

LA
CINÉMATHÈQUE
FILM CLUB



Latin American Film Series
Fall 2019

Juan José Campanella
b.1959

The Secret in their Eyes
2009

The Secret in Their Eyes

Jonathan Holland • October 4, 2009

Article sourced from Variety: <https://variety.com/2009/film/markets-festivals/the-secret-in-their-eyes-1200477075/>

A deeply rewarding throwback to the unself-conscious days when cinema still strove to be magical, "The Secrets in their Eyes" is simply mesmerizing. While it packs two generation-spanning love stories, a noirish thriller, some delicious comedy, a pointed political critique and much food for thought into more than two hours' compelling, grown-up entertainment, the film is still more than the sum of its parts. Repping a change of direction for Juan Jose Campanella, whose "The Son of the Bride" also starred Ricardo Darin, this is an altogether darker, more complex piece of work, as well as Campanella's finest film.

In Argentina, which it will rep in the foreign-language film Oscar race, the mid-August release has met with unusual critical and commercial acclaim. "Eyes" is likely to shine similarly in a range of offshore territories.

Recently retired Benjamin (Darin), a former criminal-court employee, has decided to write a novel based on a rape and murder that occurred 20 years ago — a crime he believes has never been solved. He shares his intentions with judge Irene (Soledad Villamil), for whom he has long carried a secret torch and who — for reasons which soon become clear — is unsure about the idea.

Flashbacks set just before the late-'70s arrival of the military junta show an Argentina already in the grip of judicial corruption. (The pic is vague about specifics, but supplies enough political background for auds to make the necessary connections.) The dead woman was the young wife of Morales (Pablo Rago); the two immigrant workers arrested for the crime have clearly been beaten into confessing.

Roused to action, and aided by his drunken barfly colleague Sandoval (Argentinean comedian Guillermo Francella), Benjamin sets about identifying the real perp, their clumsiness generating some wonderful comic business along the way.

It's typical of the pic's striking fusion of thriller and romance that Benjamin is alerted to the possibility that Gomez (Javier Godino) might be the killer by photographs in which Gomez is staring at the victim. "Eyes talk," one character says, and indeed, eyes function beautifully in the film as both vehicles of passion and instruments of observation.

Tracking down Gomez is fraught with difficulties. Benjamin becomes determined to have the case formally reopened, and his struggles to do so rep a barbed attack on the way power employs bureaucracy to obfuscate the path to justice. The pic's second half slows to explore the present consequences of these goings-on.

Aided by helmer's fluid editing, "Secret" shuttles smoothly between the busy past and a present replete with satisfyingly extended takes, such as when Benjamin and Irene flirtatiously debate the transforming power of memory, a key theme in terms of 20th-century Argentinian history. Pacing here is expertly judged, moving between suspenseful scenes and delicate, pin-drop dialogue, and the outstanding thespians generate real chemistry by taking all the time they need — which is never a second too long.

Powerfully understated, Darin explores every psychological shade of a moral man who, having been beaten down by the system, now seeks the fulfillment life has denied him; the richness of the perf, which encompasses both younger and older versions, suggests that we are witnessing the arc of an entire life. Villamil

plays the beautiful, statuesque Irene as insecure beneath her veneer of professional power, while Francella, though responsible for many of the laughs, movingly brings out the loneliness beneath the comedy. Rago's Morales is somewhat limited by his role as the distraught victim, but is allowed to blossom in a hauntingly intense scene later on.

Visually, the film is straightforward, with repeated tight close-ups of faces, per the title, providing the only stylistic idiosyncrasies (these shots also reveal the fine makeup work in aging the characters). But room is found for one memorable tour-de-force sequence set in a packed soccer stadium, the camera swinging and swooping as it goes in search of a single figure among the thousands.

Federico Jusid's score aptly tends toward the intimate and lyrical, though with occasional bursts of the stately. Print screened for review includes one scene of full-frontal nudity.

Filmography as Director

- **The Weasel's Tale** (2019)
- 5 episodes of **Halt and Catch Fire** (2014-17) TV series
- 9 episodes of **Colony** (2016-17) TV series
- 1 episodes of **Cannibals** (2015) TV series
- **Underdogs** (2013)
- 7 episodes of **The Man of Your Dreams** (2011-12) TV series
- 7 episodes of **Recordando el show de Alejandro Molina** (2011) TV mini-series
- 5 episodes of **House** (2007-10) TV series
- 17 episodes of **Law and Order: Special Victims Unit** (2000-10) TV series
- **The Secret in their Eyes** (2009)
- 1 episode of **30 Rock** (2006) TV series
- 1 episode of **Six Degrees** (2006) TV series
- 7 episodes of **Vientos de agua** (2006) TV mini-series
- **Avellaneda's Moon** (2004)
- 1 episode of **Dragnet** (2003) TV series
- 1 episode **The Guardian** (2002) TV series
- 2 episodes of **Law & Order: Criminal Intent** (2002) TV series
- 1 episode of **Ed** (2002) TV series
- **Son of the Bride** (2001)
- 8 episodes of **Strangers with Candy** (2000) TV series
- **El mismo amor, la misma lluvia** (1999)
- **Love Walked In** (1997)
- 6 episodes of **Lifestories: Families in Crisis** (1992-96) TV series
- 2 episodes of **Remember WENN** (1996) TV series
- 1 episode of **CBS Schoolbreak Special** (1995) TV series
- **The Boy Who Cried Bitch** (1991)
- **The Contortionist** (1988) short
- **Victoria 932** (1984) documentary
- **Prioridad nacional** (1979) short

