

'The Last Viking', with Mads Mikkelsen, to open 22nd Seville European Film Festival

- From November 7 to 15, the festival will showcase the finest European debuts of the year, winners at Berlin, Venice, Locarno and Cannes, which have chosen Seville for their Spanish premiere.
- The workshops 'Writing in Images', led by filmmaker Pablo Berger, and 'GUASA', directed by screenwriter Fernando Hernández Barral, are now open for registration.
- The Seville European Film Festival underlines its commitment to emerging filmmakers who bring a fresh twist to genres and cinematic language with a unique voice.

Seville, 18 September 2025. - 'The Last Viking', the highly anticipated new film by Danish director Anders Thomas Jensen, starring Mads Mikkelsen, will open the **22nd edition of the Seville European Film Festival**. A former protégé of Lars Von Trier and Thomas Vinterberg, Oscar winner in 2010 for the screenplay of 'In a Better World' and Academy Award winner for Best Short Film in 1999 ('Election Night'), Anders Thomas Jensen is the perfect example of an emerging talent whose career has blossomed into an extraordinary body of work.

In this sense, the Seville Festival also seeks to be a platform for the new voices of European cinema, programming this opening film as a dialogue with the very essence of the festival: a strong commitment to **first features and promising filmmakers**. This same vocation to foster new perspectives also extends to **FRAME Sevilla**, the festival's industry and training strand, which will host workshops such as "**Writing in Images**", led by internationally acclaimed Spanish filmmaker **Pablo Berger**, and **GUASA**, an innovative comedy lab conceived for Andalusian screenwriters, directed by screenwriter **Fernando Hernández Barral** and mentored by the creative team behind '**Sin gluten**'. In this way, the festival reaffirms itself as a space for discovery, learning, and projection for the voices set to shape the future of European cinema.

The Last Viking, the new film by Anders Thomas Jensen starring Mads Mikkelsen, to open the Festival

Organized by the City of Seville, the **22nd Seville European Film Festival** will open this year's program with the Spanish premiere of '**The Last Viking**', written and directed by **Anders Thomas**

Jensen (winner of the Best Screenplay Award at the Seville Festival in 2010 for Susanne Bier's 'In a Better World'), an emblem of the best Danish auteur cinema. With 'The last viking', arriving in the Official Section of the Seville Festival after rave reviews in Venice and Toronto, Anders Thomas Jensen crowns three decades of collaboration with actor **Mads Mikkelsen** ('Another Round', 'The Hunt'...), here in the delirious role of a man who, after suffering a mental disorder, forgets everything and believes himself to be John Lennon. Together, Jensen and Mikkelsen once again craft a dark comedy on identity, full of unpredictable twists, absurd humor and eccentric characters, continuing the path traced between 'Riders of Justice' (2020) and Jensen's debut feature, the stunning 'Flickering Lights' (2000).

First and second features acclaimed at Cannes, Berlin, Locarno and Venice choose Seville for their Spanish premiere.

The 22nd edition of the Seville European Film Festival defines itself as a true showcase of emerging talent. Across all its sections, the festival brings together first and second features from filmmakers whose works spearhead a European cinema determined to break or expand its own codes with daring and stimulating proposals.

In the **Official Section**, the festival will present '**We Believe You**', written and directed by Charlotte Devillers and Arnaud Dufeys, winner of **Best First Feature at the last Berlinale**. Shot in a single location and almost in real time, this film with subtle performances portrays a mother's struggle to protect her children from their father, in a justice system that scrutinizes her above all. Also competing will be '**Un Anno di Scuola**', the second feature by Laura Samani, following her acclaimed *Small Body* (Discovery Prize at the European Film Awards). Inspired by a novel by Giani Stuparich, and written by Elisa Dondi together with Samani, it tells the story of a young Swedish woman who moves to Trieste, Italy, to study in a vocational school for boys only, becoming the center of attention. Co-lead actor **Giacomo Covi won Best Actor at Venice**.

The **Embrujo Section**, dedicated to the most audacious, captivating and innovative voices of European cinema, will feature '**Dandelion's Odyssey**', a French-Belgian co-production of animation screened at Annecy and Cannes Critics' Week, in which four dandelion seeds fight for survival in a post-nuclear wasteland. After several award-winning shorts, Japanese filmmaker Momoko Seto debuts with this imaginative, mesmerizing, dialogue-free film blending digital animation and real photography. Also in Embrujo will be '**Olivia**', the enigmatic and Lynchian feature written, directed and edited by young Argentine filmmaker Sofía Petersen. Shot in Tierra del Fuego on 16mm and natural light, and performed mostly by local non-professional actors, it follows a young woman searching for her father, who has vanished in the mountains.

