



The Platform (film)

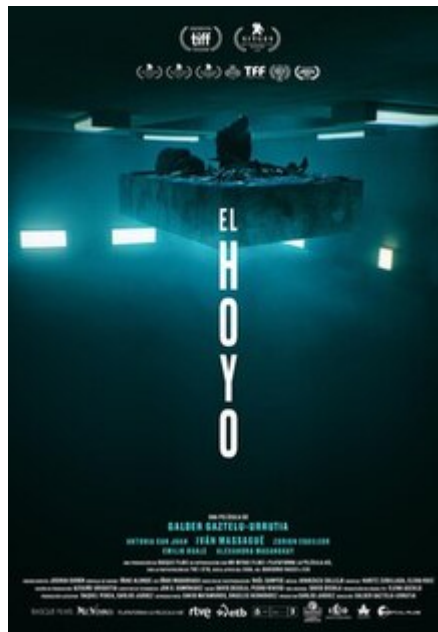
The Platform (Spanish: ***El hoyo***, lit. 'The Hole') is a 2019 Spanish dystopian thriller^[2] film directed by Galder Gaztelu-Urrutia.^[3] The film is set in a large, tower-style "Vertical Self-Management Center." Its residents, who are transferred in through for various crimes or wants must every month switch between its many floors, are fed via a platform which, initially filled with food at the top floor, gradually descends through the tower's levels, stopping for a fixed amount of time on each. The system inevitably leads to conflict, as the residents at the top levels get to eat as much as they can, with each level only getting the leftovers from the previous ones.^[3]

The film's cast includes Iván Massagué, Antonia San Juan, Zorion Eguileor, Emilio Buale Coka and Alexandra Masangkay.^[3] It premiered at the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), where it won the People's Choice Award for Midnight Madness.^[4] At TIFF, the film also secured a worldwide streaming deal with Netflix.^[5] It was released theatrically in Spain on November 8, 2019 by Festival Films. It generally received positive reviews from critics.

Plot

Goreng wakes in a cell on level 48. His cellmate Trimagasi explains that they are in a tower-style holding facility. Once per day, food arrives on "the platform" that lowers from level 0, stopping for two minutes on each level. Prisoners can only eat while the platform is stopped on their level, and are subjected to fatal temperatures if they keep any food. The lower the level, the less food left on the platform. Prisoners are randomly reassigned to a new level each month. Trimagasi reveals that when assigned to level 132, he and his former cellmate cannibalized someone. One day, a woman named Miharu rides down the platform. Trimagasi explains she regularly descends the pit to

The Platform



Theatrical release poster

Spanish	<i>El hoyo</i>
Literally	The Hole
Directed by	<u>Galder Gaztelu-Urrutia</u>
Screenplay by	David Desola Pedro Rivero
Story by	David Desola
Produced by	Carlos Juárez
Starring	<u>Iván Massagué</u> <u>Antonia San Juan</u> <u>Zorion Eguileor</u> <u>Emilio Buale</u> <u>Alexandra Masangkay</u>
Cinematography	Jon D. Domínguez
Edited by	Haritz Zubillaga Elena Ruiz
Music by	Aranzazu Calleja
Production companies	Basque Films Mr. Miyagi Films

search for her child. Goreng volunteered to spend six months in the facility in exchange for a diploma, while Trimagasi transferred in serving a year-long sentence.

After becoming friends, they are re-shuffled to level 171. Expecting no food, Trimagasi ties up Goreng while the latter sleeps. Trimagasi explains his plans to use Goreng's flesh. Trimagasi eventually begins cutting into Goreng's flesh. Miharu arrives, attacks Trimagasi, and frees Goreng, who kills Trimagasi. Encouraged by Miharu, Goreng eats Trimagasi's flesh and subsequently becomes haunted by hallucinations of Trimagasi.

	Plataforma La Película A.I.E
Distributed by	Festival Films
Release dates	6 September 2019 (TIFF) 8 November 2019 (Spain) ^[1]
Running time	94 minutes
Country	Spain
Language	Spanish

In the third month, Goreng awakes on level 33 with a woman named Imoguiri and her dog. Imoguiri appears to know Goreng. It is revealed that Imoguiri was the administration official who had interviewed Goreng before sending him to the pit, and volunteered after she was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Imoguiri only eats every other day, letting her dog eat on the days that she does not. She tries to convince the pair below them to also ration their food. One day, Miharu arrives injured, and Goreng and Imoguiri nurse her back to health. Goreng breaks up a fight between Miharu and Imoguiri. After Miharu leaves, Goreng mentions her child to Imoguiri, who says there are no children in the pit and Miharu came alone. She reveals that there are 200 levels in total. Goreng is re-shuffled to level 202 to find that Imoguiri has hanged herself. Goreng eats her flesh, plagued with hallucinations of his former cellmates.

