

"TALK TO HER"

(HABLE CON ELLA)

A FILM BY PEDRO ALMODÓVAR

112 Minutes. Rated R by the MPAA. In Spanish with English subtitles.

A Sony Pictures Classics Release.

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"TALK TO HER"

Cast

Benigno JAVIER CÁMARA
Marco DARÍO GRANDINETTI
Alicia LEONOR WATLING
Lydia ROSARIO FLORES
Katarina, the Dance Teacher GERALDINE CHAPLIN
Rosa MARIOLA FUENTES
Matilde LOLA DUEÑAS
Nurse A BEATRIZ SANTIAGO
Amparo PAZ VEGA
Alfredo FELE MARTÍNEZ
Niño de Valencia ADOLFO FERNÁNDEZ
Ángela ELENA ANAYA
TV Host LOLES LEÓN
Niño de Valencia's Agent JOSÉ SANCHO
Lydia's Sister ANA FERNÁNDEZ
Lydia's Assistant ANGEL INFANTES "YIYO"
Lydia's Sister's Husband CARLOS GARCÍA CAMBERO
Himself CAETANO VELOSO
Musicians JACQUES MORELENBAUM
JORGE HELDER
PEDRO SÁ
Nurse B MAMEN SEGOVIA
Doctor ROBERTO ALVÁREZ
Alicia's Father HELIO PEDREGAL
Psychiatrist's Receptionist ADELA DONAMARÍA
Head Nurse CARMEN MACHI
Priest AGUSTÍN ALMODÓVAR
Alfredo's Mother SONIA GRANDE
Hospital Director JOSERRA CADIÑANOS
Nurse ISMAEL MARTÍNEZ
Hospital Receptionist LOLA GARCÍA
Public Official ESTHER GARCÍA
Concierge CHUS LAMPREAVE
Lawyer MICHEL RUBEN
Prison Director JUAN FERNÁNDEZ
Herself PINA BAUSCH
Herself MALOU AIRAUDO
Swimmer FERNANDO IGLESIAS
Ben BEN LINDBERGH
Dance Academy Employee Lawyer's ANA SANZ
Receptionist YUYI BERINGOLA
Public Official CARLOS MIGUEL MIGUEL
Pianist VÍCTOR MATOS

"TALK TO HER"

Filmmakers

Written and directed by PEDRO ALMODÓVAR
Executive Producer AGUSTÍN ALMODÓVAR
Director of Production ESTHER GARCÍA
Director of Photography JAVIER AGUIRRESAROBÉ A.E.C
Editor JOSÉ SALCEDO
Music ALBERTO IGLESIAS
Artistic Design ANTXON GÓMEZ
Associate Producer MICHEL RUBEN
Make Up KARMELE SOLER
Hair Artist FRANCISCO RODRÍGUEZ
Costume Design SONIA GRANDE
Sound MIGUEL REJAS
Mixing JOSÉ A. BERMÚDEZ
Choreography "Masurca Fogo" and PINA BAUSCH
"Café Müller"
Second Operator and SteadiCam JOAQUÍN MANCHADO
Casting SARA BILBATUA
First Assistant Director PEDRO LAZAGA
Sound Editing and Editing Assistants ROSA ORTIZ
MANUEL LAGUNA
DIEGO GARRIDO
Special Effects – DDT DAVID MARTÍN
MONTSE RIBÉ
Special Effects Team XAVI BASTIDA
MERCHE ARQUE
JOSÉ MANUEL MENESES
JUAN SERRANO
MIGUEL "MAGE" RODRÍGUEZ
SIMONE FERRER
VÍCTOR GARCÍA
ISMAEL FERRER
Mechanics ADOLFO VILA
ENRIC MASIP
Collaborators NOEMI ELÍAS
MARISOL RIBE
MÓNICA ALARCÓN
HERMANOS ORCO
Mad Pix Company Supervisor JORGE CALVO
Mad Pix Production VERÓNICA DÍEZ
YOLANDA VERGARECHE

Composition FASA OYIBO
FERRÁN PIQUÉ
RAMÓN GUZMÁN
JUANCHO FERNÁNDEZ
BRUNO DE LA CALVA
OCÉANO MATEOS
MONTSE CAPDEVILLA
ÑAÑA GONZÁLEZ
LUIS GUERRA
MANUEL DELGADO
3D ISAAC DE LA POMBA
PILAR CIENFUEGOS
RUBEN VILLORIA
ROBERTO GIRÓN
Scanning and Processing CLAUDIO GÜELL
Image: "Shrinking Lover" PAULA MORÓN
Filming NACHO MELERO
MANEL FONTES (CINEFECTO)
Dream Factory Animatronics COLIN ARTHUR
SARAH POOLEY
JAN ARNOLD
EFE-X Special Effects
FX Technicians RAÚL ROMANILLOS VILLALBA
PAU COSTA MOELLER
JULIO NAVARRO SEISDEDOS
DAVID CAMPOS
JOAQUÍN DORADO
ANTHONY S. CICCARELI
F & P: ISIDRO RUANO, FÉLIX CORDÓN, JOSÉ
CORDÓN and CARLOS MARTÍN

TANZTHEATER, PINA BAUSCH

“Cafe Müller”

Set and Costume Design ROLF BÖRZIK
Costume Design ANDREAS MAIER
Sound MATTHIAS BURKERT
ANDREAS EISENSCHNEIDER
Make Up BÄRBEL JUNGE
Dancers PINA BAUSCH
MALOU AIRAUDO
NAZARETH PANADERO
JEAN LAURENT SASPORTES
DOMINIQUE MERCY
MICHAEL STRECKER

“Masurca Fogo”

Set Designer PETER PABST
Costume Designer MARIÓN CITO
Dancers RUTH AMARANTE
AIDA VAINIERI
RAINER BEHR
STEPHAN BRINKMANN
JORGE PUERTA
MICHAEL STRECKER
DAPHNIS KOKKINOS
DOMINIQUE MERCY
FERNANDO SUELS
FABIEN PRIOVILLE
CRISTIANA MORGANTI
JULIE SHANAHAN
MELANIE MAURIN
DITTA JASFI
AZUSA SEYAMA
BARBARA HAMPEL
REGINA ADVENTO
ANDREY BEREZIN

DANCE ACADEMY

Dance Teacher CATALINA ARTEAGA
Pianist VÍCTOR MATOS
Dancers RAQUEL AGUILERA
LUCÍA BARBADILLO
MIGUEL ÁNGEL BOLO
RAYCO CANO
LARA HERNANDORENA
ISAAC MONLLOR
VICENTE PALOMO
RAQUEL REY
RAÚL MONTES
NATALIA ROOK
BENOIT CAUSSE
MARINA JIMÉNEZ

