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MAY 12, 2026

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THE *Hollywood* REPORTER

MAY 12, 2026

DAY 1

CANNES

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INSIDE

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CROISSETTE SNUB

Why Is Hollywood Ghosting Cannes?

Spooked by social media pile-ons, eye-watering costs and a string of high-profile misfires, the major studios have calculated that a glitzy Palais premiere might not be worth it **BY SCOTT ROXBOROUGH AND MIA GALUPPO**

There's a tentpole-sized hole in the center of this year's Cannes lineup. For the first time since 2017, not a single film from a major Hollywood studio will be premiering at the festival.

There will be a couple of U.S. movies — **Ira Sachs'** musical fantasy *The Man I Love*, with **Rami Malek**, and **James Gray's** *Paper Tiger*, with **Scarlett Johansson**, **Adam Driver** and **Miles Teller**, are in competition — but those are indies. Neon is releasing *Paper Tiger* stateside, and *The Man I Love* is still looking for domestic distribution.

What's missing this year is the big-ticket blockbuster, a film like Paramount's *Top Gun: Maverick*, or *Mission: Impossible — The Final Reckoning*, Warner Bros.' *Elvis*, or Disney's *Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny*, previous studio films that used a Cannes premiere as a launchpad for their global rollout.

"The U.S. will be present [at
(Continued on page 2)



LEGEND OF THE CROISSETTE

Catherine Deneuve Has No Interest in Slowing Down

At 82, the French screen icon returns to Cannes with two films in competition, a Shiba Inu named Jack (not Jacques!) and a passion for filmmaking that shows no sign of fading: 'It's not just work — it's something I love' **BY SCOTT ROXBOROUGH**



READ ON PAGE 16

For all the latest coverage of the Cannes Film Festival, go to [THR.COM/CANNES](https://www.thr.com/cannes)



are increasingly spooked by the idea of a big festival premiere, where fickle critics, and not the in-house marketing team, provide the first impressions of a film, often months before it hits theaters. “There’s a nervousness about reviews coming out long before release and about controlling the way films of that scale are launched because there’s so much at stake,” Berlinale director **Tricia Tuttle** told *THR* ahead of this year’s studio-free Berlin fest. Tuttle traces the trend back to the 2024 Venice festival launch of *Joker: Folie à Deux* — **Todd Phillips’** follow-up to *Joker* — which was swiftly trashed by festival critics and declared dead on arrival, limping its way to a meager \$200 million worldwide against a reported overall budget of \$300 million.

“The quickness of response in the social media age has changed things,” says Toronto Film Festival director **Cameron Bailey**, noting that bad reviews out of the big festivals quickly go viral. He argues the appeal of a public festival like Toronto, compared to an industry event like Cannes, is its real-world audience: “When a major Hollywood studio or streamer brings a film to Toronto, it’s because they’re confident the film will resonate with the audience here, first of all.” Case in point: **Chloé Zhao’s** *Hamnet*, from Focus, whose awards campaign got a big boost after winning Toronto’s audience award and proving itself an early favorite among the industry at the Telluride Film Festival.

For big studio releases, a Cannes premiere is beneficial only if the film is set to hit theaters a week or two later. This was the case for 2022’s *Top Gun: Maverick*, which had a Cannes premiere May 18 before

Continued on page 34

this year’s festival], the studios less [so],” said Cannes artistic director **Thierry Frémaux**, announcing the lineup April 8. He ended on a defiant note: “When the studios are less present in Cannes, they are less present, full stop.”

Cannes has tried to paper over the studio gap this year with a Midnight Screening of *The Fast and the Furious*, the original race car actioner that kicked off Universal’s unstoppable franchise back in 2001. *Fast* stars **Vin Diesel**, **Michelle Rodriguez** and **Jordana Brewster**, along with producer **Neal H. Moritz** and **Meadow Walker**, daughter of the late **Paul Walker**, will attend the Wednesday night screening.

Cannes’s sales pitch to the studios is simple: We’ll give you a combination of artistic credibility, media buzz and the world’s most glamorous red carpet. And, because the world’s film journalists are here, a Cannes premiere can double as a movie’s international junket.

