

BAD EDUCATION

a film by **PEDRO ALMODÓVAR**

A Sony Pictures Classics Release

109 mins

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

Two kids, Ignacio and Enrique, discover love, cinema and fear in a religious school at the start of the '60s. Father Manolo, the school principal and their literature teacher, is witness to and part of these discoveries.

The three characters meet twice again, at the end of the '70s and in the '80s. The re-encounter will mark the life and death of some of them.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Madrid, 1980: Enrique Goded, a young director of twenty-seven who, despite his youth, has already directed three successful films, is looking through the news in the tabloids for a story for his fourth film. (One item in particular attracts his attention and he cuts it out: "In a zoo in Taiwan, a woman threw herself into a pool full of crocodiles at a time when there was the greatest number of visitors. While the crocodiles were devouring her, the woman hugged one of them without making a sound.")

The doorbell rings. The visitor is an attractive young man with a beard who says he is his old school friend, Ignacio Rodríguez. Enrique remembers his school friend perfectly, but he doesn't recognize any of his features in the young visitor. But it's also true that they haven't seen each other for sixteen years.

Enrique doesn't know it yet, but the search for the story for his next film is in front of him, smiling and holding out his hand.

In their school days, Ignacio had a literary vocation, but he gradually gave it up for that of acting. In any case, he has brought a short story called "The Visit." He gives it to Enrique in case it might interest him. The story was inspired by their childhood in the school, their problems with the priests, in particular with the Principal, the repression, the soccer games, the hypocrisy, the distortion of the spirit, the harassment, the masses sung in Latin by Ignacio who was the soloist in the choir, etc. It also tells, in parallel, of an essential discovery for the two kids - the cinema: Sara Montiel, "Hercules," "Breakfast at Tiffany's," "Moon River," "Johnny Guitar," etc.

The imagination of Ignacio-author has the three characters – himself, Enrique, and the Principal – meet (in the short story) years later, when they are adults. Enrique, although

still young, has become a frustrated family man in the provinces, Father Manolo has left the congregation, and Ignacio has become Zahara.

Zahara is a drug addict transvestite who impersonates Sara Montiel (a sort of Spanish Mae West Gay icon of the '60s and '70s) and is a member of a fifth-rate variety company. The story is told from Zahara's point of view on the night she performs in a Casino in the same city where Enrique and he went to school.

The encounter between the three characters, in the short story, ends tragically.

Enrique Goded reads "The Visit" with great interest. He is moved by the first part, which deals with their childhood, in particular, his love story with Ignacio, which was broken up by Father Manolo. In love with Ignacio, Father Manolo expelled Enrique from the school so as not to have to compete with him. The second part, when Ignacio (who has now become Zahara) visits the school disconcerts him, but it also interests him.

He decides to adapt "The Visit" and make it into a film. When he tells Ignacio (who insists that Enrique call him by his current stage name Ángel Andrade), the latter explodes with joy. He only imposes one condition, that he acts in the film. Enrique doesn't mind, but when Ignacio (Ángel) asks to play the lead, that is, the transvestite Zahara, Enrique tells him that he isn't right for the character (neither does he understand the request). He is too masculine, too well built, physically he is just the opposite to a character like Zahara. Ignacio (Ángel) insists, and asks Enrique to trust him. Enrique replies that he finds it very hard to trust him, and they end up having a violent argument. Ignacio (Ángel) goes off, saying that if he doesn't play Zahara there won't be any film.

In the days following the argument, Enrique can't get the mysterious visitor out of his mind. He investigates - after all that's one of the storyteller's jobs, investigating his characters in depth in order to understand them better and tell them better - and discovers that the attractive boy who came to ask for work is not Ignacio Rodríguez but an impostor who had access to the real Ignacio. He also discovers that the real Ignacio died three years earlier, shortly after writing "The Visit."

The shock of the discovery increases when, a few days later, Ángel Andrade (the false Ignacio) visits him again. He has shaved his beard and slimmed down a little. Enrique thinks he has come to apologize and to explain everything, but it isn't so. The false Ignacio apologizes for the violent argument they had the last time they met, and offers Enrique the rights of "The Visit" to make a film of it, without imposing any conditions.

Enrique doesn't say a word about Ignacio or mention his imposture at any time. He only asks to be allowed to audition for the role of Zahara. (Enrique listens to him in astonishment). As he can see, Ángel has already slimmed down and he has also started working in a gay bar in order to learn how to be a "queen." Ángel is also receiving private lessons from Sandra, a transvestite who specializes in impersonating Sara Montiel.

Enrique auditions him, gives him the part and makes him his lover. He wants to know the impostor's reasons and how far he will go with his imposture, and he wants to know how Ignacio, his old school friend, died. He doesn't care what price he has to pay for the adventure.

Long months of preparation go by. The first day of shooting on "The Visit" arrives, and so does the last one. Enrique penetrates Ángel Andrade frequently, but only physically. He doesn't manage to discover anything about Ignacio's death and Ángel's mystery

remains intact. But on the last day someone visits the set and hides behind the crew in order to see without being seen.