The Secret in their Eyes

Roger Ebert • April 21, 2010

Article sourced from RogerEbert.com: <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/the-secret-in-their-eyes-2010>

4/4 Stars

"The Secret in Their Eyes" opens with the meeting, after many years, of Benjamin (Ricardo Darin) and Irene (Soledad Villamil). She is a judge. He is a retired criminal investigator. They are just a little too happy to see each other. Twenty-five years ago, when she was assistant to a judge and he was an investigator under her, they were involved in a brutal case of rape and murder. Benjamin visited the crime scene, and the dead woman's corpse spoke eloquently of the crime's brutality. Two workmen were arrested and convicted. Benjamin was never convinced of their guilt. Now he tells Irene that on his own time he wants to write about the case.

This commences an absorbing back and forth journey through time, between Buenos Aires in 1974 and 2000, which reopens both the crime and the unacknowledged feeling that has remained all these years between Irene and Benjamin. That's where their personal appeal comes into play. The actress Soledad Villamil is, forgive me, my idea of a woman. Grown-up, tallish, healthy, brunette, sane and perhaps she was cast for her eyes, because the film contains a lot of closeups, and they're required to conceal secrets. Think of Anne Archer. Playing Irene at ages 25 years apart, she is never too young or too old, but standing right there.

Ricardo Darin makes her worthy partner as Benjamin. His rank was too low, his pay too small, her presence too assured for him to trust the signals he must have known she was sending. He's one of those men on whom a beard seems inevitable. There is a sadness about him. He has never stopped thinking about the murder case, and we understand -- although the movie is indirect about this -- that the investigation was mishandled at the time because of Argentina's diseased right-wing politics.

Without being too obvious about it, the film reassembles the strands of two stories, the murder case and the unfinished emotions between Benjamin and Irene. It is filled with vivid characters. Sandoval (Guillermo Francella) is Benjamin's alcoholic assistant in the investigation, one of those drunks who may be incompetent but is not useless. He and Benjamin, and all the legal-side workers, engage in the droll formality of addressing one another by fanciful titles. Morales (Pablo Rago) is the husband of the dead woman, still obsessed with her death. Gomez (Javier Godino) has always been Benjamin's real suspect, and there is a scene involving him in a soccer stadium that I have no idea how it could have been filmed, special effects or not.

Juan Jose Campanella is the writer-director, and here is a man who creates a complete, engrossing, lovingly crafted film. He is filled with his stories. "The Secret in Their Eyes" is a rebuke to formula screenplays. We grow to know the characters, and the story pays due respect to their complexities and needs. There is always the sense that they exist in the *now* and not at some point along a predetermined continuum. Sometimes I watch a film unspool like a tape measure, and I can sense how far we are from the end. Sometimes my imagination is led to live right along with it.

"The Secret in Their Eyes" surprised many by winning the 2010 Academy Award for best foreign-language film. Michael Haneke's "The White Ribbon," another considerable film, was thought to be the front-runner. The academy did a good thing when it reformed the foreign-language film voting, requiring all voters to see all five finalists. In 2009, with the Japanese winner "Departures," and again in 2010, the voters had an advantage over the rest of us. Who is to say if they were right? They voted as they felt, and in today's unhappy

distribution scene, the Oscar means your chances of seeing this film are much increased. You won't regret it. This is a real movie, the kind they literally don't make very much anymore.

A 10 Movie Introduction To Argentine Cinema

George G • Nov 13, 2018

Article sourced from Cinapse: <https://cinapse.co/10-amazing-argentine-movies-youve-probably-never-beard-of-92a97124fc41>

Argentina has a vibrant and active film industry, complete with its very own A-List, from tip-top directors like Pablo Trapero to larger-than-life actors like Ricardo Darín. Weirdly, it's not too well-known in the English-speaking world. So, if you're one of the many people who don't know much about Argentine cinema, you're in for a treat: and trust me, there's a lot more where these came from. In no particular order...