BULLFIGHTERS

Bullfighter JAVIER CONDE
Bullfighter's Quadrille JOSÉ CALVO
PABLO A. SAUGAR
VÍCTOR HUGO SAUGAR
LUIS ANTONIO VALLEJO
DAVID MORA
MIGUEL ÁNGEL CUBILLO
ILUMINADO MENES
CARLOS HERRANZ
JUSTO MAESTRO
JOSÉ PABLO MONGE
JOSÉ JAVIER ELEJALDE
DIEGO MORENO
GUSTAVO VÁZQUEZ
JOSÉ GONZÁLEZ

"TALK TO HER"

Synopsis

1. The curtain of salmon colored roses and heavy gold fringing which covers the stage is pulled back to reveal a Pina Bausch spectacle, "Café Müller." Among the spectators, two men are sitting together by chance. They don't know each other. They are Benigno (a young nurse) and Marco (a writer in his early forties). On the stage, filled with wooden chairs and tables, two women, their eyes closed and their arms extended, are moving to the music of "The Fairy Queen," by Henry Purcell. The piece is so moving that Marco starts to cry. Benigno can see the gleam of his chance companion's tears, in the darkness of the stalls. He'd like to tell him that he too is moved by the spectacle but he doesn't dare.

Months later, the two men meet again at "El Bosque," a private clinic where Benigno works. Lydia, Marco's girlfriend and a bullfighter by profession, has been gored and is in a coma. It so happens that Benigno is looking after another woman in a coma, Alicia, a young ballet student.

When Marco walks by the door of Alicia's room, Benigno doesn't think twice before speaking to him. It's the start of an intense friendship... as lineal as a roller coaster. During this period of suspended time between the walls of the clinic, the lives of the four characters will flow in all directions, past, present and future, dragging all of them towards an unsuspected destiny.

2. "Talk to Her" is a story about the friendship between two men, about loneliness and the long convalescence of the wounds provoked by passion. It is also a film about incommunication between couples, and about communication. About cinema as a subject of conversation. About how monologues before a silent person can be an effective form of dialogue. About silence as "eloquence of the body," about film as an ideal vehicle in relationships between people, about how a film told in words can bring time to a standstill and install itself in the lives of the person telling it and the person listening.

"Talk to Her" is a film about the joy of narration and about words as a weapon against solitude, disease, death and madness. It is also a film about madness, about a type of madness so close to tenderness and common sense that it does not diverge from normality.

"All About My Mother" ended with a theater curtain opening to reveal a darkened stage. "Talk to Her" begins with the same curtain, also opening. The characters in "All About My Mother" were actresses, imposters or women with an ability to act on and off the stage; "Talk to Her" is about narrators, narrators who recount their own lives, men who talk to whoever can hear them and above all to those who can't.

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"TALK TO HER"

Pedro Almodovar interviews Pedro Almodovar

Actors and Actresses

Q: *From now on, we'll have to say that as well as being a good director of actresses you're also a good director of actors. The leading characters in "Talk to Her" are two men and the actors who play them are splendid.*

A: I'm delighted it's you who's said that. Yes, Javier Cámara and Darío Grandinetti are superb in very complicated roles. In any case, "Talk to Her" isn't my first film with male leads. "Live Flesh" is a testicular story. "Matador" and "Law of Desire" were also stories in which men determined the action. In "Law of Desire" even the girl (Carmen Maura) was a man.

Q: *Which do you find more enjoyable?*

A: What do you mean?

Q: *When it comes to working, actors or actresses?*

A: When they're wonderful and can make me forget that I'm the director and the writer, I enjoy both equally and very much. Over the course of fourteen feature films I admit that I've found more good actresses than good actors, but it's also true that I've written more female roles than male or neuter roles.

Q: *That's obvious...*

A: In another field, that of writing, and as a general rule, I believe that women inspire me to write comedies, and men, tragedies.

Q: *Why don't you do more comedies?*

A: The scripts done come out easily. But I'm going to force it.

Q: *Can you force a script, the elements that make it up, the tone?*

A: No. Or you shouldn't, with the exception of documentaries and biographic films.

Q: *To what genre does "Talk to Her" belong?*

A: I don't know. All I know is that it isn't a western, or a film about CIA agents. Nor is it a James Bond film or a period piece.

Q: *It does have an element of that...*

A: That's true, seven minutes to be precise, which take place in 1924.

Q: *Those seven minutes are giving rise to a lot of talk.*

A: Even though they're silent... In the middle of the film, the nurse, Benigno (Javier Cámara) uses one of his few free nights to go to the Cinematheque to see a silent Spanish film: "Amante Menguante" ("Shrinking Lover"). I show about seven minutes of that film.

Q: *Isn't it a bit risky to interrupt the general narrative with a very different piece, or is it a flashback involving the same characters?*

A: No, it isn't a flashback, it's a separate story... and yes, it's risky, very risky...

Q: *Aren't you afraid the spectator will be confused, or lose his concentration?*

A: Now that I've finished it, no, but while I was filming it I was terrified. I couldn't sleep until I had the two stories edited together.

Spoken Cinema

A: The part that runs from when Javier goes to the Cinematheque until he finishes telling the film to the recumbent, remote Alicia (about ten minutes running time) is one of my favorites.

Q: *What's the reason for this "detour" from the central story?*

A: It only seems like a detour, because the nurse's story doesn't actually stop during those seven minutes, rather it overlaps and merges with that of "Shrinking Lover." In any case, the original reason (when I was working on the script) was so that I could use the silent film as a front.

Q: *To hide what?*

A: What is really happening in Alicia's room. I don't want to show it to the spectator and I invented "Shrinking Lover" as a kind of blindfold. In any case, the spectator will discover what has happened at the same time as the other characters. It's a secret which I'd like no one to reveal.

Q: *That's called manipulation.*

A: It's a narrative option, and not exactly a simple one. That's why I'm so proud of the result.

Q: *In any case, it isn't the first time that your characters explain themselves through another film. For example, in "High Heels"...*

A: Yes. Victoria Abril shouted a scene from "Autumn Sonata" at her mother, Marisa Paredes, in order to explain the love and hate that she felt for her, a love and hate so great they'd even driven her to kill. In "Matador," the protagonists hurry into a cinema (she's running away from him) where they are showing "Duel In The Sun." On the screen they can see what their own end will be. In "Live Flesh," while Liberto Rabal and Francesca Neri are fighting, the television is showing Buñuel's "Rehearsal For a Crime" (aka "The Criminal Life of Archibaldo de la Cruz"). Buñuel's film could well provide the title for this section of "Live Flesh." And its images anticipate two elements which will later appear in my film, a legless man (after this scene Javier Bardem's character ends up in a wheelchair, in "The Criminal Life of Archibaldo de la Cruz" it was a dummy which had its leg removed) and the fire which would trap Angela Molina's character when Liberto breaks off with her (in "The Criminal Life..." it was the oven in which Archibaldo de la Cruz was burning a dummy identical to the character played by Miroslava. By coincidence, years later, the actress really did die in a burning car).

