



THE 70TH SEMINCI AWARDS *THE MASTERMIND* AND *MAGELLAN* THE GOLDEN SPIKE EX AEQUO

- *Kelly Reichardt and Lav Diaz share the festival's top award in an edition that surpassed the 2024 audience figures in just six days*
- *The Silver Spike goes to *Silent Friend* by Ildikó Enyedi, while the acting awards honour Eva Victor for *Sorry, Baby* and Harry Melling for *Pillion**
- *Argentine filmmakers Ezequiel Salinas and Ramiro Sonzini receive the Best Director Award for the political optimism of their film *The Night is Fading Away**

Valladolid, 1 November 2025. The 70th Valladolid International Film Festival (SEMINCI) concludes today with the presentation of its awards at the Closing Gala, marking a record-breaking edition for audience attendance. 'Although some sessions are still to be counted, we have already surpassed 100,000 spectators. By Wednesday 29 October, we had already equalled the total audience figure for 2024,' announced festival director **José Luis Cienfuegos**.

The Official Section Jury has awarded the Golden Spike ex aequo to *The Mastermind*, by American filmmaker **Kelly Reichardt**, and *Magellan*, by Filipino master **Lav Diaz**, a film co-produced by Albert Serra and Montse Triola that reflects on colonialism and history through the figure of the Portuguese navigator. While Reichardt deconstructs genre cinema with an intimate exploration of human fragility, Diaz presents an aesthetic and temporal proposal that critically revisits colonial history.

The decision of the jury: **Elena López Riera**, **Laurentina Guidotti**, **Serge Toubiana**, **João Pedro Rodrigues** and **Mihai Chirilov**, to grant the Golden Spike ex aequo is not unprecedented in SEMINCI's history. It has occurred on three previous occasions: in 1963, 1971 and 1984.

Regarding *The Mastermind*, the jury highlighted how 'with elegance and irony, the film deconstructs the rules of genre to reveal what lies beneath the action: desire, illusion and failure. Through a narrative that plays with the conventions of the heist film, Kelly Reichardt offers an intimate perspective on human frailty and perseverance.'

As for *Magellan*, the jury praised the film for 'allowing us to immerse ourselves in the past from the present, re-reading colonial history through a complex and critical lens.' They also commended its 'extraordinary aesthetic, photographic and temporal vision,' as well as its 'narrative ambition, formal rigour, and unique ability to intertwine historical reflection with cinematic experience.'

The **Silver Spike** was awarded to *Silent Friend* by **Ildikó Enyedi**, which also received the **Green Spike Award** for its 'comforting outlook in a world in crisis.' '*Silent Friend* powerfully explores the theme of silent communication, the relationship between human and non-human life forms, and the invisible forces that permeate reality,' the jury stated.

Best Director and Acting Awards

The Ribera del Duero Award for Best Director has been presented to Argentine filmmakers Ezequiel Salinas and Ramiro Sonzini for *La noche está marchándose ya* (*The Night Is Fading Away*), in recognition of their joint achievement, ‘a tender and lucid reminder of cinema’s power as a space for connection and political resistance.’ The award highlights the duo’s ability to celebrate cinephilia, ‘friendship and love as collective gestures that invite us to keep believing in the power of storytelling at a time of great adversity for contemporary Argentine filmmaking.’

In the acting categories, the winners were **Eva Victor** for her work in *Sorry, Baby*, which she also directed, and **Harry Melling** for *Pillion*, directed by Harry Lighton. Both performers, the jury noted, ‘brilliantly sustain two bittersweet dramas laced with humour. They humanise their films and ignite their emotional core, turning the cinematic experience into the sheer pleasure of sensitive storytelling.’

The jury also awarded a **Special Mention** to the trio of non-professional actors **Lionel Corral Bernal, Lionel Corral and Alicia Corral Bernal** for *Lionel*, directed by Carlos Saiz, acknowledging ‘the work of this family, whose story blurs the boundaries between fiction and reality. Their fiery chemistry and deeply sincere performances transform this tale of late reconciliation into a powerful and moving journey.’

