

Alain Guiraudie's irreverent humour in 'Misericordia' wins over the jury at the 69th edition of SEMINCI

- *The French director has won the Golden Spike for best film and best screenplay*
- *The Spanish films **They Will Be Dust**, by Carlos Marques-Marcet, and **Salve María**, by Mar Coll, win the Silver Spikes for Best Film ex aequo and Best Actress*
- *The Asian films of Yeo Siew Hua (**Stranger Eyes**) and Guan Hu (**Black Dog**) have won two Silver Spikes for Best Film ex aequo and Best Director*
- *The actors in Dan Johan Haugerud's Norwegian film **Sex** share the Silver Spike, and Ángela Molina and Alfredo Castro receive a special mention for Carlos Marques-Marcet's **They Will Be Dust***
- *American independent films have won over critics and audiences, who have recognised Tyler Taormina's **Christmas Eve in Miller's Point** and Tracie Laymon's **Bob Trevino Likes It***

Valladolid, 26 October 2024. In the 69th edition of the Valladolid International Film Festival, which has brought together proposals from new creators and works by established filmmakers with a wide variety of styles and themes, the veteran French director **Alain Guiraudie** (*Nobody's Hero*) has unanimously seduced the international jury with *Misericordia*, a mixture of rural thriller and anticlerical irreverent comedy that recalls the films of Claude Chabrol with the ironic charge of Alfred Hitchcock's *The Trouble With Harry*. The film is produced with the complicity of Albert Serra and Montse Triola (Andergraun Films).

Golden Spike

Formed by the Greek director Sofia Exarchou, the Spanish actress Aida Folch, the critic and editor Devika Girish, the German producer Ingmar Trost and the Spanish director and writer Luis López Carrasco, the jury highlighted the intelligence of this film: 'Its lightness hides a complex balance of genres and tones, under whose appearance of provincial thriller-comedy hides a profound meditation on how desire and guilt make us predictable and incomprehensible to each other'.

Alain Guiraudie has also won the Miguel Delibes award for best screenplay, based on a novel he wrote, 'for its intricate structure, perfectly paced transitions, twists and wit that nevertheless leaves plenty of room for fluidity, grace and reflection. It creates its own world, distinctive and strange, without losing sight of the real world and the human impulses that drive it (desire, rage, remorse)'.

Silver Spike

The Jury has decided to divide the Silver Spike between two very different films, which represent a distinctive cinematographic vision: *Stranger Eyes*, by **Yeo Siew Hua** and *They Will Be Dust*, by **Carlos Marques-Marcet**. The former 'tells an absolutely contemporary tale of life under surveillance in Singapore, with a modern and original filmic language that maintains the intrigue until the end, without giving in to surprise'.

They Will Be Dust, on the other hand, ‘approaches with sensitivity and even joy the confrontation between mortality and the life of a family, where maximalism is balanced with subtlety and authenticity, thanks to the extraordinary performances of true film legends’.

Best directors

The winner of the award for best director D.O. Ribera de Duero went to **Guan Hu**, who in *Black Dog*, according to the jury, ‘takes a simple story of a man and a dog, and builds around it a multi-layered cinematic universe full of intricate visual, local and narrative details’.

The jury further noted that ‘if a director is the author of a film, the creator of its world, the one who brings together its disparate formal elements with a strong and enveloping vision, then the best director in this year’s Official Competition fulfils the mandate in a very convincing way.

Best Performances

The actors who have convinced the jury of this 69th edition share, in terms of the characters they play, a questioning of traditional male and female roles.

For the ‘fierce authenticity of her performance, embodying the multiple contradictions of one of society’s most complex figures - a reluctant and troubled mother - through empathy and a defiant commitment to nuance’, **María Laura Weissmahr**, star of Mar Coll’s *Salve María*, won the award for Best Actress.

The award for Best Actor was shared by the two leads in Dan Johan Haugerud’s *Sex: Jan Gunnar Roise* and **Thorbjorn Harr**. As the jury agreed: ‘They demonstrate the extraordinary ability and subtlety needed to portray with authenticity characters from everyday life, where the dramas unfold internally and in minute gestures, rather than in grand displays of action or emotion. These are two male protagonists who gently challenge and expand the contours of masculinity on screen’.

