

MIGUEL ÁNGEL MUÑOZ

ACTOR. He arrives on time for the appointment, in the hotel ME in Madrid, to talk about the new TV comedy series on Tele 5: *La vida loca*, [“The Crazy Life”], which debuts on Sunday, March 13.

“I would have liked to lead a crazier life”

BY M. FERNÁNDEZ.

Tell us a little bit about your new project.

It is called *La vida loca*, and it is a very funny bedroom comedy that pulls you in very quickly. The most novel element is that it is the first time in Spain that the format of an American *sitcom* will be used: at 25 minutes per episode. It will be broadcast Sunday evenings.

And your character?

The main characters are a couple that has separated and have new relationships. He (Toni Canó) has just come out of the closet, and he has a boyfriend who is very homosexual (Javier Tolosa). She (Esther Arroyo) starts up a relationship with a man who is twenty years younger, and that's me. Toti is a guy who takes good care of himself because he is completely in love with his girl and wants the best for her. He takes good care of his appearance, and he has had his teeth whitened (I wear a very amusing set of false teeth.)

What does this character do for you?

I try to make all the characters different, even though this is a very risky option. Since it is a very crazy comedy, it allows you to walk a line between what is endearing and what is humorous. I like to try different things in my career.

In this series, Toti takes very good care of himself. Is he like you in this respect? Nobody believes that I don't take care of myself. The fact is that I am a young guy, I don't smoke, I don't drink and I love sports.

Do you live a crazy life?

I would have liked to have scored better on leading a crazy life, because sometimes I control myself too much. My life doesn't usually include a lot of chaos, although I have had some very intense periods as far as my professional life. For example, the musical stage of *Un paso adelante* was completely crazy.

What steps would you like to take in your career as an actor?

I am content and thankful to be able to

keep working, since I have been lining up one project after another. I would like to maintain my hopes, my motivation and my patience. I suppose that I will have a dry spell, because this amount of work is not usual. I would like to be able to keep calm at these moments and to have a financial tranquility that will keep me from making bad decisions.

Are you impatient?

I suppose I am...I can't stop and do nothing, and I take advantage of the free time that I have to read books, prepare the next project, rehearse, study languages, take an acting course...I don't like to lose time, and I take maximum advantage of it.

Do you confess to being a perfectionist and that you are never totally satisfied with the work that you have done?

Yes. I wouldn't like to finish something and say: “I did a really fantastic job.” You can always do things better, even though you are satisfied with the final result. I am very much the perfectionist, although I am not too hard on myself either. I am content because I know that I always give it my best.

Are you an easy person when it comes to working?

Very easy. I am passionate about my profession, I love going to work, and I make sure that there is a good atmosphere. I make it a priority, before the actor's ego and my own advantage. There are days that I think: “I should have been a little bit more selfish,” but it doesn't come naturally.

Is working in Hollywood one of your obsessions?

Not at all. I would love to, obviously, but I have enough to do with not obsessing about working here to think about the USA. I would love to take important steps in Spain, going abroad would be a gift. I dedicate a great deal of my time to learning another language, although I am aware that this is a dream for a few chosen people, such as Banderas, Penélope Cruz and Bardem.

What does success outside of our



borders depend on?

It is a matter, in the first place, of talent. Then of work and luck. These are the three things, but maybe 50% is luck. You have to be in the right place at the right time. In this profession things don't work on the basis of who you know.

Have you definitively abandoned your musical facet in pursuit of acting?

That came to an end when the series *Un paso adelante* was over. I love music, and I learned a lot from that adventure, and I worked as hard anyone. I even won an award at Cannes! But it is over. I will always remember it, and I will tell my grandchildren about it.

Don't you think about the possibility of doing musicals in the theater?

Yes, but I would have to like it a lot because it demands making a big commitment and refusing other projects. I would love to play a part in *Mary Poppins*, which is being put on on Broadway.

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Miguel Ángel is 27 years old, and he has been working for 15 years in TV, cinema and theater.

Lately actors have been taking significant positions on behalf of some political or social causes...

I don't have a clear ideology, and I think that I am not a point of reference in anything to share my ideals and make people take a position on my side or the other side. I don't know enough to say whether a guy does a good or bad job, I try to follow politics, but from a distance, because I see that there is pressure and very strong interests that influence people.

Do you believe that most gestures of solidarity have a political meaning?

Well, it seems that taking part in some of them position actors to the left. In some cases it is clear, but I think that they should simply support the cause itself, apart from politics. I try to take part in all relevant shows of support, if my professional commitments allow it.

But you tend to tiptoe around this sort of act...

It is not to be politically correct: I don't like to use our profession of acting to practice politics. We each have our ideas, and we are free to share them with other people, but we shouldn't

use the industry for politics, but rather for the causes and for raising awareness. This is what culture is for. I go to the Goyas ceremony to enjoy the work of my fellow actors, but I don't think it is the right place to make claims.

As a non-smoker, what do you think of the new anti-smoking law?

I am glad. I hadn't gone out at night for a long time because I felt sick from the smoke. In the restaurants, since there is always a smoker in your group of friends, I didn't have a very good time, and that's why I am happy with this law. Nevertheless I think about the smokers, I think that it is a little bit extreme. They should have a place where they can smoke. What is obvious is that now I don't have an excuse not to go out at night (laughter).

In Spain there are more than 4 million unemployed persons, and you line up one project after another. Do you consider yourself lucky?

Of course, I am extremely privileged to have work in times of crisis. In addition, I am happy because I am working in what I like best in life. Today I got up at 6:15 in the morning as happy

as a lark, and I came to work with such a good attitude that you would be astounded. I have never said: "Darn it! Tomorrow I have to go to work!" At any rate, I am living a sort of illusion because regardless of the crisis, earning a living as an actor is very complicated.

And do you have a Plan B in case some day you can't earn your living with this? Yes. I have an extras casting company and I try to save, although circumstances haven't really let me do much of it. I am well aware that the day may come when they don't call me for work. If someone tells me that his son wants to pursue this profession, I say: "First, he should study something else." In this profession you always have to have a Plan B, because you will have to use it at some point and, if you do not have it, you will find yourself forced to do a lot of parts and projects that you do not like, but that will allow you to eat.

You are a young actor with a lot of media draw, and you are sometimes pursued by the tabloids. Describe your relationship with this world.

It seems to outsiders that I handle it well, but I really have a hard time, and I get very nervous. Any witty remark or confession that you make to anyone is taken out of context. It is a lot of pressure for me. I don't like it, I want to talk about my life, but not because I am cooler. I like to share my experiences with the people I love, I am very egotistical in this respect, but it seems that you are compelled to do so because you are popular. I respect this press, but I do not share information about my life. They are very dishonest because there are people who promise you that they will not ask you personal questions, and they do not follow through. I can't understand it. If they see that, in spite of many complicated subjects, you never play this game, as is the case with me, I think that they should respect me.