



VALLADOLID, CITY OF FILM. SEMINCI 70 years of advertising posters, designers and directors

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
<i>Cinema</i>	<i>This article provides an overview of Valladolid, Spain as a creative city and a city of cinema, with particular reference to Seminci, the International Film Week of Valladolid. While abundant literature addresses the festival's history and cultural relevance, less attention has been paid to its advertising image as constructed through its official posters. These posters are not merely promotional images but visual expressions that convey meanings and ideas incorporated by audiences into their perception of both the festival and the city that hosts it. The article therefore analyses Seminci through the perspective of its advertising posters and their creators and directors.</i>
<i>Creativity</i>	
<i>Advertising</i>	
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1. Introduction

This article examines the elements that have shaped Valladolid, Spain, as a creative city closely associated with cinema. Central to this process is Seminci, its prestigious International Film Festival, which celebrates its seventieth edition in 2025. Each October, during the week of the festival, the city becomes an international point of reference for cinema, providing a major platform for the seventh art. The festival brings together specialist and non-specialist audiences, public institutions, private companies and professionals from the audiovisual sector. Above all, however, it is sustained by the city and its inhabitants, whose continued engagement over time has fostered both a deep appreciation of cinema and the development of informed and critical perspectives.

The analysis does not approach the festival's identity solely through its cinematic programme or its audiences, but rather through the visual and symbolic discourse articulated in each edition's official poster and through the work of its principal creators and artistic directors. It traces the festival's trajectory and examines the symbolic meanings embedded in its posters.

1.1. Valladolid as a UNESCO Creative City of Film

The present article examines Valladolid as a Creative City, following its designation by UNESCO in 2019 as "Valladolid, Creative City of Film". While the city has a well-established tradition in literature, the plastic arts and theatre, it is also recognised for its strong association with cinema. This connection with the seventh art is formally acknowledged through its inclusion in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (Valladolidcityoffilm, 2025). The analysis is situated within the context of what is widely regarded as a leading international arthouse film festival, founded in 1956 (Devesa-Fernández, 2005).

In 2004, UNESCO established the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, of which Valladolid is a member, with the aim of placing creativity and culture at the centre of sustainable urban development within the cultural and creative industries (Unesco.org, 2025).

Valladolid joined the Network as a City of Film in 2019, alongside Potsdam (Germany), Sarajevo, Wellington and Mumbai, the latter internationally recognised as a major centre of the audiovisual industry and Indian cinema (UNESCO, 2025).

The UNESCO Creative Cities Network was created to promote cooperation among cities that identify creativity as a strategic driver of sustainable urban development. The more than 350 cities currently comprising the Network share the objective of placing creativity and cultural industries at the centre of local development strategies while fostering international collaboration (UNESCO, 2025).

Valladolid is one of nine Spanish cities recognised by UNESCO within this framework. In the field of cinema, the designated cities are Valladolid and Terrassa. In other disciplines, Spanish members include Seville (music), Bilbao (design), Granada (literature), Burgos and Dénia (gastronomy), and Llíria (music) (globalcitieshub.org, 2021).

Valladolid's prominence in the field of cinema is closely linked to the internationally recognised Seminci and to the Master's Degree in Film Industry and Communication offered by the University of Valladolid. The programme was designed by Professor Mercedes Miguel Borrás in collaboration with Seminci from its inception, under the direction of Javier Angulo (mastercine-uva.es 2025).

The city is also home to the first film chair established at a Spanish university, located at the University of Valladolid. It is the second oldest chair of its kind in Europe, preceded only by the Chair of Film History and Theory at the University of Pisa, founded in 1959 under the auspices of the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia. The Valladolid chair was created with the objective of promoting the study and knowledge of cinematography, organising courses in film education and culture, disseminating knowledge of film production, and cooperating in the organisation and development of Seminci (mastercine-uva.es, 2025).

On 28 February 1962, the Chair of Film History and Aesthetics was formally established at the University of Valladolid and attached to the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters by order of the then Ministry of National Education, published in the Official State Gazette on 9 June 1962. It remains

the longest-running film-related institution in the city, alongside Seminci (catedradecineuva.es, 2025).

1.2. Seminci Festival

1.2.1. The festival's origins and early years (1956–1973)

The Seminci Festival was founded on 20 March 1956 under the name Valladolid International Religious Film Week. The initiative was led by Antolín de Santiago and Luis Huerta, who were the principal figures behind its creation (Angulo, 2015). In its first edition, the festival was modest in scale, comprising only six screenings, all of national production (Combarros, 2015).

Its initial orientation towards religious cinema and human values reflected a city with a longstanding interest in the moving image, evident since the 1940s and, more broadly, in its earlier theatrical tradition (Díaz, 2022). At that time, Valladolid had six first-run cinemas and five venues offering double features, demonstrating the strength of local audiences' engagement with film culture.

The festival's connection with the university dates back to its origins. Luis Huerta, then a student at the University of Valladolid, proposed to the provincial delegate for Information and Tourism, Antolín de Santiago, the organisation of a Religious Film Week. The initiative sought to enhance the prominence of Holy Week in Valladolid, already a significant cultural event, by situating it within a distinct artistic and religious context (Combarros, 2015). The civil governor, Jesús Aranburu, provided financial support, enabling the initiative to proceed through the convergence of individual initiative, institutional backing and economic sponsorship.

The first poster was as sober as the film week itself. Printed in black and white, it featured religious motifs.

Image 1. Poster for the 1st Religious Film Week in Valladolid



Source: Seminci.com/posters (2025).

The Seminci is currently regarded as one of the most prestigious film festivals in Europe, described as “a showcase where established auteurs and promising new talents from different latitudes converge to compose a plural and versatile portrait of contemporary cinema” (Seminci Presentation, 2025).

The first edition featured only one premiere film, *Una cruz en el infierno* (“A Cross in Hell”) by José María Elorrieta. Nevertheless, well-known actors such as Elena Espejo, Antonio Villar and Fernando Fernán Gómez were in attendance. At that stage, the festival was non-competitive and functioned as an exhibition, with short films screened prior to the feature presentation. It became international in its third edition, adopting the acronym that would later define its current name, Seminci. Antolín de Santiago directed the festival for its first eighteen editions.

The fourth edition introduced official awards, the Lábaros de Oro, which replaced the earlier Don Bosco Prize. A jury was established and international productions were incorporated into the programme. In 1960, recognising the thematic limitations of a strictly religious focus, the festival broadened its scope to include "Human Values", introducing new awards: the Espiga de Oro and the Espiga de Plata, presented to films aligned with this expanded orientation. In 1962, the designation "Morales" was replaced by "Humanos", reflecting a shift in conceptual framing. By the eighth edition, the International Film Week attracted approximately two hundred accredited journalists. However, during the tenth edition, seven films were censored, marking a significant setback and illustrating the extent to which the festival, like other cultural institutions of the period, was subject to broader political constraints (Combarros, 2015).

In 1967, the event expanded to two venues, and in 1969 Luis Buñuel was among its most prominent figures, alongside filmmakers and actors such as Carlos Saura and Paco Rabal, according to the Seminci photographic archive (1969). Although the period was marked by economic difficulties, the continued presence of internationally recognised filmmakers and performers consolidated the festival's growing prestige.

1.2.2. New Phase and Directions for the Film Festival (1974-1983)

In 1974, Carmelo Romero assumed the direction of Seminci, a position he held until 1975. During his tenure, the Espiga was established as the festival's principal award. He was succeeded by Rafael González, who directed the festival for one year and became the first and, to date, the only director from Valladolid. A journalist by profession, González presented *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, which had recently received five Academy Awards in the principal categories, an unprecedented achievement in the festival's history. His tenure ended following a dispute with Antolín de Santiago concerning the commissioning of the official poster to the Republican artist Josep Renau (Seminci Presentation, 2025).

