



A film by **Alberto Rodríguez**

PRISON 77

PRESS BOOK



Atípica
FILMS

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A group of men are gathered on the rooftop of a large, multi-story building with a weathered, yellowish-tan facade. The men are dressed in casual, mostly tank-top attire. Several of them have their arms raised in the air, some holding small white flags or pieces of paper. A long, white banner with the word 'AMNISTIA' written in large, dark, hand-painted letters is stretched across the left side of the rooftop. In the center, a man in a blue tank top stands with his arms raised. To his right, another man holds a white banner with a circular logo and the word 'LIBERTAD' inside it. Further right, another banner with the word 'LIBERTAD' is visible. The building's architecture features large, arched windows and decorative moldings. The sky in the background is a pale, hazy blue.

THIS IS NOT THE STORY OF A PRISON.

THIS IS HISTORY.

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SYNOPSIS

Model Prison. Barcelona 1977. Manuel (Miguel Herrán), a young accountant, imprisoned and awaiting trial for committing embezzlement, faces a possible sentence of 6 to 8 years, a disproportionate punishment for the crime committed. Soon, together with his cellmate, Pino (Javier Gutiérrez), he joins COPEL, a prisoners' association that will fight for the rights of common prisoners and amnesty. A war for freedom begins that will shake the Spanish prison system. If things are changing outside, they will have to change inside as well.

A story of friendship, solidarity and freedom, inspired by real events.



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Prison 77 is a film that Rafael Cobos and I started writing as a result of a news item about the escape of 45 inmates from the Modelo prison in Barcelona in 1978.

What most attracted our attention was the existence of an organization or union of prisoners that acted as a coordinator and was recognized within the prison as an articulated organ of power (COPEL).

We knew nothing about what happened in the prisons during Franco's regime. But after the death of the dictator, freedom was reaching an entire society, a whole country, and yet the prisoners were left out of the equation. It seemed that inside prisons time had stopped and everything remained as it was years before. Even political crimes were reviewed and political prisoners were granted amnesty. But the rest of the prisoners, the self-called social prisoners, remained in the jails, subjected to extremely harsh and unhealthy conditions, and governed by a penitentiary system in which human rights were absent.

People imprisoned for miserable crimes, petty theft or obsolete and nineteenth-century laws.

From homosexuals (divided into congenital and acquired), minors (very young), unemployed, homeless, psychiatric modules, geriatrics and many preventive (law of vagrants and thugs), mixed with murderers, thieves and swindlers.

In the end, the airs of freedom ended up reaching the prisons and the prisoners did everything they could to make themselves heard. In Barcelona's Model prison, for example, 200 people slashed their veins at the same time to draw attention to their situation. In Madrid's Carabanchel prison, they stayed whole days on the rooftops protesting, asking for justice. Almost all the prisons in the country ended up rebelling against the system and there were even coordinated riots between different prisons.

For a time they put the State in check until finally and, little by little, COPEL was disbanded and disappeared.

Their achievements are difficult to quantify. Perhaps the best thing they left behind is their example, their struggle in the face of an unjust situation, without thinking individually about the cost, only about the reward of the collective.

Rafael Cobos and I wanted to talk about the last place where the Transition from a dictatorship to democracy arrived: the prisons. We wanted to talk about how a group of people, united in the face of an unjust situation, to change their lives and the way of understanding the penitentiary system in this country. A disproportionate struggle in the historical period of this country in which anything was possible, in which a state was possible, in which a state had just been born: immaculate, new, brand new...

Although the events we are talking about occurred all over the country, we ended up focusing the story on the Barcelona Model prison. A prison with all the history of the twentieth century inside it and at a time when it was inhabited by anarchists, thieves, and even with members of Els Joglars. By swindlers, SEAT workers, Nazario and Ocaña.

The prison as a reflection of a country, as a reflection of a society.

For me, *Prison 77* is a film about characters in a closed space, about characters who have to believe and make a long inner journey to know themselves, to achieve almost

unattainable goals, forced to work on a common project, in a desperate way, without thinking about the consequences.

It is a film in which the actors have been very important, we have given them all the shooting time we could, making the mise-en-scene simple and straightforward. I am really happy with their performances. I think they have done a great job. And above all, they have managed to convey a sincere emotion, something more and more difficult in this world overloaded with stimuli.