For me, the films I see become part of my own experiences, and I use them as such. There's no intention of paying homage to their directors or of imitating them. They're elements which are absorbed into the script and become part of it. "Telling films" is something that has to do with my biography. And I'm not talking about a film forum or the typical discussion about cinema (I hate those). I remember that when I was little I would tell films to my sisters, films that we'd seen together. I'd get carried away by the memory and while I was telling them I'd reinvent them. Really, I was making my own adaptation, and my sisters preferred my inaccurate, delirious versions to the original film. I remember that during those hours when time slowed down (sitting in the patio while they sewed, or gathered around the table with the brazier underneath), they would say: Pedro, tell us the film we saw yesterday...

Q: Can you see yourself telling films to your grandchildren?

A: I don't know. It's getting late for me to have grandchildren... In any case, I don't think I'd do it. I don't tell films anymore, I've lost that skill and I only talk about them when I'm forced to do so in interviews.

Words and Loneliness

Q: *When the psychiatrist asks Javier Cámara's character what his problem is, he replies: "Loneliness, I guess."*

A: Marco (Darío Grandinetti) also tells the two women in the film on two very different occasions that he's lonely. In both cases, neither Benigno nor Marco gets melodramatic about it, they're simply stating a fact. Loneliness is something which all the characters in the film have in common. Alicia and Lydia are lonely too. And Katerina, the ballet

mistress. And Alicia's father, although it's likely that after a while he'll have an affair with the receptionist in his consultancy. And the nurse played by Mariola Fuentes, secretly in love with her fellow worker Benigno. And the housekeeper in Benigno's building. Even the only unpleasant character, the despicable interviewer played by Loles León, ends up alone on the set, talking to the camera because Lydia (quite rightly) has stormed off in the middle of the interview. And the bull is left alone in the huge ring when Lydia is taken to the infirmary, fatally injured... "Loneliness, I guess" is another possible title for this film.

Q: *In a self interview, a genre with which you're familiar, how does the loneliness affect you? What do you feel at the absence of an interlocutor... nostalgia... or contempt?*

A: I don't feel contempt for anything, not even for things I hate. The reason I interview myself is for practical rather than endogamic reasons. I say what I want to say and in the fastest way possible. In any case, a self interview is a written piece and writing is always done in solitude.

Q: *Have you ever realized that you were talking to yourself?*

A: Right now.

Q: *I mean in your life, without whatever you say necessarily appearing in print.*

A: Yes. A few months ago. I caught myself doing it on several days. I did it either in the morning, when I'd just got up, or at night. (I've been told that Buñuel also talked to himself in the morning, to check on how his deafness was progressing). I was doing it to check the sound and power of my voice. I lost my voice during the shoot and for a few weeks when I got up after the long nocturnal silence, I'd talk to myself in bed or in front of the mirror. "How's my voice today?" I'd ask myself. "Much better. If I don't force it, I may make it through to the evening." I've always believed in words, even when you've got no voice... or no one to talk to.

Q: *Is that the message in "Talk to Her?"*

A: As in any film, the message is "Go see it;" then, in a subliminal way, "and tell your friends about it."

Privacy and Spectacle

"Talk to Her" tells a private, romantic, secret story, peppered with independent, spectacular units. I'm referring, as well as to the bull fights and the inclusion of "Shrinking Lover," to the collaboration and presence of Caetano Veloso, who sings "Cucurrucú paloma" live, to Pina Bausch, the choreographer of "Café Müller" and "Masurca Fogo," the pieces with which the film begins and ends. I'm also grateful for the return to the stage in "Café Müller" of Malou, a member of the original Wuppertal Tanztheater who now teaches youngsters and who, out of sheer generosity, immersed herself in the stage again and enthralled everyone.

“Shrinking Lover”

It's the synthesis of a silent film, introduced half way through the narration of “Talk to Her.” The decision that it should be silent and in black and white is due to the fact that this is the last genre discovered by Alicia before her accident. An interest which Benigno inherits from her.

As the film didn't exist, I had to make it. I'd already written the story of a shrinking man, much more detailed than the one inserted into “Talk to Her.” Originally, it was a story of love and suspense. The man who is shrinking leaves Amparo, the beautiful scientist, and goes back home to a despotic mother whom he hasn't spoken to in years. It's an opportunity to be reconciled with her. When Alfredo measures only a few centimeters he moves into one of his toys and lives there surrounded by his boyhood fetishes (books, comics, etc.). Among the pages of one of his favorite books he discovers a letter from his dead father; although it's addressed to him, Alfredo never received it. In it, his dead father tells him about his mother's growing insanity and warns him that if anything should ever happen to him his mother will have been responsible. The mother senses that Alfredo has discovered that she killed his father. Alfredo is living inside his electric train and doesn't want to come out for fear of his mother. In a fit of rage, his mother chases him from carriage to carriage. Just then, Amparo appears (after discovering where the mother lives). She saves little Alfredo and takes him with her to the Hotel Youkali where she is staying.

For obvious reasons, I've only used the beginning and end of all that melodrama. I really enjoyed making both fragments. For years I've dreamed of the image of the lover walking around the body of his loved one, as if it were a landscape. And now I've got it.

In order to prepare myself for the language of silent cinema, I saw my favorite silent films again, Griffith, F. Lang, Murnau, T. Browning... “Sunrise” was essential. I wanted to be true to the narrative and form of the time. I found it more attractive to struggle for accuracy than to break the rules. Except for some inevitable license, all the shots were done with a tripod. I didn't use a single traveling shot, in the composition of a shot the upper part of the frame is usually empty, the actors walk into frame, the props are authentic, from the mid-20s, and the acting is strictly expressionist, with a lot of care taken to avoid the risks of overacting. I was lucky that both Paz Vega and Fele Martínez could place themselves effortlessly in that situation which is so close to parody without ever succumbing to it. Their performances, naïf, tragic-comic and accurately expressionist, are due solely to their intuition and talent.