Vicente Antonio Pineda subsequently assumed the directorship. However, insufficient financial support from the Information and Tourism Delegation placed the festival's continuity at risk. In response, the City Council voted to assume responsibility for its funding, a commitment that continues to the present day (Combarros, 2015).

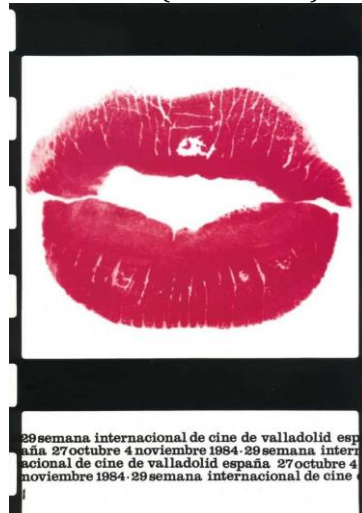
In 1980, the City Council established the Municipal Foundation of the Valladolid International Film Festival, thereby providing the institutional stability necessary to consolidate the event's organisational structure. The arrangement was initially conceived as provisional until a more permanent management framework could be formalised. In 1982, the Calderón Theatre resumed its role as the festival's principal venue (Norte de Castilla, 2016).

1.2.3. Fernando Lara's Tenure as Festival Director (1984-2004)

Fernando Lara directed Seminci from 1984 to 2004, a period during which the festival consolidated its prestige and international visibility. Reflecting on this trajectory in 2020, Lara characterised Seminci as a successful and institutionally strengthened festival following an earlier phase of transition (Lara, 2020).

In 1984, Lara also designed the iconic poster featuring red lips superimposed on a strip of celluloid, an image that has since become emblematic of Seminci's visual identity.

Image 2. Seminci poster from 1984 (29th edition) Designed by Manuel Sierra



Source: Seminci.com/carteles (2025).

This period also coincided with tributes to Mario Camus and with the recurring presence of Marina Saura as the festival's representative public face. In 1988, the Golden Spike Award was endowed with a monetary prize for the first time, marking a significant step in the consolidation of the festival's prestige.

The 1990s opened with the creation of *Tal como éramos* ("As We Were"), a retrospective section revisiting the early years of the competition, alongside the launch of the *Punto de Encuentro* ("Meeting Point") section (Barrasa et al., 1990). Notable figures during this period included Brad Pitt, who attended in 1991, and Pilar Miró in 1992. As Combarros (2015) observes, "Year after year, the Week increases its prestige in auteur cinema, discovering new talent and introducing Spain to the work of great unknowns who are now part of film history" (p. 27).

In 1995, Seminci returned to the Lope de Vega Theatre, the same year in which Icíar Bollaín emerged as a notable filmmaker. The following year, *Rompiendo las olas* ("Breaking the Waves") opened the festival, and in 1997 *Las Ratas*, based on the novel by the Valladolid writer Miguel Delibes, inaugurated the edition, which was widely regarded as one of the strongest competitions to date.

In 1999, the Calderón Theatre once again became the principal venue. With the support of the Sociedad General de Autores y Editores (SGAE), the festival began hosting gatherings of emerging filmmakers, an initiative that continued until 2010 and strengthened the visibility of Spanish directors.

In 2001, particular attention was given to Afghanistan, notably through the presence of an Afghan actress and a Hungarian photography exhibition, while in 2002 Poland was featured as the guest country. In 2003, the Tiempo de Historia section celebrated its twentieth anniversary. The forty-ninth edition, held in 2004, included the participation of Javier Bardem, who collected the Best Actress award on behalf of his mother, Pilar Bardem. That same year also marked a notable strengthening of Spanish documentary filmmaking within the Tiempo de Historia section.

The year concluded with Fernando Lara's appointment as Director of the ICAA by the then Minister of Culture, Carmen Calvo, bringing to an end a twenty-five-year period of leadership. Under his direction, the festival achieved consolidated national and international recognition as one of Europe's leading arthouse film festivals, leaving the Board of Trustees with the task of appointing his successor (Combarros, 2015).

1.2.4. Period of Change 2005-2007 with Frugone

The fiftieth edition in 2005 took place during a period of change. The Argentine Juan Carlos Frugone, who had served as Lara's deputy in the early years, assumed leadership, maintaining the festival's established trajectory while adding his own distinctive approach. This edition screened fifty notable feature and short films from previous years. It was accompanied by the production

of a one-minute promotional film shot in the city and directed by Isabel Coixet, celebrating an “idyll” between the city and cinema on the occasion of the festival’s anniversary. The film functioned as a promotional vehicle for the city across cinemas, television and the Cannes Film Festival (Agencies, 2005).

The festival was further promoted in France through a dedicated reception in Cannes, and the documentary *50 Years of Cinema* was broadcast on Spanish television. Additional film series were organised in New York. The edition was attended by Cannes prize-winners and featured a poster by the painter Eduardo Arroyo.

Until that point, the creators of the official poster had been selected by the management team, either on the basis of their professional reputation or because a specific work aligned with the festival’s conceptual vision. In 2006, the fifty-first edition introduced a new feature: an animated film on the theme of tolerance by Michel Ocelot, *Azur et Asmar* (Cantalapiedra, 2006). The following edition was dedicated to Ingmar Bergman, who had recently passed away. That year also saw Gerardo Olivares, the sole Spanish filmmaker from Andalusia, receive the Espiga de Oro, the festival’s highest award. Notably, Sophia Loren was honoured with the Espiga de Honor, attracting widespread public attention.

On 1 April 2008, a letter sent by Frugone to the members of the Board of Trustees “blew up the competition” (Combarros, 2015, p. 30). Changes in personnel were requested to ensure the festival’s continuity, a move poorly received by the mayor. The Board of Trustees, after initially denying the existence of any problems, stated that the festival had endured by maintaining a strict separation between politics and cinema. The episode concluded with Frugone’s resignation as festival director (Norte de Castilla, 2008).

1.2.5. Javier Angulo's Tenure as Festival Director

Javier Angulo was appointed by the Board of Trustees as his successor, in recognition of his extensive experience in the field, including ten years of collaboration with the Málaga Festival and his role as editor of *Cinemanía* magazine. From the outset, he made clear his intention to maintain auteur cinema as the festival’s core focus, giving less prominence to film stars. He articulated his objective as follows: “for a lot to happen, that is my ambition and my dream” (Combarros, 2015, p. 30).

A new phase began, marked by a particular emphasis on Spanish cinema and its professionals, thereby attracting new audiences. In 2009, Carlos Saura was the festival’s central figure (Seminci Tributes, 2009).

It was under Angulo’s direction, from his appointment in 2008, that an official poster competition was introduced. Open to artists through a public call for entries, this competition forms the subject of the present study. During this period, designers and advertising professionals were able to develop proposals that reflected their creative perspectives, often aligned with auteur cinema and consistent with the festival’s ethos and visual identity.

Angulo consolidated Seminci’s position as one of Europe’s most prestigious auteur film festivals, situated just below Cannes, Venice and Berlin, yet firmly among the leading festivals in its category. The festival’s commitment to auteur cinema became widely recognised, as Angulo himself affirmed in statements for this study.

He enjoyed the support of cultural institutions, including Valladolid City Council, the Regional Government of Castile and León and the Ministry of Culture, as well as professional associations, local companies and the city’s public, whose sustained attendance is reflected annually in long queues for festival tickets.

