

San Sebastian Co-Production Forum: A Powerful Lineup

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EMILIANO DE PABLOS

Brazilian Gabriela Amaral Almeida's *She, Crocodile*, Victoria Galar-di's *Hedgehogs* and *Rambler*, from Mexico's Astrid Rondero and Fernanda Valadez, feature among the 14 projects being brought to market at San Sebastian's Europe-Latin America Co-Production Forum.

Further titles are from admired established helmers – Argentina's Santiago Loza, Bolivia's Martin Boulocq – or fast emerging directors such as Cuba's Rosa María Rodríguez, Argentina's Natalia Meta, Paraguay's Pablo Lamar and Mexico-based Natalia López Gallardo.

Five brief takes on the lineup and profiles of titles:

It's Togetherness Time

Rosa María Rodríguez Pupo *Her Lightness* is produced by not just Armando Capó but Cristina Gallego and Martha Orozco. Hernan Rosselli's *Hard-Boiled School* now has seven international production partners. 12 out of the 14 titles hit the Co-Production Forum with international co-producers already attached. The name of the game, however, is to attach a whole host of partners, compensating for ever plunging minimum guarantees paid by sales agents against foreign.

Argentina: Challenges Spark Opportunity

Five of the 14 Forum titles are from Argentina. That's making a virtue out of necessity. A perfect storm of inflation and Javier Milei's government has decimated film funding. And there's no real end in sight. But as Argentina turns to multi-lateral co-production to off-set paltry state financing, that opens up the chance to work with some of the best film-making talent in Latin America.

Uruguay Emerges

Five Forum titles are co-produced with Uruguay, nearly as many as France (six). As funding challenges mount for national Latin America film industries – not just Argentina but Mexico of major territories – Uruguay is emerging as ever more potent film force, with a pro-film government leaping at the chance to host Ventana Sur, a well-earned continent-wide reputation for production standards.

Auteur Genre Phillip

In the space of two decades, Latin America's high-art, minimalist, sometimes radical arthouse has moved towards the mainstream, breeding various derivatives: Event arthouse and auteur genre movies are just two. Both are lapped up by foreign markets.



She, Crocodile.

Animales del desierto, (aka. *Animal Print*, Santiago Loza, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay)

Set up at Argentina's Murillo Cine, another departure for Loza who hit a home-run with Cannes 2010 player *The Lips*. Here, in the immensity of the desert, in a precolonial past, Nube, Ari, Valen and Lara walk dragging a wagon, to execute a revenge.

A Different Garden, (*Otro jardín*, Mariana Gil Ríos, Colombia, France) Produced by Daniela Echeverri at Medellín's Movimiento Cine, the story focuses on 8-year-old Amanda. Spending holidays at her enigmatic grandfather's home, she meets Miguel, a wild boy living in the garden.

The Hedgehogs, (*Los erizos*, Victoria Galar-di, Argentina, Uruguay)

Separating after 10 years of marriage, a couple takes a final seaside holiday with their young son. Galar-di co-writes with Fabián Casas; Argentina's Juan Pablo Miller and Uruguay's director-producer Federico Veiroj produce – a powerful combination.

Hard-Boiled School, (*La escuela pesada*, Hernán Rosselli, Argentina, Austria, Uruguay, Brazil, Portugal, France, Chile, Peru)

Through the meticulous planning and execution of a bank robbery played out by a gang of retired thieves, *Hard-Boiled School* reconstructs the life and work of real-life legendary heist maestro Pedro Palomar. Rosselli's follow-up to well-received *Something Old, Something New, Something Borrowed*.

Her Lightness, (*La levedad de ella*, Rosa María Rodríguez Pupo, Cuba, Mexico, Colombia)

A standout at this week's Locarno Open Doors. When her cancer returns, Nora (Lola Amores, *Wild Woman*), determines to decide her own destiny. Produced by a pedigreed trio – Armando Capó, Cristina Gallego and Martha Orozco – the first feature of a figure on the cutting-edge of Cuban cinema, mixing gender point and building intimate fantasy.

Mar de Leva, (Mariana Saffon, Colombia, France)

Elena prepares for the imminent death of her father and desires to become a mother. The debut of Saffon. Rated director-producer Franco Lolli (*Gente de bien*) and Capucine Mahé at Colombia's Evidencia Films lead produce.

