' sister Valeria, their younger brother Federico and a slew of thieves, conmen and pickpockets. As the deceptions mount, it becomes more and more difficult to figure out who is conning whom.

### **The Orphanage/ El orfanato (2007) Guillermo Del Toro. Spain**

A woman brings her family back to her childhood home, where she opens an orphanage for handicapped children. Before long, her son starts to communicate with an invisible new friend.

### **Our Lady of the Assassins/La virgin de los sicarios (2001) Barbet Schroeder. Colombia**

The writer Fernando Vallejo returns to Medellin, the city of his childhood, after an absence of over thirty years. Fernando meets Alexis, 16 years old, in a boys' brothel. Alexis comes from the slums. He has been drawn into a world of killing. Love begins to blossom between Fernando and Alexis. But their love has no future. Anyone who crosses Alexi's path can be a possible victim. Alexis needs no reason to kill: like an Angel of Death, he openly fires on anybody who rubs him the wrong way. Bound by their passion for each other, they wander from church to church, murder to murder, each day their love growing stronger. A new love story begins for Fernando, as if in this city reality has been turned upside down, and the dead seem to come alive again.

### **Pam's Labyrinth/El laberinto del fauno (2006) Guillermo del Toro. Spain**

Set in a dark Spanish forest in a very dark time — 1944, when Spain was still in the early stages of the fascist nightmare from which the rest of Europe was painfully starting to awaken — "Pan's Labyrinth" is a political fable in the guise of a fairy tale. Or maybe it's the other way around. Does the moral structure of the children's story — with its clearly marked poles of good and evil, its narrative of dispossession and vindication — illuminate the nature of authoritarian rule? Or does the movie reveal fascism as a terrible fairy tale brought to life?

### **Pedro Almodóvar (1995) Documental. Spain**

Filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar's ability to shock and provoke is legendary. In this program, the director traces his colorful career from obscure independent filmmaker, to his 1988 Oscar nomination for *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*, and beyond. Using scenes from this and other major films—*Folle, Folleme Tim*; *Pepi, Luci y Bom y Otras Chicas del Monton*; *Laberinto de Pasiones*; *Entre Tinieblas*; *Matador*; *Tacones Lejanos*; and *La Flor de Mi Secreto*—Almodóvar explores his unique creative perspective, particularly his frequent use of characters living on the fringes of traditional Spanish society. Due to the adult nature of Almodóvar's films, this program is recommended for mature Spanish language students.

### **A Place in the World/ Un lugar en el mundo (1994). Adolfo Aristarain. Argentina**

The most charismatic character in "A Place in the World," an elegiac remembrance of the hardscrabble existence in a remote Argentine valley, is a cynical Spanish geologist named Hans Meyer Plaza who calls himself a "hired gun." Hans, played with a fiery gravity by Jose Sacristan, has been employed by an unnamed multinational corporation to determine the feasibility of a hydroelectric project in the desolate Bermejo Valley, 90 miles from Buenos Aires. Hans, who has also been checking the area for oil, professes indifference to the fact that his work might precipitate the eradication of a pastoral society that has existed for centuries. In his Darwinian view, human beings are "primates who cannot be changed."

### **Place without Limits/ El lugar sin límites (1978) Arturo Ripstein. Spain**

Family honor, greed, machismo, homophobia, and the dreams of whores collide in a Mexican town. Rich, elderly Don Alejo is poised to sell the town for a profit, needing only to buy a whorehouse to own all the buildings and close the deal. It's owned by a man and his daughter: Manuelita is gay, aging, afraid; he cross-dresses and entertains as a flamenco dancer; he wants to sell and leave. His daughter wants to stay. The return of Pancho complicates things: he's a hothead Alejo tries to control and he scared Manuelita the year before. Things come to a head as Pancho breaks Alejo's hold on him, then flirts and dances with Manuelita and finds himself at risk of being called a "maricón."

### **Principio y Fin (1993) Arturo Ripstein. Mexico**

The film tells the story of the Boteros, a middle-class Mexican family struggling against poverty after their father's death. Ignacia (Egurrrola) is the Boteros mother, a desperate woman who chooses to sacrifice the destiny of her three older children, in order to protect Gabriel (Laguardia) the youngest one. She believes Gabriel will climb the social structure and bring back the lost fortune to the family. But destiny has other plans for the Boteros and tragedy will overcome eventually. Based on the novel of Nobel Prize winner Naguib Mahfouz.