The actors have been able to convey the emotion of those who are subjected to a situation as hard and unfair as that of our characters. All the performances contain the emotion and the tension of escaping from an implacable system and, above all, the more complex emotion of those who end up finding a way to learn about themselves and about integrating into society, whether in or out of prison.

ALBERTO RODRÍGUEZ, director and co-writer *PRISON 77*

Alberto Rodríguez is a Spanish director and screenwriter with two Goya® Awards to his credit and is considered one of the country's best directors. His 7 feature films, to date, accumulate 114 awards (including 17 Goya® Awards and the European Film Academy Award for Best Film) and 105 nominations.

He is a regular at the San Sebastian Film Festival but has also participated with his

works at other prestigious Film Festivals, such as: Berlinale, Tribeca, Rome, London, JeonJu, Guadalajara, Shanghai, etc.

Alberto Rodríguez is also the creator (together with Rafael Cobos) and director of *The Plague*, the first series to participate in the Official Selection of the San Sebastian Festival.

FILMOGRAPHY

- 1. *Prison 77* (2022) - Director and co-writer
- 2. *Apagón* (2022) - Director (1 episode)
- 3. *The Plague*, Season 2 (2019) - Creator, director and plot
- 4. *The Plague*, Season 1 (2017) - Creator, director and plot

- 5. *Smoke and Mirrors* (2016) - Director and co-writer
- 6. *Marshland* (2014) - Director and co-writer
- 7. *Unit 7* (2012) - Director and co-writer
- 8. *Hispania, the legend* (2010) - Director (4 episodes)
- 9. *After* (2009) - Director and co-writer

- 10. *7 Virgins* (2005) - Director and co-writer
- 11. *The Suit* (2002) - Director and co-writer
- 12. *The Pilgrim Factor* (2000) - Co-director and co-writer
- 13. *Banks* (2000) - Co-director and co-writer



WRITER'S NOTES

We began researching this story in 2006. Since then we have collected first-hand hundreds of testimonies from COPEL prisoners, family members and leading members of the support groups.

Among them and especially relevant were conversations we had with Lluís Maria Xirinacs, senator and one of the main defenders of prisoners' rights, and written correspondence with José Antúnez (as he had been in prison for many years for different riots), one of the key prisoners of the COPEL movement in the Barcelona Model prison and executor of the escape tunnel.

The interest of this film arises from the knowledge of some facts that forged us as a society and that are quite unknown. At the dawn of democracy, the desire for freedom also reached our prisons. Amnesty was obtained for political prisoners, as it could not be otherwise, but not the amnesty for a great majority of common prisoners imprisoned

under such questionable laws as the law of vagrants and thugs.

The common prisoners (or social prisoners, as they themselves preferred to be called) organized themselves under COPEL and managed to get the media into the prisons to testify to the subhuman conditions in which the inmates lived. They gained the support of society, and numerous demonstrations demanded Amnesty and Freedom.

With the passage of time that movement, although it did not achieve all its objectives, it did succeed in changing the vision of what a prison should be. After several reforms, Penitentiary laws have helped change the concept of prison as a place of confinement and permanent punishment to a center of reeducation with the objective of social reintegration. A fundamental shift that undoubtedly makes us better as a society and that without the events that took place in the story we tell in *Prison 77* would have been impossible or at least, very different.

RAFAEL COBOS, writer *PRISON 77*

Rafael Cobos is a playwright, television and film scriptwriter, who has just started his directing career with the scripted TV show *“The left-handed son”* (an Atípica Films production for Movistar Plus+).

He studied Medicine and Law before beginning his studies in Audiovisual Communication and Stage Direction at the University of Seville. He is mainly known for his screenplays for cinema and has won two Goya® Awards: in 2015 for *Marshland* (Best Original Screenplay) and for *Smoke and Mirrors* (Best Adapted Screenplay) in 2017.

For previous works as screenwriter such as *7 Virgins* (2005), *After* (2009) and *Unit 7* (2012), he was nominated for Best Original Screenplay at the Goya® Awards.

More recently, he was awarded the Ricardo Franco Award, granted by the Spanish Film Academy. He teaches screenwriting workshops at the University of Seville and in different film schools.