Also receiving a special mention are the protagonists of Carlos Marques-Marcet’s film *They Will Be Dust*: **Ángela Molina** and **Alfredo Castro**. The jury thus wished to declare its admiration for their work and confirm the place of the veteran actors on the world film scene for ‘bringing a unique blend of quality and credibility to their roles as a couple facing death’.

Best Cinematography and Editing

The award for Best Cinematography goes to **Weizhe Gao** for **Guan Hu’s** *Black Dog*, a film ‘that stood out from the first shot for its remarkable use of landscape, light and framing, imbuing a humanistic and moving story with the grandeur of an epic’.

For defending editing as a central creative principle in cinema, **Telmo Churro** and **Pedro Filipe Marques** were awarded the José Salcedo prize for best editing for the film *Grand Tour* by Miguel Gomes. According to the jury: ‘Editing becomes the tightrope on which past and present, fiction and documentary, East and West delicately balance each other’.

Meeting Point

The members of the Meeting Point Jury, filmmaker Bridgett M. Davis, Brazilian director and screenwriter Sérgio Tréfaut and actress and musician Julia de Castro, have awarded the Meeting Point Award to *Holy Cow*, by **Louise Courvoisier**, and the special Fundos Award to *Familiar touch*, by **Sarah Friedland**.

Among the reasons for selecting *Holy Cow*, they highlighted the fact that it takes risks, starting with the adolescent audience it is aimed at, and the courage and complexity with which its director tackles directing children. 'We were surprised by the unexpected decisions in the script that managed to alter our emotional and physical state, taking us back to a childhood we had forgotten about. An unprejudiced film where humour is conveyed with the intelligence of great comedies'.

According to the jury, the other winner, *Familiar Touch*, 'is a moving, beautifully moving film, whose director has achieved a piece of immeasurable visual value'. They have highlighted the 'very delicate direction of the actors, many of them non-professionals, who manage to accompany the spectator to our inescapable destiny: old age. We are happy to award a director whose way of looking transforms the present'.

Alchemies

The prize in the most daring section of the competition, Alchimies, which won the favour of the jury, made up of the Brazilian filmmaker Gabe Klinger, the writer, screenwriter and director Álex Mendíbil and the German artist and filmmaker Helena Wittmann, went to **Alberto Gracia's** *La parra*, 'for blindly and freely guiding us through closed and uncomfortable places through two characters who choose not to respond'.

The 'rigorous aesthetic proposal that through subtle gestures trusts the audience and opens up to human and artistic contact' of *Bluish*, by **Milena Czernovsky** and Lilith Kraxner, has been awarded a special mention.

Time of History

Artist and director Nina Danino, professor and writer Domingo Sánchez-Mesa Martínez, and film curator Tomasz Poborca, jury of the Time of History section, have decided to award the grand prize to **Wang Bing's** *Youth (Hard Times)*, an immersive and introspective documentary filmed in the new textile industrial district of Zhili (China), where the oppressive environment where young immigrants work is transferred to the viewer. An immersive and introspective documentary, filmed in the new textile industrial district of Zhili (China), where the oppressive environment in which young immigrants work is transferred to the viewer. 'Bing has succeeded in presenting the reality of the factory as a living organism, with its digestive and excretory systems, producing masses of waste, as well as interpersonal alliances. In conclusion, we witness a microcosm of labour exploration that must be interpreted in broad political terms. We highlight the extraordinary work of the filmmakers in this

monumental project as a work about work that reflects the chaos in a new debate about labour at work’.

The Special Award in this section went to **Alexander Horwath's** *Henry Fonda for President*, a documentary based on a wealth of archival footage, very carefully edited and filtered through the biography and career of an iconic figure in Henry Fonda. ‘The extraordinary heterogeneity of the material was remarkable, spanning both his history and his politics, from the foundation of the nation to the time of Reagan.’

Concha Barquero and **Alejandro Alvarado's** *Caja de resistencia*, an exploration of the archives of Spanish filmmaker Ruiz Vergara, won the DOC Spain award for being a ‘visually exploratory, experimental film that reveals the relevance of the unrealised project in Vergara's archive that the filmmakers unearthed, as well as the memory of recent and critical historical and social events in Andalusian history’.

The jury also decided to award a special mention to **Paulo Carneiro's** *Savanna and the Mountain* for playing with ‘the limits of non-fiction cinema by challenging the monopoly of seriousness in political cinema. An extraordinarily poetic approach to the formula of recreation, full of humour and beautiful gestures of resistance made by an oppressed community’.