1. The Secret in Their Eyes (2009)

Director: Juan José Campanella

Starring: Ricardo Darín, Soledad Villamil, Guillermo Francella

Spanish: El Secreto de sus Ojos

Runtime: 129 minutes.

This crime/romance drama tells the story of an unsolved murder from the early 70s, a time of extreme political repression in Argentina, that still haunts a retired public prosecutor and his former boss 25 years later. Through jumps from the past to the present day, we're shown an incredible tale that blends drama with the crime, mystery, thriller, and romance genres. The deserved winner of the 2009 Oscar for Best Foreign Film, it was adapted into a Hollywood remake in 2015 that you should absolutely avoid. You can't beat the original!

2. The Clan (2015)

Director: Pablo Trapero

Starring: Guillermo Francella, Peter Lanzani

Spanish: El Clan

Runtime: 108 minutes

A smash-hit in Argentina, where it sold more tickets in 2015 than any other film, this movie tells the true story of the Puccio family. Seemingly normal and middle-class, they of course have a secret: they sort of like to kidnap people for ransom. This thrilling true-crime story is brought to life expertly by a team of star (in Argentina!) actors and one of the country's best directors. If you like blockbusters, there's no better way to get acquainted with Argentine cinema than with its biggest-ever.

3. Truman (2015)

Director: Cesc Gay

Starring: Ricardo Darín, Javier Cámara

Spanish: Truman

Runtime: 109 minutes

In this Spanish-Argentine co-production, a terminally-ill Argentine man living in Spain receives a surprise visit from his best friend, all the way from Canada. Together, they set off on a quest to find a new home for Truman, who is not the American president, but the dying man's elderly dog. It's a fantastic reflection on friendship, masculinity, and unconditional love, taking viewers on an emotional rollercoaster: often hilarious, sometimes infuriating, at times tear jerking. To top it off, the chemistry between the two stars is some of the best you will ever see on-screen. It's no surprise that the film swept the Goya (Spanish Oscar) awards in 2016, winning Best Film, Best Actor, and Best Supporting Actor.

4. The Distinguished Citizen (2016)

Directors: Gastón Duprat, Mariano Cohn

Starring: Oscar Martínez

Spanish: El Ciudadano Ilustre

Runtime: 118 minutes

A Nobel-prize winning author who became famous writing stories set in his small, backwoods hometown is invited to return there for the first time in 40 years. On a whim, he decides it's finally time to go back, and the result is an often surreal comedy-drama where half the town is delighted to finally receive their most famous son, while the other half is delighted to finally have the chance to confront him about the way they've been depicted in his books. An excellent film with a very unique plot.

5. Nine Queens (2000)

Director: Fabián Bielinsky

Starring: Gastón Pauls, Ricardo Darín, Leticia Brédice

Spanish: Nueve Reinas

Runtime: 114 minutes

One of the best heist films ever made, Nine Queens is an exciting, non-stop rush of twists and turns that easily holds the attention of any viewer from start to finish. Two small-time yet ingenious conmen happen upon each other by chance and end up joining forces for the biggest heist of their lives, with the stakes getting higher every minute. The film was an unexpected international smash-hit, inspiring remakes in both Hollywood and Bollywood as well as catapulting Darín to stardom.

6. Intimate Stories (2002)

Director: Carlos Sorín

Starring: Javier Lombardo, Antonio Benedicti, Javiera Bravo

Spanish: Historias Minimas

Runtime: 92 minutes

With a cast made up almost entirely of locals with no prior acting experience, this anthology film follows three different people on their own respective, interlinked voyages across the picturesque Patagonian desert of Argentina. They aren't special people and their quests aren't world changing, yet their journeys mean the world to each of them. Its uniquely authentic, realist feel, breathtaking visuals, loveable characters, and simple yet compelling storylines all come together to render it an instant classic.

7. The Man Next Door (2010)

Directors: Mariano Cohn, Gastón Duprat
Starring: Rafael Spregelburd, Daniel Aráoz
Spanish: El Hombre de al Lado
Runtime: 110 minutes

A rich and successful architect living in a world-famous mansion has his life upended when a lower-class used car salesman makes a window in a dividing wall that happens to overlook his spacious yard. Seen through the eyes of a rich man during his one-sided clash with someone he'd otherwise never interact with, this film examines class conflict in a unique way, contrasting the loveable-yet-rough working-class stereotype with that of the superficial and emotionally barren bourgeois.

8. Wild Tales (2014)

Director: Damián Szifron
Starring: Ricardo Darín, Oscar Martínez, Leonardo Sbaraglia, Érica Rivas
Spanish: Relatos Salvajes
Runtime: 122 minutes

A blockbuster anthology featuring many of Argentina's most important actors, this movie is made up of six different irreverent, hilarious, over-the-top, yet strangely satisfying stories that all share one unifying theme: our latent desire to just let it all go and lose control. It includes a battle to the death between a hillbilly and a businessman on a deserted highway, a traditional Jewish wedding gone horribly wrong, and a man who does what we all dream of when dealing with endless bureaucratic back-and-forths. What's not to like? Nothing, apparently, as it sold the most tickets of any film in Argentina in 2014.

