

Spain and Philippines to Sign Co-Production Pact, as Spain Looks to Asia for Further Growth

ANNA MARIE DE LA FUENTE

A landmark co-production treaty between the Philippines and Spain is imminent, Camilo Vázquez, deputy director general of Spanish national film agency, ICAA, said Monday at a Focus on the Philippines round table at the San Sebastian Film Festival.

The upcoming pact dovetails with ICAA's objectives to expand its bilateral agreements worldwide, but Asia, and key markets there, look like the next growth target for Spanish film-TV authorities and the Philippines, where Spanish is a secondary language for some, is a natural beachhead for Spain.

Other panelists were Liza Diño, executive director of the Quezon City Film Commission, Philippine pro-ducer Monster Jimenez of This Side Up and ArkeoFilms and Laura Serra, representing Barcelona-based pro-ducer Alba Sotorra Cinema Prods.

At the moment, Spain has twenty-two bilateral treaties and would like to increase that number, said Vázquez. "We have identified Asia as a region of special strategic interest. It is our point of reference beyond our natural markets or areas of influence and work such as Europe and Latin America," Vázquez said, adding: "We want to make a strong commitment to Asia and within Asia—because it is a vast region—we have prioritized four countries, one of which is the Philippines."

He added that the text of the bilateral agreement was virtually finalized at the technical level and what remains is the formal approval by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of both countries, which could happen in a few weeks.

ICAA is also working actively with India. "Next year is the Spain-India Dual Year, a strategic framework for privileged relations between Spain



DE ANDALUCÍA AL MUNDO

Representantes de distintos organismos del sector audiovisual andaluz presentaron ayer a Andalucía como el plató del sur de Europa, destacando su potencial, el talento local y el futuro de la industria, con el objetivo de impulsar su competitividad y proyección internacional.

and India across many areas—trade, tourism, industry, economy and also the audiovisual sector. A bilateral agreement with India has already been signed, but we want to reform, update and refresh it," said Vazquez. He added that China was another country of interest for Spain, where they looked to update its current pact, as Spain seeks to further strengthen its ties with them.

The fourth country is South Korea where they are in the early stages of negotiating a bilateral agreement. We want to strengthen ties with that country as well, as South Korea's film-TV industry is very strong. We've seen clear examples recently, such as *Squid Game*, and other audiovisual productions that have had great success and significant impact in Spain," he said.

He stressed that Spain has always strongly supported co-productions, recognizing their significant value both economically and artistically. Economically, they broaden access to funding by enabling support from multiple administrations. Artistically, they foster creative exchange through collaboration across ideas, stories and talent, leading to productions that resonate with diverse audiences.

"We believe that stories—whether told through books, film, or audiovisual productions—are ultimately universal. The language of cinema is a universal one. Even small, local stories—those set in a village or a rural town in Spain—can find emotional relevance and meaning for audiences around the world," he added.

"It's really good news that there will be a co-production treaty between Spain and the Philippines, and also an opportunity not just for Spain and Philippines to work together, but for the Philippines to be a gateway for Spanish as well as Latin America producers to work with the rest of the Southeast Asian region," said Diño.

She pointed out that Quezon City, where 70% of the country's film and television workforce are based, has aspired to be a hub for collaborations within the region and to that end, announced that the Quezon City Film Commission, through the Qcinema International Film Festival, would be launching a three-year focus on Ibero-America from 2026 to 2028.

During those years, they will be selecting six Ibero-American projects,

which will be showcased during the project market to which they will be inviting industry professionals from Ibero-American countries. Two winning projects will take home cash prizes of \$10,000 and \$15,000.

Diño also announced that the Quezon City Film Commission was launching the Quezon City Ibero-America fund where they were going to award every year one to two projects a maximum amount of \$100,000, with 50% to be spent territorially or non-territorially as long as an Ibero American producer and a Filipino producer are attached.

Producer Monster Jimenez presented her project, now in post, that is still applying for Spanish grants. Titled "Daughters of the Sea" and directed by Martika Ramirez Escobar, Jimenez found her co-producer, the Barcelona-based Alba Sotorra, while at Cannes.