When Enrique goes back to his office to gather up his things, he catches the mysterious stranger in there, rummaging through photos from the shoot. The visitor calls himself by his last name, Mr. Berenguer, but Enrique recognizes Father Manolo, dressed in civilian clothes and seventeen years older than the last time he saw him, the day he expelled him from the school. Now it is Enrique who expels him from his office. But Mr. Berenguer remains motionless and asks him: "Don't you want to know how Ignacio died and who killed him? Wouldn't you like to know the identity of Ángel Andrade, the actor in your film?"

Driven by the same suicidal curiosity that led him to work with Ángel Andrade while knowing he was an impostor, Enrique lets Father Manolo tell him the true story of Ignacio-adult and as he listens he feels like the woman who threw herself into the pool of crocodiles and hugged them while they ate her.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

I had to make “Bad Education.” I had to get it out of my system before it became an obsession. I had worked repeatedly on the script for over ten years and I could have gone on like that for another decade. Because of the amount of possible combinations, the story of “Bad Education” was only finished once the film had been shot, edited and mixed.

“Bad Education” is a very intimate film, but not exactly autobiographical. I mean that I’m not recounting my life at school or all that I lived and learned during the first years of the “movida,” although those are the two periods in which the story is set (1964 and 1980, with an interval in 1977). Of course my memories were important when it came to writing the script. After all, I lived in the settings and in the periods in which it takes place.

“Bad Education” is not a settling of scores with the priests who “bad-educated” me or with the clergy in general. If I had needed to take revenge I wouldn’t have waited forty years to do so. The church doesn’t interest me, not even as an adversary.

Nor is the film a reflection on the “movida” in Madrid at the start of the ‘80s, even though a large part of it is set in the Madrid of that time. What interests me about that historic moment is the explosion of freedom that Spain was experiencing, as opposed to the obscurantism and repression of the ‘60s. The early ‘80s are, therefore, the ideal setting for the protagonists, now adults, to be masters of their destinies, their bodies and their desires.

The film is not a comedy, although there is humor (Javier Cámara’s character), nor is it a children’s musical although there are children singing. It is a “film noir”, or at least that is how I like to think of it.

FADE TO BLACK

Black are the priests' soutanes, black are the nights in the pupils' dormitory, black are the characters' destinies, and "noir" is the genre to which the story told in "Bad Education" belongs. Black, in French, in recognition of the country that rescued the genre, defined its identifying signs and encouraged its development as a major genre.

Film noir (like almost all the noble genres) adapts easily to being mixed with other genres, provided the narrative has that breath of fatality without which black would be grey.

The noir genre mixes well with melodrama in its toughest form ("Leave Her To Heaven," by John M. Stahl, "Mildred Pearce," by Michael Curtiz), with the most desperate romanticism ("Laura," by Preminger, "La Sirène du Mississippi," by Truffaut, "Out of the Past," by Jacques Tourneur, etc), social criticism (Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, James Ellroy, Vázquez Montalbán) or the terror-without-monsters, that is, the kind that comes straight from the human heart ("Human Desire," in its two versions, Fritz Lang, whenever he works in this genre, "Fallen Angel" and "Angel Face," both by Preminger, etc.) or the melancholy of the violent, if a genre can be assigned to this characteristic (Nicholas Ray: "In A Lonely Place," "On Dangerous Ground"). The noir genre even mixes well with the Western. That is Clint Eastwood's greatest contribution as a director ("Unforgiven" is really a thriller and "Mystic River" a Western).

In film noir there may not be policemen or guns or even physical violence, but there must be lies and fatality, qualities that are normally embodied by a woman: the "femme fatale." The "femme fatale" (she isn't indispensable in the genre, but she is one of its great icons) is a woman aware of her power of seduction, hypo tense, so she won't be easily upset, who has lost her scruples and has no interest in recovering them. For her, sex is not a source of pleasure, but one of pain for everyone else.

In “Bad Education”, the “femme fatale” is an “enfant terrible,” the character played by Gael García Bernal, who strictly follows the examples of Barbara Stanwyck, Jane Greer, Jean Simmons (“Angel Face”), Joan Bennett (“Scarlet Street”), Ann Dvorak, Mary Windsor, Lizabeth Scott, Veronica Lake and so many other curses in the shape of a woman.

CINEMA AS A REFUGE AND AS A MIRROR

I like to think that cinemas are a good refuge for murderers and for the lonely. I also like to consider the screen as a mirror of the future.

Juan and Mr. Berenguer (Gael García Bernal and Lluís Homar) go into a cinema to kill time, after having killed someone. The evening is growing black for three reasons: the sky threatens a storm and the cinema where the two characters end up is showing two gems of French film noir, “La bête humaine” (Renoir) and “Thérèse Raquin” (Marcel Carné), both based on novels by Zola. The two films involve situations similar to that of the two men who are watching them as they wait for the Mediterranean night to fall. As they leave the cinema, Mr. Berenguer, devastated, complains: “It’s as if all the films were talking about us.” (The big screen as a mirror of the spectators).

