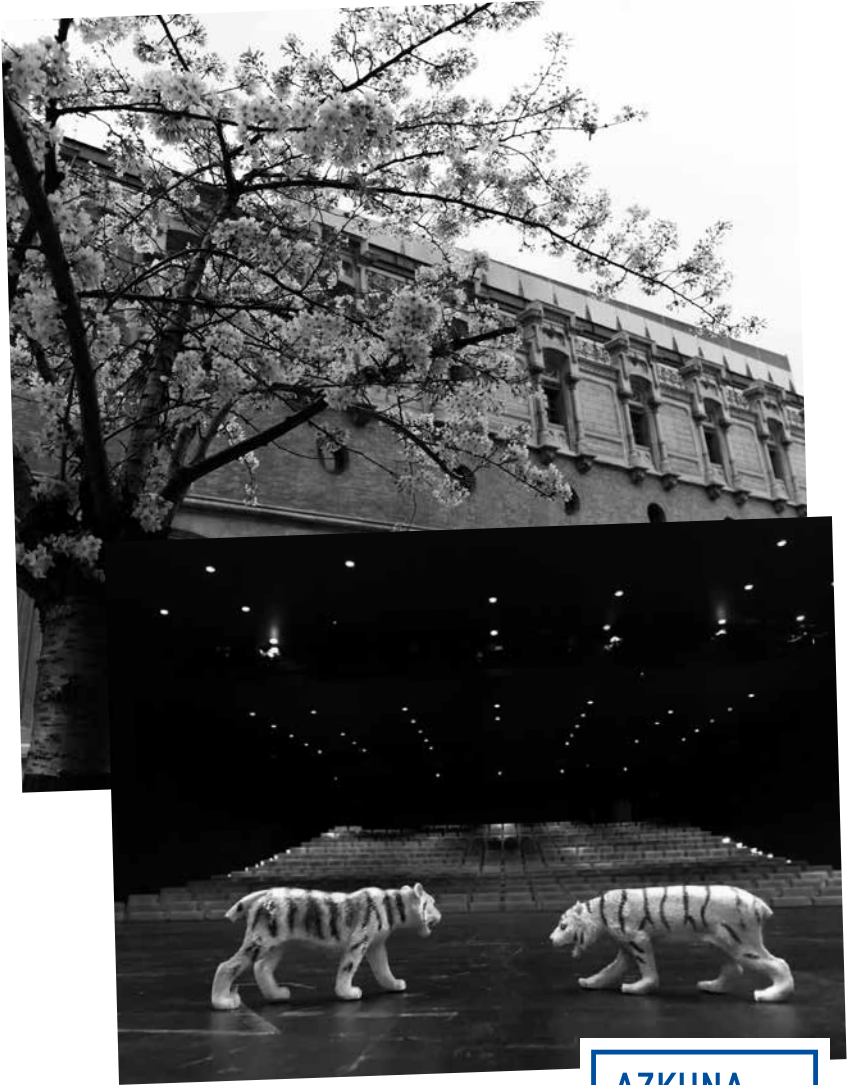


PROGRAMME
ENGLISH

APRIL MAY JUNE 2021



AZKUNA
ZENTROA
ALHÓNDIGA
BILBAO

society and
contemporary culture

Bilbao



Luis García Berlanga, the chronicler of the 20th century

Following the retrospective on [Pier Paolo Pasolini](#), the *Zinemateka* kicks off in April with the cycle dedicated to [Luis García Berlanga](#). The transition from one to the other is not arbitrary. Both filmmakers and contemporaries were influenced by Italian neorealism, which emerged after the Second World War with the purpose of showing the social conditions of the time, seeking a more human and committed cinema than in previous periods.

Pasolini reflects on a post-war Italy, with an underlined criticism of bourgeois society and consumerism. With Berlanga, we look at that post-Civil War and Francoist Spain, in what is one of the first approaches of Spanish cinema to Italian neorealism. As the filmmaker himself recalled on one occasion, the context was key to his films and the leitmotif of his entire career. It is with good reason that he is known as the chronicler of the 20th century.

Berlanga's films are characterised by ensemble casts, music, a humorous and often ironic tone, and genre scenes of the city and the countryside.