9. Chinese Take-Away (2011)

Director: Sebastián Borensztein
Starring: Ricardo Darín, Ignacio Huang
Spanish: Un Cuento Chino
Runtime: 93 minutes

The Spanish name for this film translates to 'A Chinese Story', a common phrase in Argentina that means 'telling tall tales', or, more simply, 'bullshit'. This double meaning is the perfect description for this movie, where a man leaves China to seek a new life in Argentina after a cow quite literally falls from the sky, killing his bride-to-be. Unfortunately for him, the first person he runs into is the owner of a small hardware store who is absolutely set in his simple routine, with seemingly no interest in going out of his way to help out a man he can't even communicate with. Of course, he does it anyway. A hilarious and heartwarming film about two unlikely friends brought together after two one in a billion chances.

10. How Most Things Work (2015)

Director: Fernando Salem
Starring: Verónica Gerez, Rafael Spregelburd, Pilar Gamboa

Spanish: Cómo Funcionan Casi Todas las Cosas

Runtime: 93 minutes

When her father dies unexpectedly, a toll-booth operator living in a remote, barely populated region decides to finally search for her mother who left the family and moved to Italy when she was a child. To raise money for the trip, she takes a job as a travelling saleswoman, selling a book that claims to answer ‘most of life’s questions’. A slow-paced, relaxing and oddly charming affair that always keeps the viewer guessing, this drama offers a unique take on the road movie genre.

That’s all — for now. I hope you enjoy your introduction to a new world of cinema!

Cinema of Argentina

Article sourced from Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cinema_of_Argentina

Cinema of Argentina refers to the film industry based in Argentina. The Argentine cinema comprises the art of film and creative movies made within the nation of Argentina or by Argentine filmmakers abroad.

The Argentine film industry has historically been one of the three most developed in Latin American cinema, along with those produced in Mexico and Brazil. Throughout the 20th century, film production in Argentina, supported by the State and by the work of a long list of directors and actors, became one of the major film industries in the Spanish-speaking world.

Argentina has won sixteen Goya Awards for Best Spanish Language Foreign Film, which makes it the most awarded country. It is also the first Latin American country that has won Academy Awards, in recognition of the films *The Official Story* (1985) and *The Secret in Their Eyes* (2009).

History

The beginning

In 1896, French photographer Eugene Py was working for the Belgian Henri Lepage and the Austrian Max Glücksmann at the 'Casa Lepage', a photographic supplies business in Buenos Aires. The three all saw the debut of the Lumière Cinématographe in Argentina,"with a picture of the Lumière's, took place on July 18, 1896" at the Teatro Odéon, only a year after its debut in Paris.

Lepage then imported the first French cinematographic equipment into the country and though Eugenio Py who, using a Gaumont camera in 1897, is often credited for the first Argentine film, *La Bandera Argentina* (which consisted of a flag of Argentina waving in the wind at the Plaza de Mayo), the credit belongs to German-Brazilian Federico Figner, who screened the first three Argentine films on 24 November 1896 (shorts depicting sights of Buenos Aires). Earning renown, Py continued to produce films for exhibition at the Casa Lepage for several years, following up with *Viaje del Doctor Campos Salles a Buenos Aires* (1900, considered the country's first documentary) and *La Revista de la Escuadra Argentina* (1901); by that time, the first projection halls had opened, working as part of the cross-national film production, distribution and exhibition system developed by Glücksmann in Argentina, Uruguay and Chile.

Early developments

Several Argentine artists continued to experime with the new invention, making news shorts and documentaries. Eugenio A. Cardini filmed *Escenas Callejeras* (1901) and Mario Gallo made the first Argentine film with a point-of-view: *El fusilamiento de Dorrego* ("Dorrego's Execution," 1908). Other directors such as Ernesto Gunche directed early documentaries.

The Argentine history and literature provided the themes of the first years of film-making. One of the first successes of the national cinema was *Nobleza Gaucha* of 1915, inspired by *Martín Fierro*, the gaucho poem by José Hernández. Based on José Mármol's novel, *Amalia* (1914 film) was the first full-length movie of national production, and in 1917 *El apóstol*, a satiric short on president Hipólito Yrigoyen, became the first animated

feature film in world cinema. Another notable 1917 debut, for Francisco Defilippis Novoa's *Flor de durazno*, was Carlos Gardel.