FILMOGRAPHY

1. *The left-handed son* (2023) - Showrunner, director and writer

2. *Prison 77* (2022) - Writer

3. *Apagón* (2022) - Writer

4. *The Plague*, Season 2 (2019) - Showrunner, creator, writer

5. *Me, my wife and my dead wife* (2019) - Writer

6. *The Plague*, Season 1 (2017) - Creator, writer

7. *Smoke and Mirrors* (2016) - Writer

8. *Toro* (2016) - Writer

9. *Marshland* (2014) - Writer

10. *Love is not what it used to be* (2013) - Writer

11. *Ali* (2012) - Writer

12. *Unit 7* (2012) - Writer

13. *After* (2009) - Writer

14. *7 Virgins* (2005) - Writer

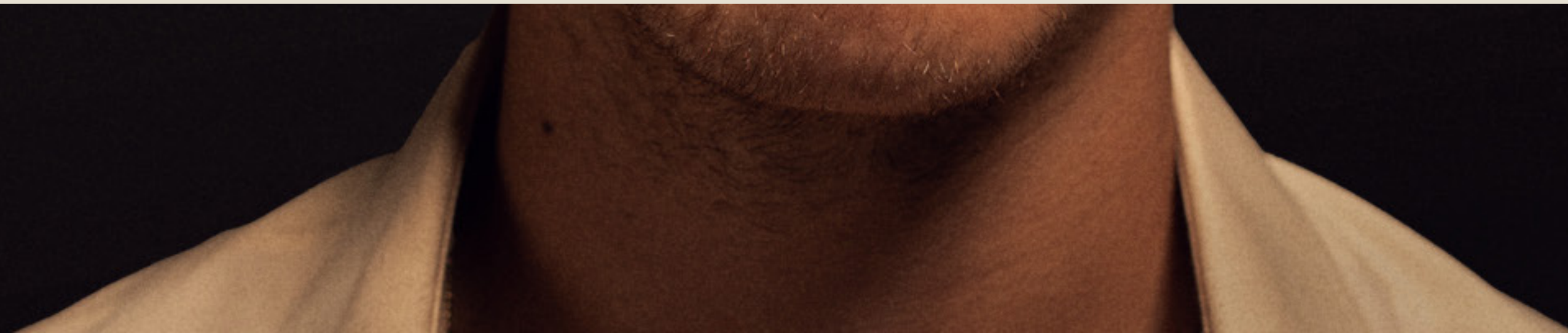


CHARACTERS



MANUEL

He is the son of a family of Andalusian emigrants. Very poor. He is intelligent. Stubborn, generous, contentious and arrogant. He has the soul of a worker and the tastes of a refined bourgeois. An upstart. A charismatic and untiring declassed. His aspirations in life are very high. He is not like those around him; that is the concept he has of himself. He soon leaves his neighborhood to make a living in the city. He knows how to relate to people; he is perceptive. Polite. And handsome. Eventually he gets a job as a clerk in an important company and a good position, socially and economically. He has achieved his dream. And he forgets his origins. Who he is, where he comes from. Trying to maintain his new life, he steals money from his company's cash box. In no way does he think he will be caught. He's smarter than anyone else. Or so he thinks. When the country celebrates the end of a long dictatorship and the dream of democracy is at reach, he is imprisoned. With no trial date and a disproportionately long sentence ahead of him.



MIGUEL HERRÁN

Malaga-born actor, winner of the Goya® Award for Best Upcoming Actor for the film *Nothing in return*, by Daniel Guzmán. Miguel was discovered by Daniel for his debut film and since then he has not stopped being on our screens.

After participating in the films *Our last men in the Filipines*, by Salvador Calvo or *The invisible guardian*, by Fernando Gonzalez Molina, he gets the role that has given him international fame, Rio in *Money Heist*.