"It's an all-woman team, and we wanted an all-woman production team. We didn't want to be strict about it, but it just felt correct," she said. In it, three lives intertwine like kindred spirits rooted in the same soil. Lucía, a curious tour guide who unknowingly crosses paths with her father in Spain, lives vicariously through two others: a pet shop owner desperate to save a dying mermaid and a young girl whose long-missing mother suddenly reappears.

"When we met Monster, it felt very organic for us to be part of this project and this team. We felt not just because of the story or who Monster was and her career and who Martika was, but we also felt we had an historical responsibility. And we were very grateful to be part of this and to be able to explain something that is normally not on the table," said Serra.

AGENDA

INDUSTRIA

MOSCAS / FLIES

PRÍNCIPE, 7 I WIP LATAM

09:30 - 11:30

Dirección: Fernando Eimbcke
Producción: Kinotitlán, Teorema (México)

Presentación Spain Film Commission del Programa Experiencias: de espectador a protagonista

KURSAAL – CLUB DE PRENSA

09:30 - 10:30

Presentación del proyecto enmarcado dentro de Spain Screen Grand Tour, impulsado por Spain Film Commission y financiado por el Ministerio de Industria y Turismo - Secretaría de Estado de Turismo (SETUR).

XI. Ikusmira Berriak

MUSEO SAN TELMO

10:00 - 14:00

Citas one-to-one con los proyectos seleccionados

Encuentro de inversores creativos

TABAKALERA– PRISMA

10:00 - 14:00

14 Foro de Coproducción Europa-América Latina

SAN TELMO MUSEO A

10:00 - 20:00

Citas one-to-one con los proyectos seleccionados

Sello LGBTIAQ+. Distribución e internacionalización de películas LGBTIAQ+ latinoamericanas

MUSEO SAN TELMO – SALÓN DE ACTOS

10:30 - 12:00

En colaboración con premios Sebastian - Gehitu y Agenda 2030.

Moderador: Jorge Vañó (programador y gestor cultural)

Participan: Sandro Fiorin (FiGa Films), Ignacio Juricic (director de cine) y Pilar Toro (Filmin)

LA PLAGA SIN FIN / THE NEVERENDING PLAGUE

PRÍNCIPE, 2 I WIP LATAM

12:00 - 14:00

Dirección: Joaquín Cociña Varas, Cristóbal León Dooner
Producción: León & Cociña Films, Globo Rojo Films, Vikings Films, Montelona, Auténtika Films, Premium Films (Chile – Países Bajos – Uruguay – Alemania – Francia)

Encuentro de festivales de cine LGBTIAQ+ iberoamericanos

MUSEO SAN TELMO – SALÓN DE ACTOS

12:30 - 19:00

Nuestras voces: acción colectiva contra las violencias sexuales

KURSAAL – SALA RUEDAS DE PRENSA

12:30 - 13:30

Coorganizada junto con el Grupo de Trabajo Interterritorial de Igualdad (GTI) en el Audiovisual 50/50 para 2025, que aglutina las asociaciones AMMA, AAMMA, Cima, Donnes Visuales, Hemen, Dona i Cinema y Mia, y con el Observatorio de Igualdad de RTVE y el Festival de Cine de Málaga.

Cóctel. El cine que viene: un espacio de encuentro

MUSEO SAN TELMO

13:30 - 15:00

Una cita para compartir, de forma informal, miradas sobre el cine y su papel ante los desafíos de nuestro tiempo, con el apoyo de la European Climate Foundation y Climate Spring.

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN SLEEP

PRÍNCIPE, 2 I WIP EUROPA

15:30 - 17:00

Dirección: Jonas Bak
Producción: Trance Films, Jonas Bak, Jasper Wiedhöft (Francia - Alemania)

SIEBEN TAGE FEBRUAR / FEBRUARY, SEVEN DAYS

PRÍNCIPE, 2 I WIP EUROPA

18:00 - 20:15

Dirección: Tatjana Moutchnik
Producción: Wood Water Films GmbH, Wega Film (Alemania - Austria)

Happy Hour Cinema do Brasil

MUSEO SAN TELMO I CLAUSTRO

19:00 - 20:30

Únete a nosotros en el evento Cinema do Brasil Networking Event, un cóctel especial que reúne a profesionales internacionales de la industria, productores y socios.