Directors such as José A. Ferreyra began to work on producing films in Argentine cinema, releasing films such as *Palomas rubias* (1920), *La Gaucha* (1921) and *Buenos Aires, ciudad de ensueño* in 1922. Films that followed included *La Maleva*, *Corazón de criolla*, *Melenita de oro*, *Leyenda del puente inca* (1923), *Odio serrano*, *Mientras Buenos Aires duerme*, *Arriero de Yacanto* (1924) and *El Organito de la tarde* and *Mi último tango* (1925).

In 1926, Ferreyra released *La Vuelta al Bulín*, *La Costurerita que dio aquel mal paso* and *Muchachita de Chiclana* followed by *Perdón, viejita* (1927). Many of these Ferreyra films featured two of the decade's most popular stars, Alvaro Escobar and Elena Guido.

Towards the end of the decade, directors such as Julio Irigoyen began to release films such as *Alma en pena* in 1928. Films such as these began to feature the Argentine culture of tango dancing into films, something which rocketed later in the 1930s after the advent of sound.

1930s–1950s: The Golden Age

In 1930, *Adiós Argentina* became the first Argentine film to have a soundtrack. The film starred actresses such as Libertad Lamarque and Ada Cornaro who both debuted in the film.

In 1931, José A. Ferreyra directed *Muñequitas porteñas*, the first Argentine film to be made with Vitaphone sound synchronisation. That year, Ferreyra made a second sound film, *El Cantar de mi ciudad*, encouraging other early directors to make the transition to sound.

Movietone arrived in 1933 and it allowed both voice and music in motion pictures. The first two Argentine cinematographic studios were created: *Argentina Sono Film* was founded by Ángel Mentasti; *Lumitón* was created by a partnership led by Enrique Susini, who was instrumental in the introduction of television to Argentina in 1951.

The first disc-less sound film was *Tango* (1931), directed by Luis Maglia Barth and a key film of the period was the tango film *Dancing* which saw the birth of a number of Argentine stars such as Amelia Bence and Tito Lusiardo; other popular actors from the era included Aida Alberti, Armando Bo, Floren Delbene and Arturo García Buhr. Two such features which have endured in local culture are *Honeysuckle*, starring Libertad Lamarque and *Casamiento en Buenos Aires*, starring Niní Marshall. The two 1939 films each featured themes that have become Argentine musical standards, likewise immortalizing the two leading ladies.

Other films included: *El alma del bandoneón*, Mario Soffici, 1935; *La muchacha de a bordo*, Manuel Romero, 1936; *Ayúdame a vivir*, 1936 by Ferreyra; *Besos brujos* (1937) by Ferreyra; *La vuelta al nido* (Leopoldo Torres Rios, 1938) and *Así es la vida* (1939) directed by Francisco Mugica.

Manuel Romero was a prominent director of the mid-to-late 1930s and worked in comedy based films often with rising Argentine star Luis Sandrini in films such as *Don Quijote del altillo*.

The film industry in Argentina reached a pinnacle in the late 1930s and 1940s when an average of forty-two films were produced annually. The films usually included tango, but even when a tango theme was omitted most cinema from this period still included humble heroes and wealthy villains. In these films, it portrayed hard work and poverty as ennobling and depicted the poor as the primary beneficiaries of Juan Perón's economic

policies. These films, in part supported by Perón, were seen as part of the political agenda of peronism. By supporting a film industry that attacked greed and supported the working class, Perón was able to influence the attitudes of his constituency to build public appeal.

The growing popularity of the cinema of the United States, pressure from the Roman Catholic Church and increasing censorship during the Perón presidency limited the growth of Argentine cinema somewhat, not least because harassment led to the exile of a number of prominent actors, among them Alberto de Mendoza, Arturo García Buhr, Niní Marshall and Libertad Lamarque, whose rivalry with her colleague Eva Duarte turned against her when the latter became First Lady in 1946. Argentine cinema began losing viewership as foreign titles gained an increasing foothold in the Argentine market. The problem eventually became so bad that Argentina tried to curb the influx with the Cinema Law of 1957, establishing the "Instituto Nacional de Cinematografía" to provide education and funding.

Among the era's most successful films were: *Historia de una noche*, Luis Saslavsky, 1941; *La dama duende*, Luis Saslavsky, 1945; *Malambo* (Lucas Demare and Hugo Fregonese, 1945); *Albeniz* (Luis César Amadori) starring Pedro López Lagar (1947); *Pelota de trapo* (1948) and *Crimen de Oribe* (1950), Leopoldo Torres Ríos; and *Las aguas bajan turbias*, by Hugo del Carril, 1952. One of the few Argentine actors who made a successful transition into directing was Mario Soffici, who debuted behind the camera in 1935 to acclaim with *El alma del bandoneón* and went on to become an institution in Argentine film over the next generation; among his most memorable work was the film adaptation of Marco Denevi's bestselling mystery, *Rosaura a la diez* ("Rosaura at Ten O'Clock"), for whose 1958 screen release Soffici wrote, directed and starred.