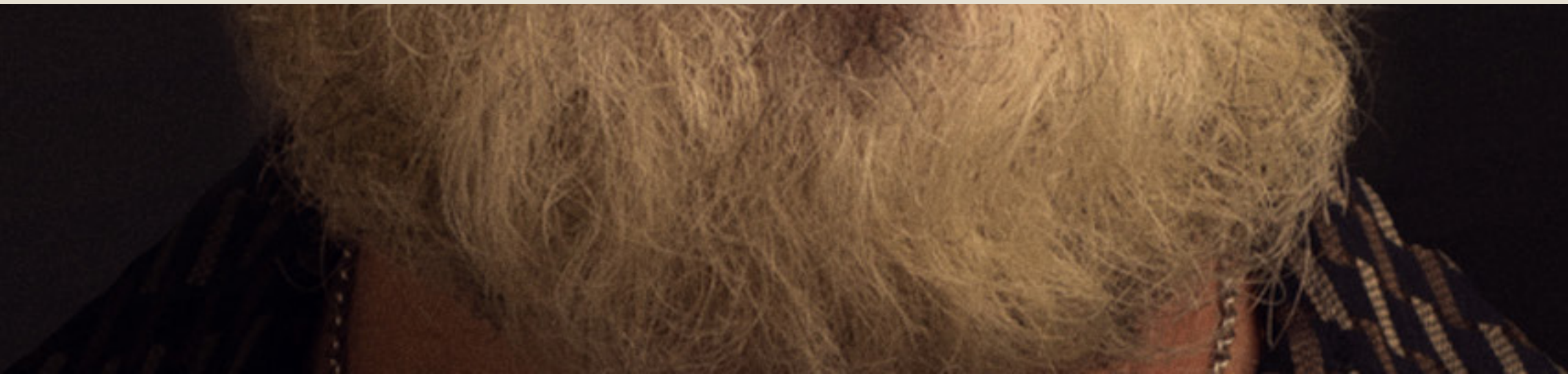
Back on the big screen he stars in Daniel Calparsoro's *Sky high*.

Now Miguel presents *Prison 77*, a thriller where he gives life to Manuel, a young accountant who is imprisoned and who will fight for the rights of prisoners in a Spain that is just beginning its democracy.



PINO

Soon to be 50 years old. Dry. Not very talkative, lapidary and honest. He is MANUEL's cellmate. Always a prisoner. With a long prison record. A steppe wolf. Solitary. Skeptical and unbelieving. He has been behind bars longer than outside. He has been in reform school and in many prisons in the country. He has forged the legend of a tough and violent man, the only way to survive in a place where the law of the jungle reigns. For years he has lived with his back to the world, to prison and to the inmates. Isolated from everything. In his bubble. He believes in nothing. In nobody. His future does not exist. He collects fantasy-type shirts and rents science fiction novels that he knows by heart, a business that serves as a cover to sell hashish in prison with the silent connivance of the officials.



Actor with a very long career in all formats: film, television and theater.

Recognized with numerous awards in all of them.

In 2014 Alberto Rodríguez selects him for the role of detective Juan Robles in *Marshland*. Gutiérrez, until then a well-known comedy actor, demonstrates in this multi-awarded film his mastery in dramatic acting.

For this role, he obtains some of the most important awards of his career: a Goya® Award for Best Leading Actor and the Silver Shell at the San Sebastian Festival, both for *Marshland*.

He went on to win another Goya® Award for Manuel Martín Cuenca's *The motive*, the Feroz Award for the TV show *Spanish Shame*, by Álvaro Fernández-Armero and Juan Cavestany, as well as other starring roles in films: *The olive tree*, by Iciar Bollain, *The daughter*, also by Martín Cuenca and his most endearing role Marco Montes in *Champions*.

