

Everybody Knows (15) PS

Directed by Asghar Farhadi



'18 Spain | France | Italy 2hrs 13mins

Fri 8 March for at least one week

Oscar®-winning director Asghar Farhadi (*A Separation*, *The Salesman*) returns with his starriest cast yet (including Javier Bardem, Penélope Cruz, and Ricardo Darín) in this engrossing Spanish-set mystery thriller.

When Laura (Cruz) returns to her native Spain with her children for her sister's wedding, her husband (Darín) remains in Argentina, leaving Laura free to reunite with an old friend (Bardem) and plunge into the simple pleasures of her youth. On the night of the wedding, however, Laura's teenage daughter vanishes, and a tightly wound game of whodunit plays out in the countryside: as the clock ticks to save her, fingers get pointed and past slights bubble up.

A brooding look at class, family secrets and community, the ensemble cast are dazzling (real life husband and wife Cruz and Bardem in particular) - Farhadi's Spanish-language debut is a real pleasure to watch.

This interview by Christina Radish with actor Penelope Cruz originally appeared on collider.com in Feb 2019.

Collider: You did really tremendous work in this film, but it seems like it must have been a fairly grueling and emotional shoot.

PENELOPE CRUZ: Thank you! Thank you so much. I cannot say that this performance was easy to do, but I feel very lucky that this director trusted me with material like this. I would do it again in a second, but at the end of the shoot with (writer/director) Asghar [Farhadi], I was completely exhausted. I had a fever, every night, from the amount of stress that the character goes through. It's your body and your mind, and you know that it's fiction, but there's always a little percentage that gets confused about what is going on.

Collider: When this film came your way, did you know that the Asghar Farhadi wrote this character, specifically for you to do?

CRUZ: Yes, he told me five years before. He told me, "I have this idea. I want to do this in Spain, and if you like it, I'm going to write in for you in mind." I was a big fan of his work, and I loved the conversation that we had, and so, I got attached to the project from that conversation. I knew he was writing it for us, and that was honor because we really admire him.

Collider: How was the experience of shooting this in Spanish, with a director who doesn't actually speak the language?

CRUZ: He has two amazing translators that are a part of his brain, they know each other so well. To translate Asghar, you have to know

The 17:40 screening of *Everybody Knows* on Mon 11 March will include Descriptive Subtitles and a short introduction from Tara Judah, Watershed Cinema Producer, which will feature simultaneous BSL (British Sign Language) interpretation. Following the screening please join Tara for a post-show discussion with other audience members which will take place in the Café/Bar and will feature simultaneous BSL (British Sign Language) interpretation.

Asghar because you cannot miss anything. You have to translate the details and the subtext of things, and these two people know him and really have a similar sensibility to him. That's why they're good translators. It's not just a cold translation of words. There's meaning to what he wants to translate, and that's always clear with them. Also, he speaks some good English, and he can also express himself in English, so we didn't have any communication problems. We got used to his way, and I didn't feel like it was ever an obstacle. He's incredible. He worked for five years on this movie, and moved to Spain and was studying the language and our culture. He did something incredible because you don't see any Spanish clichés in the movie. You really see a story happening in a village in Spain, and it's very believable.

Collider: When you're working with a filmmaker who is demanding that you go to very dark places, do you find yourself hating him, in those moments, or do you appreciate the approach that he takes to his art?

CRUZ: No, I always appreciate it because it's not to be a masochist. I'm not a masochist. But on set, if I'm doing a drama, or scenes of somebody that is suffering, it's not a joke. You have to honor that person that you are playing, in that situation. Unfortunately, situations like that have happened to real people, and you have to honor that and go as deep as you can, and he is the master of that. He would ask you to please forget that you are doing a movie, and tell you that this has to be like a documentary. If he detects anybody doing a movie moment, he would cut you off, in a very kind way, and tell you, "No, you're lying. Your eyes are lying." But he's so loving that he's never offensive. You just appreciate his honesty. He says things in a very, very honest but kind way.

Collider: Was this a woman and a character that you immediately found yourself identifying with? Could you understand her pretty easily?

CRUZ: I never try to identify with them, or agree with them. I try to understand them. It was very well written, so it was easy to understand all of these characters, or most of them. Of course, the

ones that do things that you don't like, it's always harder to identify with, but you can understand how their mind works. In in this case, with my character, I felt it was really easy to understand what she was going through. When you read it, everything was there, on the page.