The music is also a key element. I didn't want the typical piano, which is how they show silent films at the Cinematheque. Alberto Iglesias suggested the idea of a quartet; I thought it ideal because if there's one kind of composition which Alberto has mastered it's the quartet. I have to confess I find the result very moving. In the best tradition of musical cinema, the melody mingles with the actors' movements, it gives a voice not just to the actors but also to the captions. The few texts which appear acquire a voice, rhythm and movement with the music. They're alive. But above all, the music situates the

story in the realm of emotion, and brilliantly avoids the danger of obscenity and grotesqueness, both of which can hover around a story like "Shrinking Lover."

Thanks to Paz Vega, Fele Martínez and Alberto Iglesias, "Shrinking Lover" becomes a lyrical, emotive, profound fantasy, despite its apparent frivolity.

Pina Bausch

In "All About My Mother" there was a poster of Pina in "Café Müller" (it was hanging on a wall in Cecilia Roth's son's room). I didn't know then that that choreographic piece would be the prologue to my next film. At the time I only wanted to pay homage to the German choreographer.

When I finished writing "Talk to Her" and looked at Pina's face again, with her eyes closed, and at how she was dressed in a flimsy slip, her arms and hands outstretched, surrounded by obstacles (wooden tables and chairs), I had no doubt that it was the image which best represented the limbo in which my story's protagonists lived. Two women in a coma who, despite their apparent passivity, provoke the same solace, the same tension, passion, jealousy, desire and disillusion in men as if they were upright, eyes wide open and talking a mile a minute.

Around that time, I saw "Masurca Fogo" in Barcelona and was struck by its vitality and optimism, its bucolic air and those unexpected images of painful beauty which made me cry, like Marco, from pure pleasure. Not to mention the "sighing beginning," which I had to reduce for narrative reasons. I'm referring to the beginning of the piece: A woman (Ruth Amarante) appears on a diaphanous stage, her hair is hanging loose and she's wearing an ankle length flowered dress. She picks up a 70s style microphone and holds it up to her mouth. It looks as if she's going to sing or talk, but she doesn't do either. After filling her lungs with air in a suspense-filled silence, she lets out a long, deep sigh. This is followed by another sigh... and another.

"Masurca Fogo" begins with the sadness of the absent Benigno (the sighs) and unites the surviving couple (Marco and Alicia) through a shared bucolic emotion: several couples are dancing in the country to the rhythm of a Cabo Verde mazurca, also accompanied by the sound of a little waterfall which flows miraculously from the grass in all its splendor.

If I had asked for it specifically I couldn't have got anything better. Pina Bausch had unknowingly created the best doors through which to enter and leave "Talk to Her."

Caetano Veloso

At the height of the promotional campaign for "The Flower of My Secret" we landed in Rio de Janeiro, after dragging ourselves through TV interview sets, premieres and crowded parties in New York, Los Angeles, Miami and Sao Paulo.

With the enthusiasm of a zombie, I looked out my hotel window at an explosive view of Río. I didn't want to move in the next hours, I couldn't.

Worn out, brain damaged from various attacks of jetlag (overpowered by the typical sensation of emptiness and in constant battle with Rossy de Palma because she was really excited by Brazil and only wanted to go partying), I was informed that we had a commitment: we were invited to the home of Caetano Veloso.

I already adored Caetano's music although I didn't know him personally, but in my physical and psychic state, the idea of moving, mingling with strangers, talking or listening, meant an effort verging on martyrdom. I tried to wriggle out of the commitment in the hotel, alleging an obvious and real affliction; but Chema Prado, who was accompanying Marisa Paredes, completely ignored my protests with that very Galician deafness of his and dragged me to Caetano's house by force.

I'm grateful to him now.

Caetano had just performed in Sao Paulo, he'd recorded the concert which would become "Fina estampa ao vivo" and, as a curiosity, he played for us his version (it's a reinvention rather than a version) of "Cucurrucucú paloma" and suddenly all my ills disappeared.

From that moment I wanted to include the song in one of my films. That's the other dream that has come true. In "Talk to Her," Caetano himself sings it live, accompanied by the maestro Morelenbaum. As we couldn't bring the whole orchestra, the version which appears in the film is even more stylized, heartrending and intimate than the one he played in Sao Paulo.

BENIGNO AND MARCO

Benigno (Javier Cámara)

Benigno's life has been spent around a bed. There was always a woman in the bed. First it was his mother, then Alicia. His mother installed herself in bed (and never left it again) when she still wasn't ill. It was her way of celebrating the fact she'd turned forty. Her husband had just left her and in the mornings the mirror had begun to hint that her beauty, eternal until that moment, was showing the first signs of its ephemeral nature. Everything happened at the same time. If it hadn't been for the help she got from Benigno (her son, a boy whose ugliness she never quite understood), the mother would have died of negligence.

Benigno looked after her day and night, and even studied nursing to learn how to take better care of her. He only left the house to go to his classes. He also studied beauty care and hairdressing, but he did that through a correspondence course. He didn't want his mother to deteriorate, he wanted to see her always beautiful.

He guided her on her walks inside the house. He bathed her, dried her, dressed her, did her make-up, fixed her hair and settled her in bed as if she were on a throne. And after that, he'd look at her. Despite all his care, his mother died twenty years later. The short walks around the sitting room weren't enough for her heart.

Before she died, she asked her son (Benigno was now a man of twenty five who had known neither female nor male): "What are you going to do when I die, Benigno?" "Kill myself, I guess," he replied quite naturally. If his mother weren't there, his life would be pointless.

After a flattered silence, his mother decided for him: "Well, you have to live, Benigno. When you no longer have to look after me, you'll have to look after yourself. Go out on the street, look out the windows, travel. Out there you'll find a horrible world, but you'll also discover things that will interest you and some of them you'll want for yourself and you'll fight for them."

Benigno opened his little eyes, filled with amazement at his mother's words. He went over to the window, pulled back the net curtain which had gone out of fashion over twenty years ago and for that reason now seemed modern, and looked out at the street. He ran his eye over the buildings opposite, he looked at the Decadance Ballet Academy diagonally across from his house, to the left. Placed there by fate so that he could contemplate it at his ease.

That was the first day he saw Alicia dance. She was an adolescent with very white skin who swayed in time to a soundless music (he couldn't hear it). After delighting in contemplating her face, her long neck, her shoulders, her breasts which were firmly outlined beneath her lycra top, Benigno thought that he wanted that adolescent for himself, and he admired his mother for her foresight.

Javier

Cámara is Benigno. Totally and completely. I'm sure that if Javier were to look for a job as a nurse he would get one (and also as a manicurist, a beautician and an embroiderer; all skills which, given the demands of the script, the actor had to learn until he mastered them). As well as sewing, combing and cutting hair, doing manicures, etc., he spent four months learning the many activities involved in tending to and caring for a body as matter. Bodies in a vegetative state need twenty four-hour care. Javier applied the same joy and dedication to his work as the character dedicated to Alicia in the story. His evolution from a slightly chubby, naïf, bouncy nurse, with a certain femininity acquired by his constant (and sole) contact with his mother, into a thin, bearded man, prisoner of a tragedy which only Marco can understand, separated from the only thing that keeps him alive, Alicia's presence... the evolution which the actor imprints on the character is prodigious. I fear that for a long time Benigno will accompany Javier Cámara as his shadow.

