

SEMINCI concludes its 70th edition celebrating cinema that reflects who we are and who we can become

- *During the closing ceremony, held at the Calderón Theatre, the Golden Spike was awarded ex aequo to *The Mastermind* by Kelly Reichardt and *Magellan* by Lav Díaz.*
- *David Trueba, director of the film which closed the festival, *Siempre es invierno*, praised SEMINCI's role as 'a gateway for the most formidable filmmakers we have enjoyed in recent years'.*

Valladolid, 1 November 2025. The Valladolid International Film Festival (SEMINCI) brought together jurors, filmmakers from around the world, institutional representatives, sponsors and cinephile members of the public to harvest the prizes sown during its 70th edition in a Closing Gala held today at the Calderón Theatre. The event was presented by the host **Elena Sánchez** and the actress **Llum Barrera**, who provided the humorous counterpoint. Musical entertainment was provided by the group La La Love You.

The gala began with an emotional video tracing notable moments and guests from the festival's 70-year history, from the devotion of the people of Valladolid since 1956 to the filmmakers who have visited to present their films, reminding us of SEMINCI's long-standing commitment to auteur cinema, new narratives and the discovery of emerging talent. As the host put it: 'film speaks to us and from film we also speak; it does not just tell us what we are, but what we can become.'

A powerful list of award winners

The most anticipated moment of the evening arrived with the reading of the awards. The first to collect his prize was director **Pedro Pinho**, winner of the Meeting Point section award for *I Only Rest in the Storm*. The Portuguese director, who received the prize for his 'bold and committed' proposal from actor Rubén Ochandiano, took the stage accompanied by the leading actor of his film, **Sérgio Coragem**. Pinho hoped 'that with a shared inheritance of colonisers and colonised, we do not repeat the mistakes of the past'.

Next, **Jorge Luis García**, President of Fundos, presented the Special Fundos Award to *Last Night I Conquered the City of Thebes* by **Gabriel Azorín**. The director, who received the award alongside the philologist **Laura Camino**, emphasised the importance of friendship in his film, both as subject-matter and off set.

Carla Quílez, lead actress of the series *Yakarta*, announced the Meeting Point Audience Award, which was collected by the director and the lead actress of *A Sad and Beautiful World*, **Cyril Aris** and **Mounia Akl** respectively.

Guadalupe Arensburg, Director of the Short-Film Department at Movistar+, thanked the festival for 'offering this space of love for short-films' in order to deliver the Movistar+ Project Award which went to filmmaker **María Herrera**, a prize that seeks to promote new talent and projects in development. The filmmaker premiered her first work at the 69th SEMINCI: *A Midsummer Night's Tale*.

Non-fiction and short films

Jury member for the Time of History section **Alexander Horwath** announced the Special Award of this section to *Memory* by **Vladlena Sandu**. The filmmaker recalled her traumatic past in Chechnya when collecting the award, and expressed her wish that the film might help those who need it, as it helped her when she did not know how to live a normal life after surviving war and human-trafficking.

Fellow jury member **Feyrouz Serhal** announced the Grand TH Prize for *Face to Face* by **Federico Veiroj**. The Uruguayan director took to the stage to collect his award and requested applause for the late master of non-fiction, Peter Watkins. Afterwards producers Nata Moreno and José Antonio León (Director of Communications, Renault Group) presented the DOC España Award to Candela Sotos, director of *Yrupê*. The filmmaker voiced her hope aloud ‘that stories will be told without fear’.

Yuri Ancarani, representing the jury of the Alquimies section, announced the winner of the Grand Alquimias Prize: **Leonor Noivo**, for her film *Bulakna*. Actress Norma Canda, lead in the film, accepted the award on her behalf and thanked the festival for enabling her to share the stories of the community of Filipino women migrant workers living away from their families for decades.

Short-films, defined by the host as ‘the thermometer of cinema’, also took a starring role in the 70th edition’s closing gala. Four of the five short-film directors nominated for the European Short Film-Vimeo Prix 2026 (**John Smith**, **Dilby Kebe**, **Sara Rajaei** and **Miranda Pennell**) presented the Golden Spike for the International Short-Film Section to *Living Stones* by Jakob Ladányi Jancsó. The Hungarian director recalled the counsel of his mentor, filmmaker Béla Tarr: ‘always seek the extraordinary’, and voiced his support for his compatriots’ struggle against injustices from the Hungarian government.

Gonzalo Miró presented the Pilar Miró Award for best new Spanish direction to **Lucía Aleñar Iglesias** for *Forastera*. The director emphasised, in her process as a debut director, the importance of ‘nurturing the creative process as much as the result’.

Meanwhile **Ángel Ortiz**, director of *El Norte de Castilla*, announced that the Public Award of the Official Section had gone to *Hamnet* by **Chloé Zhao**.

Official Section Jury Awards

Actors **Ángela Cervantes** and **Álvaro Cervantes** took to the stage at the Calderón to present the *Miguel Delibes* Award for Best Screenplay to **Begoña Arostegui** and **Fernando Franco** for *Subsuelo*. The screenwriter/director applauded the SEMINCI audience for being so ‘active and owner of the Festival’.

Although unable to attend to collect their awards, actors **Ivana Baquero** and **Fernando Cayo** announced the acting prizes recognising the work of **Eva Victor** in *Sorry, Baby* (which she herself directs) and **Harry Melling** in *Pillion* by **Harry Lighton**.

Filmmaker **Isaki Lacuesta** and **Miguel Sanz** (Director-General of the DO Ribera del Duero) presented the Best Director award (D.O. Ribera del Duero) to Ezequiel Salinas and Ramiro Sonzini for *La noche está marchándose ya*. The filmmakers lamented the attack currently facing Argentine cinema by their government, but asserted: ‘Cinema has had more intelligent adversaries; we will keep filming in spite of everything. Our cinema remains very much alive.’

The moment when the Spike was dressed in silver occurred when Hungarian filmmaker **Ildikó Enyedi**'s award for *Silent Friend* was collected by **Pilar Toro** (Marketing Director, Filmin) on her behalf, handed over by two jury members **Serge Toubiana** and **João Pedro Rodrigues**.

The culminating moment of the evening came with the awarding of the Golden Spike, announced by director **Elena López Riera**, ex aequo to *The Mastermind* (Kelly Reichardt) and *Magellan* (Lav Díaz). **Montse Triola** and **Albert Serra**, producers of the latter, collected the award. The jury thus recognised two radically different but equally valuable proposals, bringing to a close a diverse and representative awards list of the best of contemporary cinema.

The closing gala concluded with a screening of *Siempre es Invierno* by **David Trueba**. The filmmaker moved the audience in the stalls and those watching live on Channel 2 (Spain) as he recalled his father, born in a village in Valladolid, and all 'that generation who decided to get their shoulders under it, to forget the destiny bequeathed by political antagonism so that their children might have a better future. "We should be ashamed if we think we will not live up to them."' "

Trueba closed the ceremony referring to the 70 years of a festival 'which has been the gateway for the most formidable filmmakers we have enjoyed in recent years, the place where for the first time we hear of them. A festival that is not afraid of films that speak to us of human beings and of filmmakers who offer us something more substantial and nourishing.'