There is another sequence in which fiction and reality come face to face, like the spectator and the cinema screen. When Mr. Berenguer visits Enrique Goded’s set. In front of the camera he sees Father Manolo, or rather, Mr. Berenguer before he cast off his habits, in the film written by one of his pupils (Ignacio) and directed by another (Enrique). Mr. Berenguer can contemplate his past, narrated and deformed by the two pupils who, years earlier, had been his victims.

The narrative reflects itself and revolves around various visits. Even the scene that the two boys see in the cinema is a visit, to a convent (Sara Montiel, after living through an indescribable destiny in “Esa Mujer” returns to the convent where she took the habits).

Doubleness, duplicity, and mirrors that multiply deform what they see. Enrique Goded decides to film the short story written by his friend Ignacio, which triples the versions we are seeing of the same story: the “real” story, the one told by Ignacio in his short

story, inspired by and fantasized from the real story, and the one Enrique adapts from the short story and visualizes as a film.

“Bad Education” is the story of a triple triangle (the two pupils and the school principal), multiple stories that, like Russian dolls, are hidden inside each other and are really only one.

AUTO-INTERVIEW

Q: In “Law of Desire” (1986) the transsexual played by Carmen Maura goes into the church of the school where she studied as a boy. She finds a priest playing the organ, in the choir. The priest asks her who she is. Carmen confesses to him that she had been a pupil at the school and that he (the priest) had been in love with him. Is that the origin of “Bad Education?”

A: More or less. Long before that, I had written a short story in which a transvestite goes back to the school where he had studied in order to blackmail the priests who had harassed him when he was a boy. While filming “Law of Desire” I remembered that story and it gave me the idea of Carmen’s character going into the church at his school and meeting a priest who loved him when she was a boy. By then I was considering the idea of developing the short story in detail. Carmen is a foreshadow of Zahara.

Q: There is also a film director in “Law of Desire.”

A: Yes, and like Fele Martínez’s character he mixes his personal desires with his work and in the end he pays a very high price for it. I’ve always been interested by the story of the artist who works with his own guts. It’s a fascinating adventure even if it never ends well.

Q: In your first statements you denied that the film was autobiographical.

A: Paco Umbral says that everything that isn’t autobiographical is plagiarism. The film is autobiographical but in a deeper sense. I am behind those characters but I’m not telling my life story.

Q: I believe you were the soloist in your school choir...

A: Yes. And I sang all the time, masses in Latin, motets, etc. I sang at all the religious ceremonies and the celebrations. And I guess I didn’t do it badly. The priests recorded

some of the songs I sang and played them at the door of the church to attract the faithful. And I remember that we filled the church. I'd give anything to recover those tapes, but I don't think they exist. What I most enjoyed in my time at school were the religious ceremonies. I'm agnostic, but I think the Catholic liturgy has a dazzling richness, it fascinates me and moves me. But it's been a long time since I went to mass. I don't know what it's like now.

Q: Does Father Manolo exist?

A: Yes, as a character.

Q: But did he really exist?

A: No. He's a made-up character, although for some scenes I was inspired by two priests at school.

Q: For what scenes in particular?

A: The harassment by the river and in the sacristy.

Q: Are they real scenes?!

A: Two schoolmates told me about them. If you're a boarder at a school you eventually find out about everything.

Q: If the two people who were the inspiration for Father Manolo are alive, aren't you afraid they may react?

A: Admitting that they were being alluded to would be like accusing themselves. I'm a director and a scriptwriter. For me, Father Manolo is a character, one with whom, I should mention in passing, I'm very satisfied. The character isn't a weapon thrown against the Catholic church (which does have a lot of problems to solve, including its priests' sexuality. If celibacy didn't exist, there wouldn't be so many cases of abuse.) I

didn't create Father Manolo and his prolongation, Mr. Berenguer, in order to attack the church. They are elements that allow me to talk about two of the many faces of passion. When Father Manolo is played by Daniel Giménez-Cacho, the passion he feels for the boy, and his abuse of power, make him into an executioner. When he calls himself Mr. Berenguer and has cast off his habits and falls in love with Juan, the same terrible character plays the opposite role in the roulette of passion. Now he is a victim. The film is inconceivable without those two characters, who are really one, and without their incarnation by Daniel Giménez Cacho and Lluís Homar respectively. Although they are two veterans, they were two great discoveries for me. I can never thank them enough for their lack of prejudice, their depth and their unending willingness to satisfy all the demands of a director as insatiable as I am.

Q: What can you tell me about the rest of the cast?

A: They are superb. Fele Martínez, Francisco Boira, the kids, Javier Cámara, Alberto Ferreiro, Petra Martínez, Francisco Maestre, and, naturally, Gael. It's a miracle to get it right with all the actors, especially when you don't know any of them, except Javier and Fele.

Q: Fele doesn't seem like himself, physically.

A: I made him slim down and train for four or five months, until he got another (better) body, another physical attitude. He was delighted, because everyone found him much sexier. As well as the physical aspect, we also worked on his tone of voice. I lowered its tessitura. He gave the character his heart, all of it, and his skin. I believe that from now on Fele will do other kinds of roles, less teen, more adult. He's an all-round actor. He can span the two extremes, torrid drama and crazy comedy. As happens in a different way with Javier Cámara.

