

EXCLUSIVE: Nosotros and NBCUniversal Crown Season 5 ‘Ya Tú Sabes’ Winner as Program Goes Fully Cinematic

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Nosotros and NBCUniversal are signaling a decisive shift in how Latino talent is developed and presented for the industry. With Season 5 of *Ya Tú Sabes*, the long-running incubator has fully transitioned from a traditional showcase model into a cinematic short-form pipeline—culminating in the crowning of *The Comedian* as this year’s top winner and positioning the program as a serious launchpad for writers and actors ready for film and television.



What began in 2020 as a challenge from **NBCUniversal Launch** to rethink the traditional actor showcase has evolved into a fully realized creative pipeline. Initially launched as the *Ya Tú Sabes Monologue Slam*, the program emphasized original writing and live performance. Over time, it expanded into fully produced stand-alone scenes selected through a competitive process, under a new name, **Ya Tú Sabes Monologue Shorts**.

Nosotros and NBCUniversal have marked that evolution and raised the bar once again with the explosive fifth season of *Ya Tú Sabes*, unveiling a bold new evolution of the long-running Latino talent incubator—one that trades the traditional stage showcase for cinematic pieces designed to reflect the professional readiness of Latino talent when given meaningful resources and production value.

“In a year shaped by a difficult national climate for Latinos, support for arts programs like this was far from guaranteed,” said **Joel M. Gonzales**, President of Nosotros. “We’re deeply grateful to NBCUniversal and the NBC Launch program for standing with us when sponsorships were tight. What Season 5 represents is how much this program has grown over the past five years—and how Latino artists continue to create opportunity, break through, and tell our own stories on our own terms.”

Emerging as Season 5’s creative breakthrough and top winner with judges and audiences alike, is *The Comedian*, written by stand-up comic **José Maestas** and powerfully performed by actor **Richard Eick**. This piece amplifies the *Ya Tú Sabes*’ core mission: spotlighting Latino writers and actors through original work rooted in universal themes—while steadily expanding the scale and seriousness of the platform.

A sharply observed and emotionally layered piece, *The Comedian* draws directly from Maestas’ personal experience to explore the duality of life on and off the stage—the persona versus the person. Its resonance was immediate, quickly becoming one of the most talked-about monologue shorts of the season for its depth, honesty, and cinematic execution.

“Across a lineup of powerful shorts, one of the strongest examples was the winner, *The Comedian*,” said Gonzalez, adding “The writing and performance stood out immediately and reflect the level of depth and readiness that exists in our community when the opportunity is real.”

The *Ya Tu Sabes* Monolouge Shorts premiered live at the **Ricardo Montalbán Theatre** this past December, streaming simultaneously on the Nosotros YouTube channel, with Audience Choice voting closing on December 31 declaring writer **Cristal González Ávila** and actor **Mariana Belén** as the Audience Choice winners for *Ropa Sucia*.

Industry-Level Execution

Season 5’s six monologue shorts were led creatively by **Hector Felix**, who served as director, editor, and cinematographer, establishing a cohesive visual language across the entire showcase. The project was produced by Gonzales and co-produced by Nosotros Creative Director **Juan Munevar**, with creative collaboration from **Joaquin F. Palma**, writer/director of the program’s first three seasons—bridging the initiative’s roots with its cinematic future.

This year’s highly noted celebrity ambassador judges underscored the program’s industry credibility, include **Julian Works** (*The Long Game, Jimmy*), actor/producer **Nicholas Gonzalez** (*La Brea, The Good Doctor*), producer/director **Ben DeJesus** (*Leguizamo Does America*), actor/director **Jon Huertas** (*This Is Us*), and **Larry Laboe**, Executive Director of NewFilmmakers LA. They were joined by NBCUniversal executives and a broad cross-section of casting directors, agents, managers, publicists, and industry professionals.

What's Next?

Looking ahead, the Season 5 monologue shorts—led by *The Comedian* and *Ropa Sucia*—will be submitted as stand-alone short films to film festivals, extending their life well beyond the showcase and expanding visibility for the participating writers and actors across the festival and industry landscape.

Winners will receive cash prizes and sponsored access to key industry leaders, including NBCUniversal executives, casting directors, agencies, and senior writers and producers—solidifying *Ya Tú Sabes* not just as a showcase, but as a tangible bridge to career advancement.

With Season 5, Nosotros and NBCUniversal have made a clear statement: when Latino artists are given space, resources, and respect, the results are not just promising—they’re cinematic.