



## Festival shows the best of Spanish cinema

By Ali Rodriguez October 21 2013.

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In its fifth consecutive year in North America, the Festival of New Spanish Cinema has come back to Ottawa to exhibit the best of modern Spanish cinema.

Over five weeks, Ottawa film enthusiasts will get to see the current trends in Spanish filmmaking, including the films *A Gun in Each Hand*, *Six Points About Emma*, *Map*, *The Wild Ones*, and *Casting*.

The films represent the current trends of filmmaking in Spain and offer something for everybody—the diverse selection of films, with big and low budgets, features renowned directors and first-timers.

“All have in common the quality of the story telling and innovation,” Marta Sanchez, the founder of Pragda, said.

The festival covers the most important cities in North America with Ottawa chosen as the opening city. The tour travels to nine other cities including Chicago, Houston, Vancouver, Seattle, and Miami.

Three organizations came together to make the festival possible: Pragda—a film company specialized in Spanish and Latin American culture—the Embassy of Spain in Canada, and the ByTowne Cinema.

For the second year in a row the ByTowne is hosting the event.

Sanchez explained how the ByTowne was the best option to host the festival in the city.

“Last year we decided to bring the festival to a more specialized film audience, and become part of the cultural life of the city,” Sanchez said. “The ByTowne is the best art house cinema in the city.”

According to the Pragda founder, the Festival of New Spanish cinema has one goal—to have a permanent window for Spanish films in Ottawa.

“We want to have a date every year and bring the best of films so Canadian audiences know our filmmakers and films, and filmmakers can have their work shown to wider and appreciative audiences,” Sanchez said.

The festival premiered with *A Gun in Each Hand* (*Una Pistola en Cada Mano*), a star-studded dramatic comedy that follows eight men as they deal with mid-life crises and relationship conflicts.

The acclaimed film was awarded one Goya and one Gaudí award, the most prestigious film awards in Spain.

And that's no surprise. According to Sanchez, the eclectic line-up features the best films of the moment.

Ending on a high, strong note, the festival will close its last two weeks in Ottawa with the critically-acclaimed movies *The Wild Ones* and *Casting*.

*The Wild Ones* by Patricia Ferreira won the Best Film of the Year award at this year's Malaga Film Festival, one of the most prominent film events in Spain. The coming-of-age story follows a group of teenagers and the consequences their actions have on the people around them.

The closing film of the festival, *Casting*, looks at six actors who lead very different lives except for one thing—a casting for the role of their dreams.

The Festival of New Spanish Cinema runs till the end of October.