Best Short Films

Among the short films in the Official Section, producer and director Marina Alberti, Swiss director Lasse Linder and producer, programmer and editor Daniella Shreir awarded the Golden Spike to **Marthe Peters' Baldilocks**, “an intimate and uncompromising philosophical investigation into one of society's greatest unknowns; an intensely moving, yet never manipulative, portrait of the filmmaker's experience with cancer”. The jury appreciated ‘Marthe Peter's deft handling of the personal archive, whose attention to detail and play with repetition convey what happens when a body is constantly translated into data’.

The two Silver Spikes went to *Lluna de Sal*, by **Mariona Martínez**, for its atmospheric vision of coming-of-age narrative, the sensitivity of its look at disability and differences, and the performance of its protagonists; and *Punter*, by **Jason Adam Maselle**, ‘a tension-filled drama about a boy's complicated love for his gambling-addicted father that never falls into the temptation to moralise’.

The rest of the award-winning short films are *O*, by **Rúnar Rúnarsson**, as best European short film; *El príncipe*, by **Àlex Sardà**, La noche del cine español award; *De sucre*, by **Clàudia Cedó**, special mention Noche del corto español award; and *Solo los muertos se quedan*, by **Alejandro Renedo**, Castilla y León en corto award.

Critics' and Audience Awards

The International Federation of Film Press Association (FIPRESCI) award, given in this 69th edition by the critics Vladimir Angelov, Roberto Baldassarre and Joan Pons, went to *Christmas Eve in Miller's Point*, by **Tyler Taormina**, for ‘being a new, young, forward-looking voice, not only in American cinema but worldwide, that seeks to

escape from clichés and look for other ways of narrating and showing emotions on screen’.

The audience vote also went in favour of North American independent cinema, choosing among the films in the Official Section *Bob Trevino Likes It*, by Tracie Laymon. In the Meeting Point section, the film with the most votes was *Holy Cow*, by Louise Courvoisier.

Other awards

‘For the choice of the Spanish tradition of satirical humour to address, with extreme formal rigour and a great sense of space, both the issue of immigration and that of power relations, as well as the excellent direction of the actresses’, the Pilar Miró Award for the best new Spanish director was won by *Fin de fiesta*, by **Elena Manrique**, veteran producer of films such as *Pan’s Labyrinth* (Guillermo del Toro, 2006) and *The Orphanage* (J. A. Bayona, 2007), who makes her debut as a director with this film. The jury responsible for selecting this award was formed by Carlos Losilla, Isabel Ruiz Lara and Daniel Matilla.

Caught by the tides, by **Jia Zhang-Ke**, won the Green Spike Award, which distinguishes the film that shows the greatest sensitivity to the need to protect the planet and environmental values. The jury, made up of Lorea Elso, co-founder of Ecometrage; the coordinator of the educational area of Ecologistas en Acción Piluca Enjuto, and Raúl Millares, member of the Greenpeace Communication team, wanted to highlight this film for ‘documenting with sensitivity, precision and a critical eye the development of a society at the expense of its territory, its people, its memory and its nature’.

The Rainbow Spike was won by *Three kilometres to the end of the world*, by **Emanuel Pârvu**, ‘because it represents the conflict faced by many LGTBIQ+ people in environments that are still reluctant to accept affective-sexual diversity’. The jury, which includes Cinhome festival programmers Cristina Soriano Úbeda and Marta García Caramazana, and writer Paco Tomás, highlighted the need for works like this one, which ‘show that past eras are as alive as ever, and that the origin of the conflict lies in a corrupt, violent, homophobic, ultra-religious, sexist system that lacks family support, and not in the sexual orientation of the protagonist’.

The young jury, made up of Daniel Hernández, Alba Manuela Lermo and Cecilia Tejero (Official Section); Jaime Coco, Sofía Luezas and Covadonga Pérez (Meeting Point), and Pino de Pablos, Nuria Menéndez and Malena Salgado (Short Films), selected the films *Armand*, by **Halddan Ullmann Tondel**, in the Official Section; *Universal Language*, by **Matthew Rankin**, in the Meeting Point, and the short film *De Sucre*, by **Clàudia Cedó**.

The jury highlighted the fact that *Armand* is ‘a risky debut film, with a Kafkaesque aspect, and deals with complex themes such as the functioning of the school system, multiple truths and identity through the eyes of others’.