The Film Academy and ACCIÓN, the Association of Film Directors, expressed their gratitude to Angulo for his leadership and acknowledged his role in strengthening the festival’s standing within auteur cinema, highlighting “his good work and good cinema” (academiadecine.com, 2023).

On 21 December 2021, Seminci announced that “Javier Angulo is stepping down as director of the International Film Week” (Seminci Noticias, 2022). He departed of his own accord after fifteen years, stating that he “will remain in office until the appointment of the new director”. The same

report summarised his principal contributions, including the expansion of sections and participating titles, and outreach to new audiences through initiatives such as Miniminci and Sección Joven for schoolchildren, as well as awards in sections including Punto de Encuentro, Tiempo de Historia and DOC. España, focused on audiovisual production in Castile and León. These sections generate their own posters and awards, encompassing both feature and short films. Additional initiatives, such as Cine Gourmet (formerly Cine & Vinos), link the festival to Valladolid's gastronomic and enological heritage. The most recent addition, introduced in 2021, was Seminci Series, reflecting the festival's adaptability to evolving cultural and audiovisual contexts.

While much could be said about each director, this study does not seek to provide a comprehensive account; rather, its purpose is to contextualise the posters representing each period.

The Valladolid Film Festival is significant not only for the film industry but also for the city itself, serving as a creative and culturally valuable showcase. Although it does not attract visitors to the same extent as Holy Week, it draws external audiences and energises local participation, making the festival week an important driver of the local economy and enhancing national visibility. This impact is reinforced by the year-round activities associated with the festival (Narganes, 2023).

1.2.6. José Luís Cienfuegos's Tenure (2023 to present)

Seminci's official digital profile introduces José Luis Cienfuegos in the following terms:

José Luis Cienfuegos takes over the management of Seminci after having been at the helm of the Seville Festival since 2012. As director of the European film competition, Cienfuegos has brought together the great figures of European cinema, from legends such as Agnès Varda and Paolo Taviana to winners of the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival, as well as creators who have marked the progress of auteur cinema... (seminci.com, 2025)

Cienfuegos was formally introduced on 3 May 2023, in a ceremony symbolically marking the transition from Javier Angulo's tenure. During the event, Angulo presented him with two books on the history of the festival, underscoring institutional continuity. In his inaugural address, Cienfuegos described film festivals as "more necessary than ever" and expressed his enthusiasm at assuming leadership of what he characterised as "a festival where I have learned everything as a film programmer". He pledged to dedicate his "enthusiasm, work and effort" to generating renewed momentum and strengthening the relationship between festivals, cinema, and audiences, emphasising the importance of enabling spectators to define their own path within the festival framework (Seminci.com, 2023).

In the subsequent edition, Cienfuegos marked what was regarded as a new strategic direction, introducing a significant transformation by redefining the festival's corporate identity and ensuring that this renewed representation would clearly resonate with the public. The new image became the central visual element of the edition. As officially announced: "SEMINCI unveils its new graphic identity, updating its iconic lips and reinforcing its acronym as an international brand" (seminci.com, 2024).

This edition featured five Spanish directors competing for the Espiga de Oro, the festival's principal award, and reaffirmed its commitment to American independent cinema, including the participation of Eduard Fernández.

The 70th edition further reaffirmed Seminci's historical vocation as a showcase for socially committed and humanist cinema. Conceived as a milestone edition, it offered a reflective perspective on the festival's evolution and included numerous national premieres. Its poster consolidated the renewed visual identity, articulating a conceptual emphasis on movement and light as metaphors for continuity and transformation.

Beyond its cultural dimension, Seminci continues to exert a measurable economic impact. Studies estimate that the festival generates approximately €2.2 million and supports around forty jobs in local production. These effects are categorised as direct (linked to cultural organisation),

indirect (derived from the spending of non-local spectators), and induced or secondary effects associated with the broader economic activity generated by the event (Devesa-Fernández, 2005).

Finally, the role of the audience remains central to Seminci's identity. The Valladolid public is widely regarded as knowledgeable and critically engaged. Each edition stimulates public debate, praise, and dissent, extending beyond screening venues into the broader urban atmosphere. In this sense, the city itself becomes inseparable from the festival: Seminci is not merely hosted by Valladolid but is collectively appropriated and sustained by its community (Del Río, 1975; Seminci presentación, 2025).

2. Objectives

The objectives of this work are:

- To frame Valladolid as a creative city of cinema.
- To frame the historical journey of Seminci, better understanding its trajectory and its poster in relation to this.
- To frame the stages of Seminci's posters.
- To understand the message that the artists intended to convey.
- To understand the creativity in depth of some of the relevant creative figures in the history of the poster.
- Understand the stages of defining Seminci's identity and image and its latest campaign for the 70th edition, the current one.
- Learn about the opinions and challenges of the festival directors, their image, and what they aim to achieve with their competition posters.

3. Methodology

The following work combines secondary and primary research. The former allows us to frame the state of the art and to gather information on the representations produced by past and present posters, drawing on testimonies from Seminci and its audience. The primary sources, in this case an in-depth survey, enable us to arrive at a more precise creative understanding of certain authors considered relevant at each stage of Seminci¹: Manuel Sierra; Jorge Barrientos; Toni Pontí and the PobrelaVaca studio (Félix and Ana); and directors Javier Angulo and José Luis Cienfuegos.

Secondary sources are employed to conduct a focused content analysis, examining aspects such as image composition, colour, typography, and the dominant themes presented to the public, enriched by artists' statements or interviews.

3.1. Methodology

Content analysis is a technique widely employed in the study of media and advertising. Authors such as Weber (1999), cited in Rivar (2022), define it as a methodology that allows valid inferences to be drawn from texts or images.

Content analysis is primarily a research technique based on quantitative, objective data, yet these data are of limited relevance unless accompanied by a subjective interpretation grounded in the quantitative results obtained. Bardin, in his work *El análisis de contenido* (Content Analysis), observes that "content analysis moves between two poles: the rigour of objectivity and the fertility of subjectivity. It excuses and accredits in the researcher that attraction to the hidden, the latent, the non-apparent, the unpublished (unspoken) potential, enclosed in every message" (Bardin, 1977, p.7).

Used by communication researchers such as Donis and Martín-Casado (2017), Martín-Casado (2022), and Tur-Viñes et al. (2018), among others, content analysis allows researchers to examine perceived content in relation to specific objectives.

¹ It would be interesting to capture the testimony of as many artists as possible; however, this exceeds the scope of the present work, which focuses on their contributions to the festival's identity and image. Consequently, those who have been most relevant have been selected, allowing us to trace developments up to the present moment.

The in-depth interview is a qualitative research method consisting of a flexible, yet planned and open, conversation between an interviewer and an interviewee. Its aim is to gain a detailed understanding of the interviewee's experiences, feelings, and perspectives on a specific topic. This method is characterised by its interactive and generative nature, allowing the researcher to explore topics in depth and obtain rich, context-sensitive information, although it requires time and experience to execute effectively (Taylor and Bogdan, 2008).

As Guerrero (2001) notes, "qualitative practices constitute a tentative attempt to reproduce the forms of symbolic exchange in real social praxis, responding to the logic of concrete meaning" (p. 3). In this approach, the interviewer and interviewee interact dynamically, with the interviewee guiding the discussion towards predetermined topics, in this case to explore Seminci and the specific visual identity of certain posters.

The interviews explored the perspectives of both the author and the directors. The author discussed how he received the commission and provided an explanation of the poster's creative approach, while the directors reflected on how they were selected, the meaning and objectives of Seminci, and their expectations for the poster in each edition.