Javier is very versatile, he works in all the media (cinema, television, theatre, cabaret) and in all the genres. In “Talk to Her,” even though the role was dramatic I discovered his gift for humor, and even though it’s brief, his character in “Bad Education” was like an oasis for the whole crew. Javier is a comedic virtuoso. He has that special gift that goes beyond acting and that can’t be learned. His composition of “Paca” is rich, exhaustive, human, hilarious, dangerous for whoever is at his side because you only have eyes for him. A natural “scene-stealer.”

Q. Poor Gael!

A: Not in the slightest. Gael is going to work a lot and he’s going to make lots of money.

Q: How and why did you choose him, after cross-dressing every Spanish actor in the prime of young manhood?

A: By auditioning him two or three times, like everyone else.

Q: What did he have that the others didn’t?

A: He was very attractive as a boy and as a girl. And that was essential for understanding his character’s relationship with the others, the intensity with which everyone became obsessed with him.

Q. Is Gael the villain of the story?

A: “Bad Education” is the opposite of a film with good guys and villains. In any case, I never judge characters whatever they do. My job is to “represent them,” “explain them in all their complexity” and come up with an entertaining spectacle with all that. It isn’t good for a film [when] the director judges his characters, even if they do atrocious things. Juan, the base-character that Gael plays, is a guy who doesn’t stop at anything as far as he gets what he ambitions. He is capable of killing, if the situation comes up, of seducing and of having sex with men and women depending on his convenience.

His absolute lack of scruples gives him an incredible strength, and makes of him a walking menace. But if you don't cross yourself in his ambition's path, Juan is a normal guy that can live perfectly integrated in society without anyone detecting the danger that he brings along. I like to compare it to Patricia Highsmith's amoral characters, Ripley, for example, to whom crime does not affect morally, but ends up refining them, cultivating them and making them [more charming]. Considering the movie as an obscure "thriller," as I said before, the character of Gael, represents the typical "femme fatale," (in his case "enfant terrible") because he leads all the characters who come in contact with him to their downfall. And "Downfall" is the Spanish title for "Double Indemnity" (by the genius Billy Wilder), "noir" among the "noir"-est, to which I'm paying homage.

Juan and Mr. Berenguer go to the Museum of Giant Figures in Valencia to plan a murder. Juan tells his lover that after they carry it out they mustn't see each other for a while. With the naivety of the typical manipulated lover, Mr. Berenguer thought that the murder would unite them forever but, on the contrary, it drives them apart and he can't bear that idea but it's too late to avoid it.

This scene is a reference to (and reverences) the scene in the supermarket in "Double Indemnity." Even though I really like how it turned out, I'm aware that no film in color can surpass the image of Barbary Stanwyck in a curling blonde wig and large dark glasses, surrounded by stacks of canned food, all of it, including Fred MacMurray, in glorious black and white.

Q: What was it like working with Gael?

A: A challenge, for him and for me. It isn't easy to play a character that is actually three, especially when two of them are very different physically. I guess it's the hardest work that Gael has done to date. On top of the difficulty of changing sex and not looking

grotesque, there was the accent. I wanted him to speak Spanish, not Mexican which is very different...

Q: Are you satisfied with the result?

A: Yes. I hope that the spectators won't let themselves be influenced by the fact that one of his characters is so hateful. To end up, I don't want to forget Alberto Ferreiro, Francisco Maestre, Petra Martínez and the kids. They were all wonderful surprises. With Raúl García and Ignacio Pérez (the kids), I hit the jackpot. You never know what can happen with one child, never mind two. I have no experience with child actors. I directed Ignacio and Raúl as if they were adults, and I think the result is very moving. I'm very proud of that part of the film (the story of the two boys and their relationship with God and Father Manolo), perhaps because before I started shooting, it seemed to be the most difficult and most delicate part. I'm very grateful to Joserra Cadiñanos, the casting director, who during the shooting helped me explain to Ignacio and Raúl what they were doing and why they were doing it. Joserra was my best intermediary.

Q: The structure of "Bad Education" is at least as complicated as that of "Talk to Her"...

A: I think it's even more so. As in "Talk to Her," in "Bad Education" there is a film within a film, but in this case it lasts half an hour, which is even more risky. Really, the film tells three stories, about three concentric triangles, which in the end turns out to be just one story.

Q: The story of a director-scriptwriter who is looking for a story...

A: And who finds it. As Truman Capote said, quoting St. Teresa, "There are more tears shed over answered prayers than over unanswered prayers"...

Q: Why so many voiceovers?

A: The voiceover is used to explain what isn't seen and to speed up the narration rhythm. It is as if a character in the movie visits you, sits down in front of you at the table and sums up part of his/her story. Voiceovers have been essential for me to shift from one story to the other, from one period to the other.

The good thing about having the two protagonists, one a film director (that is to say, a narrator, someone who investigates so that everything is understood) and the other possessing a tight secretive attitude, an intrinsic quality to the impostor's nature; the good thing about having these two opposed characters, I say, is that it makes us understand lots of keys to Gael's character through the director (Fele Martínez). The spectator knows what Fele knows, so he/she identifies with Fele, and it's his eyes and his "voiceovers" that explain his discoveries about himself and the mysterious and ferocious figure of Gael-Juan.