Universal Language is notable for ‘the audacious social critique it presents through an interconnected world that highlights the cultural diversity in which we live and

inhabits a dystopian society that captivates the spectator with a technical proposal and a very singular language, playing with the absurd with mastery’.

For its part, *De Sucre* is a short film that ‘has captivated us because of the visibility it gives to an issue such as the desire for motherhood in people with functional diversity. It has made us consider a social issue that is far removed from our own reality, but which at the same time, as a society, we cannot ignore’.

Finally, the SEMINCI Youth Award, chosen by a vote of the spectators, was won by **Jenifer de la Rosa's *Hija del volcán***.

LIST OF WINNERS 69TH SEMINCI

Feature Films International Official Section

Golden Spike: **MISERICORDIA** - Alain Guiraudie

Silver Spike: **STRANGER EYES** - Yeo Siew Hua / **THEY WILL BE DUST** - Carlos Marques-Marcet (ex aequo)

Ribera de Duero' Award for Best Direction: **GUAN HU** - *Black Dog*

Best Actress Award: **LAURA WEISSMAHR** - *Salve María* (Mar Coll)

Best Actor Award: **JAN GUNNAR RØISE** - *Sex* (Dag Johan Haugerud) / **THORBJØRN HARR** - *Sex* (Dag Johan Haugerud) (ex aequo)

Special Mention for the Performers: **ÁNGELA MOLINA** and **ALFREDO CASTRO** - *They Will Be Dust* (Carlos Marques-Marcet)

Best Cinematography Award: **GAO WEIZHE** - *Black dog* (Guan Hu)

Miguel Delibes' Award for Best Screenplay: **ALAIN GUIRAUDIE** - *Misericordia* (Alain Guiraudie)

José Salcedo' Award for Best Editing: **TELMO CHURRO** and **PEDRO FILIPE MARQUES** - *Grand Tour* (Miguel Gomes)

Meeting Point Official Section

Meeting Point Award: **HOLY COW** - Louise Courvoisier

Fundos Special Award: **FAMILIAR TOUCH** - Sarah Friedland

Alquimies Official Section

Alquimies Grand Prize: **LA PARRA** - Alberto Gracia

Special Mention Alchemies: **BLUISH** - Milena Czernovsky and Lilith Kraxner

Official Section Time of History

Time of History Grand Prize: *YOUTH (HARD TIMES)* - Wang Bing

Time of History Special Award: *HENRY FONDA FOR PRESIDENT* - Alexander Horwath

Special Mention: *SAVANNA AND THE MOUNTAIN* - Paulo Carneiro

Other Feature Film Awards

Pilar Miró' Award for Best Spanish Director: *ELENA MANRIQUE* - Fin de fiesta

DOC. Spain Award: *CAJA DE RESISTENCIA* - Concha Barquero and Alejandro Alvarado

SEMINCI Youth Award: *HIJA DEL VOLCÁN* - Jenifer de la Rosa

Official Section Young Jury Award: *ARMAND* - Halfdan Ullmann Tøndel

Short Film Awards

Golden Spike Official International Short Film Official Section: *BALDILOCKS* - Marthe Peters

Silver Spike Official International Short Film Official Section: *PUNTER* - Jason Adam Maselle

Silver Spike Official International Short Film Official Section: *LLUNA DE SAL* - Mariona Martínez

Best European Short Film Award: *O* - Rúnar Rúnarsson

Award 'La noche del corto español': *EL PRÍNCEP* - Àlex Sardà

Special Mention 'La noche del corto español': *DE SUCRE* - Clàudia Cedó

Castilla y León en Corto Award: *SOLO LOS MUERTOS SE QUEDAN* - Alejandro Renedo

Unofficial Awards

Rainbow Herringbone Award: *THREE KILOMETRES TO THE END OF THE WORLD* - Emanuel Pârvu

Green Spike Award: *CAUGHT BY THE TIDES* - Jia Zhang-ke

FIPRESCI Award: *CHRISTMAS EVE IN MILLER'S POINT* - Tyler Taormina

Audience Award International Official Section: *BOB TREVINO LIKES IT* - Tracie Laymon

Audience Award Official Section Meeting Point: *HOLY COW* - Louise Courvoisier

Press contact:

983 42 64 60
prensa@seminci.com