

## **ALMA ACTIVITY REPORT FOR FSE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

### **AMSTERDAM 2019**

ALMA has at present 667 members across the country. The membership has increased by 11% since September 2018, and the tendency is to sustain growth. There are market factors influencing this, but also the determination to offer more and better services to our members and keeping a strategy.

The personnel have increased, and now ALMA has a new Project Manager on board in the pathway to keep professionalising the management and providing more suitable and more precisely shaped services to our members, and facilitating networking, training and creative activities and events.

ALMA co-organises and codirects a University master's degree in Screenplay and Scriptwriting with Carlos III University of Madrid, which is just initiating its thirteenth edition. This year it has again surpassed its top number of students (27). Also, since 2016 it offers an Expert's degree, with more limited contents and which does not require a graduate degree to access it.

### **Key issues in progress**

#### **Collective agreement for non-freelance writers**

We are vigilant that producing companies are complying with the terms of our collective agreement, whose rates rose in 2017 for the last time. That year we also accomplished our goal to set the rates for a monthly pay, plus two extra payments that can be spread over the 12 months.

Currently the situation is complicated; the producers' association has virtually disappeared and there is no counterpart *de facto* for the negotiation of the new rates or even to sign the renewal of the one in force.

#### **Statute for the Artists and Creators**

Following the report of the Statute for the Artists and Creators, ALMA was able to introduce a legal provision in the reform of the Legal Property Law to allow Spanish unions and associations of self-employed authors and other artists to bargain collectively with representative associations of producers legal working conditions and, in the meantime, be able to report medium market prices for the different service they provide.

This is a fundamental breakthrough for the protection of the authors, especially in regards of the Copyright Directive passed by the European Parliament this year.

#### **Code of Conduct**

The General Assembly of ALMA unanimously adopted a Commitment of Good Practice for our members in which they take on an ethical behaviour.

#### **Non-fiction remuneration rights**

ALMA called a networking meeting in June with writers of entertainment programmes, to hear their demands and check the key issues the guild has identified in the last years on this field, and also to let them know what the situation looks like and the developments in that period.

In the pursue to define and achieve recognition of fair remuneration rights for nonfiction writers (in the cases provided by the law, such as comedy or infotainment writers), ALMA has ordered an academic study by an Intellectual Property University Professor. This will set the legal for the future directions to be followed by CMO's in collecting and distributing funds for the creation of this types of audiovisual works to their authors.

### **Streaming and VOD platforms**

We are undergoing a very interesting moment in Spain, and high-quality TV series are being produced for streaming and VOD platforms: Movistar+, Netflix, HBO and Amazon. The dynamics are varying from the last year, and it needs to be noticed that Netflix has established significant headquarters in Madrid, exerting a major influence in the audiovisual ecosystem. ALMA is detecting and following how this influence is developing and will extract valuable conclusions for the progress of our profession to be further discussed in international forums as required.

### **Legal report**

ALMA has an agreement with a specialized law firm with over 30-year experience handling legal issues with the most prominent writers and producers in the country. Through our agreement, they offer our members special advantages in the use of its services, such as a free first consultation and reduced rates for the following ones. They provide negotiation and rewriting of contracts, legal defence, advise of the terms that should or should not be accepted, among others. Through 2019, the number of consultations kept growing with our membership, there have been new court cases involving appropriate retribution and authors' rights.

In 2019, 3 lawsuits have been brought before the Labor jurisdiction. The first one of them, regarding dismissal of a writer and executive producer by a significant production company, resulted in a settlement for an amount of over 100.000€.

A second claim is in progress on behalf of 28 writers whose salaries are not complying with the CBA, totaling an impact of a half million euros.

The third case has been raised against the Spanish public broadcaster, and it deals with a claim of a writer who has been for years hired as a false-self-employed worker and is to be recognized as an employee.

After a Labor inspection filed by ALMA in 2018 against a renowned television producer to enforce the provisions of the collective agreement, the working hours limit (35 hours per week) has begun to be applied to those workers correcting their prior situation of adding personal hours and work from their homes, and their full salaries started to be paid matching the CBA, unlike what was being done before the inspection.

The results of this legal service reach the highest level of satisfaction with the members of ALMA.

## Events and cultural activities

### **ALMA Negocia (Madrid, November 2018)**

The members of ALMA enjoyed a very practical workshop to improve their contracting bargaining in a course combining negotiation skills with the most common clauses and situations in which writers usually get themselves. A negotiation expert and the legal advisor of the guild tailored this session to the needs of our writers.

### **30 Anniversary of ALMA**

ALMA is the Spanish Writers Guild. Founded in 1989, this year it is celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary having fulfilled many major achievements. The celebrations have been linked to the professional activity of the guild but it has also given space to social peak moments to share with our members and founders, and collect a small portion of those in an audiovisual document.

### **ALMA Legal (Madrid, January 2019)**

ALMA offered an exclusive course to introduce our writers to create and shape legal scripts with a complete and professional context and the keys of legal and judicial procedures.

A Judge of the National High Court of Spain went through the different stages of police and judicial procedures in two half-day sessions to provide authors with the tools to create their stories in a realistic and technically appropriate manner, avoiding some of the mistakes often found in series and feature films.