4. Results

4.1. Interpretation Following Public Presentation or Interview

4.1.1. First Stage

The posters can be viewed in the "Posters" section of Seminci, where the author, dimensions, year, and edition are listed.² In the early years, posters were commissioned directly from the authors by Seminci management or through competitions among invited companies, as advertising agencies were practically non-existent at the time. A brief description of each poster's content is provided, with more detailed accounts included when based on interviews with the author.

1956 poster – Black and white, 1st Religious Film Week. Design features a black background with a hand holding a crucifix. Author: José Antonio Perelátegui.

1957 poster – Incorporates red, 2nd Religious Film Week. A red background with a celluloid ribbon surrounding a crucifix, linking cinema and religion. Author: Ito.

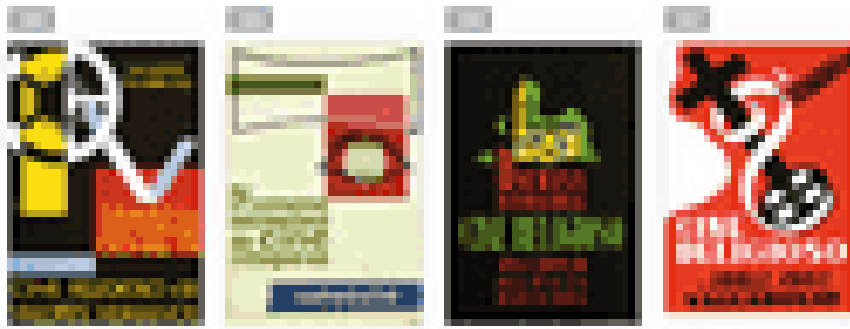
1958 poster – Black background, 3rd International Religious Film Week. Valladolid Cathedral is depicted in yellow on a green background, and the lettering emphasises the religious nature of the event. This was the first poster to include red lettering and incorporate the international concept.

1959 poster – 4th International Religious Film Week. Colour poster with an abstract design showing a globe inside an eye, reflecting the festival's international character. The word Valladolid appears on a celluloid strip. This marked the first time there was no clear reference to religion. Author: Carlos.

1960 poster – Black background with celluloid playing with yellow and white light. The falling ribbon forms a "V" for the fifth International Film and Human Values Week, the first-year human values were incorporated into the title. Red is used for the name of the week, in a simple, modern font. Author: Carlos.

² The images of all the posters are available at: seminci.com/carteles.

Image 3. Posters from 1957 (right) to 1960 (left)



Source: seminci.com/posters (2025).

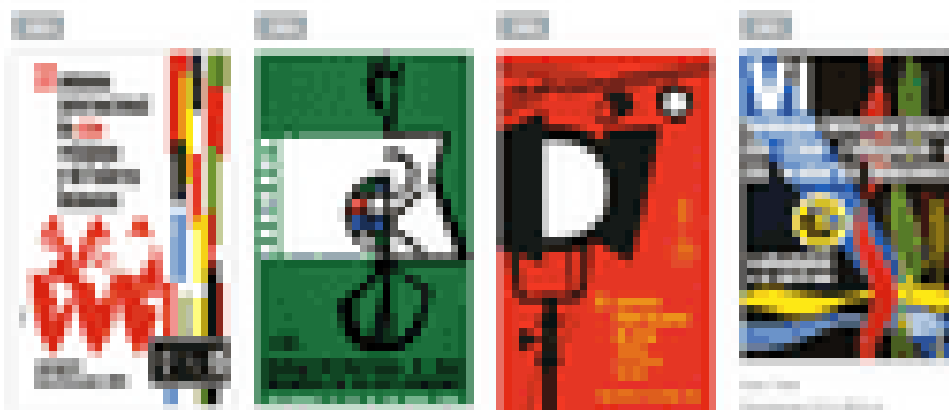
1961 poster – VI International Week of Religious Cinema and Human Values. Black background with primary colours, featuring vertical and horizontal celluloid strips arranged fluidly, crossing at the bottom right where the spike emerges. At the centre is the labarum, a Roman insignia containing a cross. This was the first edition to incorporate elements of the festival's identity. White lettering appears on the black background. Author: Fede.

1962 poster – VII International Week of Religious Cinema and Moral Values. Large letters highlight the words that would give the festival its name, Seminci. The background is in "Seminci red", and, like cinema spotlights, the labarum and spike are symbolically joined. The letters stand out for their simplicity in yellow. The design is modern yet retains traditional motifs associated with cinema and festivals, including spotlights, celluloid, and the cross.

1963 poster – 8th International Week of Religious Cinema and Human Values. The word "Morals" is replaced by "Humans". The poster features a green background with hints of celluloid suggested by a spotlight, the world, and the viewer. Author: José Luis Roncero.

1964 poster – 9th edition. White background with coloured stripes. A map of the world appears in white on a red background, emphasising the festival's international character. Three symbolic elements are depicted on the black celluloid: an ear of wheat, the labarum, and a caravel, representing the festival, the Roman insignia of the cross (its religious character), and the international dimension of the event. The word "Cinema" and the edition number stand out in red. Author: Fede.

Image 4. Posters from edition VI, 1961 (right) to IX, 1961 (left)



Source: Seminci.com/posters (2025).

1965 poster – 10th edition. The words *Semana Internacional de Cine* (International Film Week) are highlighted in orange, with the remaining text in purple. There are no symbolic elements. The Valladolid motif appears alongside celluloid, and the number X is crowned at the top inside a circle, possibly inspired by an ear of wheat, emphasising the tenth edition's significance. Author: Fede.

1966 poster – 11th edition. The first three words appear alongside the edition number, while the description of religious and human values is presented separately. This poster introduces a clear logo for the first time, combining the ear of wheat, the labarum, and a caravel, which remained in use for several years. Celluloid appears in black against a grey background, with yellow used solely for the typography. Author: A. F.

1967 poster – 12th International Film Week. The title appears in black-on-black celluloid, with “religious and human values” in black on yellow. The design features black-and-white celluloid on a bright yellow background, with red indicating the edition. Author: Fede.

1968 poster – 13th edition. The entire title is presented in the same font and size. White lettering appears on a black background, with a spotlight suggested by its white light, surrounded by colours that convey joy, dynamism, and vibrancy. Author: Fede.

Image 5. Posters from the 10th edition (1965) to the 13th edition (1968)



Source: Seminci.com/posters (2025).

1969 poster – 14th International Film Week. The title appears in black, with “religion and human values” in red, set against a soft background featuring an eye within celluloid. Small squares, possibly representing cinema seats, appear, with the red square marking the start of the festival name. Author: Fede.

1970 poster – 15th International Week of Religious and Human Values Cinema. The entire name is presented in typography, with the number 15 highlighted in red. The black poster features yellow spheres reminiscent of suns, terminating in celluloid. Author: Enrique Paredes.

1971 poster – 16th edition retains the same festival name. The poster depicts a figure or face within the depth of a frame, rendered in purple, black, and white. Author: Fede.

1972 poster – XVII Semana, maintaining the same festival name. The typography emphasises the name of Valladolid International Film Festival rather than its religious or human aspects. Coloured circles and celluloid strips extend from the left-hand corner to the centre, including a globe to emphasise the festival’s international character. Author: Enrique Paredes.

Image 6. Posters from 1969 (right) to 1972 (left) from the 14th to the 7th edition



Source: Seminci. Com/posters (2025).

1973 poster – 18th edition and the first to use the festival’s final name, Valladolid International Film Festival, dropping the religious and humanistic elements from the title. The poster reflects a

broader and more open theme, featuring geometric figures and positioning the camera as the central element that opens up multiple images, perspectives, and gazes. The previous logo is also reinstated. Author: Fede.

4.1.2. Period from 1974 to 1983

1974 poster – 19th edition. The festival’s full name is used, still without acronyms. This poster differs from previous editions, featuring a photographic image of the Avenida cinema. A new director assumed leadership, introducing a fresh style and a new signature. Author: Filadelfo.