### **The Promise/La promesa (2004) Hector Carre. Spain**

Hector Carre's psychological thriller *The Promise* concerns a woman who liberates herself from a destructive marriage and becomes nanny to a boy. The boy's family lives in an ornate mansion, but the nanny becomes convinced that the house is haunted, and she goes to frightening lengths to protect the boy



### **Requiem for a Dream/ Réquiem para un sueño (2000) Darren Aronofsky. Argentina**

The drug-induced utopias of four Coney Island individuals are shattered when their addictions become stronger.

### **Rigoberta Menchu: Broken Silence(1992) Documentary**

"In recognition of her work for social justice and ethno-cultural reconciliation" she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on October 12, 1992. "The celebration of Columbus is for us an insult," said Menchú, one of the most outspoken and articulate and persuasive advocates of native rights. This program presents a profile of this extraordinary woman, whose life has become a symbol of the sufferings, not only of her own Mayan Quiché people, but of all the indigenous people of the Americas. It is a moving portrait, too, of a self-taught woman who dreams of two things: a Guatemalan Congress integrating indigenous and non-indigenous men and women—and having a child "so I can plant my own seed, for better or worse." (25 minutes)

### **Romero (1989) Raul Julia. EL Salvador**

The life and work of Archbishop Oscar Romero who opposed, at great personal risk, the tyrannical repression in El Salvador.

### **Roots Rhythm (3 movies) (1997). Documentary. USA**

In this first tape of the three-tape documentary *Roots of Rhythm*, host Harry Belafonte traces the roots of the musical form that has come to be called Latin music. From its origins in Africa and Spain, Belafonte details the evolution of the rhythms that would eventually be carried across the sea on slave ships. Featuring archival clips of early Latin superstars, the video sets the historical stage for a thorough exploration of this passion-filled musical form.

### **The Rose Seller/ La Vendedora de Rosas (1998) Víctor Gaviria. Colombia**

13-year-old Monica leads a street life, making her living by selling flowers to couples in local nightspots, she is joined by 10-year-old Andrea who runs out of her house after her mother beats her. A heart-breaking urban tale that makes optimal use of natural actors and improvisation, together with very basic photography. However, its lyricism sets it apart from any pretensions of "real" cinema.

### **Sábado: el Túnel (1952) Antonio Drove. Spain-Argentina**

The Argentine film *El Tunel* features two of that country's brightest young stars, Laura Hidalgo and Carlos Thompson (the latter was on the verge of "going Hollywood" in 1952). Based on a controversial novel by Ernesto Sabato, the film attempts to probe the psyche of a demented murderer. Thompson plays a surrealist painter who falls in love with the wife (Hidalgo) of a famous pianist. Consumed by jealousy of the woman's multiple affairs, the painter is driven to murder. But that's only part of the story: once he's safely ensconced in a lunatic asylum, the artist is "interpreted" by a group of self-styled specialists, in much the same way as his paintings had previously been picked apart by art critics.

### **Sea Inside/Mar adentro (2004) Alejandro Amenábar. Spain**

This is the life story of Spanish poet Ramón Sampedro, who fought a 30-year campaign to win the right to end his life with dignity. The film explores Ramón's relationships with two women: Julia, a lawyer who supports his cause, and Rosa, a local woman who wants to convince him that life is worth living. Through the gift of his love, these two women are inspired to accomplish things they never previously thought possible. Despite his wish to die, Ramón taught everyone he encountered the meaning, value and preciousness of life. Though he could not move himself, he had an uncanny ability to move others. Starring Javier Bardem.

### **Secrets of the Heart/ Secretos del Corazon (1997) Montxo Armendáriz. Spain**

Javi and his friend Carlos visit an old house on the outskirts of a small Spanish village. According to his brother Juan this is a haunted house and one can hear the voices of the dead. Later he is intrigued with a room which is always closed (the room where his father was found dead). He is so interested in these mysteries that he starts to investigate all the secrets of these dead people and their stories.