Collider: You've talked about how this was difficult on you, physically. At the end of this shoot, what did you do to wash your hands of this character and to leave all of those emotions behind?

CRUZ: When I finished, I took the clothes of the character off, I put on my own clothes, and I went to the street, running. It felt like a liberation. But I don't want that to sound like it was a bad experience because it was not. I loved the experience of working with Asghar. But it was four months of the character suffering so much that, by the end, I was really relieved to be done.

Collider: I also saw *Loving Pablo*, the last film that you did with Javier Bardem, and you were both so great in both films. What do you most enjoy about working and collaborating with your husband, and what do you feel he draws out of you, as a scene partner?

CRUZ: Well, there is a lot of trust and there is a similar way of working, so of course, it's a great experience. But it's not something we want to do, all of the time, even if it's more convenient. We'll only do it when it makes perfect sense, like in this piece or *Loving Pablo*.

Collider: In this film, in particular, it was so interesting to watch the dynamic between your characters because they have this history together, but they're not currently together. What was it like to play that dynamic?

CRUZ: We didn't look at it differently because they were not a actual couple, in present time. What I like is that the characters are so different from *Loving Pablo*. We were, in no way, doing similar things, and that was one of the things that made us say yes. And we have similar ways of seeing the work. We even have the same acting coach, and a similar way to prepare. It's not that everything is the same, but we understand each other's process. So, once in awhile, it's something we would like to do.

Collider: You're set to do the all-female spy thriller *355*, and that has a really great cast that includes Jessica Chastain, Marion Cotillard, Lupita Nyong'o and Fan Bingbing. What drew you to that, and what sort of woman are you playing in that film?

CRUZ: I cannot talk about that a lot yet because everything about the script is really secretive. I just read the first draft, and I liked it a lot, but the director and producers have not spoken about it yet. We're going to wait a little bit to talk about it because nothing about the story is out yet. But, I like it a lot.

Collider: Do you know when you're going to be shooting the film?

CRUZ: It looks like it's going to be in the summer.

Collider: It's a very exciting cast that sounds like it will be very fun to watch because you all are so very different.

CRUZ: Yes, I'm very grateful to Jessica, that she thought of me for this. It's a great group of women. I like all of them so much, and I'm very excited about taking that genre and doing something new with it, where the women are the ones taking care of things and solving the problems. I don't know if I would say that it's feminist because that word is so easy to be misunderstood.

Collider: You've made six movies now with Pedro Almodóvar, and you have *Pain & Glory* (*Dolor y Gloria*) coming out this year. Has your relationship as collaborators changed, over the years, or do you just feel like it's naturally evolved, as you've worked with him?

CRUZ: I think it's always evolving. We are very close friends. He's more like family to me. We're really close. We look at each other, and we know what the other one is thinking. It's always good, when you're on set, and you have such easy communication and trust. I saw the movie, the other day, and I love this movie. It's so personal and so honest, and I loved playing his mother.

Collider: Does it feel like there's an extra sense of responsibility, when you are playing his mother?

CRUZ: It's based on his mother, when she was young, but I knew it was based on her, so it is a responsibility because he loves his mom so much and misses her a lot. This was an homage to her that he was doing. And I met her, and she was a very special woman.

Collider: You also directed a documentary about childhood leukemia, called *Yo Soy Uno Entre Cien Mil*. What inspired that? Was it the desire to direct, or was it the subject of the film that was of most interest to you?

CRUZ: I've wanted to direct since I was a little girl. I directed a publicity campaign, and I also directed the documentary on childhood leukemia, and I plan to do many more things. It's one of the things that I've wanted to do since I was a 13-year-old teenager.

Collider: Are you also hoping to direct a narrative feature film?

CRUZ: Yes, that is something that I've thought about, every single day of my life, since I was 16, and I know someday that I will do it. It's not the right time yet. My kids are little, and I don't work now as much as before, but maybe in a few years, I will try to do that.

Collider: You've talked previously about how you don't like to work so much because it takes away from life and family. That being considered, what gets you excited about a project? What sort of work are you looking to do, at this time in your life and career?

CRUZ: Well, when you're a mother, everything changes. Every time I read a project, the first thing that I look at is the dates and location. I try to work more in the summer, or sometimes they put all of my stuff together, like the movie I'm doing now with Olivier Assayas. My family is always together, so you have to find a way that works. My main priority is raising my kids, but this job, fortunately, makes it easier because I am not working the whole time. You're shooting, but then you also have a lot of free time, and it's a big blessing to have that.

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