1975 poster – 20th edition. The festival name appears in white, with the word “cinema” in red. The number XX is highlighted, constructed from brightly coloured geometric shapes in blue, fuchsia pink, and orange. The director, continuing from the previous year, returned to a previous artist, Fede.

1976 poster – 21st Valladolid International Film Festival. Created through a competition among companies and agencies in Valladolid that existed at the time, this poster incorporates the logo of three elements alongside a groundbreaking and unique image. The illustration depicts a jacket that positions the cinema viewer as the protagonist. The colourful tie alludes to the variety and diversity of Seminci: countries, cultures, themes, and trends. The poster, created on the final night from a winning idea, emphasises the union of cinema and the viewer during a week when cinema is central to everyone’s attention. Author: Manuel Sierra (interview).

Image 7. Posters from 1973 to 1976, from the 18th to the 21st edition



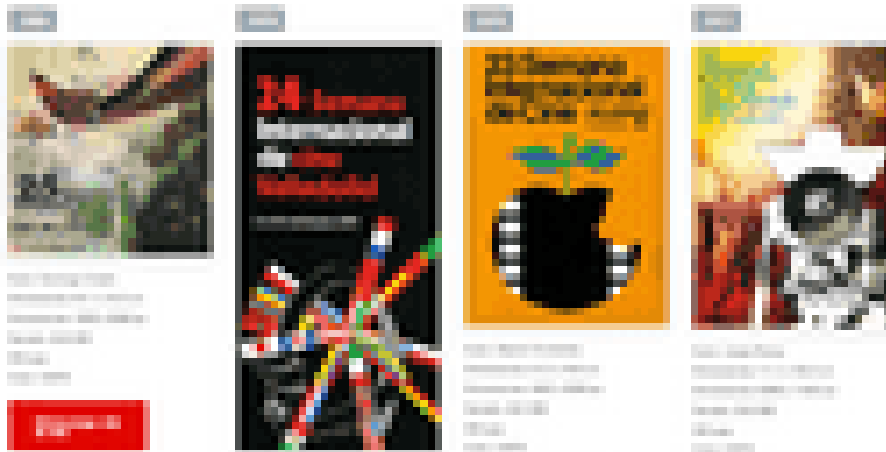
Source: seminci.com/posters (2025).

1977 poster – 22nd International Week. The design is based on a semi-realistic image, featuring an audience in the background and the camera in the foreground. A line connects the festival name, the light, and the camera, emphasising the camera as the protagonist, capturing a turbulent moment. Author: Josep Renau, whose involvement caused tension with the director of Seminci due to his controversial political ideas at the time.

1978 poster – 23rd edition. The poster features a bitten apple, outlined similarly to the Apple logo, with a black celluloid interior. The apple predates the global fame of the Apple brand, with the bite perhaps symbolising “the sin of cinema”, and coloured leaves representing joy. Author: Alberto Fernández. This edition also marks a new management phase, with the festival date shifted to the end of November, moving away from its traditional proximity to Easter.

1979 poster – 24th edition of the International Film Week. Red highlights the words “Cinema” and “Valladolid”. A roll of celluloid intertwines with flags from multiple countries, emphasising the festival’s international character. This was the first edition held in October. Author: Fede.

1980 poster – 25th Valladolid International Film Week. A square poster featuring abstract painting, placing painters as the protagonists. This design represents a departure from the previous visual style. Author: Domingo Criado.

Image 8. Posters from 1977 to 1980, editions 22 to 25

Source: seminci.com/posters (2025).

1981 poster – 26th International Film Festival. A colourful, illustrated poster featuring an orange background and a stylised map incorporating various cinematographic elements, ghostly figures, scenes, and landscapes with abstract decorative motifs, about which little information is available. Author: Jorge Vidal.

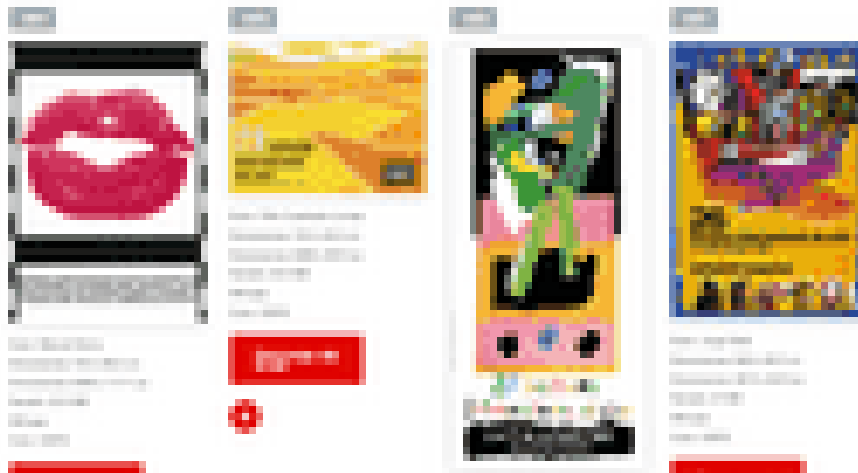
1982 poster – 27th International Film Week. A vibrant, fictional composition created from pieces of torn paper forming a couple seated before the fiction, symbolising either love in cinema or cinema love. The poster introduces a new artist with a groundbreaking approach to shape and colour. Author: Gabino Gaona.

1983 poster – 28th edition. Inspired by the fields of Castile, the poster is rendered in ochre tones. These posters diverge markedly from previous designs, moving away from conventional cinematic imagery and incorporating the work of painters with diverse styles. Author: Félix Cuadrado-Lomas.

4.1.3. Fernando Lara Period

1984 poster – 29th Valladolid International Film Festival. Created in an interview-based collaboration with Manuel Sierra, the design features celluloid depicted as if it were a paper napkin, stamped with a woman's kiss. The image was developed by stamping different lips on various types of paper until the optimal result was achieved. According to the author, the kiss symbolises love, both in cinema and beyond, and, by integrating the kiss with the film, represents "the love of cinema". The author clarifies that the design is not inspired by Marilyn Monroe's lips; only he knows the true inspiration. The red lips became a defining element of the festival's identity, creating a memorable, logo-like image. Fernando Lara's team commissioned this poster to establish a striking and recognisable festival identity, and it has remained the public image of Seminci ever since.

Image 9. Posters from 1981 to 1984, editions 26 to 29



Source: seminci.com/posters.

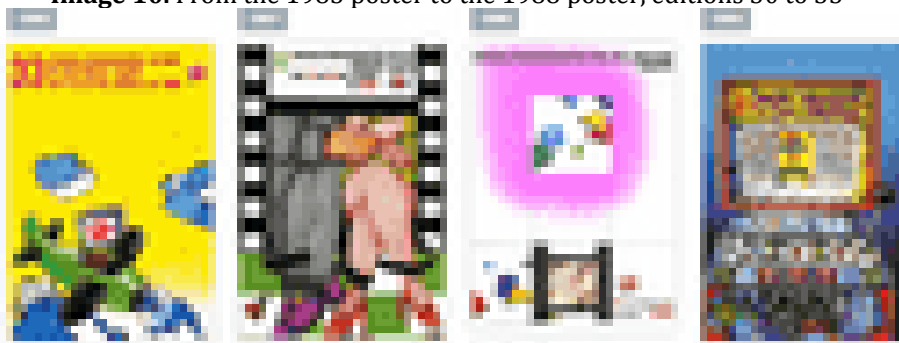
1985 poster – 30th edition of the International Film Week. Based on an interview with Manuel Sierra, the design presents cinema as a game, simulating a slot machine with cinematic elements. The three lips represent good fortune and the festival itself, with cinema portrayed as the prize, whether it be film stars or life experiences. The poster reinforces the previously established identity, inviting audiences to enjoy cinema.

