



# 2016 Ottawa Spanish Film Festival



SPAIN arts & culture and Bytowne cinema present the latest trends in Spanish cinema.

## HAPPY 140

- On Wednesday, October 5 at 6:45 pm.
- Original title: *Felices 140*.
- Directed by Gracia Querejeta, Spain, 98 minutes.

*Happy 140* is a blackly comic melodrama about the winner of a 140 million Euro lottery and the frenemies she invites to a luxurious Canary Islands hideaway, where she plans to divulge her happy news.

To mark her 40th birthday, Elia (Maribel Verdú) cajoles her old gang to get together, at her expense. The guests include her docile sister Cati with her abusive husband Juan; restaurant owner Ramón, who has always had a soft spot for Elia, much to the disgust of his pregnant wife Martina; high-flying businessman Polo; Mario, Elia's ex-boyfriend, for whom she still carries a torch; and, unexpectedly, Mario's new flame, an insufferable pop star. Elia stuns them all with news of her lottery win. While in public they profess their happiness for her, in private the knives come out. The question of how far a person is willing to go for a multi-million Euro payout is Chabrol or Hitchcock territory, but happily, it's played for laughs here, with the cast of well-known Spanish actors delivering the goods. (Alissa Simon, *Variety*)

## REQUIREMENTS TO BE A NORMAL PERSON

- On Wednesday, October 12 at 6:45 pm.
- Original title: *Requisitos para ser una persona normal*.

### FILM OTTAWA

Wed, October 05–  
Wed, October 26, 2016

#### Venue

Bytowne Cinema, 325 Rideau St, Ottawa, ON

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#### Credits

Organized by SPAIN arts & culture and Bytowne Cinema with the collaboration of the Commercial Office of Spain in Toronto and the Tourism Office of Spain in Canada.



- Directed by Leticia Dolera, Spain, 94 minutes.

Quirky and offbeat, director/actress Leticia Dolera's story of a left-field 30-something anxious to fit in is unaffected, enjoyable fare with a real sense of fun.

The premise is strong: repeatedly throughout the film, a list of seven 'requirements for normality' flash up on the screen, including 'home', 'job', 'partner', etc. Unemployed 30-something María has none of the boxes ticked, and decides that she's going to be 'normal', innocently believing that such a thing exists. Overweight, bespectacled Borja (Manuel Burque) shares María's quirky view of things. They agree to help one another: he'll help her to become normal, she'll help him to become thin. In order to have a social life, María calls an old school friend, who introduces her to a cool, good-looking member of the Barcelona arts scene. What will María choose? Will she prefer spending her time with preening arty types, or cuddling under the bed sheets with Borja? (Jonathan Holland, *Hollywood Reporter*)

## DIRTY WOLVES

- **On Wednesday, October 19 at 6:45 pm.**
- Original title: *Lobos sucios*.
- Directed by Simón Casal de Miguel, Spain, 106 minutes.

Manuela (Marian Álvarez) is a single mother living with her young daughter, her sister and her mom near a remote village in Spain's northwestern Galicia region. The only legitimate employment to be had is at a wolfram (tungsten) mine seized by Nazi forces for use in arms production. It's hard, ill-paid work, with some like Manuela taking great risks to sell small amounts of the mineral on the black market to Allied agents. When Manuela comes to the attention of the mine's handsome, ruthless German commander, Franz (Pierre Kiwitt), she plays a dangerous double game, encouraging his courtship while simultaneously funneling messages between an English doctor and a prisoner who works in the mine's forced-labour division. In his feature debut, director Simón Casal de Miguel guides a capable cast and the pacing has nary a wasted moment. The film is attractively shot, most notably with striking aerial shots of the gorgeous, mountainous countryside. (Dennis Harvey, *Variety*)

## NOTHING IN RETURN

- **On Monday, October 26 at 6:45 pm.**
- Original title: *A cambio de nada?*.
- Directed by Daniel Guzmán, Spain, 93 minutes.

*Nothing In Return* (Best Film & Director at Malaga Film Festival) is a richly observed comic tale of two young buddies determined to beat their circumstances. It's a high-energy, feel-good movie with the warmest of hearts.

Darío (a lively, fast-talking Miguel Herrán) and his considerably larger friend Luismi (Antonio Bachiller) are good-hearted teens who, the script implies, have



been driven to misbehaviour by society. They spend their time playing hooky, shoplifting clothes, and stealing car parts which they then sell to down-on-hisluck mechanic Justo (Felipe García Véllez), a kind of sly-winking surrogate father to Darío. When Justo is arrested for not paying his debts, bail is set at an impossibly high sum. But Darío decides he's going to find the money. His attempts to do so are heartbreaking in their futility but also rich in comedy. Ultimately, though, the relationship between Darío and Luismi is the key. Though of course they'd never use the word, the two boys love one another; the script loves them; and Guzman ensures that a lot of that love is transferred from the screen to the spectator.

(Jonathan Holland, *Hollywood Reporter*)