In the **Rampa Section**, showcasing filmmakers at the beginning of their careers with powerful and singular visions, two genre-bordering titles will stand out. '**God Will Not Help**', directed by Croatian filmmaker Hana Jušić, follows a Chilean widow traveling to her late husband's hometown in Dalmatia, disrupting the life of a closed rural community. Martelli and Veselčić **won Best Acting Duo at Locarno** for this tense, western-like drama. Meanwhile, '**Vitrival**', directed by Noëlle Bastin and Baptiste Bogaert, observes life in a quiet Belgian town where two young local police officers confront a wave of vandalism and suicides. Nominated for the Tiger Award in Rotterdam, this naturalistic and poignant comedy dives into rural life with a keen observational lens.

Also in **Rampa**, several partially autobiographical stories explore the political as personal. **'My Father's Shadow'**, directed by Akinola Davies Jr. and co-written with Wale Davies (creators of the Sundance-winning short *Lizard*), is the **first Nigerian feature ever to compete at Cannes**. This emotional social thriller follows a father, played by Şopé Dirisù ('His House', 'Gangs of London'...), and his children through a day in turbulent Lagos in 1993. **'Short Summer'**, by Serbian filmmaker Nastia Korkia, revisits childhood memories against the backdrop of the Second Chechen War. **Winner of the Lion of the Future for Best Debut in Venice**, it is a melancholic, visually striking meditation on childhood, time and loss. The personal also turns political in *Imago*, by Georgian filmmaker Déni Oumar Pitsaev, winner of the French Touch Jury Prize and the Oeil d'Or at Cannes. Set in the Caucasus valley among Chechen war refugees, this intimate autofiction transcends conventional documentary language with an organic, profoundly moving testimony.

Finally, the **Alumbramiento Section**, devoted to films outside the mainstream radar, will feature **'Renovation'**, a romantic comedy by young Lithuanian director Gabrielė Urbonaitė, about a woman torn between her boyfriend and a Ukrainian worker she feels a deeper bond with. Shot in Super 16mm, the film refreshes genre tropes with irony and lightness while addressing the echoes of the war in Ukraine and the traumas of the post-Soviet generation. Also in Alumbramiento, **'Sweetheart' (Gioia mia)**, the debut feature by Margherita Spampinato, arrives in Seville after winning two awards in Locarno. The story portrays the bond between a restless boy and a grumpy elderly woman forced to spend the summer together in Sicily, an endearing exploration of intergenerational gaps and the need to truly listen in a society obsessed with speaking faster and louder.

With these additions, the Seville Festival highlights its strong commitment to filmmakers who twist genres and film language with a voice of their own. These are new European voices to be discovered, daring and unorthodox, capable of sparking enthusiasm for cinema with stories and characters that go beyond convention while remaining profoundly humanist mirrors of the continent's culture and values.

The workshops 'Writing in Images', directed by filmmaker Pablo Berger, and GUASA, led by screenwriter Fernando Hernández Barral, open their registration calls today.

Within **FRAME Sevilla**, the festival's professional hub, workshops, roundtables, meetings, cycles and networking events will once again bring together the European film community.

Filmmaker **Pablo Berger**, whose latest film 'Robot Dreams' was nominated for the Academy Award, won two Goya Awards, and received accolades in Annecy, Sitges and the European Film Awards for Best Animated Feature, will lead **'Writing in Images'**. This 20-hour workshop, organized by the Seville European Film Festival and Fundación SGAE, is aimed at students, film enthusiasts and professionals. It combines lectures and practical activities, taking as case studies Berger's award-winning films 'Blancanieves' and 'Robot Dreams'. At the end, participants will work on a practical writing exercise under the filmmaker's direct supervision. Registration will be open on the Festival's website from today to October 3.

On the other hand, **GUASA**, a **pioneering comedy workshop** for Andalusian screenwriters, will be directed by screenwriter **Fernando Hernández Barral** (director and writer of 'Matusalén', starring Antonio Resines and Julián López). Developed as **part of the CreANDo program, an initiative by the Andalusian Regional Government in collaboration with the Seville, Málaga and Huelva film festivals**, GUASA will feature several training sessions—both theoretical and practical—mentored by the writing team of the hit series Sin gluten. With a clear goal of discovering new comedy talent, the workshop will culminate with participants developing and presenting a commissioned gag. With a maximum of 12 participants, GUASA will run for 24 hours across three days. Registration will remain open on the Festival's website from today to October 6.

Through these activities, the **Seville European Film Festival** reaffirms its role as a reference point for training, dialogue, exchange and projection for professionals across the audiovisual sector.

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Lourdes Palacios 655 903 260

Helena Madico 629 515 962

Virginia Moriche 636 724 593

Press Team, Seville European Film Festival

22 SEFF | 7-15 Nov. 2025

Calle Torneo, 18. Sevilla, 41002

@festivalsevilla