

# A Sneak Peek at the 33rd Miami International Film Festival

By **Lauren Cohen** ([http://www.socialmiami.com/contributor\\_profile.asp?id=26](http://www.socialmiami.com/contributor_profile.asp?id=26))

The 2016 Miami International is less than three months away, and now we're being treated to a small taste of what to expect from the Festival come March. And if the Opening Night film is any indication, we have one heck of a party in store. The Festival just announced that the Opening Night film will be Álex de la Iglesia's "My Big Night" ("Mi Gran Noche"), which revolves around the taping of a New Year's Eve special and the backstage shenanigans that threaten to derail the over-the-top production.



"Álex de la Iglesia has made a perfect pop movie with "My Big Night," says the Festival's executive director & director of programming Jaie Laplante. "This riotously funny film is much more than one of the very best films by de la Iglesia, it is a party!"

In a role that is a hilarious, self-referencing parody, Spanish superstar Raphael stars as "Alphonso," a legendary pop singer who is headlining a New Year's Eve TV special. Other familiar faces include Mario Casas, Santiago Segura, Carlos Areces, Blanca Suarez, Hugo Silva, Carmen Machi, and Carolina Bang.



Opening Night film "My Big Night"

But perhaps the most exciting announcement is the fact that Spanish superstar Raphael will attend the screening in person. A worldwide celebrity, Raphael has been making music for over five decades, and is considered a pioneer of modern Spanish music.

My Big Party, the Festival's Opening Night event, will follow at the historic Alfred I. DuPont Building right across the street, where attendees will ring in the beginning of the 2016 Festival with nonstop drinks, dancing, glitz & glamour – all the fun you've come to expect of a glittering New Year's Eve soirée.

In addition to the announcement of the Opening Night Film and Party, the revelations continue with the unveiling of the Festival's outstanding Spanish line-up, which features stars such as Ricardo Darín, Inma Cuesta, and Paco León. Highlights include "Spanish Affair 2" (its predecessor is the highest grossing film of all time at the Spanish box-office), and Julio Medem's "Ma Ma" starring Penélope Cruz. Continue reading to view the full list of announced titles:

- Cesc Gay's Truman, starring Ricardo Darín and Javier Cámara, already heralded as a front-runner for the 2016 Goya Awards (Spanish Academy Awards).
- Emilio Martínez Lázaro's Spanish Affair 2 (Ocho apellidos catalanes), the record-breaking sequel to Ocho apellidos vascos, the highest-grossing Spanish film of all-time at the Spanish box office.
- Fernando González Molina's Palm Trees in the Snow (Palmeras en la nieve), the epic, big budget adaptation of Luz Gabás's sweeping romantic novel of Spanish Guinea in Central Africa. The highly anticipated film, also starring Mario Casas, is set to open in Spain on Christmas Day.

- Agusti Villaronga's *The King of Havana* (El rey de La Habana), a scandalous adaptation of Cuban writer Pedro Juan Gutierrez's scabrous 1999 novel, filmed in and co-produced with the Dominican Republic.
- Federico Veiroj's *The Apostate* (El apostata), winner of Miami's 2015 post-production Encuentros prize sponsored by Knight Foundation, an eccentric comedy about a young Spaniard seeking to remove the official Catholic status from his birth records.
- Paula Ortiz's *The Bride* (La Novia), an earthy, sensual new adaption of Lorca's Blood Wedding, starring Inma Cuesta and Álex Garcia. Both actors are familiar to Miami audiences from their 2015 Festival visits with their most recent films, *Sidetracked* and *Kamikaze*.
- Daniel Guzmán's *Nothing in Exchange* (A cambio de nada), the big winner at the 2015 Málaga Film Festival, the feature film directorial debut of the popular actor;
- Juana Macías' *We Are Pregnant* (Embarazados), a delightful romantic comedy with a swoon-inducing lead performance by Spanish heartthrob Paco León;
- Gustavo Ron's *My Bakery in Brooklyn*, featured as part of Lee Brian Schragger's Culinary Cinema series

Additional majority Spanish production titles confirmed for the 2016 Festival include:

- Julio Medem's *Ma Ma*, starring Penélope Cruz
- Gracia Querejeta's *Happy 140* (Felices 140), starring Maribel Verdú
- Javier Ruiz Caldera's *Spy Time* (Anacleto: Agente secreto), a big-budget adaptation of the popular Spanish comic strip character
- The documentary *Snacks, Bites of a Revolution*, a look at the New Basque cuisine movement which so greatly influenced world culinary styles, part of the Lee Brian Schragger's Culinary Cinema program
- The world premiere of the short "The Lift" by Javier Polo, who previously presented his documentary *Europe in 8 Bits* to Miami audiences at the 2014 Festival

A seminar has also been confirmed:

- "From Doodles to Pixels" presentation and screening with animators, in partnership with Centro Cultural Espanol (CCE), Accion Cultural Española (AC/E), and Miami Animation and Gaming International Complex (MAGIC) at MDC.

**The 33rd annual Miami International Film Festival will take place March 4-13, 2016. Advance ticket packages, plus tickets for the Opening Night Film and Party, are already on sale at [www.miamifilmfestival.com](http://www.miamifilmfestival.com) (<http://www.miamifilmfestival.com>) or by calling 1-844-565-6433 (MIFF).**

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