

El Nido

("The Nest")

Spain : 1980 : dir. Jaime de Armiñán : A-Punto ELSA / Premier : 97 min †
 prod: : scr: Jaime de Armiñán : dir.ph.: Teodoro Escamilla

[Ana Torrent](#)
 Héctor Alterio; Luis Politti; Agustín González; Patricia Adriani; María Luisa Ponte;
 Mercedes Alonso; Luisa Rodrigo; Ampara Baró; Ovidi Montllor; Mauricia Calvo; Tony; Yiyi;
 Bernabé; Arantza; Tomás; Juan; Carmen; Fremin; Jaime; Quinto; Catalina; Jacobo

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	8	≠	M	☺	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
5870	1.5	7	1	845	-	-	-	-	-	No	unseen

[† but given by several other sources as 109 min]

Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001 review:

"Diverting but predictable drama detailing the relationship between wealthy, aging widower Alterio and 13-year old Torrent. Helped immeasurably by Arminan's precise script and direction. *** "

Speelfilm Encyclopedie review:

"A man in his fifties living an isolated existence attracts the attentions of a teenage girl, who enthral him with her imaginary romantic tales. Completely taken in by her inventions, he shoots her imaginary enemy – a Guardo Civil – and is killed by the police. Just as in Carlos Saura's films, so here too, after Franco's death the symbolic/psychological reflections on his repressive regime have become less important and penetrating, and the once necessitated avoidance of directness and clarity here in places becomes irritatingly pretentious. The Lolita-theme is still, thanks to the actors, engrossing, even if the older Torrent has lost much of the magic of the little girl in "EL ESPIRITU DE LA COLMENA" and "CRIA CUERVOS". *** "

Bloomsbury Foreign Film Guide review:

"A wealthy old widower (Alterio) becomes enthralled by a 13-year old girl. His priest, his maid, the girl's teacher, her father and a police sergeant all try to dissuade them both from the liaison which ends in death. This is a gentle, intriguing film on a taboo subject that manages to avoid prurience. Beautifully acted by

Alterio and Torrent (the marvellous little girl in "THE SPIRIT OF THE BEEHIVE" seven years before) and luminously photographed, it might have been even better had it been less literary and explored the subject with more irony."

The Film Yearbook vol.2 – 1982/83 – review:

"A tender but occasionally sentimental tale of chaste but erotic love felt by a 60-year old for a schoolgirl. Simplicity itself, the film merely charts the gradual developments in their relationship, ignited by a mutual love of nature, and the concern it arouses among the locals. Typical art-movie fare in fact, with luminous photography, excellent performances (particularly Torrent, so effective previously in "SPIRIT OF THE BEEHIVE", and Alterio, one of Spain's finest film actors), and an almost total reluctance to take anything but the most wishy-washy stand on its "difficult" subject."

The Good Film and Video Guide review:

"In a small Spanish town a wealthy, middle-aged landowner (Hector Alterio) becomes obsessed by a teenage girl (Ana Torrent), to the consternation of all but her teacher (Patricia Adriani), through whose eyes we see the relationship. Our interest in the proceedings is bound up with our wish, or otherwise, to see it become sexual, and it is certainly an artificial tale; but it is an accomplished, handsome film as photographed superlatively by Teo Escamilla. ** "

The Time Out Film Guide review:

“Don Alejandro is a courtly, quixotic figure on a white steed, stigmatised as "eccentric" for daring, at sixty, to harbour sexual desires. 13-year old Goyita (Ana Torrent from "**SPIRIT OF THE BEEHIVE**"), first seen as a school-play Lady Macbeth, is a sensual child-woman but no simple Hispanic Lolita, for she lives literally in the shadow of the law at the station of the local Garda Civil. The story tells of their chaste but erotic love, with nothing of the whimsical or lubricious: it's the "tragic show" of stifled dreams, illicit longings, acted out intricately by all the characters, male and female, old and young, and interwoven with a dense web of symbolic allusions – suggestively haunting bird imagery, exultant use of music (Haydn's "*Creation*") and the Macbeth motif that ominously mirrors the main plot. A film of infinite tenderness, lyricism and passion.”

Video Movie Guide 1993 review:

“ "**THE NEST**" is the story of a tragic relationship between a 60-year old widower and a 12-year old girl. The movie takes a far too romantic view of the widower's sacrifices to the friendship, and Ana Torrent is a bit too austere and worldly-wise for her own good. Hector Alterio as the older man has a warm and inviting face and voice. He is the one who enlists our sympathies. In Spanish with English subtitles. **1/2 ”

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "The Critics' Film Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. Not to be confused with the 1988 SF quickie "**THE NEST**", concerning voracious cockroaches.

Compare and contrast the non-judgmental tone of these reviews with the same critics' reports of more recent films on the same theme. From what one can read here, it's a film about prejudice and small-mindedness towards an "inappropriate" friendship. Today that prejudice and small-mindedness are all but universal, and backed up by a whole battery of new laws and control mechanisms specifically to stamp out "inappropriate" friendships of this kind. Society can travel a long way in twenty years, and travel backwards in the firm conviction it is moving forwards.

See also "**BADKONAK-E SEFID**" and "**BASHU**" - both recent Iranian films, and subject index under **ARAB WORLD / MIDDLE EAST**.