The cycle opens with [Esa pareja feliz \(That Happy Couple\)](#) (1951), the Valencian director's debut film and the first of his collaborations with the director and screenwriter Juan Antonio Bardem, both of whom had just graduated from the Institute of Cinematographic Investigation and Experience.

This was followed by [Bienvenido Mister Marshall \(Welcome Mr. Marshall\)](#) (1953), which won an award at the Cannes Film Festival, and which, although not the director's favourite, has gone down in history as a symbol of Spanish cinema in the 1950s. A parody with which Berlanga undermined the censorship of the time despite depicting a blistering image of the Francoist regime.

It would be followed by other films which are also programmed in this cycle, such [Calabuch](#) (1956), [Los jueves, milagro \(Miracles of Thursday\)](#) (1957) or [Plácido](#) (1961), portraits of the society of developmentalism. [El verdugo \(The Executioner\)](#) (1963), considered his masterpiece, where Rafael Azcona's script and his plea against the death penalty stand out, cannot be missed.

[La escopeta nacional \(The National Shotgun\)](#) (1978) and [Patrimonio nacional \(National Heritage\)](#) (1981) are part of the hilarious trilogy with which Berlanga, devoid from the pressure of censorship, acidly reflects the social reality which was beginning to emerge following Franco's death. With [La vaquilla \(The Heifer\)](#) (1985), Berlanga goes back in time to the Spanish Civil War, presented as a comedy, capable of bringing a smile to one of the darkest chapters in Spanish history.

The cycle ends with [Todos a la cárcel \(Everyone off to Jail\)](#) (1993), winner of three Goya awards. Once again, Berlanga makes a contemporary portrait of society and a premonition of what has become part of the political class.

In summary, a ten film cycle with which the *Zinemateka* joins the numerous tributes of the 'Year of Berlanga' on the centenary of his birth.

PROGRAMME

Esa pareja feliz (1953)

That happy couple

April 14, Wednesday / 5:00 p.m.

April 15, Thursday / 7:00 p.m.



In Madrid in the 50s, Juan and Carmen, a poor couple, live in a rented room with a shared kitchen. While she's convinced the solution to their problems will be winning the lottery or competitions, her dream becomes true when Florit soaps chooses them as the 'happy couple' to enjoy life as a wealthy upper-class couple for 24 hours.

90' / Spain / D: Luis García Berlanga / C: Fernando Fernán Gómez, Elvira Quintillá, Félix Fernández, José Luis Ozores

Bienvenido Mr Marshall (1953)

Welcome Mr. Marshall

April 21, Wednesday / 5:00 p.m.

April 22, Thursday / 7:00 p.m.



The mayor of a small town called Villar del Río receives a visit from the Delegate General announcing the imminent arrival of a US Government delegation as part of the European Recovery Plan. The authorities decide to organise a warm welcome.

75' / Spain / D: Luis García Berlanga / C: Lolita Sevilla, Manolo Morán, José Isbert, Alberto Romea, Elvira Quintillá

Calabuch (1956)

April 29, Wednesday / 5:00 p.m.

April 30, Thursday / 7:00 p.m.



Tired of building atomic bombs and worried about the destructive scope of their discovery, a prestigious North American scientist flees his country to live anonymously in a peaceful village called Calabuch on the Mediterranean coast. While he was there, the professor was mistaken for a contraband accomplice, arrested by the Civil Guard and locked up in a holding cell.

92' / Spain / D: Luis García Berlanga / C: Edmund Gwenn, Valentina Cortese, Juan Calvo, Franco Fabrizzi, José Isbert

Los jueves, Milagro (1957)

Miracles of Thursday

May 5, Wednesday / 5:00 p.m.

May 6, Thursday / 7:00 p.m.



When the old Fontecilla spa started to fall into an obvious decline and neglect, the powers that be in the area got together to find a solution and planned a strategy to promote it, thereby encouraging tourists to come to the village. To this end, they invented a false miracle whereby Saint Dimas would appear at the train station every Thursday.

85' / Spain / D: Luis García Berlanga / C: Richard Basehart, José Isbert, Paolo Stoppa, Juan Calvo, Alberto Romea

Plácido (1961)

May 12, Wednesday / 5:00 p.m.