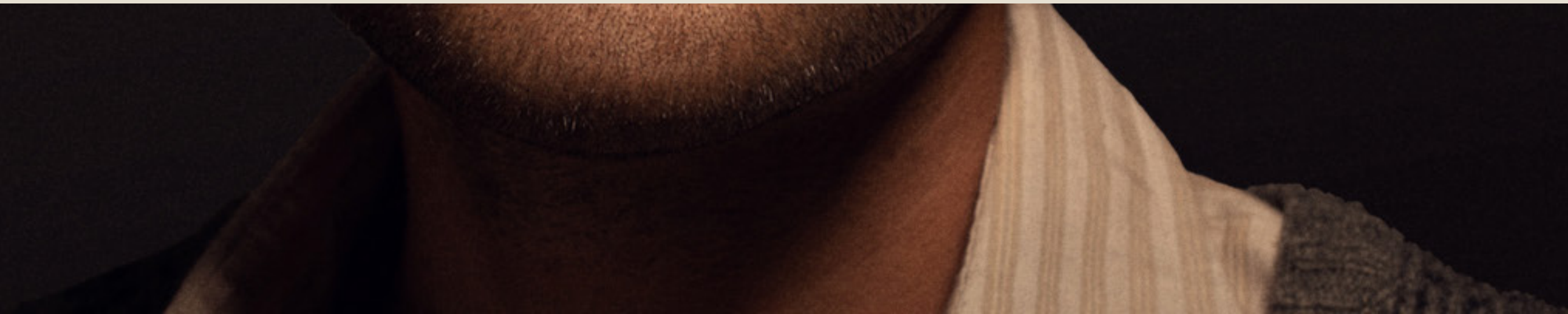
In *Prison 77* he repeats under Rodríguez's orders, playing Pino, a skeptical prisoner that does not believe that things can change inside the penitentiary institutions in the second part of the 70s.

JAVIER GUTIÉRREZ



BLACKY

42 years old. Very dark. Hirsute black hair. Electric. Pure nerve. Funny, with a great sense of humor. Generous. He can't stop talking. Or inventing. Nor interacting with people. PINO's cellmate. He is his servant friend. From a large family. He redeems for everything: he works in workshops, kills rats, donates blood and serves in kitchens. Although MANUEL denies it, BLACKY claims to know him from his neighborhood. And that makes him become his godfather in prison. His first mentor. He takes him in, protects him and teaches him the laws of the jungle.



JESÚS CARROZA

His first role was as co-star in Alberto Rodríguez's *7 Virgins*, for which he won the Goya® Award for Best Upcoming Actor.

A trusted actor of the director, he has also participated in other titles of his filmography, such as *Unit 7*, *Marshland*, the TV show *The plague* and *Apagón*.

He has also worked with other well known directors in the film industry: with Daniel Monzón in *Cell 211* and *The kid*, with Mariano Barroso in the TV show *The day after tomorrow*, with Salvador Calvo in *Adú* and with Javier Ruiz Caldera in *Valley of the dead*.

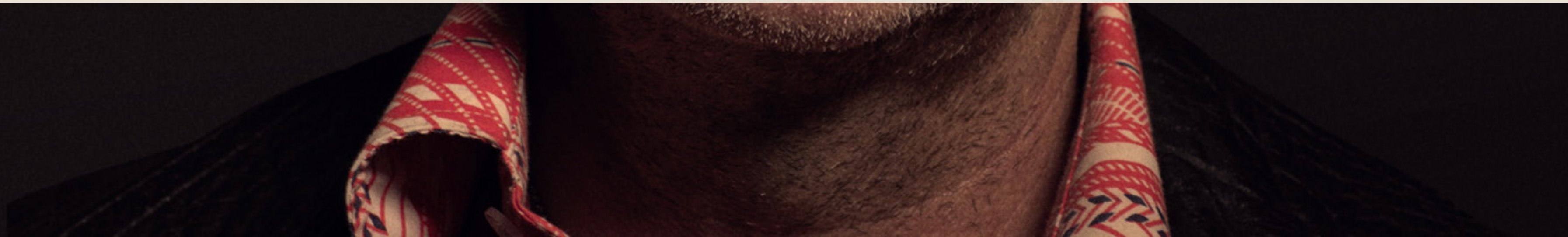
Jesús has been nominated twice for the Feroz Awards.

In *Prison 77* Jesús plays Blacky, a noble, kind-hearted guy appreciated by everyone in the prison.



EL MARBELLA

Lord and master of the prison. One not to be messed with. He has been locked up for many years and has never considered a life outside until he starts to see COPEL's movements. He controls the 6th Gallery. He will play a key role in uniting all the prisoners to riot.



Actor from Cordoba, winner of a Goya® Award for Best Upcoming Actor for the film *Soccer Days*, by David Serrano, and with a long career in film and television. Fernando is well known to the public for his roles in such popular TV shows as *No way to live here* and *La que se avecina*. In his filmography, we find titles as outstanding as *As luck would have it*, by Álex de la Iglesia, *Torremolinos 73* by Pablo Berger, and the dramas *Five square meters*, by Max Lempke and *Skin in flames*, by David Martín Porras. For his role in the film *Chef's special*, he was once again nominated to the Goya® Awards as Best Supporting Actor.