1986 poster – 31st edition of Film Week. The poster features a square with coloured, airbrushed shapes forming an abstract composition that reflects the spirit of the moment. Set against a pink background, coloured triangles highlight the 31st edition, while lines below suggest the ongoing activity behind the grey film strip, including Seminci and its logo, which continues to leave its mark. Author: Manuel Sierra.

1987 poster – 32nd edition of International Film Week. Cinema is depicted as a space of reality beyond celluloid. A couple making out in a dark space extends beyond the frame of the film, representing moments of love and cinema as a dreamlike, immersive experience that transcends the screen. Author: Manuel Sierra.

1988 poster – 33rd edition of International Film Week. Inspired by the arrival of the film *Mona Lisa* the previous year on a chartered plane, the poster conveys Seminci cinema as a phenomenon that arrives from anywhere, celebrated as if from heaven. A plane flies overhead, “releasing” the festival, with the logo representing the image of Seminci. Author: Manuel Sierra³.

Image 10. From the 1985 poster to the 1988 poster, editions 30 to 33



Source: seminci.com/posters (2025).

1989 poster – 34th International Film Week. The poster features colourful figures, including silhouettes of film characters and scenes. Author: Vicente Pérez.

³ The author tells us that the team did not want the same author for too many years in a row. The change was positive. This was his last poster.

1990 poster – 35th International Film Week. The design evokes the interplay of colour and light in cinema, presented within a square reminiscent of a frame of celluloid. Author: Vicente Pérez.

1991 poster – 36th edition. The Calderón building appears to fly like a windbox, releasing colourful and cheerful celluloid strips. The design anticipates a cinematic sense of movement similar to that in the film *Up*, although the poster predates the film. Author: Enrique Panedas.

1992 poster – 37th Valladolid International Film Week. Coloured celluloid forms the letter V for Valladolid, with an eye incorporated into the design. This continues the visual connection with Sierra's kiss logo, emphasising continuity in the festival's identity. Author: Enrique Panedas.

Image 11. Posters from 1989 to 1992, editions 34 to 37 of the festival



Source: seminci.com/posters.

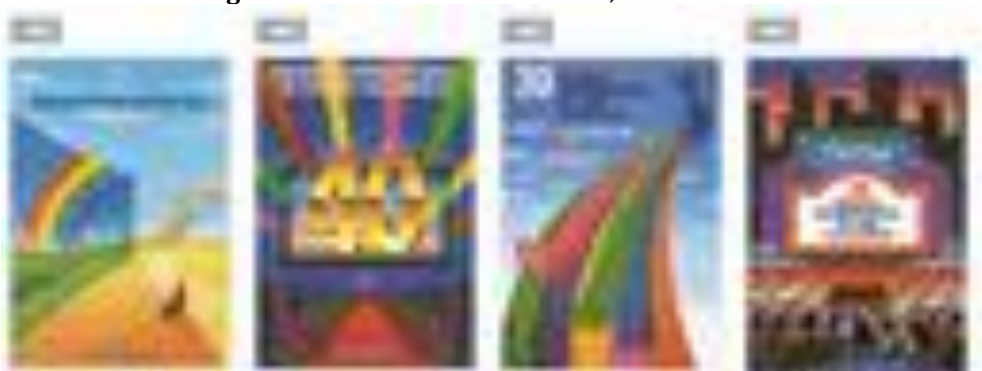
1993 poster – 38th edition of the Valladolid International Film Festival. The poster simulates a crowded cinema entrance, rendered in cheerful, somewhat pastel tones and lacking red. Author: Enrique Panedas.

1994 poster – 39th edition. A peacock, symbolising Valladolid's Campo Grande Park, features prominently on this colourful design. The feathers are depicted as celluloid, and the kiss logo is retained. Author: Enrique Panedas.

1995 poster – 40th edition. The number 40 appears as a star projected onto a cinema screen. Another colourful poster by Enrique Panedas.

1996 poster – 41st edition. The design shows a man observing a rainbow reflected on the cinema screen, emphasising cinema as a medium that reflects and enhances beauty. Author: Enrique Panedas.

Image 12. Posters from 1993 to 1996, editions 38 to 41



Source: seminci.com/posters (2025).

1997 poster – 42nd International Film Week. Pieces of a puzzle construct a film scene, symbolising that colour depends on history: without history, there is no colour. Author: Enrique Panedas.

1998 poster – 43rd Film Week. Two scenes placed at opposite corners, connected by a diagonal line from the top left to the bottom right, highlight a recording scene and an action scene, with festival information positioned between them. Authors: Adrián and Ureña.

1999 poster – 44th International Film Week. The number four is reflected as if in a mirror to form the edition in orange. Against a blue background, a woman’s face appears in black, all framed within celluloid. Authors: Adrián and Ureña.

2000 poster – 45th Film Week. Based on a work by Edward Hopper, the poster depicts a female usher appearing pensive in a cinema to which she feels alien, inviting viewers to observe stories both inside and outside the cinema.

Image 13. Posters from 1997 to 2000, editions 42 to 45



Source: seminci.com/posters (2025).

2001 poster – 46th Valladolid International Film Festival. A charcoal-style poster depicting a cinema with an audience in front of a screen, possibly capturing a scene from the centre of the auditorium. Author: Miquel Barceló.

2002 poster – 47th Valladolid International Film Festival. An illustration of a cinema scene in which both the audience and the scene itself take centre stage. Author: Willian Roberts.

2003 poster – 48th Valladolid International Film Festival. A photograph of a man, depicted as a white statue, writing beneath the word “Cinema”, serving as an invitation to the 48th festival. Author: George Segal.

2004 poster – 49th Film Festival. A painting simulating the filming of a scene, alongside various scenes from other settings or spaces. Author: Thomas Hart Benton.

Image 14. Posters from 2001 to 2004, sections 46 to 49

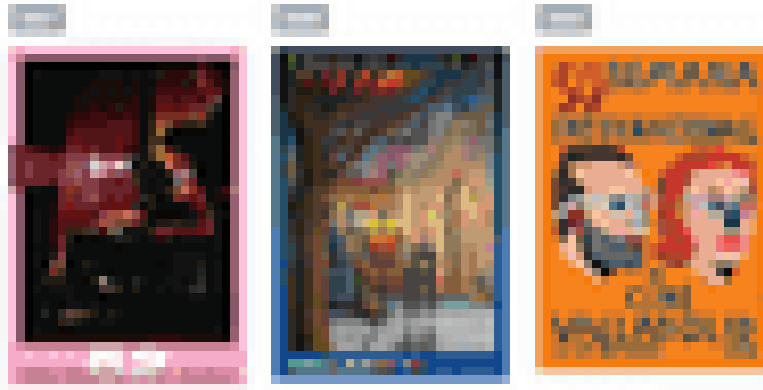


Source: seminci.com/posters (2025).

2005 poster – 50th International Film Week. The poster depicts a man and a woman wearing glasses, possibly created using marker pen and cut-out paper. They appear either as spectators or as actors and protagonists of the poster. Author: Eduardo Arroyo.

2006 poster – 51st International Film Festival. An illustrated scene of a couple walking in the rain towards a cinema. The image is complemented by colourful and cheerful typography reflecting the festival’s character. Author: Karen Mazzarella.

2007 poster – 52nd Valladolid International Film Festival. A photograph of a film set, showing a camera operator while the director positions an actress. The poster captures a cinematic scene in action. Author: Jack Vetriato.

