

# Streaming the Hispanic World: Mobility in Netflix's "Original" Films in Spanish

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**tecmerin**  
televisión-cine:  
memoria, representación  
e industria



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# Cinema in an Age of “Content”: The Continuing Rise of Netflix Films

- ▶ Since getting into “original” fiction films, Netflix has been steadily increasing the number of works it distributes. Those films have been getting more and more attention:
  - ▶ 2015: 7
  - ▶ 2016: 31
  - ▶ 2017: 69
  - ▶ 2018: 132
  - ▶ 2019 (thus far): 100
- ▶ (Figures are based on US releases, compiled from press announcements. Actual totals likely slightly higher.)

# Hispanic Films and “Content” at Netflix

Francisco Ramos, VP of Hispanic Original Content



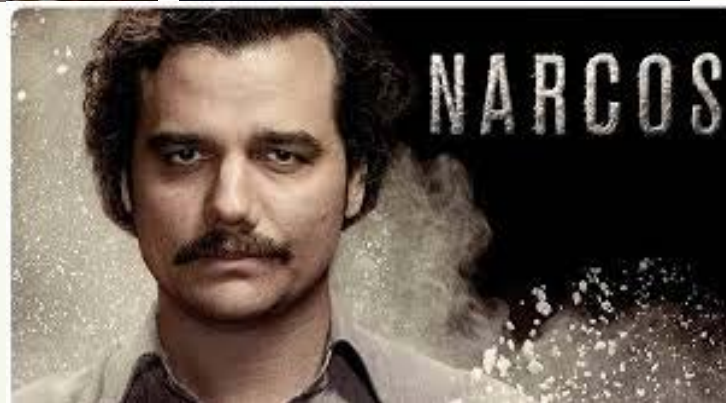
- Netflix’s corporate alignment considers Hispanic world as separate from Europe, non-Hispanic LA
- Company has extensive production presences in Mexico and Spain

## Hispanic Films and “Content” at Netflix: Madrid and Mexican Production Hubs





## Netflix's Hispanic Original Series



# Netflix's "Original" Hispanic Films

- Since 2018, Spanish is the second most popular language of Netflix "original" films:
    - 2015: 7/7 ENG 0 ESP
    - 2016: 31/27 ENG 1 ESP
    - 2017: 69/55 ENG 2 ESP
    - **RAMOS HIRED DECEMBER 2017**
    - 2018: 132/77 ENG 19 ESP (1 Euskera)
    - 2019 (thus far): 100/40 ENG 21 ESP
- TOTALS: 339/206 ENG 43 ESP 1 EUSKERA



# Types of Netflix Films I: Full(ly) Original Films

- Films are fully financed by Netflix before principal photography begins. So far, within Hispanic world, practice has only occurred in Spain. Mexican, Chilean films are in the works.



## Types of Netflix Films II: Global Acquisitions

- Netflix takes global exclusivity on the films that were already in production or were already produced.





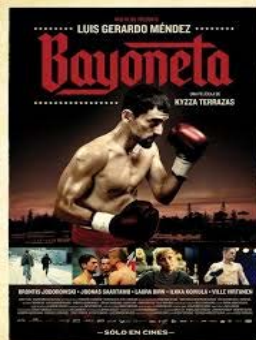
## Types of Netflix Films III: Some Foreign Rights

- Films are distributed by traditional means (i.e. theaters, TV, etc.) in one or more countries. Distributed/owned by Netflix everywhere else. Most common practice for Hispanic films.



# Made from TV Movies: Netflix Films as Compliments to/Offshoots of Series

Luis Gerard Méndez as Netflix Star



*La Casa de Papel*





## Creating and Exploiting the Hispanic Market: Historical Precedents

- ▶ Courtney Brannon Donoghue's (2018, 2014) work on Hollywood Studios in Spain, Latin America. "Flexible localization".
- ▶ Vast body of research on independent co-production initiatives between Spain, Latin America to create "Hispanophonie" (Turegano, Shaw, Falicov, others)





# Finding and Fostering Hispanic Community: Mobility in Netflix Films

- Key concern in research is to examine the ways in which films/works try to foster or take advantage of elements of “affinitive transnationalism” (Hjort).



## Finding and Fostering Hispanic Community: Mobility in Netflix Films

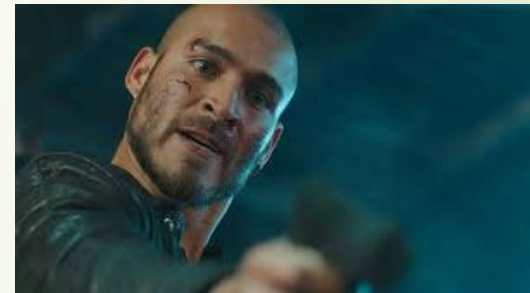
- Key concern in research is to examine the ways in which films/works try to foster or take advantage of elements of “affinitive transnationalism” (Hjort).
- Major line of research is concerned with instances of mobility within and beyond the Hispanic world. Such representations occur frequently across the corpus of Netflix films: **22 of 43 films (50%)**. Will feature in forthcoming films known to be in the pipeline.

## Images of Mobility: Spaniards in Latin America





# Images of Mobility: Latin Americans in Spain



# Aspirational Mobility and Pan-Hispanic Difference in *Soltera Codiciada* (2018)





## Towards Greater Critical Attention to Netflix's Role in Hispanic Cinema

- The sheer size of Netflix's investment in Spanish-language film production demands we pay attention to it. The precarity of Netflix's business model, its preferences in terms of creative partners, genres, modes of representation all need close scrutiny.





## Towards Greater Critical Attention to Netflix's Role in Hispanic Cinema

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- Mobility recurs in the films, as it did in earlier industrial formations. We need to have a more sophisticated understanding of how it looks now vs. how it looked before.
  - Aspirational mobility vs. economic migration vs. transnational crime stories.