In *Prison 77*, he plays the role of El Marbella, the prison boss, the lord and master of one of the most conflictive sectors of the prison who, after seeing the progress made by the other inmates joining COPEL, decides to get involved in the Prisoner's Association.

FERNANDO TEJERO



LUCÍA

**When she meets MANUEL she is 16 years old. She is the sister of Carmen, his girlfriend.
She is generous. Empathetic. Sweet. Intelligent and sensitive. Sometimes candid and naive, like the child she is.
At other times intuitive and brave. And strong. She represents light. Hope. A look free of prejudices and complexes.
She is modern. Full of the future. Under construction. Like the country.**

CATALINA SOPELANA

She began her film career in 2018 with Carlos Vermut in *Who will sing to you*. Since then she has found a place on the screens participating in both films and television shows. The general public will remember her for her role in *The neighbor*.

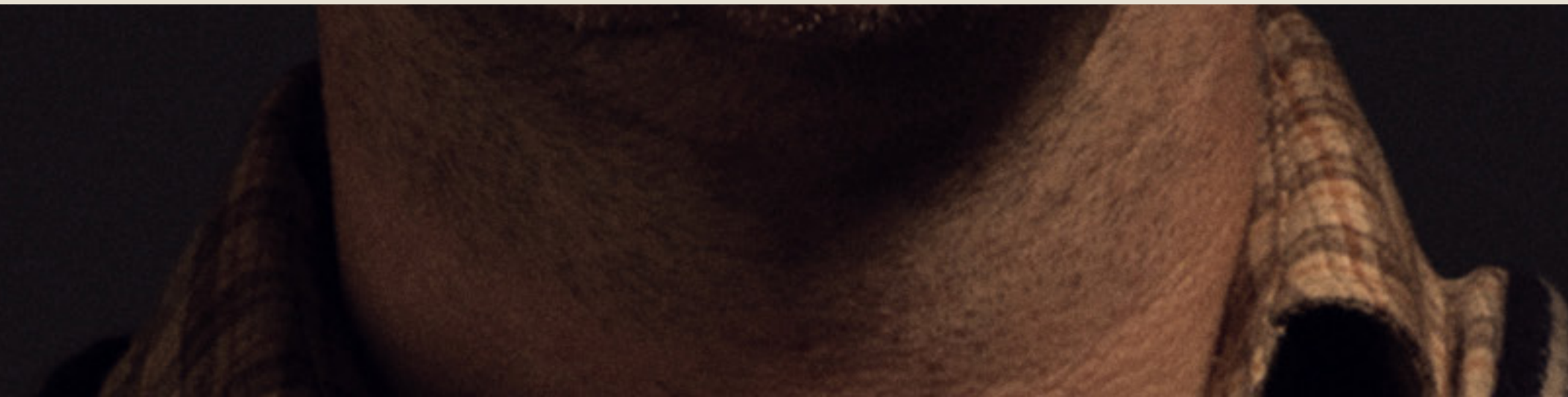
Recently she has participated in Daniel Monzón's *The laws of the border* and in Carlos Vermut's *Mantícora*.

In *Prison 77* she plays Lucía. Just a girl who, thanks to her joy and good heart, ends up conquering Manuel.



BONI

He is a doctor and attends to the health needs of the prisoners when the prison doctor is not there. He is never there.
He is imprisoned for his sexual condition, following the laws that prevailed during the dictatorship.
He is part of the leadership of the COPEL movement and MANUEL feels admiration for him.



Catalan actor. He has participated in the films *Pain and Glory*, by Almodóvar, *The laws of the border*, by Daniel Monzón and in the TV shows *Money Heist*, *The innocent* and *Nasdrovia*.

In *Prison 77* he plays Boni, a doctor imprisoned by the laws of the Franco regime who was part of the leadership of the COPEL movement inside the Catalan prison.