Only Love Exists, (Natalia López Gallardo, México, United States, France)

Following on *Robe of Gems*, a Berlin Silver Bear winner, the second feature from celebrated Mexican-Bolivian editor López Gallardo, re-teaming with producer Fernanda de la Peza on a contemporary drama intertwining digital and real lives.

Rambler, (Astrid Rondero, Fernanda Valadez, Mexico)

After scooping a Sundance Grand Jury Prize with drug cartels drama *Sujo*, the hit Mexican duo is developing *Rambler*, portraying the experiences of three people at the edge of a cataclysm in Mexico City.

Remanso, (Pablo Lamar, Paraguay, Brasil, Uruguay, France)

A story set during the dictatorship of Stroessner in Paraguay, a woman discovers a girl was raped and murdered in the neighboring house of an influential military officer. Lamar (*Noche adentro*) produces alongside Gabriela Sabaté (*Paraguayan Hammock*).

She, Crocodile, (Gabriela Amaral Almeida, Brazil, Portugal)

Starring Bianca Comparato (*Avenida Brasil*), a young and sole heiress of a luxury real estate brokerage in Rio de Janeiro gradually transforms into a hungry and deadly crocodile. "*She, Crocodile* arose from my need to portray violence from the perspective of capitalism and women's issues," says director Amaral. Comparato produces with Yana Chang; Alice Braga and Amaral executive produce.

The Spirit of the Law, (*El espíritu de la ley*, Natalia Meta, Argentina)

Seen at Cinemart 2024, and produced by two Argentine prestige players, both behind *Zama*, Picnic Productions making *Las Acacias* and Rei Pictures *The Settlers*. Meta's follow-up to Berlin competition entry *The Intruder*, here a congresswoman at the peak of her career, advocates for the approval of a crucial law she has fought for her entire life.

The Strange Woman, (*La Mujer Extraña*, Martin Boulocq, Bolivia, Uruguay)

During the lithium war in a future Bolivia, a Quechua teenager decides to

AGENDA

INDUSTRIA

Alianzas e inversiones para la consolidación del ecosistema audiovisual europeo

KURSAAL – CLUB DE PRENSA

09:30 - 13:00

Organizado por el Ministerio para la Transformación Digital y de la Función Pública.

Primer estudio del impacto económico de los rodajes internacionales en España

KURSAAL – CLUB DE PRENSA

17:00 - 18:00

Un proyecto de Spain Film Commission y Profilm elaborado por Olsberg - SPI.

Presenta: Carlos Rosado (presidente Spain Film Commission)

Modera: María Guerra (presidenta de la Asociación de Informadores cinematográficos de España)

Ponentes: Juan Manuel Guimeráns (secretario general Spain Film Commission), Fernando Victoria de Lecea (presidente Profilm) y Leon Forde (Managing Director Olsberg SPI)

Presentación del Día del Cine Español

KURSAAL – CLUB DE PRENSA

19:00 - 19:15

Presentación del nuevo programa del Día del Cine Español.

Participan: Isabel Bombal (Directora General de Desarrollo Rural, Innovación y Formación Agroalimentaria), Ignasi Camós (Director General del ICAA) y Valeria Campporesi (Directora de Filmoteca Española).

Presentación de la tercera edición de Spanish Screenings ON TOUR + cóctel

KURSAAL – CLUB DE PRENSA

19:00 - 19:15

Tras la presentación habrá un cóctel para celebrar el buen momento de nuestro cine.

become a surrogate to escape poverty, facing her mother's fury and unleashing a family conflict in the midst of social turbulence.

Tropical Malaise, (*Malestar tropical*, Jorge Cadena, Switzerland, France) A group of queer activists team with indigenous communities near Colombia's largest open-cast coal mine. Co-writers include Jacques Toulemonde, (*El abrazo de la serpiente*), and the Colombian-born and Swiss-trained Cadena.

The Two Landscapes, (*Los dos paisajes*, Francisco Lezama, Argentina, Brazil)

During an institutional crisis within the Catholic Church due to Catholics converting to Evangelism, Mercedes, a devout sixty-year-old Catholic, is obliged to host the late tenant's girlfriend and unrecognized daughter in her home. A "melancholic comedy" about religious and family tensions, says Lezama.