But the costs are substantial. For a major release, paying for travel, accommodations and security for A-list talent in this pricey Mediterranean resort town can run into seven figures. At a time when the U.S. entertainment industry is still in a period of contraction, with yet another major merger still on the horizon, Cannes is an easily expendable line item.

studio films at past Cannes.

Insiders point to the 2023 Cannes debut of *Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny* as a prime example of what can go wrong when a big studio film bows on the Croisette. That film, the first Indiana Jones movie to hit the big screen in 15 years, had its world premiere at Cannes, where it was greeted by less-than-stellar reviews from the international

“The quickness of response in the social media age has changed things.”

Cameron Bailey, CEO, Toronto Film Festival

“It’s horribly expensive, and if you screen to thousands of journalists and the film doesn’t play well, then you have got off to the worst start possible and it probably would have been better to just junket out of a major European city and embargo reviews for the week of opening,” says one veteran publicist who has handled

press. A few years on, going to Cannes and the middling reaction that followed is seen as a misstep in that film’s marketing plan. *Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny* topped out at the global box office with only \$384 million against a \$295 million pre-marketing production budget.

It isn’t just Cannes. Studios

Meanwhile, in the Real World ...

→ **Donald Trump** will travel to China to meet Chinese President **Xi Jinping**, marking the first trip by a U.S. president to China in nearly a decade. The leaders of the world’s two largest economies will have meetings May 13-15.

→ The Writers Guild of America West staff strike has officially come to an end after 82 days. The Writers Guild Staff Union has unveiled that 89 percent of participating members voted to greenlight a tentative first contract deal.

→ Netflix’s hit drama *Adolescence* won four BAFTA TV Awards in London, including the honor for best limited series. **Seth Rogen** dedicated the best international series BAFTA for *The Studio* to his late co-star **Catherine O’Hara**, who died in January.

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HIDDEN GEM

A Vanished Friend and Secrets Buried Below Snow and Ice

Manuela Martelli's *The Meltdown* uses the lens of childhood to explore what happens when a country's deepest traumas finally begin to thaw **BY GEORG SZALAI**



The Meltdown follows Inés, a 9-year-old Chilean girl left to her own devices at a remote ski resort.

Roughly 10 percent of an iceberg is visible above the surface. Inés, the 9-year-old Chilean protagonist of *The Meltdown* (*El Deshielo*), is about to find out the hard way how that applies to hidden truths and family trauma.



Martelli

The sophomore feature from actress turned writer-director **Manuela Martelli** is set in 1992, when Inés' parents are away on business mounting an iceberg at the Universal Expo in Seville. Left at her grandparents' remote ski resort in the Andes, Inés befriends Hanna, a 15-year-old German skier who then vanishes without a trace. Hanna's mother and Inés join forces in the

search, filling each other's family voids. **Maya O'Rourke** stars as Inés, **Maia Rae Domagala** plays Hanna, and **Saskia Rosendahl** (*Babylon Berlin*) portrays Inés' mother, Lina.

The film world premieres at Cannes in Un Certain Regard — Martelli's first appearance in the official selection — marking a return to the Croisette after her debut, *Chile '76*, premiered in Directors' Fortnight. As in that film, Martelli uses an intimate lens and a personal story to explore the lingering wounds of Chile's transition from **Pinochet's** dictatorship to democracy.

"My main interest is going back to history

through characters and through their emotions and experiences instead of addressing history with a capital H," she says. Martelli herself was 9 years old in 1992, a moment she describes as "permeated by this transition in Chile. ... It was interesting to overlap the transition of a kid and the transition of a country and the world as well."

The parallels extend beyond Chile, where the military dictatorship ended in 1990. The Berlin Wall had also fallen in 1989. "In Germany, you could see how clear this change was — the wall being down was so graphic," Martelli says. Both countries, she notes, ultimately opened up to the same neoliberal system — one that had already taken hold in Chile under Pinochet, backed by the U.S. and the regime's "Chicago Boys," Chilean economists trained at the University of Chicago.

The film is suffused with the textures of horror, and deliberately so. "The idea of horror was so present for me in this period of history," Martelli explains. "I had this idea of walking over dead bodies because people disappeared, and you didn't know where they were. I wanted everything to feel ambiguous. It's not that it's a horror movie, but it kind of flirts with that." Everything, she adds, is filtered through Inés' child's-eye view — "ambiguous because she is a child, and this is the way a child is experiencing these things — not being able to put things into words, really."