May 13, Thursday / 7:00 p.m.



In a small provincial town, a group of holier-than-thou individuals fond of ostentatious charity organise the 'Sit a poor person at your table' Christmas campaign. They hire Plácido for the occasion, a poor man who has to cooperate with the 3-wheeled delivery van he has just bought. The frantic activity in which he finds himself means he doesn't have time to pay the first instalment of the purchase promptly. The man tries everything possible to solve his problem while careering from one place to another as he finds himself involved in a series of unexpected incidents.

85' / Spain / D: Luis García Berlanga / C: Casto Sendra 'Cassen', José Luis López Vázquez, Elvira Quintillá, Manuel Alexandre

El verdugo (1963)

The executioner

May 19, Wednesday / 5:00 p.m.

May 20, Thursday / 7:00 p.m.



José Luis is a young funeral parlour employee. He knew Amadeo, an executioner who's about to retire, when rendering a service at a prison. When he took to his home the case with the professional tools he had forgotten, he also met his

daughter Carmen, who nobody had wanted to marry because they didn't want to be related to her father. The couple get on very quickly and after being surprised by the old man in a compromising situation, José Luis is forced to marry her.

90' / Spain / D: Luis García Berlanga / C: Nino Manfredi, Emma Penella, José Isbert, José Luis López Vázquez

La escopeta nacional (1978) The national shotgun

May 26, Wednesday / 5:00 p.m.
May 27, Thursday / 7:00 p.m.



Jaume Canivell is a Catalan intercom manufacturer travelling with his secretary and mistress to the outskirts of Madrid to take part in a shooting party on the Marques of Leguineche's (a bankrupt aristocrat) estate, where senior government ministers and important personalities are in attendance. In fact, Canivell's real intention is to do business and contact a Francoist minister to help him introduce the new technological advance in Spanish homes.

95' / Spain / D: Luis García Berlanga / C: José Sazatornil 'Saza', José Luis López Vázquez, Luis Escobar, Antonio Ferrandis

Patrimonio nacional (1981) National heritage

June 2, Wednesday / 4:30 p.m.
June 3, Thursday / 7:00p.m.



After Franco's demise, the Leguineches abandon their estate Los Tejadillos, where they've lived in voluntary exile for decades to return to Madrid and infiltrate the circle closest to the Spanish monarch to resume their long lost court life. To this effect they decide to settle in an old palace of theirs.

110' / Spain / Z/D: Luis García Berlanga / C: Luis Escobar, José Luis López Vázquez, Amparo Soler Leal, Agustín González

La vaquilla (1985) The heifer

June 9, Wednesday / 4:30 p.m.
June 10, Thursday / 6:55 p.m.



2 years after the start of the Spanish Civil War, the bored soldiers of both sides on the Aragon front exchange tobacco and cigarette paper. The apparent tranquillity is broken when a loudspeaker from the national side announces a bullfight with young bulls in the neighbouring town with a banquet and dance. The republic side becomes deflated so Brigadier Castro comes up with an idea to annoy the nationals and raise the morale of his troops.

122' / Spain / D: Luis García Berlanga / C: Alfredo Landa, Guillermo Montesinos, Santiago Ramos, José Sacristán, Carlos Velat

Todos a la cárcel (1993) Everyone off to jail

June 16, Wednesday / 5:00p.m.
June 17, Thursday / 7:00p.m.



To collect a debt from the Public Administration which has been in arrears for ages, a small businessman called Artemio attends the International Prisoner's Day inside a prison. The celebration is essentially a political event, attended by the most representative authorities in the region along with personalities from the world of culture, finance and the church. Despite the fact they all attend the event alleging solidarity with those whose freedom has been lost, each of the attendees has some specific interests which will trigger a peculiar mutiny.

99' / Spain / D: Luis García Berlanga / C: José Sazatornil 'Saza', José Sacristán, Agustín González, Manuel Alexandre, Rafael Alonso

INFORMATION

Every projection is in Original Version (OV).

The programming is subject to last minute change.

+ Info: azkunazentroa.eus

The cinema room is opened 30 minutes before the projection of the film. We recommend you to come a few minutes in advance.

ABREVIATURES

D: Director | C: Casting

Images: imdb