Image 15. Posters from 2005 to 2007, editions 50 to 52

Source: seminci.com/posters.

4.2. The Poster from the Competition Stage: Personal Interviews and Content Analysis

At this stage of the festival, the two directors, Javier Angulo and José Luis Cienfuegos, were interviewed. The discussion was guided by three questions: How did you become involved with the festival? What is Seminci? And what do you expect from the Seminci poster and its advertising?

4.2.1. Interview with Javier Angulo

He became involved with the festival because he was sought out and accepted the challenge.

Regarding Seminci and its significance, he emphasised that it is undoubtedly one of the world's leading auteur festivals. It defends creative freedoms and is open to all genres, with its hallmark being the quality of the films it programmes. It is a unique festival.

He consistently valued that the festival enjoys the full support of the city, alongside backing from public and private institutions, including the City Council, the Regional Government of Castile and León, and the Ministry of Culture. Numerous companies have sought to collaborate with the festival, recognising it as a significant opportunity. Seminci is the second most important festival in Spain and is constantly evolving, with activities and spaces incorporated throughout the year. The team travels internationally to bring the best films to the festival, demonstrating effort and commitment rather than relying on financial investment. This task is undertaken annually.

The festival is rich in activities, supported by a dedicated team that brings enthusiasm and professionalism each year.

When asked about his expectations for the poster, he emphasised impact. He sought a design that would stand out, present a fresh and clearly auteur perspective, and engage the viewer. The poster should convey a perceivable message, reflecting the quality and authorship of the films. The jury, composed of experts in cinema, design, creativity, and Seminci's identity, evaluates the submissions.

From the outset, Angulo proposed a completely open competition to select the poster, prioritising originality. Authors submit an explanation and justification of their work. The jury, composed of film and design professionals, chooses the winner, with the president's vote counting double in the event of a tie. The president also retains the right of veto. Only the press receives the posters and classifies them for delivery, and the authors' names remain anonymous during the selection process.

The poster must include the edition, the festival dates, and the festival name. The theme is open, but the use of typical cinema motifs such as spotlights, celluloid, or popcorn is restricted. Until 2008, the full festival name was used; the acronym Seminci did not yet appear on promotional posters. There are no requirements regarding size, logos, or predefined fonts, leaving authors free to explore creativity without constraining style.

4.2.2. Posters by Javier Angulo

2008 poster – 53rd Valladolid International Film Festival. The poster simulates the behaviour of the eye, which resembles a camera for viewing images. Author: Estudio RaRo.

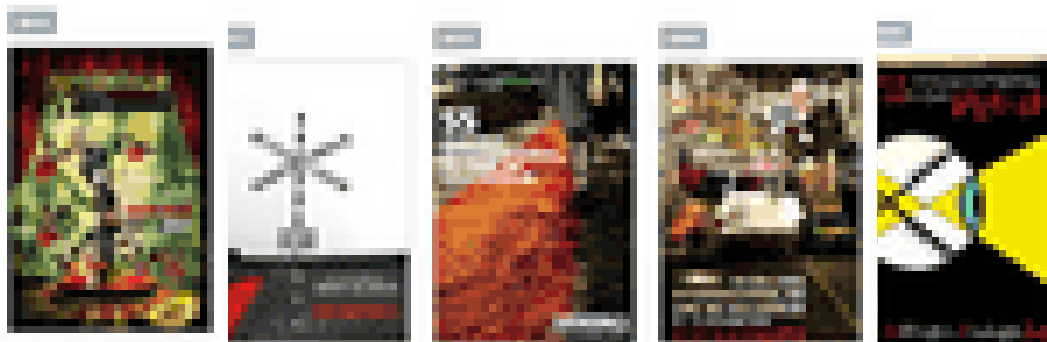
2009 poster – 54th edition. This is the first poster to feature the name Seminci in red as the focal point. The design depicts a modest setting, reflecting how auteur cinema often operates with limited economic resources, yet this does not diminish its talent. The poster recognises the challenges of auteur cinema. Author: Álvaro Moreno Molero.

2010 poster – 55th Festival. The poster emphasises the importance of festivals in supporting different, rare, difficult, and special cinema during challenging times, highlighting the role of art house cinema. Author: Estudio Gráfico “Trespuntocero”.

2011 poster – 56th edition. The design presents a showcase for traditional cinema and a springboard for new cinema, exploring all directions and emphasizing both form and substance. The word Seminci appears in red, symbolising the festival’s path towards innovation. Author: Iñaki Fernández Iturmendi.

2012 poster – 57th edition. The poster celebrates cinema as a meeting place and a fantasy of reality, highlighting its role as a gathering point for culture. References are made to Mexico as the guest country. Author: Marta Corcho.

Image 16. Posters from 2008 to 2012, 54th to 57th editions



Source: seminci.com/posters.

2013 poster – 58th edition. The poster depicts a barefoot woman, referencing Morocco and its social and cultural evolution. The design presents the gaze of a camera and an enlarged view captured at a moment of transition⁴. Author: Iván San Martín.

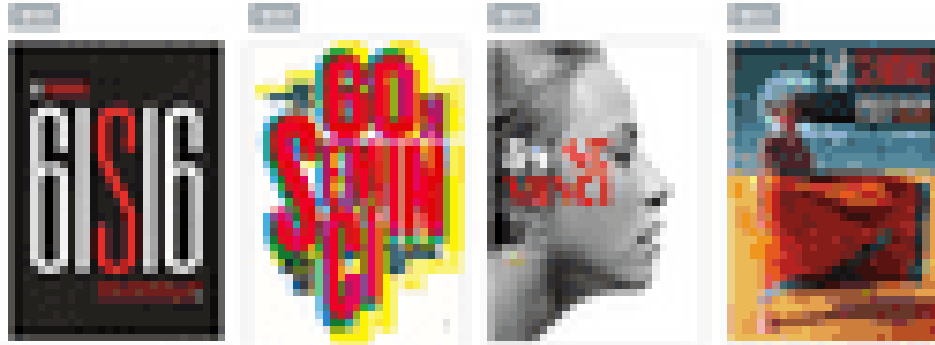
2014 poster – 59th edition. According to the author, the poster should convey beauty and simplicity. A black and white profile of a woman with her eyes closed evokes reverie and freedom, capturing the contemplative and dreamlike experience that cinema offers. Colour and dynamism are introduced through the typography, whose shape engages the viewer. Author: Tono Pontí.

2015 poster – 60th edition. A colourful poster designed by Oscar Mariné, winner of the National Design Award. The design simulates the third dimension, reflecting sixty years of cinema in all its forms. The big screen is celebrated as offering more than home cinema, inviting audiences to experience the festival in person.

2016 poster – 61st edition. The author intended to create a poster that symbolises a complete, perfect plan, demonstrated through the symmetry and structure of the numbers and letters, including the S of Seminci. The design of the number 61 reflects the festival itself and the year 16, marking a perfect year of cinema at the festival. Author: Toni Pontí.

⁴ The details are taken from Seminci’s news report on the presentation.

Image 17. Posters from 2013 to 2014. Editions 13 to 16



Source: seminci.com/posters (2025).