Those themes resonate well beyond their historical moment. "In a way, I feel that it's about something that we are experiencing now," Martelli says. "It feels like so much is melting down. It's a very, very difficult moment for the world right now."

At the center of it all is O'Rourke, who Martelli says exceeded every expectation. "She had to act in English and Spanish," the director raves. "She had to act in the snow. It was really hard for her, but she's a real warrior." **THR**

Cannes, According to ... The Indie Vet



Jessica Lacy
Head of film finance and distribution, Gersh

Best bargain in Cannes?

Jambon Beurre from a food cart, late night shawarma or not eating at all — which often happens ...

Favorite meal in Cannes?

Definitely Le Jade! The owner, Mi, is the best, and I am always there multiple times each fest. Next year will mark my 20th Cannes, and I'm hoping to rent it out for a celebratory dinner!

Most overrated restaurant?

Le Maschou. A fun time and a great vibe, but

terribly overpriced (even for Cannes), and nothing is more overpriced than their vegetable basket. I mean, who is eating a hard-boiled egg and whole scallions before dinner?! It's crazy.

Best place to grab a drink after 3 a.m.?

No better place than Brown Sugar.

Place to avoid during the festival?

Dolly's, the strip joint across from Brown Sugar. Nothing good happens at a strip club at 3 a.m. in Cannes

(or anywhere, for that matter). Although to be honest, I've been more than once ... and I'll just leave it at that.

Your "only in Cannes" moment?

Dining at Colombe D'Or surrounded by Picassos, Calder and Renoirs.

Biggest Cannes pet peeve?

Having to take connecting flights from L.A. Come on! We can do better! Also, the lack of showers — just handhelds in a bathtub. No thank you!

Cannes guilty pleasure

Ridiculously expensive Bellinis at the Hotel Du Cap. You can't have just one. Trust me, I know.

Strangest request you have ever received in Cannes?

A studio exec asking me to dance to "Achy Breaky Heart." Not my style, dude.

Most interesting celebrity encounter?

Walking down the Croisette with **Mike Tyson**. I wasn't worried about getting mugged that night!



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CANNES RISING STAR

Ulya's Karlis Arnolds Avots

The Latvian actor was told he was too tall. Now he's at Cannes playing a 7-foot basketball legend — and Amazon, the BBC and Catherine Zeta-Jones are all calling **BY GEORG SZALAI**



With a population of around 1.8 million — comparable to West Virginia — Latvia punches well above its weight in cinema. *Flow's* Oscar for best animated feature in 2025 was the most recent proof. Now, a rising Latvian actor is stepping into an increasingly global spotlight with his Cannes debut: **Karlis Arnolds Avots**.

You may know him from *Soviet Jeans*, the dramedy series in which he plays Renārs, a rock 'n' roll fan who sets up a secret underground jeans factory in a psychiatric hospital in 1979 — a role that earned him best actor in the international section at Series Mania 2024. Or from *January*, which won the best international narrative feature prize at Tribeca 2022, where he played an aspiring filmmaker caught up in the political turbulence of Latvia's struggle for independence in January 1991.

If not, his Cannes debut should do it. The 29-year-old leads *Ulya*, from *January* director **Viesturs Kairiss**, which world premieres in *Un Certain Regard*. Avots, who had the idea for the film and co-wrote it, plays **Uljana "Ulya" Semjonova**, the legendary female Latvian basketball player whose journey from an awkward rural childhood to global dominance is one of sport's great untold stories. Semjonova won the Soviet national championship and the European Champions Cup 15 times each, took Olympic gold with the USSR in 1976 and 1980, and became the first non-American woman inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame.

Avots didn't have to look far for his subject. "I've known her all my life, and when I moved to Riga, she became my neighbor," he tells *THR*. "Her story moved me so much, and I just realized that this is my *Hamlet*. Actors are always searching for stories that can emotionally disarm



BAFTA AWARD-WINNER
RHYS IFANS

ACADEMY AWARD-NOMINEE
LAURA LINNEY

ONWARD — AND — SIDEWAYS

FROM ACADEMY AWARD-NOMINATED DIRECTOR JOHN MADDEN

Two strangers have a startling encounter on the morning they are both confronted with a diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease. As an unexpected friendship unfolds, the pair transcend the assumptions of a little-understood condition, and triumph over the odds to find humour, joy, and love.