Marco (Darío Grandinetti)

Marco is the "man who cries," a good title for a film if only Sally Potter hadn't thought of it first.

Marco is Argentinean, sentimental and mysterious, sick with nostalgia, a traveler, a wandering journalist, a travel guide writer.

In the 90s, he meets Angela, who is still under age, for whom he feels instant passion. Shortly after, he discovers that the girl has got problems with heroin and soon they sink into a hell of aggression and lies.

Life in Madrid is unbearable and they start to travel in order to keep Angela away from drugs and from Madrid. Their relationship only works when they're running away. Marco makes use of the journeys to write a travel guide of each place; once she's got over her withdrawal symptoms, Angela is the best traveling companion imaginable. They wander through Istanbul, Havana, the Ivory Coast, Mexico, Santo Domingo, Brazil... always aimlessly. On each of the journeys they are confronted with unexpected, marvelous images. Ever since then, a sudden moment of unexpected beauty will make Marco cry because it reminds him of Angela and because he can no longer share it with her.

After five years and seven travel guides, Marco leaves Angela at her parents' house in her home town. With time, her parents manage to separate her from Marco and from drugs.

It's a very sad story. There's nothing worse than leaving someone you still love. That wound is never cured, or it takes ten years.

Marco has remained anchored in Madrid. He can't conceive of traveling without Angela, he's even nostalgic about her withdrawal symptoms. In a cardboard box, the kind used for moving house, he keeps hundreds of photos with her. Years later, he still doesn't dare open the box. He also keeps her notes apologizing to him each time he came home and she wasn't there. He hasn't dared to read them either.

When he meets Lydia she has just put an end to a love affair which is still beating strongly in her heart. Neither one knows the other's secret, nevertheless the mystery draws them together, like creatures of the same species.

Marco regains the pleasure of traveling. He accompanies Lydia by car to all the places where she fights.

Inside the car, Lydia clings to his hand in silence and he looks out at the countryside. And both feel relieved, leaning mutually on the other.

Dario

Grandinetti is Marco, undoubtedly the most complex role in the film and the one with the least visible embellishments. Darío gives a lesson in breadth of register. He has the greatest catalogue of looks that I know (with the priceless help of the director of photography, Javier Aguirresarobe. The density of the light and the shadows which he has given to the close-ups of Darío are of an explosive richness).

Darío has 1,000 eyes and each one of them expresses a precise, different emotion.

His refined, virtuoso technique is fortunately the kind that you don't notice. When Darío passes through the camera lens he is beautified and enhanced.

Just as Benigno is a character magnetized by a bed with a woman in it, Marco is a traveler, mobile, a wanderer (the few pieces of furniture in his house include a table with bicycle wheels, and the only paintings he has are two hearts and a map of the world which fills a whole wall). During the months that he remains anchored in the clinic, we see him continually walking along the corridors. Walking unhurriedly and almost always aimlessly, which is the nicest way to walk.

The list of actors who have known best how to walk in front of a camera (John Wayne, Gary Cooper, Robert Mitchum) will now have to include the name of Darío Grandinetti. His slow way of walking along the edge of the swimming pool, until he disappears into the darkness of the far end of the porch where Caetano Veloso is singing, is as moving as the tears he's trying to hide.

Lydia (Rosario Flores)

Lydia's father was a "banderillero," but he dreamed of becoming a bullfighter. He reared his daughter as if she were a man so that she would achieve what he couldn't. The girl inherited his same yearnings. But the bullfighting world is very chauvinistic. After the death of her father, her great and only support, Lydia had to face the prejudice and scorn of the professional bullfighters on her own. Many refused to fight alongside her, for the mere fact of being a woman. That was when the matador called "El Niño de Valencia" offered not just to share billing with her but to accompany her wherever necessary afterwards. They fell in love. This newsworthy romance, rather than her skill, kept Lydia in the limelight and she was able to fight regularly.

The couple appeared weekly in all the gossip magazines. "El Niño" was delighted, but it sickened her. She didn't like becoming famous that way, nor was it the kind of life she wanted to live with the man she loved. They finally broke up. Lydia still loved him but at that time her indignation was greater, or at least so she thought.

In a suicidal fit and given the lack of opportunities to fight, Lydia decided to fight six bulls, on her own. Unaware of the danger, or running to meet it, she longed for "El Niño" to

be in the bullring as a spectator, so that at least he'd feel guilty if one of the bulls should charge straight into her.

But that afternoon, covered with sand and blood (bull's blood), Lydia was a wonderful success. Marco was among the spectators...

Rosario

In Rosario I looked for strength of character and those sad, innocent eyes which go so well with a character defeated by abandonment. I also looked for and found a body which was both athletic and feminine. Dressed in the revealing bullfighter's breeches, Rosario looks like a bullfighter in the style of Manolete. And poured into a design by Dolce and Gabana, she is a stunning woman. Of all the female artists I know, Rosario is the only one who, when dressed as a bullfighter, looks like a bullfighter. Even the hat suits her.

But not everything in her is physical (although that's fundamental for her character). Rosario's eyes and her voice, childlike from the loss of her father, her only support in a world of chauvinists, are linked directly to her heart, and she has given Lydia's character authenticity, naturalness and a style which will undoubtedly be more appreciated by those who don't know her.

In the film Lydia is killed by the bull of bad conscience. When someone loves two people (in the end Lydia goes back to the bullfighter when she's still with Marco) that doesn't mean the pleasure is doubled, only the problems are. Lydia hates lying to Marco. When she finally decides to tell him everything she doesn't have the chance... And with that sense of unease she goes out into the ring.

A woman on her knees in front of the bull pen, ready to face the bull in that position, shouldn't be thinking about anything else, much less about two men. Because the bull can smell her thoughts and her weakness.

Alicia (Leonor Watling)

I know very little about Alicia. Only what is seen in the film. At times, the writer knows the characters' past and their future, far beyond the ending of the film. In this case, I have the same information as the spectator. Alicia's real film begins at the end, in the theater, when she meets Marco who has been so moved by the sighs in Masurca Fogo.

Perhaps, at some other time, I'll tell the story of the two of them, Marco and Alicia, but first I'd have to write it.