In the fifth month, Goreng is assigned to level 6. His new cellmate, Baharat, attempts to climb to the levels above. The pair above deceives him, making him lose his rope, and almost die. Estimating that there are 250 levels, Goreng convinces Baharat to ride the platform down with him and ration the food. Going down the first 50 levels they do not let anyone get food, arguing that they will get food the next day. They attack and seemingly kill a couple of protesters. Fellow prisoner Sr. Brambang recognizes Baharat, and berates him for being too aggressive. He gives them tips on how to conduct themselves on the rest of the way down, and convinces them to send a symbolic message to the administration by leaving a single panna cotta untouched.

As they descend further, they hand out portions to the prisoners, attacking those who refuse to cooperate. They eventually encounter Miharu being attacked and try to save her, but she is killed and they are left severely injured. Goreng and Baharat continue to descend, eventually reaching level 333, where Goreng notices a child—Miharu's daughter—. He gets off the platform with Baharat, only to have it continue downward, leaving them behind and in distress. Goreng tries to convince Baharat to feed the girl the panna cotta, saying the girl should be the message instead. Baharat repeats the panna cotta is the message over and over, but eventually changes his mind and gives the girl the dessert, repeating the girl is the message.

Goreng dreams of Baharat telling him "the girl is the message". He awakens to find that Baharat has bled to death. The child and an injured Goreng descend on the platform to the bottom of a dark pit, where he once again hallucinates Trimagasi. Trimagasi tells Goreng that his journey is over, but Goreng explains that he must bear the message. Trimagasi replies that "the message requires no bearer". Goreng gets off the platform and the two walk away, watching as the child ascends.

Cast

- [Iván Massagué](#) as Goreng
- [Zorion Eguileor](#) as Trimagasi
- [Antonia San Juan](#) as Imoguiri
- [Emilio Buale](#) as Baharat
- [Alexandra Masangkay](#) as Miharu
- Eric L. Goode as Sr. Brambang
- [Mario Pardo](#) as Baharat's friend
- Txubio Fernández de Jáuregui as [Chef](#)



Cast and crew members at a press conference in October 2019.

Production

The film was produced by Basque Films alongside Mr. Miyagi Films and Plataforma la película AIE, with the participation of [RTVE](#) and [ETB](#) and support from [ICAA](#), the Basque administration and [ICO](#).^[6] Shooting lasted for six weeks.^[7]

Galder Gaztelu-Urrutia says the film's key message is that "humanity will have to move towards the fair distribution of wealth", with an exploration of the importance of individual initiative in driving political change that critiques both capitalism and socialism.^[8] The film script is based on a theatre script by David Desola and Pedro Rivero, to which more action and physical elements were added to make it more suitable for a film.^[8] "Extensive" rewriting was required to convert the unproduced theater script into a film script. The director said it was a "torturous ordeal", as the writers defended their artistic vision and did not want some of the changes to be made.^[9]

The concrete prison cells were built for the production in a Red Cross facility in a port in Bilbao. The director asked for cells that looked "economical, robust, [and] impregnable", which emphasized a sense of architectural and engineering proportion.^[8] Only two tiers of concrete cells were built; the appearance of many tiers of cells extending above and below each cell (visible from the hole in the center of each cell) was added in post-production using visual effects.^[8] The director says the vertical tower of cells "represents the dehumanized coldness of the Vertical Self-Management Center".^[9]

The director states that the film's lavish "food was treated as another character in the story, one that is aesthetically antagonistic to the architecture of the prison."^[9] The luxurious displays of gourmet food were presented on "Versailles worthy tableware" to depict "excessive, almost erotic, opulent desire" that is eventually "desecrated" once the near-empty platform reaches the abject, starving inmates on the lower levels.^[9]