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Karlis Arnolds Avots as Uļjana "Uļya" Semjonova, the legendary Latvian basketball star.

them. And for me, this was the one where I could be as honest as possible."

What drew him in was not the trophies but the person behind them. "Before she became this champion of the world, she became the champion of her inner world," he explains. "I've always been moved by stories about misfits, about square pegs in round holes. Among my favorite films of all time are **Werner Herzog's** [*The Enigma of Kaspar Hauser*] and **David Lynch's** *The Elephant Man*. I felt like an outcast, like all of us who are too skinny, too broad, or way too tall or short, or just too different from the standard format. So I could empathize with Ulya and feel the film is really universal."

At 6-foot-5, Avots falls some 7 inches short of Semjonova's 7-foot frame — but the physical challenge ran deeper than height. "I'm quite an athletic guy," he says. "I had to find her different rhythm and get my body closer to hers."

Playing a woman was never something he dwelt on. "I don't believe an actor acts with their gender," he says. "They act with their soul." His role models reflect that philosophy. "In recent years, I have been really inspired by **Sandra Hüller**, who is a very exciting actor to watch. Seeing **Jessie Buckley** in *Hamnet* also inspired me so much. And **Joaquin Phoenix** has always been a great role model because he can get into that zone where you can feel there is no acting at all. You get thrilled and stunned for a moment by this complete honesty."

Research was equally vital. Avots spoke at length with

Semjonova and her former teammates, printed out photographs of her in various positions and expressions, and worked to mirror them physically. "I wanted to be as authentic as possible, because I felt enormous responsibility in portraying her because she was putting her trust in me."

Semjonova died this January, before she could see the finished film. "I was thinking about that a lot," Avots says. "But I feel what's most important is that she knew there was a film being made about her by someone who truly loves her. And she saw how my eyes lit up when I spoke about her story, and with how much love I wanted to tell it."

Avots says he couldn't sleep until 4 a.m. the night he found out *Uļya* had been selected for Cannes. "It has been a dream of mine," he says. "I felt that [the film] could land somewhere special. So I'm very happy."

There is plenty more ahead. Amazon Prime Video's *Vikings* creator **Michael Hirst's** series *Bloodaxe*, expected this year, will give global audiences a new look at Avots, and he also has a role in *Honey*, a prequel to *Killing Eve* in which he plays a young Konstantin, the role originated by **Kim Bodnia**. And in *Kill Jackie*, another Prime Video thriller starring **Catherine Zeta-Jones** and **Daniel Ings**, he plays what he calls "the antihero, but with a heart."

For now, though, it all comes back to *Uļya* and the woman at the center of it. Says Avots: "If you call one person a freak, then we are all freaks. Instead of pointing fingers, I think we have to celebrate our differences more." **VIBR**

Last Call on the Croisette

From a vinyl-spinning speakeasy to a legendary Antibes terrace, here's where to find the best drink in Cannes

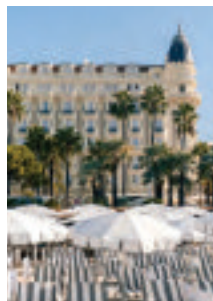
BY MELINDA SHECKELLS



Campari Lounge

Palais des Festivals et des Congrès
1 Boulevard de la Croisette

Now in its fifth year as an official Cannes partner, Campari has made the Lounge one of the most coveted invites on the Croisette. Positioned inside the Palais with a direct sightline to the red carpet, the space runs filmmaker conversations and live podcast recordings during the day, then shifts into a proper cocktail scene by evening. The signature drink this year is the "Red Carpet, Cannes Edition," a Negroni made with hibiscus-infused Campari, bitter chocolate vermouth and Courvoisier VSOP.



Carlton Beach Club

Carlton Cannes, a Regent Hotel
58 Boulevard de la Croisette

At Cannes, the question isn't whether you'll end up at the Carlton Beach Club — it's how long you'll stay. By late afternoon, the pontoon fills with producers, studio executives, filmmakers and the occasional model who has wandered in from a yacht. The order is instinctive: Provençal rosé, something from the grill and a seat facing the Mediterranean. During festival season, the beach club becomes a natural extension of the Croisette, filled with long lunches, industry conversations and sunset sips overlooking the bay.