### **Guionistas de Goya (Screenplays for an Award) (Madrid, January 2019)**

This is an encounter between the media and the nominees for Best Original Screenplay and Best Adapted Screenplay awards of the Spanish Academy of the Film Arts and Sciences. This year it was organised the week before the award ceremony, gathering most of the nominees (9 altogether, only missing one film in each category) and receiving extensive coverage by the media.

### **Writers in Andalucía: Creating The New Fiction (Sevilla, February 2019)**

Four of the most successful writers in Spain, Pablo Barrera, Rafael Cobos, Alberto Macías and Diego San José shared a round table and discuss the deep transformation fiction has gone through in the last years. The diversity of subjects, arguments, locations and the success of the Spanish authors and their creations all over the world have contributed decisively to strengthen the national industry and raise the perception of the quality of its work.

### **Film series: 'Somebody wrote it' (Madrid, February-October 2019)**

In partnership with the Cineteca of the city of Madrid, ALMA is organising a cycle of recent, successful films consisting of the screening of a recent, successful film followed by a conversation with its writers. By this action, ALMA keeps working to gain visibility for authors of films, in continuity with our social media campaign #NoSeEscribenSolos (Somebody wrote it) where we claim for complete reporting by producers and the media regarding the person or persons who write shows, series and films.

### **Dr. ALMA (Madrid, March 2019)**

Four members of the writers room of a medical daily series and a Medical Doctor who acted in the capacity of advisor to the longest daily series on TV produced in Spanish TV recreating medical real cases explained how those clinical experiences were adapted into a generalist show, written and produced on a daily basis, providing insight on the technicalities of the medical environment to script writers.

### **Writers Guild of Spain Awards (Madrid, March 2019)**

ALMA has resumed the event to present the awards to the best screenplays of feature films (comedy and drama), series scripts (daily, comedy and drama), documentaries and entertainment programmes. There is also an Honorary Award, this year bestowed on the founder of ALMA 30 years ago, Manolo Matji.

### **Writers, Authors of the Series (Madrid, April 2019)**

The Academy of the Arts and the Cinematographic Sciences was the privileged venue for a gathering of 5 thriving creators and showrunners who dugged into what involves being a creator. The main idea was that writers are at the base of the creative process, some of them culminating the series through their role of showrunners. It was also discussed what entails to work in that capacity, and in particular how critical it is to be a writer and in control of the script.

### **ALMA beside Women Writers (Madrid, June 2019)**

On June 25<sup>th</sup>, ALMA invited all her female members to join a working evening and invite as many colleagues as they would, to analyse the most usual difficulties, obstacles and opportunities for their careers as writers. The turnout was large and of great quality, diverse in generations, background and experience and to most satisfaction of organisers and attendees.

### **Conecta Fiction (Pamplona, June 2019)**

ALMA increased participation of its members and self-presence in the most prominent international series market that takes place in Spain and covers the Ibero-American, European and of course Spanish territories putting together the talent of scriptwriters with broadcasters and producers.

This year the meeting took place in Pamplona (Navarra) and around 40 members of the guild had the chance to arrange meetings, pitch their projects of series and attend the conferences and panels on the different angles of the audiovisual series market.

### **Networking encounters (Madrid, October 2019)**

ALMA has started to call a bimonthly networking social event to facilitate a professional conversation among its members, giving them the chance to leave the solitary working routine, get out of their comfort zone and open their ideas and creative process to colleagues and possibly future partners to work with or test their ideas against.

### **The story continues (*Guión y seguido*. October 2019- April 2020)**

In partnership with the Academy of the Arts and the Cinematographic Sciences, ALMA has programmed the screening of a number of well-known, successful Spanish feature films before the public, following which its writers or, if they be disappeared, two prestigious screenwriters should take on the task of presenting the seldomly disclosed artistic work underlying the screenplay.

### **Guionistas de Programas (TV show writers) (Vitoria, September 2019)**

This year for the first time this encounter, in its third edition, was brought to Vitoria (in the Basque Country) in the environment of a TV Festival (FesTVal 2019) in which new shows and entertainment programmes are presented every year before they air. 5 writers from 5 shows aired in generalist broadcasters, regional TV channels and on demand platforms presented the peculiarities of working in talent shows, sketch programmes and talk shows before professional public and media outlets who offered extensive coverage and were on the media for over a week, echoing the main headlines and the stories behind.

### **Festivals and markets**

- Festival de Málaga (Malaga Festival) (Round table with Actors and Technicians: *The Statute of the Artist and the Creator*)
- MECAL Festival Barcelona (Workshop: *Pitching your series*)
- ALMA sponsors the award for best series script at the TV and Film Festival (Festival de Cine y Televisión de Vitoria). Fariña received the 2018 award in September 2018.
- ALMA designates one member of the jury that awards the Cinematography National Award (July 2018)
- ALMA selected by a video pitch contest three of our members to attend the audiovisual market Conecta Fiction (International Spain and Iberoamerica Market) in June 2018.
- Movistar+ SpoilerFest. International TV Series Festival
- ALMA organises a session of legal advice for writers as a side activity of the International Film Festival of Gijon (FICX) and awards the recognition to the best screenplay.