In 1958, the film *Thunder Among the Leaves* directed by Armando Bó was released. The film featured the later sex-symbol Isabel Sarli in her first starring role, and marked the beginning of her partnership with future husband Armando Bó, which would span almost three decades and made numerous sexploitation films. Now considered a classic, a scene in which she bathes in a lake was the first one to feature full frontal nudity in Argentine cinema. The film was a highly controversial box-office success; it has been described as a "boom" and "scandalous" and shocked the mostly Catholic Argentine society. In November 1958, *The News and Courier* reported "[a] saucy Latin lass has smashed South American box office records with the most daring dunking since Hedy Lamarr disrobed to fame in *Ecstasy*." The movie's premiere in Montevideo, Uruguay broke box office records, and Sarli's bath scene "rocked some Latin American capitals". However, Sarli was panned by fellow filmmakers for the nude scene.

Television, as in the United States, began to exert pressure on the film market in the 1950s; on the air since the 1951 launch of Channel 7 (public television), Argentine television programming is the oldest in Latin America.

First "New Cinema"

Since the late 1950s a new generation of film directors took Argentine films to international film festivals. The first wave of such directors was Leopoldo Torre-Nilsson, who "explored aristocratic decadence", Fernando Ayala, David Jose Kohon, Simon Feldman and Fernando "Pino" Solanas, who began by making *La Hora de los Hornos* ("Hour of the Furnaces", 1966–68) the first documentaries on the political unrest in late-1960s Argentina (at great risk to himself).

Directors such as Tulio Demicheli and Carlos Schlieper began to emerge who often both wrote and directed them. A second generation that achieved a cinematographic style were José Martínez Suárez, Manuel Antín and Leonardo Favio.

1960s and 1970s

Period-piece master Leopoldo Torre Nilsson (left) with Alfredo Alcón during the filming of *El Santo de la Espada* (1970).

Kurt Land directed *El asalto* in 1960 starring Alberto de Mendoza, a crime drama shot in black and white. Lautaro Murúa, a Chilean actor working in Argentine cinema directed *Alias Gardelito* in 1961. The film showed strong political and social undertones and is about the difficulty of living an honest life in the face of an unrelenting poverty. The title of this story is taken from the name of the great Argentine singer Carlos Gardel, the idol of the antihero Toribio portrayed by Alberto Argibay. Toribio's goal in life is to emulate the famous singer and making his own way successfully in the music business. Yet at the same time, he does not stop his illegal means of making ends meet, stealing and petty thievery. Films such as *A hierro muere* starring Alberto de Mendoza and Olga Zubarry and *Accidente 703* in 1962 were often co-produced with Spain and often featured both Argentine and Spanish born actors.

In 1963, comedy films became to feature in Argentine cinema, and films such as *Alias Flequillo* in 1963 directed by Julio Saraceni starred comedians such as José Marrone. *Las Aventuras del Capitán Piluso en el Castillo del Terror* starred comedians such as Alberto Olmedo who appeared in the genre throughout the 1960s and 1970s appearing in 1967's *El andador* and other slap-stick comedies. Argentine film and TV was largely limited to light subjects in the perilous late 1970s.

The trend towards Ciné Vérité so evident in France in the early 1970s found an Argentine exponent in stage director Sergio Renán. His 1974 crime drama *La tregua* ("The Truce"), his first foray into film, was nominated for an Oscar. The same year, Osvaldo Bayer cooperated with the Province of Santa Cruz to make *La patagonia rebelde* as an homage to a violently quelled 1922 shepherds' strike.

Nostalgia was captured by Leopoldo Torre Nilsson, whose reworking of Argentine literary classics like *The Hand in the Trap* (1961), *Martin Fierro* (1968), *The Seven Lunatics* (1973) and *Painted Lips* (1974) earned him a cult following. Similar in atmosphere, Jose Martinez Suarez's moody *Los muchachos de antes no usaban arsenico* ("Older Men Don't Need Arsenic", 1975) takes a turn at murder worthy of Alfred Hitchcock. It was memorable as Mario Soffici's last role.

Towards the mid-to-late 1960s, directors such as Armando Bo produced sex comedies which shocked the audience as they were soft porn and displayed nudity and sex not seen in the industry before. This preference continued into the 1970s, with Jorge Porcel's suggestive comedies.

"During the early 1970's, Argentina came apart. Government repression was met by insurrections and terrorism. Solanas and Getino contributed by filming two documentary interviews with the exiled Peron. They also founded a magazine, *Cine y liberacion*. Getino directed *El Familiar* (1972), an allegorical fiction feature on the destine of Latin America. Other film makers continued to make Peronist films, and ultra-left groups such as *Cine de Base* emerged." "In 1976, this period of militant documentary and cinematic innovation was violently

ruptured by the murder/disappearance of three documentary filmmakers by the Argentine military: Gleyzer, Pablo Szir and Enrique Juarez."