The Grill Bar

Hôtel du Cap-Eden-Roc
167 Boulevard J.F. Kennedy, Antibes

No Cannes trip feels complete without cocktails at Hotel du Cap-Eden-Roc. The legendary Antibes property is where longtime festival regulars go to escape the chaos of the Croisette. At The Grill Bar, classic martinis arrive cold and unrushed, the olives are delicious and the Mediterranean stretches out past the pine trees. By late afternoon, those who know show up and settle at shaded tables as servers glide across the terrace, carrying trays filled with sunset-ready Negronis.



Le Speakeasy Cannes

22 Rue Latour-Maubourg

Once dinner service fades, Le Speakeasy Cannes turns into one of the festival's liveliest late night scenes. Tucked just off the Croisette, the supper club-style venue draws a crowd looking for something a bit more hedonistic than the hotel bars. Espresso martinis and champagne cocktails are frequent orders as live music spills across velvet banquettes and candlelit tables. By midnight, the dinner set has given way to dancing, and last call doesn't come until 4 a.m. — or until dawn, depending on the vibes.



Martinez Bar

Hôtel Martinez
73 Boulevard de la Croisette

A vinyl-forward speakeasy that opened in March 2025, Martinez Bar has quickly become the room of choice for the crowd that finds the hotel lobbies too exposed. The room is intimate without feeling small, close but not claustrophobic and good for the kind of conversations Cannes runs on. The signature Black Swan with Cirò vodka, apricot liqueur, sambuca and a single coffee bean is exactly the kind of drink this room deserves. Rare vinyl spins well past midnight, and so do heads and the industry chatter.

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"We need to be co-producing more," says Mia Bays. "It's incredibly hard to finance a film entirely out of the U.K. at the moment."



EXEC Q&A

The Riskiest Job in British Film

As Mia Bays prepares to leave her post as head of the BFI Filmmaking Fund, she reflects on five years of backing the films nobody else would touch — and why British cinema's survival depends on never playing it safe **BY LILY FORD**

Mia Bays is winding down her tenure in charge of one of the biggest backers of British independent film, the British Film Institute's Filmmaking Fund.

She's done and seen it all over the past five years, having become the first person ever to hold the position for a fixed term — a change implemented in recognition of just how influential the job is — and joining at a time when the industry, post-pandemic, had been transformed for good.

Bays, who will leave her post in October of this year, has experience in producing, exhibition, distribution and international sales strategy. She considers herself a cultural and gender equity activist, and with the BFI Filmmaking Fund, consolidated

all of that expertise into overseeing a budget of around 20 million pounds (\$27 million) a year. She's put relatively unknown filmmakers up for Oscar consideration, made BAFTA winners out of others, and done it all with what she says is a knack for kicking the industry's risk aversion to the curb.

"I think [risk] is absolutely a fundamental part of what the public funds are there for," Bays tells *The Hollywood Reporter* ahead of her last Cannes Film Festival as the BFI Filmmaking Fund boss. She cites some of her recent, edgy successes — **Rich Peppiatt's** raucous "print the legend" biopic *Kneecap*, **Harry Lighton's** biker BDSM dramedy *Pillion* and **Akinola Davies Jr.'s** tender, Lagos-set *My Father's*

Shadow, selected as the U.K.'s 2026 Oscars entry — as evidence of the payoff of that audaciousness.

Bays has also invigorated the country's largest open-access fund by reshaping the team, improving how the fund is performing against the BFI's inclusion targets and even setting up brand new pots of money for more experienced directors (the Impact Fund), as well as higher-budget, live-action short-form projects (Future Takes). Financing just 12 feature films a year, she's homed in on talent pursuing cultural and social reverberations.

With recruitment for her replacement officially underway, Bays sat down with *THR* to talk about the obstacles plaguing the

British film industry — and what we should be optimistic about. She discusses some of the buzzy BFI movies hitting the Croisette this year, such as **Clio Barnard's** *I See Buildings Fall Like Lightning*; why co-productions might just be British film's savior; and the key piece of advice she has for her successor.

Reflecting on the past five years, what feelings come up for you?