Q: One of the elements in the plot that works best is when we discover that two of the characters are brothers.

A: Yes, and I'd like to keep that a secret. I adore the feeling of fraternity, and I've always liked films about siblings: Warren Beatty getting a beating in a parking lot for defending the honor of his sister, Barbara Loden, in "Splendor in the Grass." Legs Diamond, in the film by Budd Boetticher, getting caught because of his brother's carelessness. The Bonnie and Clyde gang, led by two brothers. The entire Godfather saga has given us marvellous scenes of siblings who love each other, beat each other up, protect each other, and kill each other. All of Ma Baker's children in "No Orchids for Miss Blandish" (written by James Hadley Chase, directed by John L. Clowes). "Bloody Mama," by Roger Corman. Fierce mothers, leaders of gangs made up of their own children.

I'm moved by all of Alain Delon's brothers in "Rocco and His Brothers." Even Michael Jackson and Latoya Jackson, deformed mirrors of each other. Natalie Wood and George Chakiris in "West Side Story." Hayley Mills playing her own twin in "The Parent Trap," the Siamese twins in "Sisters," by early Brian de Palma. The Marx Brothers in any of their films. The touching Harry Dean Stanton in "Paris-Texas" and his silent visit to his brother, Dean Stockwell. The two Mills sisters in "Fallen Angel," by Preminger, the two delightful spinsters in "Arsenic and Old Lace" and Shelley Winters' little orphans, pursued by the evil Robert Mitchum in "The Night of the Hunter." And even, although Raymond Chandler's dialogue prevented the slightest sentimentality, Lauren Bacall defending her indefensible sister in "The Big Sleep."

At times the fraternal relationship gets complicated (how could it not!) when there is sex. I love Sam Sheppard's play "Fool For Love," and the wonderful novel "Middlesex" in which a brother and sister even get married. Fraternity is a sentiment in disuse, replaced in present-day life by friendship, but it isn't exactly the same. Fraternity springs from two great sentiments, love and friendship, united by something as unfathomable as consanguinity. Among the films about siblings that I remember, I haven't mentioned "Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?" (Robert Aldrich), a "grand guignol" which the two immense leading ladies elevate in category and genre. Two sisters, both of them former child stars, live together when they are adults, even though they hate each other. One of them (Bette Davis) ends up killing the other (Joan Crawford).

There is something of this in "Bad Education," although in a hidden way. When they were little, Juan (Ángel Andrade) was jealous of his older brother Ignacio because he was better at everything. Jealousy in younger siblings is very common. But in Juan's case, it grew over the years. The two boys wanted to be artistes. Everything was easy for Ignacio, singing, dancing, writing, reciting, transforming himself and acting.

Everything that Juan would have liked to do, Ignacio did better. And Juan hated him in silence until Ignacio gave him cause to hate him openly when he began to take drugs and dress as a woman in the little town where they lived. Family life was absolute hell because of Ignacio. The mother, who had a weak heart, was in an unbearable situation. The father couldn't stand the shame and started to drink more and more, until one winter's day they found him dead in the street, in a frozen puddle.

Out of obedience to his mother, and in his own interest, Juan went to live with his brother in Valencia. He enrolled in an acting school and kept an eye on Ignacio, so that his mother wouldn't worry so much. It was the start of democracy in Spain and in Valencia, Ignacio lived a very free life, devoted to writing, to changing his body for that of a real woman, and to using heroin to anaesthetise the tension produced by his lifestyle.

Then Mr. Berenguer, Ignacio's old literature teacher, turned up. He had hung up his habits and was living in Valencia and working in a publisher's. The appearance of the former Fr. Manolo dynamites the two brothers' existence.

Q: After thirteen years, ("Tie Me Up, Tie Me Down!") you're working with José Luis Alcaíne again as director of photography.

A: What a great idea it was to call him! José Luis has done a splendid job. I barely had to tell him what I wanted. Music and photography are two abstract elements, hard to explain. I turn up for the shoot, laden with references, but the director of photography has to sense, guess, smell the atmosphere that goes best with the story. Or atmospheres, because in "Bad Education" there are a lot of films together, and very different aesthetics coexist within the same story. Alcaíne was immensely inspired every day of this very hot shoot. As a professional he's at his peak, and I think we've both matured as people and the result has been a perfect marriage.

Q: And Gaultier?

A: I called on him to dress Zahara, in particular her outfit for the show, which is a masterpiece as regards cut and conception. It's a flesh-colored dress, tight-fitted to the neck like a second skin, that gives the impression of total nudity. The ass, the tits and the pubis are made with sequins and brown and pink glass bead and tones. The dress in itself represents false, naked femininity. He also undertook to give a touch to Ignacio-adult's gabardines and shorts. Jean-Paul is like a big child. That's why he'll never make a vulgar dress. Working with him is great fun. I adore him.

Q: This is the fifth time you've worked with Alberto Iglesias...