Heavily censored from 1975 until about 1980, Argentine film-makers generally limited themselves to light-hearted subjects. Among the productions during that era was Héctor Olivera's adaptation of Roberto Cossa's play, *La nona* (Grandma, 1979). The dark comedy became a reference to the foreign debt interest payments that later saddled the Argentine economy. One director who, even as a supporter of the military regime, delved into middle-class neuroses with frankness was Fernando Siro, an inventive film-maker seemingly insensitive to many of his colleagues' tribulations, many of whom were forced to leave during the dictatorship. Though his attitudes distanced him from his peers and public, his 1981 tragedy *Venido a menos* ("Dilapidated") continues to be influential.

Early 1980s

Following a loosening of restrictions in 1980, muck-raking cinema began to make itself evident on the Argentine screen. Plunging head-long into subjects like corruption and impunity (without directly indicting those in power), Adolfo Aristarain's *Tiempo de revancha* ("Time for Revenge", 1981), Fernando Ayala's *Plata dulce* ("Sweet Money," 1982) and Eduardo Calcagno's *Los enemigos* ("The Enemies," 1983) took hard looks at labor rights abuses, corporate corruption and the day's prevailing climate of fear at a time when doing so was often perilous. Petty corruption was also brought up in Fernando Ayala's *El arreglo* ("The Deal," 1983).

Post junta cinema

A new era in Argentine cinema started after the arrival of democracy in 1983; besides a few memorable exceptions like Alejandro Doria's family comedy *Esperando la carroza* ("Waiting for the Hearse", 1985), the era saw a marked decline in the popularity of slapstick comedies towards films with more serious undertones and subject matter.

The first group deals frankly with the repression, torture and the disappearances during the Dirty War in the 1970s and early 1980s. They include: Hector Olivera's *Funny Little Dirty War* (1983) and the true story *Night of the Pencils* (1986); Luis Puenzo's Academy Award-winning *The Official Story* (1985); "Pino" Solanas' *Tangos* (1985) and *Sur* ("South", 1987) and Alejandro Doria's harrowing *Sofia* (1987), among others.

Among films dealing with past abuses, one German-Argentine co-production that also deserves mention is Jeanine Meerapfel's *The Girlfriend* (1988), where Norwegian leading lady Liv Ullmann is cast beside locals Federico Luppi, Cipe Lincovski, Victor Laplace and Lito Cruz.

A second group of films includes portrayals of exile and homesickness, like Alberto Fischermann's *Los días de junio* ("Days in June," 1985) and Juan Jose Jusid's *Made in Argentina* (1986), as well as plots rich in subtext, like Miguel Pereira's *Verónico Cruz* (1988), Gustavo Mosquera's *Lo que vendrá* ("The Near Future", 1988) and a cult favorite, Martin Donovan's English-language *Apartment Zero* (1988). These used metaphor, life's imponderables and hints at wider socio-political issues to reconcile audiences with recent events.

This can also be said of treatments of controversial literature and painful 19th century history like Maria Luisa Bemberg's *Camila* (1984), Carlos Sorin's *A King and His Movie* (1985) and Eliseo Subiela's *Man Facing Southeast* (1986).

Contemporary cinema

1990s

The 1990s brought another New Argentine Cinema wave, marked by classical cinema and a twist from Independent Argentine Production.

In 1991, Marco Bechis' *Alambrado* ("Chicken Wire") was released. That same year, activist film-maker Fernando "Pino" Solanas released his third major film, *The Journey* (1992), a surreal overview of prevailing social conditions in Latin America. Existential angst continued to dominate the Argentine film agenda, however, with Eliseo Subiela's *El lado oscuro del corazón* ("Dark Side of the Heart," 1992) and Adolfo Aristarain's *A Place in the World* (1992) - notable also for its having been nominated for an Oscar.

Later in the 1990s, the focus began to shift towards Argentina's mounting social problems, such as rising homelessness and crime. Alejandro Agresti's *Buenos Aires vice versa* (1996) rescued the beauty of feelings in the shadows of poverty in Buenos Aires and Bruno Stagnaro's *Pizza, Beer, and Cigarettes* (1997) looked into the human duality of even the most incorrigible and violent individuals.

Having an intense past and rich cultural heritage to draw on, directors continued to reach back with moody period pieces like Eduardo Mignogna's *Flop* (1990), Maria Luisa Bemberg's *De eso no se habla* ("You Don't Discuss Certain Things," 1993, her last and one of Italian leading man's Marcello Mastroianni's last roles, as well), Santiago Oves' rendition of Rodolfo Walsh's Agatha Christie-esque tale *Asesinato a distancia* ("Murder from a Distance," 1998), as well as bio-pics like Leonardo Favio's *Raging Bull*-esque *Gatica, el mono* (1993) and Javier Torre's *Lola Mora* (1996).