The director acknowledges the film can be difficult to watch, but he says the purpose of this approach is to generate discussion and debate by viewers about the political messages.^[8] When asked about the film's brutal violence and cannibalism, the director said the prison's "hole is a reflection of our society, [so] it couldn't hide the violence. It had to show how we rip each other apart".^[9]

The film uses two actors who are cast against type; Iván Massagué and Antonia San Juan, who are known for their comedic roles, were chosen to lighten the film's weighty subject by adding "humour, irony, and surrealism".^[8] The film was shot chronologically, as the main actor Iván had to lose 12 kg (26 lbs) over the six-week shoot to show his physical deterioration.^[9]

Release

The film was released in Spain on 8 November 2019 by Festival Films.^[1] *The Platform* was released onto Netflix internationally (including Spain) on 20 March 2020. In July 2020, Netflix revealed the film had in-fact been watched by 56 million households over its first four weeks of release, among the most-ever for one of their original films.^[10]

Reception

Critical response

On review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes, the film holds an approval rating of 80% based on 97 reviews, with an average rating of 7.2/10. The site's critical consensus reads: "While it may feel muddled at times, *The Platform* is an inventive and captivating dystopian thriller."^[11] On Metacritic, the film has a weighted average score of 73 out of 100, based on 15 critics, indicating "generally favorable reviews".^[12]

Norman Wilner of Now correctly predicted that the film would win the People's Choice Award, giving it a five-N rating and writing that the film "has everything: low comedy, political allegory, left-field twists, crowd-pleasing surprises, spectacular violence, sadism, altruism, and yet more spectacular violence, all wrapped up in a high-concept horror film that moves the premise of *Cube* into a merciless vertical structure. It's grotesque and compelling, like grindhouse [Luis] Buñuel. And it never blinks."^[13]

Amy Nicholson of Variety wrote that "the film's minimalist fury feels like the plays of Samuel Beckett. Massagué and Eguileor are up to being in a zesty *Waiting for Godot*. And Eguileor's nasty, delightful, occasionally tender performance feels like an audition to play a Bond villain, or perhaps the Spanish resurrection of Hannibal Lecter."^[3]

The film garnered new reviews after a surge in popularity during the [COVID-19 pandemic](#). Sam Jones in *The Guardian* suggested it was "the perfect parable for life in the time of the coronavirus and a visceral investigation of how a crisis can expose not only the stratification of human society but also the immutable strands of selfishness coded into our DNA."^[14]

Accolades

Year	Award	Category	Nominee(s)	Result	Ref.
2020	7th Feroz Awards	Best Drama Film		Nominated	[15]
		Best Director	Galder Gaztelu-Urrutia	Nominated	
		Best Screenplay	David Desola, Pedro Rivero	Nominated	
		Best Supporting Actress	Antonia San Juan	Nominated	
		Best Film Poster		Nominated	
		Best Trailer		Nominated	
	12th Gaudí Awards	Best Non-Catalan Language Film		Nominated	[16]
		Best Screenplay	David Desola, Pedro Rivero	Nominated	
		Best Visual Effects	Mario Campoy, Irene Río, Iñaki Madariaga	Won	
	75th CEC Medals	Best New Director	Galder Gaztelu-Urrutia	Nominated	[17] [18]
	34th Goya Awards	Best Original Screenplay	David Desola, Pedro Rivero	Nominated	[19] [20]
		Best New Director	Galder Gaztelu-Urrutia	Nominated	
		Best Special Effects	Mario Campoy, Iñaki Madariaga	Won	
	29th Actors and Actresses Union Awards	Best Film Actress in a Secondary Role	Antonia San Juan	Nominated	[21] [22]
	33rd European Film Awards	Best Visual Effects	Iñaki Madariaga	Won	[23]

Sequel

Discussions around a potential sequel took place after the film's streaming success in 2020. In May 2023, Netflix reported the beginning of filming of the sequel *The Platform 2* with Galder Gaztelu-Urrutia returning as director and starring [Hovik Keuchkerian](#) and [Milena Smit](#).^[24] In July 2024, Netflix released the first trailer for the film and announced an October 4, 2024 release date.^[25]

See also



- [List of Spanish films of 2019](#)
- [Stone Soup](#)
- [Allegory of the long spoons](#)
- [The Old Man and his Grandson](#)
- [The Pit and the Pendulum](#)

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External links

- *The Platform* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt8228288/>) at IMDb
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