A: Alberto Iglesias is the only marvelous artist I know without any ego problems, the only one I make repeat the themes over and over again without him losing neither his enthusiasm nor his creativity. He is a musician and a person out of the ordinary. For this occasion, he has built a powerful, original column of sound on which the film rests, like a baby rests in its mother's arms. Alberto surprises me in every movie, after the mixing I can not think of a musical costume that suits "Bad Education" better than the one that Alberto has created for it.

Q: To judge from the answers to your own questions, you give the impression of being very happy with this film.

A: I'm never happy, but, well... Let's say I'm pretty cheerful.

Q: Future projects?

A: To recover my sleep and my waistline.

PEDRO ALMODÓVAR – BIOGRAPHY

He was born in Calzada de Calatrava, in the province of Ciudad Real, in the heart of La Mancha, in the '50s. At the age of eight, he emigrated with his family to Extremadura. There he studied in elementary and high school with the Salesian Fathers and the Franciscans respectively.

At sixteen, he left home and settled in Madrid, with no money and no job, but with a very specific project: to study and make films. It was impossible to enroll in the Official Film School. Franco had just closed it. As he couldn't learn the language, he decided to learn the content, that is, life, to live... Despite the dictatorship that was suffocating the country, for an adolescent from the provinces, Madrid represented culture, independence and freedom. He worked at many sporadic jobs, but he couldn't buy his first Super-8 mm camera until he got a "serious" job at the National Telephone Company of Spain where he remained for twelve years, working as an office assistant, twelve years that he also devoted to multiple activities that really formed him as a filmmaker and as a person. In the morning, in the Telephone Company, he gained a real knowledge of the Spanish middle class at the start of the consumer era, its dramas and its misfortunes, a gold mine for a future storyteller. In the afternoon-evening he wrote, loved, did theatre with the mythical independent group Los Goliardos, made films in Super-8 (his only school as a film maker). He collaborated with various underground magazines, wrote short stories, some of which were published. He was a member of the parodic punk-rock group, Almodóvar and McNamara, etc.

He was fortunate in that the opening of his first film in commercial cinemas coincided with the birth of Spanish democracy. After a year and a half of difficult filming on 16mm, in 1980 he opened "Pepi, Luci, Bom" a no-budget film, made cooperatively with the rest of the cast and crew, all beginners except for Carmen Maura.

In 1986, with his brother Agustín, he founded the production company El Deseo, S.A. Their first project was “Law of Desire.” Since then they have produced the following ten films which Pedro wrote and directed, and have also produced other young directors.

International recognition came with “Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown” in 1988. Since then, his films have opened in every corner of the world. With “All About My Mother” he got his first Oscar for Best Foreign Film, and also the Golden Globe, the César, three European Film Awards, the David de Donatello, two BAFTAs, seven Goyas and another forty-five awards. Three years later, “Talk to Her” had the same or better luck (Oscar for Best Script, five European Film Awards, two BAFTAs, the Nastro de Argento, the César and many more awards throughout the world except in Spain).

2003 has been one of the best years for El Deseo S.A. As well as the critical and public acclaim for “Talk to Her”, it produced and opened “Chill Out!” by Félix Sabroso and Dunia Ayaso and “My Life Without Me” by Isabel Coixet, nominated for Best Film and Best Director in the European Film Awards, a social phenomenon in Japan and a great critical success throughout Europe.

PEDRO ALMODÓVAR – FILMOGRAPHY

1974-1979 Various films of differing lengths on Super-8mm, including some on 16mm

(Salome)

1980	Pepi, Luci, Bom
1982	Labyrinth of Passions
1983	Dark Habits
1984-5	What have I done to deserve this?
1985	Trayler para amantes de lo prohibido (médium length on video, for TVE)
1986	Law of Desire
1987	Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown
1989	Tie Me Up, Tie Me Down!
1991	High Heels
1992	Acción mutante, by Alex de la Iglesia (Producer)
1993	Kika
1995	Flower of my Secret
1995	Tengo una casa, by Mónica Laguna (Producer)
1996	Pasajes, by Daniel Calparsoro (Producer)
1997	Live Flesh
1999	All About my Mother
2000	Devil's Backbone, by Guillermo del Toro (Producer)
2001	Talk to Her
2002	My Life Without Me, by Isabel Coixet (Producer)
2003	Chill Out!, by Félix Sabroso & Dunia Ayaso (Producer)
2003	Bad Education
2004	The Holy Girl, by Lucrecia Martel (Producer)

CAST

Gael García Bernal

Born in Mexico of actor parents, Gael became familiar with the world of acting from a very early age. Since beginning his career in television in the series "Teresa," he has participated in many productions in various countries: Mexico, Spain, England...

He studied at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London. His most remarkable films include "Amores Perros" (Alejandro González-Iñárritu), "No News From God" (Agustín Díaz Yanes), "Y Tu Mama Tambien" (Alfonso Cuarón), "Vidas privadas" (Fito Paez) and "El Crimen del Padre Amaro" (Carlos Carrera). This year, as well as "Bad Education," will see the opening of "The Motorcycle Diaries," directed by Walter Salles.

He won the Marcello Mastroianni Award at the Venice International Film Festival in 2001 for "Y Tu Mama Tambien."

