



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

HUMANITIES SEMINARS

A Director Before, On the Verge of, and After a Nervous Breakdown: The Films of Pedro Almodóvar

MONDAYS 9:00AM – 12:00PM

September 23, 30 October 7, 14, 21,

Malcolm Alan Compitello compitel@email.arizona.edu

There is no doubt that Pedro Almodóvar has developed a commanding presence that makes him one of the world's most highly regarded international directors. *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* (1988) was the breakthrough film that solidified his international reputation. This course uses *Women on the Verge* as the fulcrum to examine the before and after of his film making. To do that we will study *Women on the Verge* and four other representative films from across the arc of the director's career. They are all films in which the filmmaker serves as *auteur*, both screenwriter and director, including his Oscar winning films *All About My Mother* (Best Foreign Film) and the controversial *Talk to Her* (Best Original Screen Play). The analysis of these films will allow participants in the class to gain a sense of the constants that power Almodóvar's vision and the elements in his body of work that change over time. We will also look at the crucial role he has had in fomenting the development of some of the world's best acting talent including Cecilia Roth, Carmen Maura, Penélope Cruz, Antonio Banderas and Javier Bardem.

Readings:

Reading packets will be available as PDF files.

Films:

Films will be available to view online and public screenings of the films will also be arranged in the Rubel Room (UA Poetry Center, 1508 E Helen St) for those interested. Screening dates to be determined. Enrolled students will receive updates on all movie-viewing options.

Week One (September 23)

Spain Is Now Different!

Film: *What Have I Done to Deserve This*

Readings: Almodóvar Reading Packet 1

Week Two (September 30)

Gazpacho Anyone? How Pedro Almodóvar Conquered Hollywood

Film: *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*

Readings: Almodóvar Reading Packet 2

Week Three (October 7)

A Change of Scenery

Film: *All About My Mother*

Readings: Almodóvar Reading Packet 3

Week Four (October 14)

Awkward Conversations

Film: *Talk to Her*

Readings: Almodóvar Reading Packet 4

Week Five (October 21)

19th Nervous Breakdown?

Film: *Volver*

Readings: Almodóvar Reading Packet 5