### **Solitary Fragments/ La soledad (2007) Jaime Rosales. Spain**

The 2004 terrorist attacks against Madrid's public transport system cost the lives of nearly 200 people and strongly affected the sense of security in the country. Spanish director Jaime Rosales' second feature film *Solitary Fragments* examines the effects of a similar kind of attack on several ordinary people living in Madrid. Adela, a single mother of a baby boy, finds a home as the flatmate of Inés, the daughter of Antonia, a widowed mother of three adult daughters. The unexpected terrorist strike drastically changes Adela's life and has an indirect effect on the other characters as well, namely Antonia's other two daughters Nieves and Helena. The story in general is very much dependent on the mood as opposed to plot, which is borderline non-existent. The characters' personalities are revealed indirectly in conversations and long takes of mundane housework, such as ironing or cooking. The focus is on a completely personal level; the turning point of the story is passed very undramatically and the political and societal aspects of the attack are coldly ignored. However, slowly Adele, Antonia and the three sisters start feeling more real and by the quietly hopeful ending they have evolved as human beings. Winner of the Spanish Goya Awards.

### **Son of the Bride/El hijo de la novia (2001) Juan José Campanella. Argentina**

At age 42, Rafael Belvedere is having a crisis. He lives in the shadow of his father, he feels guilty about rarely visiting his aging mother, his ex-wife says he doesn't spend enough time with their daughter and he has yet to make a commitment to his girlfriend. At his lowest point, a minor heart attack reunites him with Juan Carlos, a childhood friend, who helps Rafael to reconstruct his past and look at the present in new ways.

### **The Snail's Strategy/ La estrategia del caracol (1993) Sergio Cabrera. Colombia**

In this Colombian comedy-drama, several people live in an unoccupied house until after many years of quiet living, the owner wants them out. They try their best to avoid being put out, until one of them finds a way to save their dignity. Winner of the Berlin International Film Festival.

**Stormy Weather/Tiempo de tormenta (2003) Pedro Olea. Spain**

When two married couples meet in a hospital emergency room, their lives become inexplicably intertwined. Despite having a son, Elena (Maribel Verdú) and Chus (Jorge Sanz) have continued to drift apart, while tragedy has damaged Sara (Maria Barranco) and Oscar's (Dario Grandinetti) relationship beyond repair. Unfortunately, the platonic friendship that forms between Sara and Chus is no match for the passion that flares between Elena and Oscar.

**Take My Eyes/ Te doy mis ojos (2003) Icíar Bollaín. Spain (2 copies)**

A couple breaks up after the husband's violent and abusive nature finally becomes too much for his wife, but the breakup becomes a rebuilding experience for both of them as they pick up the tattered remains of their lives. Domestic abuse has been portrayed on film before but never with this much complexity. An ode to life and survival, *Take my eyes* won seven Goya Awards.

**Talk to Her/ Hable con ella (2002) Pedro Almodovar. Spain**

Two men share an odd friendship while they care for their girlfriends who are both in deep comas. The film's themes include the difficulty of communication between the sexes, loneliness and intimacy, and the persistence of love beyond loss. Winner of the 2002 Academy Award for Screenplay Written Directly for the Screen and the 2003 Golden Globe Award for Best Foreign Language Film. In 2005, *Time* magazine film critics Richard Corliss and Richard Schickel included *Talk to Her* in their list of the All-TIME 100 Greatest Movies.

**Tie me Up Tie me Down/ Átame (1990) Pedro Almodóvar. Spain**

Antonio Banderas caught the world's attention with his portrayal of Ricky, an orphaned mental patient who stalks and kidnaps Marina (Victoria Abril), a porn actress and junkie, in order to make her love him in this decided departure for iconoclastic Spanish filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar. Suspense, tension, and uneasy humor mingle as Marina grapples with her addictive nature, a very bad toothache, and her own confusion about the need to be loved and the need for freedom. Meanwhile, Máximo (Francisco Rabal), an aging director who has just shot Marina's latest film, finds himself obsessed with her, while sister Lola (Loles León) worries Marina might be back on drugs and starts trying to track her down. The tension mounts as her sister closes in, and Marina becomes torn by her desire to escape and her growing affection for her captor. Almodóvar followed up his hit *WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN* with this controversial, steamy thriller that contains nudity and some very passionate sex. The cast includes Almodóvar regulars Rossy de Palma, Julieta Serrano, and María Barranco and features a tense musical score by Ennio Morricone.