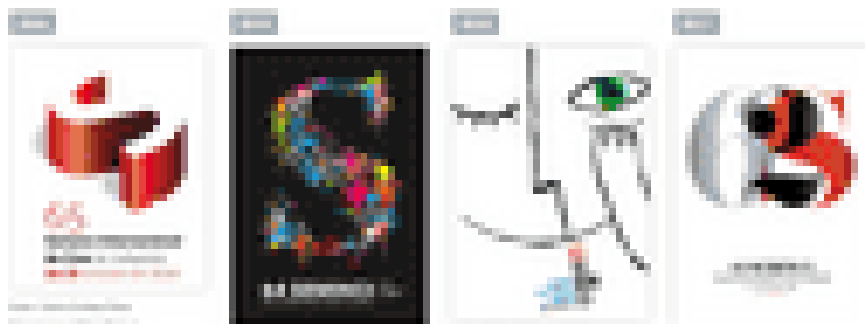
2017 poster – 62nd edition. The design emphasises letting the information speak for itself. The shapes of the 2 and the S are rounded, conveying craftsmanship and dynamism. The poster reflects art house cinema, where red is a signature colour of Seminci. It maintains a classic style, acknowledging that every style has a place within the festival’s modernity. Author: Tono Pontí.

2018 poster – 63rd edition. The poster embodies the idea that auteur cinema requires an auteur poster. Seminci is auteur cinema, where the focus is on the person and their gaze. One green eye symbolises freshness, peace, and depth, while the other eye is closed, representing the dreaming that cinema allows. Minimal features guide the viewer to perceive that film is the soul of the festival. The spectator smiles at what they see, expressing satisfaction. Author: Jorge Barrientos.

2019 poster – 64th edition. The poster reflects Seminci as a festival composed of diverse perspectives and cultures, where everything is unique and nothing is repeated. It emphasises variety, inclusion, and unity. Different spots of varying sizes, colours, and textures form the letter S, creating a more artisanal, auteur Seminci. Author: Toni Pontí.

2020 poster – 65th edition. The design, called the “Lugar S” poster, identifies Seminci at a glance through simple yet powerful graphics, giving it its own infrastructure as if it were a building. The poster invites the public to experience the festival from within, with an access point allowing them to enter the “*lugar eSe*” when attending a film. Author: Carlos Arribas.

Image 18. Posters from 2017 to 2020, from the 62nd edition to the 65th



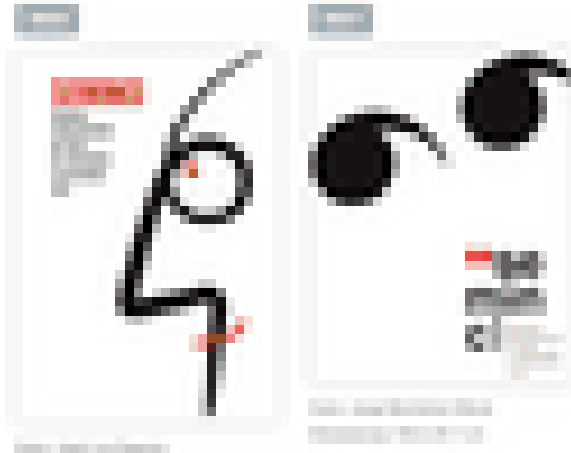
(Source: seminci.com/posters, 2025).

2021 poster – 66th edition. The author experimented with the number 66, using the shapes of the sixes to suggest eyes, positioned at an angle to convey movement and dynamism. The design reflects a clearly auteur style, breaking conventional rules while remaining connected to Seminci. The edition number appears in red, creating contrast, and the “1” is represented by squares reminiscent of pieces of celluloid. The author described his approach as playing with art and design to communicate. Author: Jorge Barrientos.

2022 poster – 67th edition. Titled *Expectant Spectator*, the poster captures the excitement of a child drawing the numbers six and four, forming a smiling face. The graphics imbue the design

with humanity, reflecting the enjoyment and engagement of the spectator at Seminci. Author: José Luis Segovia.

Image 19. From 2020 to 2021, from edition 66 to 67.



Source: seminci.com/posters (2025).

4.3. Stage with José Luis Cienfuegos: Interview and Poster Design

The director of Seminci explains that he joined the festival by submitting his CV in response to a call for applications, and his professional profile was selected. He brought extensive experience in the sector, having previously formed part of the management team at the Seville Festival. Attracted to the project, he saw an opportunity to contribute to a prestigious and well-organised event.

He was drawn to Seminci because it is a significant festival with an agile working structure and a deep respect for cinema. He was also familiar with the Film Chair and the programmes previously led by Fernando Lara.

His initial plan was to familiarise himself with the terrain, the teams, and the people involved, introducing new talent and implementing changes to better serve the city's communities. At the same time, he emphasised maintaining the essence of auteur cinema, respecting the history and tradition of Seminci, and incorporating filmmakers as central contributors in this new stage. Now celebrating seventy years, the festival is a well-established platform committed to distinguished directors and filmmakers, a space where the history of cinema continues to evolve.

Regarding advertising, he stated that the first year should focus on conveying the festival's trajectory, reflecting its history and following the lines established in previous years, while continuing the poster competition model.

In the second year, observing that Seminci lacked a clearly defined corporate identity and a unified visual image, he selected three design studios or agencies based on the quality of their portfolios. Each presented a proposal, and the chosen studio, PobreLaVaca, was tasked with designing the entire corporate identity of the brand, including a design and typography user manual.

For the most recent campaign, he requested that the team maintain the established identity and continue building the brand image according to the defined parameters, ensuring a solid and recognisable visual identity while conveying the festival's significance. This edition emphasises light and movement.

4.3.1. Posters Since 2023

2023 poster – 68th edition. The poster features colourful letters representing the 68th Seminci, with a playful twist. It celebrates the festival's history in a positive and vibrant way, introducing a more colourful and fresher image that departs from previous minimalism. The growth of the festival is reflected in the growth of the letters. The author expressed great satisfaction with the result. Author: Tono Pontí.

2024 poster – 69th edition. This poster presents the new logo as a fully defined and recognisable image for the public. While the design refreshed Seminci’s visual identity, the iconic kiss motif was retained out of respect for the audience, who have long associated it with the festival. Seminci’s identity is now highly regarded internationally and deeply embraced by the city. The new design includes custom typography and a redesigned kiss, forming a coherent brand identity while remaining instantly recognisable.

2025 poster – 70th edition. Commissioned from the same team responsible for the corporate identity, this poster adheres to the brand guidelines in the user manual. The design features a white centre with moving yellow bands, conveying light and motion, inspired by the 1960s and 1970s. It reflects the essence of the festival, creating a living, dynamic image. This is the first poster designed to be seen in motion while maintaining Seminci’s established identity, ensuring recognition as a symbol among international festivals. Author: PobrelaVaca.

Image 20. From 2023 to 2024, edition 68 to 69



Source: seminci.co/posters (2025).

Image 21. Poster for the 70th edition (2025)



Source: Seminci.com/downloads (2025)⁵.

5. Acknowledgements

My heartfelt thanks go to the people who make up Seminci, a festival with soul both on and off the screen. I have been treated with exquisite kindness and offered tremendous support, finding light where at first there was only fog.

To Luisa Carbajosa, from Seminci press, for her endless kindness, efficiency, and assistance. To Javier Angulo, for attending to me and providing information beyond what I asked for, for his generosity, storytelling skills, and ability to reconstruct. To José Luís Cienfuegos, the current director, who in September answered my questions at ungodly hours, making time where there was none and showing kindness when time was almost impossible to find.

⁵ The poster can also be opened in motion in the downloads section.

And, of course, a thousand thanks to the artists who have dedicated endless hours to this project, for responding, opening their hearts, revealing their work and souls in the posters, and sharing their minds through their interpretations. To Félix and Ana from PobrelaVaca, to Jorge Barrientos, Toni Pontí, and Manuel Sierra, the latter also preserving the memory of those from the past.

I am at a loss for words. I can only express how fortunate I have been, and how fortunate Seminci is to have had these top-level professionals, distinguished not only for their talent but for their passion, pure and open spirits, and the gaze and enthusiasm of a child with wide eyes. Thank you always.

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