

Document Citation

Title	La ley del deseo
Author(s)	Peter Besas
Source	<i>Variety</i>
Date	1987 Feb 18
Type	review
Language	English
Pagination	20, 23
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	La ley del deseo (Law of desire), Almodóvar, Pedro, 1987

La Ley del Deseo
(The Law Of Desire)
(SPANISH-COLOR)

A Cinevista (U.S.) release of an El Deseo and Laurenfilm production. Executive producer, Miguel A. Pérez Campos. Written and directed by Pedro Almodóvar. Camera (Eastmancolor), Angel Luis Fernández; editor, José Salcedo; costumes, José M. Cossio; sets, Javier Fernández; sound, James Willis; associate producer, Agustin Almodóvar. Reviewed at Cine Madrid, Feb. 11, 1987. Running time: **101 MINS.**

Pedro Quintero Eusebio Poncela
Tina Quintero Carmen Maura
Antonio Benitez Antonio Banderas
Juan Bermúdez Miguel Molina

Also with: Manuela Velasco, Bibi Andersen, Fernando Guillén, Nacho Martínez, Helga Liné, Fernando G. Cuervo, Germán Cobos, Maruchi León, Marta Fernández Muro.

Madrid — Spain's master of pop and pastiche, Pedro Almodóvar, turns his talents here to a gay love triangle, with extraneous touches of fantasy farce and camp humor, in a film that will please his fans (especially the gay community) but may turn off wider audiences. In its Madrid release, pic is drawing hefty attendance, because Almodóvar's films are always an "in" event here and arouse considerable curiosity.

More than the thin plot, it is the touches of slangy humor and droll but unlikely situations that Almodóvar comes up with which catch the audience's fancy. Pic also has a cer-

(Continued on page 23)

Variety Feb 18, 1987

Wednesday, February 18, 1987

Film Reviews

(Continued from page 20)

La Ley del Deseo

tain outrageous look to it which makes the antics more palatable.

Convoluting story concerns a famous film director, Pablo, and his way-out sister, Tina. Pablo is madly in love with Juan, who works in an outdoor bar in Andalusia. The third part of the triangle, Antonio, falls deeply in love with the director, and ultimately decides to get rid of his competitor, Juan, by pushing him off a cliff. Tina, the sister turns out to have changed her sex, and lives with her director-brother as well as a 10-year-old girl, who's a model. The model's mother is played by a well-known Spanish transvestite, Bibi Andersen (no relation to the Swedish actress).

Buoying pic are some of Almodóvar's clowning touches, such as having a kind of ornate chapel in Pablo's apartment to which Tina and the kid offer mocking prayers, or two mock-heroic detectives investigating Miguel's death. However, some audiences may fail to empathize with the many gay sex sequences, an integral part of the film from the first to the last frame. Many a lingering homosexual kiss, interspersed through the length of the film, and the frequent sniffing of cocaine form part of Almodóvar's swinging Madrid scene, and are certainly not for the straitlaced.

Eusebio Poncela puts in a good performance as the putative director. Antonio Banderas is the square-jawed, hulky lover and Carmen Maura provides the zany touch as the unpredictable sister. Technical credits are up to crack.

Pic could generate interest in select international markets where earlier films by Almodóvar such as "What Have I Done To Deserve This!" garnered attention. —*Besa.*