The Best Cinematography Award went to **Christopher Blauvelt** for *The Mastermind*, ‘for the refinement of his atmospheres and the lighting compositions that accompany Kelly Reichardt’s aesthetic vision in perfect harmony with the narrative.’ **Fernando Franco** and **Begoña Arostegui** received the Miguel Delibes Award for Best Screenplay for *Subsuelo* (*Underground*), praised as ‘a ticking time bomb of startling twists and quiet revelations that skilfully defies audience expectations.’ Meanwhile, **Nili Feller** was honoured with the **José Salcedo** Award for Best Editing for *Yes*, which the jury described as ‘both a puzzle and a mental challenge, a film whose brilliant and precise editing invites us to dive into the abyssal universe of one of today’s most daring and fascinating filmmakers.’

Meeting Point

The jury of the Meeting Point section, **Ivette Liang, Federico Luis** and **Adrián Orr**, selected Pedro Pinho’s *I Only Rest in the Storm* as the winning feature film. The jury praised it as ‘an exercise in freedom and rebellion that challenges the formulas, structures and ethical and aesthetic fears so common in today’s film industry,’ and for its ability to reflect on ‘the historical power relations between Europe and its colonies through the body, desire and the contradictions of its protagonist.’

The Special FUNDOS Award went to the Spanish film *Last Night I Conquered the City of Thebes*, by **Gabriel Azorín**, a work that ‘offers a vision of masculinity through tenderness and vulnerability, with a formal and emotional freedom that turns every moment into a discovery.’

In addition, filmmaker **Alexe Poukine** received the new ESCAC Award for Best Direction of a First or Second Feature for *Kika*, while the jury also granted a Special Mention to *Nino*, directed by **Pauline Loquès**.

Alquemies

The jury of the Alquemies section, **Yuri Ancarani, Maria Antón Cabot** and **Victoria Marotta**, awarded the Grand Alquimies Prize to *Bulakna*, directed by **Leonor Noivo**, praising its sensitive portrayal of ‘how the wounds of colonialism do not belong solely to the past, but persist today in quieter forms.’ The film tells the story of Filipino women forced to leave their homeland to work as domestic servants in the West, ‘a work that compels us to look at what we often prefer not to see.’

The jury also gave a Special Mention to *Memory of Princess Mumbi*, by **Damien Hauser**.

Time of History

Federico Veiroj has won the Grand Time of History Award for *Face to Face*, a film that the jury, **Manuel Asín, Alexander Horwath** and **Feyrouz Serhal**, described as ‘a work of many faces, where the flexibility of home video over the decades proves ideal for capturing the nuances and contradictions of a visceral relationship, composed in equal parts of disappointment, anger, admiration and love.’

The Time of History Special Award went to **Vladlena Sandu** for *Memory*, ‘a fable about violence, in which fragments of memory crystallise to form a cinematic landscape as poetic and evocative as it is disturbing and grotesque.’

A Special Mention was presented to *Notes of a True Criminal*, by **Alexander Rodnyansky** and **Andriy Alferov**, for ‘raising questions about ethics and ambivalence in image production across generations.’

Within the same section, the DOC. España Award was granted to **Candela Sotos** for *Yrupë*, with a Special Mention for *Los Cangrejos*, by **Rubén Seca**, ‘a precise record of a wound still unhealed in both the lives and public discourse of Spain.’

Other Feature Film Awards

The Pilar Miró Award for Best New Spanish Director, chosen by journalists **Conxita Casanovas, Miguel Anxo Fernández** and **Felipe Rodríguez**, went to **Lucía Aleñar** for her debut feature *Forastera*.

The adaptation of Camilla Läckberg’s character *Super Charlie*, directed by **Jon Holmberg**, received the Miniminci Award, voted by local primary school pupils. The SEMINCI Youth Award went to *Good Boy*, directed by **Jan Komasa**.

Official Short Film Section

The jury for the Official Short Film Section, **Begoña Arostegui, Andrius Blaževičius and Daniel Vadocky**, awarded the Golden Spike to *Living Stones*, by **Jakob Ladányi Jancsó**, ‘an exceptionally well-written and crafted dark story that tackles a difficult subject with near-surgical precision, masterfully blurring the boundary between dream and reality.’

The Silver Spikes went to *Dog Alone*, by **Marta Reis Andrade**, and *No Skate!*, by **Guil Sela**, while the Best European Short Film Award was presented to *Mercy*, by **Hedda Mjøen**.

In the Spanish Official Short Film Section, *Casi septiembre*, by **Lucía G. Romero**, took the **First Prize**, praised for ‘its solid direction, excellent cast and outstanding performances, which make this story a unique cinematic experience full of unexpected turns and emotional depth.’ The jury also gave a Special Mention to *Abortion Party*, directed by **Julia Mellen**.