Alicia's mother died when she was a child. Her father is a psychiatrist and she is a dancer. Her skin is white and her expression severe, as if her premature development has made her mistrustful of the glances she attracts. She always occupies the same place in the bar exercises, next to a window, in the Decadance Academy. Her dancing mistress, Katerina

Biloba, an ex-ballerina and lonely like Alicia, adores her. Alicia makes the academy her home and Katerina her most solid emotional reference.

When Benigno sees her dance for the first time (from the window opposite) he doesn't hear the music. Alicia seems to be absorbed in an interior melody. That absorption will continue for years, on the bed in the "El Bosque" Clinic, a two-story building which looks like a detached house and in which Benigno is the model nurse.

Alicia's room is decorated with personal objects, things she had in her bedroom at home until, one rainy day, she was knocked down by a car. It was the first thing Benigno told her father: "Bring me something of hers, something personal..." "What kind of thing?" the confused father asked him. "Things that she has in her room... so that when she wakes up she won't feel she's in a strange place."

In her house, before the accident, Alicia had lava lamps on both her bedside tables. She was reading *The Night of the Hunter* (the masterpiece by Davis Grubb) and page 115 was turned down at one corner, as a marker. She also had an alarm clock and a photo of her parents when they were young. And two tiny, brightly colored boats, a souvenir which Katerina brought her from a trip she'd made to Salvador de Bahía to see the Bahian women dance. And a photo of Katerina. All these objects returned to her, on both sides of the bed again, in her room in the clinic. The alarm clock was still working but the marker in the novel hadn't moved from page 115.

The lava lamps (like the corridors and the treetops moved by the wind) are a metaphor for the curdled passing of time. Their thick bubbles, wandering ceaselessly in the depths of an oily liquid, suggest the mysterious limbo in which the beautiful, recumbent Alicia dwells.

Leonor

She's wonderful playing the sleeping beauty in the "El Bosque" Clinic. Her motionless body is so expressive and so moving! Anyone who thinks that simulating a coma is easy is mistaken. It isn't enough just to lie on a bed and close your eyes. Skin reacts to the slightest contact, and the nurses never stop working with her all day (massages, changing her position several times a day, checking her vital signs, giving her rubdowns with rosemary alcohol, putting drops in her eyes so they don't get dry, applying moisturizing creams, changing the bedclothes daily with the patient in the bed, washing her body every day, etc.)

In order to achieve the self control which allows one to disconnect from the exterior world, Leonor and Rosario took yoga classes (Yyengar, to be specific) for three months before the shoot. I wanted them to be sunk within the very depth of their beings, an unfathomable depth, and for that they had to be very relaxed.

Although she has scenes where she is speaking and is upright or with her eyes open, Leonor's presence is more obvious and more powerful the greater her absence. Let me

put it like this. Leonor isn't playing dead, something I don't think would be easy either. (Buñuel first chose Fernando Rey because he liked how he played a corpse in some film or other). Without words, without eyes, without the help of the slightest movement, Leonor Watling's body withstands the presence of two superb actors (Cámara and Grandinetti) without the spectator ever losing sight of her. She shares the scene with both of them and at times steals it and transports it to some mysterious place which even I don't know.

Watling is Alicia living in the darkest part of the other side of the looking glass. When, at the end, she looks at Marco in the theater, her eyes show in silence the long, dark road she has had to travel in order to be able to open them.

Leonor Watling fills the screen to overflowing with dreams and desires. The word is made flesh in her and I shall always be grateful to her for her generosity.

(Regarding the preparation, there was one point when Rosario, Leonor and Javier Cámara were spending the whole day doing classes of one kind or another. As well as the daily practice of yoga (the Yyengar type) Rosario had training and bullfighting classes every day with the maestro Macareno and Leonor was slogging away at dance classes with the ballet mistress Irena. In turn, Javier (along with the marvelous Mariola Fuentes) was being trained in the countless details involved in looking after a coma patient. Both Mariola and Javier did everything "for real." From the script, I emphasized that the actors should show their skill as nurses. Only in that way could one understand the total dependence of a body in a vegetative state. As well as nursing, Javier learned to embroider, to give a manicure and to cut hair. All the while, he was also on a strict diet to lose weight. And he did everything with an infectious joy and enthusiasm.)

Illustrious Supporting Actors

Geraldine Chaplin has been one of the great discoveries of this shoot. When I saw her in "Nashville" (Robert Altman) I already sensed that she was an actress for me. I adore her accent, a mixture of multiple accents, and her personality, lovable, simple, funny and diverse. Although they may seem very different, she's in the same line as Chus Lampreave, that kind of actress and woman who is made up of innocence, lack of prejudices, a natural goodness (which makes them very daring because they think that everyone is the same and so they are unaware of danger) and a delightful sense of humor. Both Chus and Geraldine can play any role, no matter how flamboyant and outrageous it may be, and they always seem natural, believable and affectionate even when they're playing unpleasant characters.

I've got a comedy pending with Geraldine. And another with Mariola Fuentes (a future Carmen Maura if she's given the opportunity).

From the start I was convinced that no matter how small the parts were, they would be played by professional actors. For me all the phrases are important and all the actions.

The fact that Loles León, Chus Lampreave, José Sancho, Mariola Fuentes, Helio Pedregal, Fele Martínez, Ana Fernández, Juan Fernández, Adolfo Fernández and Roberto Álvarez, for example, undertook to play such small roles (as well as showing a solidarity for which I thank them with all my heart) fills out the characters, prevents them from being diffused and gives them greater significance.

Among other novelties, the cast of "Talk to Her," with the exception of Chus, Loles, Sancho and Mariola, is made up of actors with whom I've never worked. The four leading actors are new for me and most of the supporting actors too. And the experience has been very stimulating.

I very much liked working with the new life blood of Spanish cinema, marvelous young actresses who have taken possession of the present and the future: Paz Vega, Elena Anaya, Mariola Fuentes, Carmen Machi, Ana Fernández, Beatriz Santiago, Lola Dueñas.

The Warmth of Color

I also want to welcome to my filmography the director of photography Javier Aguirresarobe, to whom I didn't have to explain the warmth of color, because on reading the script he felt the story with the same light as I did. Especially in locations like the clinic, which cinema has portrayed so many times and where I wanted to avoid convention. No coldness, no bluish tones, I told Javier. This clinic is a place where the characters spend most of their time, they live there, it's like their home. I didn't want the spectator to be faced with an atmosphere of pain or illness. What I wanted to show was the everyday life of some people who live in that place. We painted the walls a sienna-mustard color and the corridors grayish-green, with a kind of orange padded strip about three feet above the floor. That was my idea. Curiously, there's a hospital in *Bullit* which has the same colors.