**Time for Revenge/ Tiempo De Revancha (1981) Adolfo Aristarain. Argentina**

A union organizing demolition worker and a friend of his decide to blackmail the corrupt company they work for setting up a fake accident. Because of a miscalculation the friend dies, but he sticks with the plan and demands a big sum of money as indemnity. When the company refuses to pay, determined to prove the worker is lying, he is forced to make a tragic decision in order to win.

### **Tristana (1970) Luis Buñuel. Spain (2 copies)**

When the young woman Tristana's mother dies, she is entrusted to the guardianship of the well-respected though old Don Lope. Don Lope is well-liked and well-known because of his honorable nature, despite his socialistic views about business and religion. But Don Lope's one weakness is women, and he falls for the innocent girl in his charge, seduces her, makes her his lover, though all the while explaining to her that she is as free as he. But when she acts on this freedom, Don Lope must deal with the consequences of his world-view.

### **Velázquez, The painter of Painters/Velázquez, el pintor de los pintores (1992) Documentary**

Diego Velázquez is considered one of the most influential and important painters of the 17th century. His work was integral in the development of European art, and his reputation extends into the genre of modern realism. Portrait of an Artist: Velázquez -- The Painter of Painters remembers the creations of this Spanish master. Velázquez spent most of his years at court as a royal portraitist. His canvases are a testament to his skill as a realist with each canvas a hauntingly lifelike representation. Because of his skill with color, light, and the manipulation of space, Velázquez was known as the "painter's painter." His lasting impressions can be felt in the work of everyone from Francisco de Goya to Edouard Manet to Gustave Courbet.

### **Viridiana (1961) Luis Buñuel. Spain**

Viridiana is a novice on the verge of taking her vows when she visits her uncle Don Jaime's farm. Still pining for his wife who died on their wedding night, Don Jaime is struck by Viridiana's resemblance to her. He drugs Viridiana and attempts to rape her. Later on Don Jaime confesses to her what he tried to do, but soon hangs himself, humiliated by his own atrocious behavior. Viridiana inherits his farm and in an act of charity, opens it up to a marauding troupe of beggars. To her dismay, they ruin the main house in a wild orgy culminating in a gross parody of the Last Supper. Upon its release in 1961, VIRIDIANA was condemned by the Church, banned in Spain, awarded the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival, and admired by film audiences the world over.

### **Volver (2006) Pedro Almodóvar. Spain**

Raimunda, her daughter Paula and her sister Sole travel from Madrid to the windy and superstitious village of Alcanfor de las Infantas to visit the grave of their mother and aunt Irene, who died years ago in a fire with her husband. Then they visit Irene's sister Paula, an old senile aunt that raised Raimunda after the death of her parents that insists to tell them that Irene is alive and living with her; later, they go to the house of her neighbor and friend Agustina, who gives a support to Paula. They return to Madrid, and after a hard day of work, Raimunda meets her daughter completely disturbed in the bus stop waiting for her. When they arrive home, Paula tells that she killed her unemployed father Paco, who was completely drunk and tried to rape her. While Raimunda is hiding his body, Sole calls her to tell that their beloved aunt Paula had died. On the next morning, Sole travels alone to the funeral, and when she returns to Madrid, she finds her mother hidden in the trunk of her car. She brings Irene to her apartment, where secrets from the past are disclosed.

### **The Waiting List/ Lista de espera (2000) Juan Carlos Tabío. Spain**

A desperate group of people wait at a rundown Cuban transit station for the next bus to arrive. The problem is, it never shows up. While a number of busses pass by the station, and others that are either full or at the end of the line stop by, it soon becomes obvious that the bus everyone was waiting for has left them high and dry. While one of the would-be passengers, Emilio, uses his downtime to win the affections of the beautiful Jacqueline, most of the rest decide that if they're stuck without anywhere to go, they might as well make the station a better place to wait, and they begin forming a plan to turn the decrepit bus terminal into a showplace that people would look forward to visiting.