Political history was re-examined with films like Eduardo Calcagno's controversial take on 1970s-era Argentine film censor Paulino Tato (played by Argentina's most prolific character actor, Ulises Dumont) in *El censor* (1995), Juan J. Jusid's indictment of the old compulsory military training system, *Bajo bandera* ("At Half Mast," 1997), Marco Bechis' *Garage Olimpo* (1999), which took viewers into one of the dictatorship's most brutal torture dungeons and Juan Carlos Desanzo's answer to Madonna's *Evita*, his 1996 *Eva Perón* (a portrait of a far more complex first lady than the one Andrew Lloyd Webber had taken up).

Popular culture had its turn on the Argentine screen. Alejandro Doria's *Cien veces no debo* ("I Don't Owe You Forever," 1990) took an irreverent peek into a typical middle-class Argentine home, Jose Santiso's *De mi barrio con amor* ("From My Neighborhood, with Love," 1996) is a must-see for anyone planning to visit Buenos Aires' bohemian southside and Rodolfo Pagliere's *El día que Maradona conoció a Gardel* ("The Day Maradona Met Gardel," 1996) is an inventive ode to two standards of Argentine culture.

2000s

Films such as Fabian Bielinsky's twister *Nine Queens* (2000), his gothic *El aura* (2005) and Juan José Campanella's teary *Son of the Bride* (2001) have received praise and awards around the world. Juan Carlos Desanzo cast Miguel Ángel Solá (best known for his role in *Tango*) as the immortal Jorge Luis Borges in *El Amor y el Espanto* ("Love and Foreboding", 2001), a look at the writer's struggles with Perón-era intimidation as well as with his own insecurities.

Always politically active, Argentine film continues to treat hard subjects, like Spanish director Manane Rodríguez's look at abducted children, *The Lost Steps* (2001) and "Pino" Solanas' perhaps definitive film on the 2001 economic crisis, *Memorias del saqueo* ("Memories of the Riot", 2004). Tristán Bauer took audiences back to soldiers' dehumanizing Falklands War experience with *Blessed by Fire* (2005) and Adrián Caetano follows four football players through their 1977 escape from certain death in *Chronicle of an Escape* (2006).

Lucrecia Martel's 2001 debut feature film *La Ciénaga* ("The Swamp"), about an indulgent bourgeois extended family spending the summertime in a decrepit vacation home in Salta, was internationally highly acclaimed upon release and introduced a new and vital voice to Argentine cinema. For film scholar David Oubiña, it is "one of the highest achievements" of the New Argentine Cinema, coincidentally timed with Argentina's political and economic crisis that it "became a rare expression of an extremely troubled moment in the nation's recent history. It is a masterpiece of singular maturity". Martel's succeeding films would also receive further international acclaim, such as the adolescent drama *The Holy Girl* (2004), the psychological thriller *The Headless Woman* (2008), and the period drama adaptation *Zama* (2017).

Responding to its sentimental public, Argentine film at times returns to subjects of the heart. David Lipszyc's grainy portrait of depression-era Argentina, *El astillero* ("The Shipyard", 2000) was a hit with critics, Paula Hernandez's touching ode to immigrants, *Inheritance* (2001), has become something of a sleeper, Adolfo Aristarain's *Common Places* (2002) follows an elderly professor into retirement, *Cleopatra* (2003), Eduardo Mignona's tale of an unlikely friendship, received numerous awards, as did Carlos Sorín's touching *El perro* ("The Dog", 2004). Emotional negativity, a staple for filmmakers anywhere, was explored in Mario Sabato's *India Pravile* (2003), Francisco D'Intino's *La esperanza* (2005) and Ariel Rotter's *El otro* ("The Other", 2007) each deals with mid-life crises in very different ways. The pronounced sentimentality of the average Argentine was also the subject of Robert Duvall's 2002 *Assassination Tango*, a deceptively simple crime drama that shows that still waters do, indeed, run deep.

Buffeted by years of economic malaise and encroachment of the domestic film market by foreign (mainly, U.S.) titles, the Argentine film industry has been supported by the 1987 creation of the National Institute of Cinema and Audiovisual Arts (INCAA), a publicly subsidized film underwriter that, since 1987, has produced 130 full-length art house titles.

The decade ended on a high with the 2009 film *The Secret in Their Eyes* receiving critical praise, winning the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film at the 82nd Academy Awards, three weeks after being awarded the Goya Award for Best Spanish Language Foreign Film of 2009.

2010s

In 2014, the anthology film *Wild Tales* (*Relatos Salvajes* in Spanish) directed by *Damián Szifron* was nominated for the Best Foreign Language Film at the 87th Academy Awards and won the Goya Award for Best Iberoamerican Film.