Strindberg's biography says that Kafka refers to him in this way: "I don't read him to read him, but to cling to his breast."

For me "Talk to Her" is (pardon the sentimentality) the embrace I'd like to give to all the spectators, sinking against the breast of each one of them as Lydia sinks against Marco's back, at the party. And embraces must be warm, and the light that illuminates them must also be warm.

Pepe and the Narrative

The narrative follows a broken line which mustn't be noticed. That was the most difficult thing in this never-ending shoot. I'm used to mixing tones, genres, universes, but I'd never played so much with time, a few kitsch (and Hitchcockian) flashbacks in "Labyrinth of Passion," but not much else.

Here time passes in several directions, and the main action is interrupted by the appearance of other actions with their own significance, the dances at the beginning and the end, Caetano's performance, the appearance of "Shrinking Lover," etc. All those elements had me on tenterhooks until the last minute.

I never presume that things will turn out as I plan, however hard I work at it and however much every member of the team does exactly what I ask of him or her. I need to stick one image to another, and that one to the next, in order to see that what I wanted to tell is actually there. For better or worse, the editing is a box of surprises.

Broken time and a mixture of various narrative units work better when the action is more mental or interior, or happens in another dimension, as in David Lynch's films; in this kind of fantastic neo-realism, or naturalism of the absurd in which I move, plot ruptures can mean a jolt for the spectator who had become fond of a character and a story, and then I pull at him, I drag him away and force him to follow another character and another story.

Thanks to the wise and omnipresent editor Pepe Salcedo, "Talk to Her" overcomes all those difficulties and is, or so I believe, a complex film which, however, seems simple and transparent.

For content, I tend more and more towards emotions, and for the container, transparency.

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"TALK TO HER"

PEDRO ALMODÓVAR

Biography

He was born in Calzada de Calatrava, province of Ciudad Real, judicial district of Almagro and Archbishopric of Toledo, in the 50s. When he was eight, he moved with his family to Extremadura. There, he studied Primary and Secondary level with the Salesian Fathers and the Franciscans, disrespectively. His religious miseducation only taught him to lose faith in God. At that time, in Cáceres, he started going to the cinema, compulsively.

At sixteen he settled in Madrid, alone, without family or money, but with a very specific aim: to study and make films. It was impossible to enroll in the Official Film School, Franco had just closed it. Given that he couldn't learn the language (the form), he decided to learn the substance, and dedicated himself to living. It was the end of the 60s and, despite the dictatorship, Madrid was, for a provincial adolescent, the city of culture and freedom.

He had many sporadic jobs but couldn't buy his first Super-8 camera until he got a "serious" job in the National Telephone Company of Spain. He stayed there for twelve years as administrative assistant. Those years were his true education. In the morning (from very early) he was in contact with a social class which otherwise he would not have known so well: the Spanish middle class at the start of the consumer era. Their dramas and misfortunes. A gold mine for a future story teller. In the evening-night, he wrote, loved, performed theater with the group Los Goliardos, made films on Super-8mm. He collaborated with various underground magazines. He wrote stories, some of which were published. He was a member of a 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 shooting on 16mm, "Pepi, Luci, Bom..." had its première in 1980.

From that moment, cinema became his second nature. He wrote and directed. And he lived, enough to be able to carry on making up stories that were alive.

With "All About My Mother," he won the Oscar, the Golden Globe, the César, 3 European Film Awards, the David de Donatello, 2 BAFTAs, 7 Goyas and 45 other awards. The awards haven't changed either his perspective of the films he wants to make or his life, except maybe to add a certain pressure to both.

PEDRO ALMODÓVAR

Filmography

- 1974 /1979 - Various short films in Super 8mm and 16mm ("Salomé")
- 1980 - **Pepi, Luci, Bom and Other Girls From the Heap** ("Pepi, Luci, Bom y Otras Chicas de Montón")
- 1982 - **Labyrinth of Passion** ("Laberinto de Pasiones")
- 1983 - **Dark Habits** ("Entre Tinieblas")
- 1984/5 - **What Have I Done to Deserve This?!** ("¿Que He Hecho Yo Para Merecer Esto!")
Selected for New Directors/ New Films at MOMA/NY
- 1985 - **Trailer for Lovers of the Forbidden** ("Trailer Para Amantes de lo Prohibido")
- 1985/6 - **Matador**
Best Film / Best Director - Oporto Film Festival
- 1986 - **Law of Desire** ("La Ley del Deseo")
Glauber Rocha Award - Best Director - Rio Film Festival
New Generation Award - Los Angeles Film Critics
"Film Reporter" Audience Award - Best Film - Cannes Film Festival
- 1987 - **Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown** ("Mujeres al Borde de un Ataque de Nervios")
Best Film, Script, Actress, Supporting Actress, Editing - Goya Awards, Spain
Orson Welles award - Best Author (Foreign Language film)
Nastro d'Argento - (Italian Critics Award) - Best Director
David de Donatello (Italian Academy) - Best Director
"Ciak Award" - Best Actress - Venice Film Festival
Felix Award (European Film Academy)- Best Young Film - Best Actress
"D.W. Griffith" Award - National Board of Review
Best Foreign Film - New York Critics Circle
Nominated for Best Foreign Film Oscar and Golden Globe
- 1989 - **Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!** ("¡Atame!")
National Board of Review
Nominated for Best Foreign Film - César awards, France
- 1991 - **High Heels** ("Tacones Lejanos")
César - Best Foreign Film (France)
Prix Arletty
Gramado Film Festival - Best Director
- 1993 - **Kika**
Best Actress - Goya Awards - Spain
- 1995 - **The Flower of My Secret** ("La Flor de Mi Secreto")
Best Actress - Karlovy Vary Film Festival
Best Actress - ACE awards - New York
- 1997 - **Live Flesh** ("Carne Trémula")
Best Foreign Film - Best Actress - Nastro D'Argento Awards
Nominated for Best Film & Best Actor at the European Film Awards

1999 - **All About My Mother** ("Todo Sobre Mi Madre")
Cannes 1999 – Prix a la Mise-en-Scene, Prix Ecumenique
European Film Awards – Best European Film, Best European Actress,
Best Director (People's Choice Award)
FIPRESCI Award – Best Film Of the Year
Goya Awards (Spain) – Best Film, Best Director, Best Actress,
Best Original Score, Best Sound, Best Production,
Best Editing
Academy Awards (Oscar) – Best Foreign Language Film
Golden Globes - Best Foreign Language Film
National Board of Review – Best Foreign Language Film
New York Film Critics Circle - Best Foreign Language Film
Los Angeles Film Critics - Best Foreign Language Film
Chicago Film Critics Association - Best Foreign Language Film
Boston Film Critics Association - Best Foreign Language Film
Broadcast Film Critics Association - Best Foreign Language Film
César Awards (France) - Best Foreign Language Film
Lumiere Awards (French Film Critics) - Best Foreign Language Film
BAFTA Awards (UK) - Best Foreign Language Film, Best Director
British Independent Film Awards – Best Foreign Language Film
British Film Critics – Alfie Award - Best Foreign Language Film
London Film Critics Circle - Best Foreign Language Film
German Filmpreis - Best Foreign Language Film
David De Donatello Awards (Italy) - Best Foreign Language Film
Guldbagge Awards (Sweden) - Best Foreign Language Film
Danish Academy Award – Best Foreign Film
Polish Film Critics - Best Foreign Language Film
Variety International Filmmakers Award
Selected by Time Magazine and Entertainment Weekly as
"The Best Film of the Year."

