



BITTER CHRISTMAS (Amarga Navidad)

27th
Year!

Autumn
Season
2026

Release: 2026

Cert (UK): 15

Country: Spain

Language: Spanish with English subtitles

Runtime: 1 hour 51 mins

Director: Pedro Almodóvar

Written by: Pedro Almodóvar

Cinematographer: Pau Esteve Birba

Cast: Bárbara Lennie, Leonardo Sbaraglia, Aitana Sánchez-Gijón



'It's kind of wonderful that Almodovar is back at Cannes and also in Competition with his intriguing 'Bitter Christmas', a dramedy that again sees the master in a confessional mode, wondering about the emotional betrayal that comes with turning your life and the lives of people you know into art. The French title is 'Autofiction', which should prepare you for a movie that's very much about Pedro specifically, while also being about all aging artists who wonder how their work has had a personal impact to match the professional one' - Brian Tallerico, RogerEbert.com.

A movie within a movie: the outside one - 'real' life about a film director and his problems, the inner one - the film being written by the director. The director, Raul, is having real problems finding a story for his next movie and resorts to high-jacking the life of his assistant Monica, who has just left him to help a close friend through a tragedy. In his film, Elsa is a film director who is struggling to create a plot and struggling with chronic migraines... you get the idea.

'The Jenga puzzle of parallels comes to feel a little daunting, and perhaps too cleverly artificial. Even so, 'Bitter Christmas' is so enjoyable to watch that you almost will yourself into believing that Almodóvar isn't simply reworking, with certain beats that feel a little too familiar, some of his recent preoccupations... We come for the colours, the histrionic plots, the faces, the oversharing. It's hard to get enough of the too-muchness of Almodóvar' - Stephanie Zacharek, Time. Here, here, Stephanie!
As a fan of his films since I first saw one of his films in the 1980s, he is still one of my favourites; I can't wait - how about you?