Fele Martínez

Born in Alicante 29 years ago, Fele Martínez is one of the indispensable faces of "young Spanish cinema." He moved to Madrid where he trained at the Real Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático (Royal School of Dramatic Art) and then continued with a course in Antonio Madonna's Private School.

He received the Goya Award for Best New Actor for "Thesis," by Alejandro Amenábar in 1996. He has now made over twenty films, the most notable of which, apart from the above, include: "Open Your Eyes" (Alejandro Amenábar), "Sleepless in Madrid" (Chus Gutiérrez), "The Lovers of the Arctic Circle" (Julio Medem), "Black Tears" (Ricardo Franco), "April Captains" (María de Medeiros), "Talk to Her" (Pedro Almodóvar) and "Darkness" (Jaume Balagueró).

His latest adventure has been in the theater, where he has successfully played Woody Allen's alter ego in the play "Play It Again, Sam."

Daniel Giménez-Cacho

Spanish by birth (Madrid), Daniel has managed to combine all kinds of acting work in his extensive career, from the theatre, where he has acted in plays by Eugene O'Neil

(Long Day's Journey into Night), Peter Nichols (Passion Play), Chesterton (Double Face) to lending his voice for the narrator in "Y Tu Mama Tambien."

He has worked for both famous and first time directors on both sides of the Atlantic in more than thirty films. His filmography includes such notable titles as: "Chronos" (Guillermo del Toro), "Miracle Alley" (Jorge Fons), "Nobody Will Speak of Us When We're Dead" (Agustín Díaz Yanes), "Deep Crimson" (Arturo Ripstein), "Jealousy" (Vicente Aranda), "No Shame" (Joaquín Oristrell and "Aro Tolbukhin in the Mind of a Killer" (Agustí Villaronga).

He received the Ariel Award as Best Actor for his performance in "Deep Crimson" and "Aro Tolbukhin" and the Ondas Award for "No Shame."

JAVIER CÁMARA

Javier Cámara was born in La Rioja and came to Madrid to study acting at the Real Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático (Royal School of Dramatic Art). Since then, he has worked in all the media possible for an actor: theatre, film and television. His various roles have won him great popularity among audiences in various countries. His most notable work includes that of the protagonist in "Talk to Her" (Pedro Almodóvar) which brought him international recognition and for which he received the Audience Award for the Best European Actor of 2002.

Since making his debut in "Alegre ma non troppo" (Fernando Colomo), he has managed to become one of our best loved actors in films such as "Torrente, the Stupid Arm of the Law" (Santiago Segura), "Torremolinos 73" (Pablo Berger), "Los abajos firmantes" (Joaquín Oristrell) or in the television series "Ay, señor, señor!" and "Siete vidas."

Recently Javier has gone back to the theatre with the play "Family Resemblances" (Agnès Jaoui and Jean-Pierre Bacri). Ondas Award 2004 for "Torremolinos 73."

LLUIS HOMAR

Born in Barcelona forty-seven years ago, Lluís has been able to combine theatre, to which he has dedicated most of his extensive career, with cinema and television. He studied law at the Autonomous University in Barcelona after which he did several acting courses: Uta Hagen (1986-87) in New York and John Strasberg (1985) among others.

He was one of the founders of the Teatre Lliure and its director from 1992 to 1998. He has acted in and directed over thirty theatrical works for this company. In 1999, he directed and starred in Shakespeare's "Hamlet" for the Grec Festival. Among the authors whose works he has directed and played in on stage are David Mamet, Botho Strauss and Ibsen. In cinema he has worked for directors such as Pilar Miró, Vicente Aranda and Mario Camus.

In 1986, he received the National Acting Award and the Fotogramas Silver Theater Award for "Hamlet" in 2000.

FRANCISCO BOIRA

Born in Huesca, he studied at Juan Carlos Corazza's Acting Studio. He has played supporting roles in important Spanish films such as "Morirás en Chafarinas", by Pedro Olea, "Taxi", by Carlos Saura, "Love Can Seriously Damage Your Health", by Manuel Gómez Pereira and "Novios", by Joaquín Oristrell. He has also collaborated successfully in the series "Todos los hombres sois iguales".

His daring performance in "Bad Education" will undoubtedly open the doors of cinema to him.

CREW

AGUSTÍN ALMODÓVAR

He was born in La Mancha and graduated in Chemistry from the Complutense University of Madrid.

In 1985, he began working actively in cinema. He was production trainee on the crew of “Se infiel and no mires con quien” (Fernando Trueba). That same year he began his incessant participation in his brother’s films, working as assistant director on “Matador” and immediately afterwards he and Pedro founded their own company, El Deseo, in 1986.

Since then, he has been responsible for the production of all of Pedro’s feature films (winning the Oscar for Best Foreign Film for “All About My Mother”) and combining this with producing other young directors (Alex de la Iglesia, Mónica Laguna, Daniel Calparsoro, Guillermo del Toro, Isabel Coixet, Felix Sabroso and Dunia Ayaso, and Lucrecia Martel). With El Deseo, he has worked on many co-productions with France. Chosen by the prestigious magazine “Millimeter” as one of the 50 top producers in the world, he is also a member-director of Spain’s Academy of Film Arts and Sciences.