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"TALK TO HER"

Cast

Although his enormous success in the television show "Seven Lives" and in Santiago Segura's "Torrente" have made him extremely popular in Spain in the last couple of years, **JAVIER CAMARA** (Benigno) has been working since the early nineties, in theatre (Harold Pinter's "The Homecoming"), film ("Allegre ma non troppo" and "Cuarteto de La Habana," both by Fernando Colomo) and television. He also participated recently in Julio Medem's "Lucia and Sex" and is currently shooting "Torremolinos" 1974, directed by Pablo Berger.

Born in Argentina, **DARIO GRANDINETTI** (Marco) made his film debut in 1984 in "Darse cuenta," directed by Alejandro Doria. His performances in the films of Eliseo Subiela have won him international recognition, particularly "The Dark Side of the Heart", for which he won the best actor award at festivals in La Habana, Biarritz and Gramado. He has also worked on several films of Alberto Lecchi ("El dedo en la llaga"), Jaime Chavarrí ("Sus ojos se cerraron") and Pablo Agazzi ("El día que murió el silencio"). For this last film he won the best actor award at the Cartagena Film festival. He is currently shooting "Tiempos de tormenta" in Spain, directed by Pedro Olea.

LEONOR WATLING (Alicia) caught the attention of Spanish audiences in her film debut, Pablo Llorca's "Todas hieren." Since then, her performances in films such as "La primera noche de mi vida" (Miguel Albadalejo), "La hora de los valientes" (Antonio Mercero) and "La espalda de dios," as well as her success in the TV series "Raquel busca su sitio," have made her one of the hottest young actresses in Spain today. Most recently she starred in Bigas Luna's "Son de mar" and "Deseo" directed by Gerardo Vera. She recently completed production on her first English language film "My Life Without Me," an El Deseo production starring Sarah Polley, Mark Ruffalo, Scott Speedman and Debbie Harry.

The youngest member of the Flores family (her mother Lola Flores is one of Spain's most beloved flamenco icons), **ROSARIO FLORES** (Lydia) has now made her mark both as an actress and a singer. She first stepped in front of a camera in 1982, in Eloy de la Iglesia's "Colegas," and worked in films such as Francisco Regueiro's "Diario de invierno" and Felix Rotaeta's "Chatarra," as well as in several television films and miniseries. During the nineties she concentrated on her career as a singer and released three very successful albums. Her return to the screen in "Hable con ella" has coincided with the release of her latest album, "Muchas flores."

Since her childhood appearance in "Limelight," **GERALDINE CHAPLIN** (Katerina Bilova) has honored to her illustrious surname in such classic films as "Doctor Zhivago" and "Nashville." In Spain she collaborated in many of the most celebrated films of Carlos Saura, including "Peppermint Frappe," "Cria cuervos, elisa vida mia" and "Mama cumple cien años." In the last decades she has appeared in films such as "The Age of Innocence" and "Chaplin," and series such as "Mother Teresa: In the Name of God's Poor."

"TALK TO HER"

Filmmakers

Executive producer on all of his brother's films since "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown," **AGUSTIN ALMODOVAR** (Executive Producer) is considered one of the leading producers in Spain. His objective at El Deseo S.A., their production company, is to provide Pedro with absolute creative freedom. He would also like El Deseo S.A. to be a breeding ground for new directors looking to make their first films. Along this line, El Deseo produced in 1992 the first feature film by young basque director Alex de la Iglesia, "Accion mutante." Since then, "El deseo" has produced Monica Laguna's "Tengo una cassa" and Daniel Calparsoro's "Pasajes," which was selected for the prestigious Quinzaine des Realisateurs at Cannes 1996. He was selected by "Millimeter" magazine as one of the top 50 producers in the world. Last year El Deseo S.A. also produced Guillermo del Toro's "The Devil's Backbone," and is currently in production with Isabel Coixet's "My Life Without Me."

ESTHER GARCIA (Director of Production) has been Director of Production in all of Pedro Almodóvar's films since "Matador." Efficient, precise and ordered, she has worked in almost every level of production since she began as an intern in the legendary TV series "Curro jimenez." She worked on over 40 films before she began to work at El Deseo, with directors such as Fernando Trueba, Fernando Colomo and Mariano Ozores. She won Goya Awards for Best Production for Alex de la Iglesia's "Accion mutante" and for "All About My Mother."

One of the top DP's working in Spain today, **JAVIER AGUIRRESAROBE** (Director of Photography) has worked with some of the country's most prestigious directors, including Fernando Trueba ("The Girl of Your Dreams"), Montxo Armendariz ("Secrets of the Heart"), Pilar Miró ("Beltenebros and el perro del hortelano"), Juanma Bajo Ulloa ("La madre muerta"), Imanol Uribe ("Dias contados") and Victor Erice ("The Quince Tree Sun). His work on Alejandro Amenabar's "The Others" has won him enormous praise around the world, as well as his fourth Goya award.

"Talk to Her" marks the fourth collaboration with with Pedro Almodóvar for **ALBERTO IGLESIAS** (Music), after "The Flower of My Secret," "Live Flesh" and "All About My Mother" (for which he won a Goya Award). His work in all of the films of Julio Medem, "Cows," "The Red Squirrel," "Earth," "The Lovers of the Artic Circle" and "Lucia and Sex," has been widely praised and garnered him several prizes, including four other Goya awards. He has also composed several pieces for the National Dance Company.

PEPE SALCEDO (Editor) has been the editor of all of Pedro Almodóvar's films, as well as the editor of such films as "Nobody Will Speak of Us When We're Dead" (Agustin Diaz Yañez), "Rowing with the Wind" and "The Detective and Death" (Gonzalo Suarez), "The Fencing Master" (Pedro Olea) and "El desencanto" (Jaime Chavarri) among others. He has won three Goya awards, most recently for "All About My Mother."

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