### **We Are All Stars/Todos somos estrellas (1995) Felipe Degregori. Peru**

A look at the dysfunctional family of Carmen Huambachano, religious viewers of Lima's weekly TV series "We Are All Stars," in which a normal family is selected to be interviewed and then given a chance to win prizes. The tables turn when the Huambachanos are chosen. We Are All Stars is the title of a fictional television game show broadcast daily throughout Lima, Peru. The Huambachanos, like every other family in that part of the country, are devoted to the program, watching it faithfully, dreaming of the time when their application will be accepted and they'll have a chance to earn millions. When the day finally arrives, it comes as the result of a mistake. In reality, the Huambachanos' entry form was placed in the pile for those who should never appear on the show. But a mix-up occurs and a television debut awaits Carmen and her three children.

### **West Side Story (1961) Jerome Robbins, Robert Wise. USA**

It is an energetic, widely-acclaimed, melodramatic musical - a modern-day, loose re-telling of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet tragedy of feuding families, although the setting is the Upper West Side of New York City in the late 1950s with conflict between rival street gangs rather than families. West Side Story is still one of the best film adaptations of a musical ever created, and the finest musical film of the 60s. It arrived at a time when the silver screen was realizing tremendous competition from TV and other genres of cinematic entertainment.

### **What Have I Done to Deserve this? /¿Qué he hecho yo para merecer esto? (1984) Pedro Almodóvar. Spain**

Gloria (Carmen Maura) tries to hold her insane Madrid family together in this hilariously deadpan working-class comedy from Pedro Almodóvar. Sharing their cramped tenement apartment is Gloria's husband (Luis Hualde), an abusive cabdriver who forges letters from Hitler; her heroin-dealing son; a younger son who likes to sleep with older men; an eccentric grandmother (Chus Lampreave); and a pet lizard named Dinero. Gloria works several cleaning jobs to try to make ends meet and sniffs cleaning products for relief from the stress, as she gets no thanks from her nagging husband, who eventually drives her to murder. Luckily, she has a friend in next-door neighbor Cristal (Verónica Forqué), a bubbly prostitute who seduces the cop on the case. There's also a girl upstairs who helps Gloria with her housework via telekinesis. This all works sublimely well, thanks to both an inspired cast who plays everything completely straight, and dialogue that spills over with dry wit and keen observation. Almodóvar scored one of his first international hits with this outrageous, irreverent, and touching film. He also appears in a brief cameo as a TV opera star.

**The Window/ La vetana (2009) Carlos Sorín. Argentina-Spain**

It is a significant day for 80-year-old Antonio. His estranged son is coming to visit and all must be perfect. There will be a special champagne toast; an embrace; warm words that may finally bridge the gap between them. But first, Antonio must wait. Bedridden, he looks out his window at the Patagonian landscape and sees the past and present, while sensing the future. He escapes the eye of his faithful caretakers and leaves the house for what may be the last walk in his fields, inhaling the scent of the land that has been his life. Distinguished Argentine filmmaker Carlos Sorín once again trains his camera on the small stories written by life in this poetic, humanistic.

**Without Name / Sin Nombre (2009) Cary Fukunaga. Mexico**

Honduran teenager Sayra reunites with her father, an opportunity for her to potentially realize her dream of a life in the U.S. Moving to Mexico is the first step in a fateful journey of unexpected events.

**Women in the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown/ Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios (1988) Pedro Almodóvar. Spain**

Though the kinky characters and aberrant social behavior common to the works of Spanish director Pedro Almodovar are very evident in his Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown, the film is at heart a door-slamming farce in the grand tradition. The tiny apartment of pregnant actress Carmen Maura is the "Grand Central Station" set piece for this dizzying tale. Distraught over her recent breakup with her lover, Carmen prepares to overdose on sleeping pills, which she blends into a gazpacho so they'll go down easier. She is diverted from her suicide by her best friend, Maria Barranco, a fugitive from justice (her boy friend is a Shi'ite terrorist) who needs a place to stay. Later, when Carmen's apartment is empty, her ex-lover's grown son (Antonio Banderas) comes to the apartment with his fiancée (Rossy de Palma) in answer to Carmen's "room to let" newspaper ad. The wife inadvertently ingests Carmen's "pill sauce," and as she blissfully snoozes, the husband inaugurates an affair with Carmen's friend Barranco.