ESTHER GARCÍA

Born in Segovia, Esther has won two Goyas as production director on “Acción Mutante” and “All About My Mother.” She has been production director on more than ninety films and television series since she began in 1976 with “Curro Jiménez.”

She has worked all the jobs in production from trainee to executive producer, the post she has held since the film “My Life Without Me” (Isabel Coixet). As well as working uninterruptedly for Pedro since “Matador,” she has also done production work for Fernando Trueba, Mariano Ozores, Luis María Delgado, Gonzalo Suárez, Emilio Martínez Lázaro and Fernando Colomo.

As part of the El Deseo team, she has been production director on “Acción Mutante” (Alex de la Iglesia), “Tengo una casa” (Mónica Laguna), “Pasajes” (Daniel Calparsoro), “Devil’s Backbone” (Guillermo del Toro) and “Chill Out!” (Félix Sabroso and Dunia Ayaso).

Along with Agustín Almodóvar, she has moved into international production with ventures such as “My Life Without Me,” by Isabel Coixet, and “The Holy Girl,” by Lucrecia Martel, which will be opening shortly.

ALBERTO IGLESIAS

Born in San Sebastian in 1955, he studied piano, guitar, counterpoint and harmony with Blanca Burgaleta and Francisco Escudero in his home city. He expanded his studies in Paris with Francis Schwartz and in Barcelona with Gabriel Brnçic. He has collaborated with Carlos Saura, Bigas Luna, Julio Medem and Iciar Bollaín, among others.

He has developed a close collaboration with Pedro since they first worked together on “The Flower of my Secret,” and since then he has been the regular musician on his films. His soundtracks include “The Lovers of the Artic Circle” (Julio Medem), “All About My Mother” and “Talk to Her” (Pedro Almodóvar). He has received six Goya awards for his work on the above films and for his compositions for “The Red Squirrel,” “Earth,” and “Sex and Lucía” (all by Julio Medem).

As well as his work for cinema, he has composed symphonic and chamber music and several ballets for the National Dance Company.

PEPE SALCEDO

He has edited more than ninety films to date, including all of Pedro Almodovar’s films. He was assistant to Pedro del Rey and Pablo del Amo. He began his career with the film “Una mujer prohibida,” and since then he has received three Goya awards for his work in “Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown” (Pedro Almodóvar), “Nobody Will Speak of Us When We’re Dead” (Agustín Díaz Yanes) and “All about My Mother” (Pedro Almodóvar). He has worked with some of the most important Spanish directors, including Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón, Eloy de la Iglesia, Pedro Olea, Gonzalo Suárez, Jaime Chávarri, José Luis Borau and Manuel Gómez Pereira.

JOSÉ LUIS ALCÁINE

Born in Morocco, José Luis is one of our most prolific and international directors of photography. He studied at the Official Film School in Madrid and is a member of the Spanish Association of Cinematography. (A.E.C.).

He has worked for a multitude of directors in various countries and languages. In Spain he has worked with Vicente Aranda, Fernando Trueba, Bigas Luna, Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón, Fernando Colomo, John Malkovich, Pilar Miró, Victor Erice, Carlos Saura, Fernando Fernán Gómez and Montxo Armendáriz among others.

Responsible for the lighting of more than a hundred films, he is working with Pedro again after their last collaboration in "Tie Me Up, Tie Me Down!", and a previous adventure together in "Women on the Verge of a nervous Breakdown."

To date, he has received three Goyas for his excellent work behind the camera in films such as "The Bird of Happiness" (Pilar Miró), "The Mad Monkey" (Fernando Trueba) and "Don Quixote, Knight Errant" (Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón).

CREDITS

GAEL GARCÍA BERNAL	Angel/Juan/Zahara
FELE MARTÍNEZ	Enrique Goded
JAVIER CÁMARA	Paquito
DANIEL GIMÉNEZ-CACHO	Father Manolo
LLUIS HOMAR	Mr. Berenguer
FRANCISCO BOIRA	Ignacio
FRANCISCO MAESTRE	Father José
JUAN FERNÁNDEZ	Martín
IGNACIO PÉREZ	Ignacio kid
RAÚL GARCÍA FORNEIRO	Enrique kid
ALBERTO FERREIRO	Enrique Serrano
PETRA MARTÍNEZ	Ignacio's mother
SANDRA	Sandra
ROBERTO HOYAS	Galicia's barman

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY PEDRO ALMODÓVAR

PRODUCED BY AGUSTÍN ALMODÓVAR

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER	ESTHER GARCÍA
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY	JOSÉ LUIS ALCÁINE A.E.C
EDITING	JOSÉ SALCEDO
COMPOSER	ALBERTO IGLESIAS
ART DIRECTOR	ANTXÓN GÓMEZ
SOUND	MIGUEL REJAS
MIXING	JOSÉ ANTONIO BERMÚDEZ
CAMERA OPERATOR	JOAQUÍN MANCHADO
MAKE-UP ARTIST	ANA LOZANO
HAIRDRESSER	PEPE JUEZ
COSTUMES	PACO DELGADO

WITH THE SPECIAL COLLABORATION OF JEAN-PAUL GAULTIER