The Castilla y León in Short Award went to *Darshan*, by **Alberto Allica**, ‘for its strong technical execution and remarkable performances.’

Finally, the new Movistar Plus+ Short Film Project Award was presented to *El cuerpo en cuestión*, by **María Herrera**.

Other Awards

Between Dreams and Hope, by **Farnoosh Samadi**, received the Rainbow Spike Award, granted by a jury composed of **Yolanda Rodríguez, Karu Borge and Alejandro Marín**. The jury praised the film for ‘portraying a reality rarely seen on screen, that of trans men, and for its determination to preserve youth, tell different stories, and reject violence born of social and religious constraints.’

The Green Spike Jury, composed of **Cristina Casado, Manuel Planelles and José Manuel Rodríguez**, decided to grant, in addition to the main Green Spike awarded to *Silent Friend*, an Honourable Mention to *Hair, Paper, Water*, by **Nicolas Graux and Truong Minh Quy**, “for its sensitive portrayal of the Indigenous communities living on the frontline of the environmental crisis, whose ancestral knowledge continues to protect humanity as a whole.”

Meanwhile, the FIPRESCI Jury, formed by film critics **Loreta Gandolfi, Giuseppe Sedia and Elsa Tébar**, selected *Two Prosecutors*, directed by **Sergei Loznitsa**, as the most outstanding film of the Official Section.

Audience and Youth Jury Awards

In the International Official Section, *Hamnet*, by **Chloé Zhao**, received the Audience Award, while in the Meeting Point Section, audiences chose *A Sad and Beautiful World*, by **Cyril Aris**, as their favourite.

The Youth Jury, representing the perspective of the new generation through its nine members, presented its award in the Official Section to *The Blue Trail*, by **Gabriel Mascaro**, and in Meeting Point to *Wild Foxes*, by **Valéry Carnoy**.

In the short film categories, the Youth Jury recognised *Ali*, by **Adnan Al Rajeev**, in the International Competition, and *Instrucciones para cocinar un pollo bajo tierra*, from **Olivia Delcán** and **Nacho Sánchez** in the Spanish one. The Castilla y León in Short Award went to *15 días con 15 años*, by **Dacio de las Heras**.

La Meseta Distribución Awards

The 70th SEMINCI also hosted the first edition of the La Meseta Distribución Awards, which recognise the most outstanding promotional campaigns for the release of auteur films. The jury, **Piluca Baquero**, **Gregorio Belinchón** and **Juan Manuel Guimeráns**, selected the campaign presented by **Sideral** for *The Chronology of Water*, by **Kristen Stewart**, praising ‘the clarity of its communication strategy, the feasibility of its implementation and the precision with which it defines its target audience, demonstrating a professional vision consistent with the film’s artistic potential.’

Campaigns for *La buena hija*, by **Júlia de Paz**, developed by Avalon and MadAvenue, and for *El amor que permanece*, by **Hlynur Palmason**, distributed in Spain by Elástica in collaboration with Revolutionary, also received awards. The jury additionally granted a Special Mention to Beta Fiction for the quality of its campaign for *Rondallas*, by **Daniel Sánchez Arévalo**.

The winners of the La Meseta Distribución Awards received their prizes yesterday during the closing ceremony of the fifth MERCI Valladolid Independent Film Market.

Screenings of Award-Winning Titles

Audiences will have the chance to enjoy some of the award-winning titles from the 70th edition in a series of special screenings on Sunday 2 November at the Teatro Carrión. Tickets are available at the box office and online at <https://venta.seminci.com/>

SUNDAY 2 NOVEMBER SCREENINGS

10:00 h. **ESCAC Award, Meeting Point**
Kika. Pauline Loqués (110')

12:30 h. **Pilar Miró Award**
Forastera. Lucía Aleñar (97')

16:00 h. **Silver Spike**
Silent Friend. Ildikó Enyedi. (147')

19:30 h. **Golden Spike**
The Mastermind. Kelly Reichardt (110')

22:15 h. **Ribera del Duero Award for Best Director**
La noche está marchándose ya. Ezequiel Salinas y Ramiro Sonzini (104')

Box Office Hours - Teatro Carrión (Sunday): 9:30 a 13h y de 15:30 a 22:15h

Box Office Hours - Saturday:

- Calderón, de 8:30 h. a 16 h.
- Broadway, de 11:30 h. a 13:30 h. y de 16 a 21:30 h.