XAVI SÁEZ



CREW

DIRECTOR ALBERTO RODRÍGUEZ
PRODUCERS JOSÉ ANTONIO FÉLEZ, DOMINGO CORRAL,
GERVASIO IGLESIAS AND ALBERTO FÉLEZ
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS CRISTINA SUTHERLAND AND MANUELA OCÓN ABURTO
ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY RAFAEL COBOS AND ALBERTO RODRÍGUEZ
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ÁLEX CATALÁN, AEC
LINE PRODUCER MANUELA OCÓN ABURTO
ORIGINAL SCORE JULIO DE LA ROSA
EDITOR JOSÉ M. G. MOYANO
SOUND RECORDING DANIEL DE ZAYAS
SOUND SUPERVISOR PELAYO GUTIÉRREZ
SOUND EDITOR MIGUEL HUETE

SOUND MIXER VALERIA ARCIERI
PRODUCTION DESIGN PEPE DOMÍNGUEZ DEL OLMO
ART DIRECTOR GIGIA PELLEGRINI
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CARLOS GRAS
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR IVÁN BENJUMEA-REY
VFX SUPERVISION ANA RUBIO
WARDROBE FERNANDO GARCÍA
MAKE-UP YOLANDA PIÑA
HAIR STYLIST FÉLIX TERRERO
CASTING EVA LEIRA AND YOLANDA SERRANO

A MOVISTAR PLUS+ AND ATÍPICA FILMS COPRODUCTION



PRODUCTION COMPANIES

ATÍPICA FILMS

Atípica Films (*The plague, Seventeen, Marshland, Smoke and Mirrors, Cousinhood, Family United, Unit 7*) is an independent audiovisual production company founded by José Antonio Félez and Cristina Sutherland in 2009. A few years ago Alberto Félez joined the project and has taken on the roles of producer and executive producer in Atípica's latest productions. Recently, they have co-produced, together with Movistar Plus+, *Prison 77*, the latest film by Alberto Rodríguez and two TV shows: *The girls at the back*, created by Daniel Sánchez Arévalo, and *Snow girl*, based on the bestseller of the same name by Javier Castillo. To date, its productions have accumulated 150 national awards, including 26 Goya® Awards, and more than 75 international awards. Its goal is to produce innovative, high-quality content that appeals to wide global audiences.

Movistar Plus+ is the leading audiovisual entertainment offering of the Telefónica Group in Spain. Its proposition includes bold original productions and the best premium sports content, films, shows, documentaries and programmes, in addition to the best functionalities and on-demand access so users can enjoy watching television wherever, however and whenever they wish.

Movistar Plus+ was born as a production company in 2013 under the Telefónica Studios brand. Some of their film co-productions include: *Palm Trees in the Snow, Regression, Tadeo Jones, My Big Night, Anacleto Secret Agent, Wild Tales, Requirements To Be A Normal Person, To Steal From A Thief, Toro, Altamira, Truman, Smoke and Mirrors, Gold or Champions*. In 2019, Movistar Plus+ released its first original fiction film, *While at War*, by Alejandro Amenábar. In 2022, Movistar Plus+ is releasing *Prison 77*, by Alberto Rodríguez, a co-production with Atípica Films.

MOVISTAR PLUS+



TECHNICAL INFORMATION

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

YEAR OF PRODUCTION: 2022

NATIONALITY: Spain

LANGUAGE: Spanish

RUNNING TIME: 125 min.

ASPECT RATIO: 2,39:1 - Scope

SCREENING FORMAT: DCP

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CONTACT

ATÍPICA FILMS

atipica@atipicafilms.com

+34 913 676 776

MOVISTAR PLUS+

Lidia Mosquera Beceiro

marialidia.mosquerabeceiro@telefonica.com

ELLAS COMUNICACIÓN (PRENSA / PRESS)

Elio Seguí Polnoroff

elio@ellascomunicacion.com

+34 636 608 541

Deborah Palomo

deborah@ellascomunicacion.com

+34 639 635 510

Nuria Terrón

nuria@ellascomunicacion.com

+34 648 634 103

VENTAS INTERNACIONALES / INTERNATIONAL SALES

Film Factory Entertainment

c/ Lincoln 11, 2º, 4ª

08006 Barcelona - ESPAÑA / SPAIN

info@filmfactory.es

+34 933 684 608