Well, I subscribe to creative renewal, so I think it's healthy. I think five years is a good amount of time to effect enough change — to do so quite fast — and then to leave a steady ship, I hope. Reflecting on the films and the features we've supported, we won a BAFTA for best [British] debut two years running, *Kneecap* in 2025 and *My Father's Shadow* this year, both incredibly unusual, I would say, and fresh voices and narratives. We also won the best [British] Independent Film Award [BIFA] two years running [with] *Kneecap* and *Pillion*. Awards are only one arbiter of impact, obviously. But our films have been selected as the U.K. entry for best international feature at the Oscars — *Santosh* in 2025 and *My Father's Shadow* in 2026. And then ... *Two Black Boys in Paradise*, which is supported through our short animation fund, won the BAFTA for best short animation this year. And *Magid / Zafar*, which is through Future Takes — our higher-budget short scheme — won the BIFA for best short and was also nominated for a BAFTA.

What comes into the decision-making process for you — what must a project have to get funding?

Our fund priorities are a really important steer. So it's really vital to us that whoever is applying understands what our priorities and what we are looking for, and what steers our decisions as they're applying. That's been a very big part of the work — to make sure that the fund is transparent. There are six fund priorities, [and] that's a very important tool. There are other frameworks around having

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a balanced slate, prioritizing U.K. wide, so not everything being made is from London and the South East — that we really are entirely representative of the U.K. — that we back creative risk, that the films can have some impact, both at home and away. [We] consider audiences and perhaps who has been underserved.

What do you think is the biggest hurdle facing the British film industry right now?

It's the challenges of distribution. Whenever we have the contraction that we're seeing now among distributors becoming risk-averse and less money being risked on releases and P&A [prints and advertising] and the struggle to sell internationally, that then creates an environment that makes it very hard to make the risky films, which tends to be the kind of films that we support. It makes our funds more important than ever. But as I said, we only make 12 features a year, so that's not enabling much, really, in the grand scheme of things. It's doing a substantial amount, but it's not enough. I mean, thank God that our sister fund, the U.K. Global Screen Fund, also exists. They're there to support minority co-productions, and the terrific news is that they've got more money now. Over the course of the next few months, they're announcing new interventions and new funds. That's incredibly important, because we need to be co-producing more. It's incredibly hard to finance a film entirely out of the U.K. at the moment. Yeah, those are the challenges.

And once the industry contracts and other investors become risk-averse, what that does is shut out the underrepresented voices. That's the fear — the rollback on the progress that has been made over the past few years in diversifying [film], which has created some incredible and exciting work. But thank God that we can keep existing.

Are co-productions the way forward for British film right now?

Yeah, 100 percent. Even with the nations and regions within our smaller conurbation between the

U.K. and Ireland, [it] can be very substantial — accessing the two tax credits and then public funds. We fund with Ffilm Cymru [Wales] and Screen Scotland and Northern Ireland Screen. And those are incredibly meaningful partnerships. *Kneecap* is a really good example, which is a co-production between the U.K. and Ireland and two broadcasters and three significant lottery funds. I don't think that film would have been made without that. But I hope it's opened the door to privileging more Irish-language work and showing that actually, that kind of work is exciting. It's an incredibly important part of [Irish] heritage as well, the Celtic language.

Do you consider it your job to be risky? Do you think films should



be risky in the current climate?

Yeah, that's absolutely a fundamental part of what the public funds are there for. And risk can show up in various ways. It doesn't always mean in the content and around edgy narratives that push at the boundaries. Obviously, *Kneecap* is a great example of that. *Pillion* is another version of that. *Palestine 36* is another version, because that was an untold story — the colonial impact of the U.K. in Palestine and [how] we're seeing the effects of that still to this day. Those films just wouldn't be made without us. That enriches not just the film culture, but the wider culture in the U.K. — how we see ourselves, how we represent ourselves. It's fundamental that we're doing that. If we were just steering everything through our own personal taste ... I think in the bygone eras, a lot of these roles were often [navigated] with a tastemaker principle. We've

moved away from that to have a wider scope around what role we play, and what we don't see getting made is absolutely what we should be there for.

What do you feel optimistic about?

I'm always buoyed by the work. And I just feel like British filmmaking at the moment is really, really consistently world-class and evidencing that. When we just look at our own slate and how much impact those films are having internationally, and we know that through how well they're selling and how significant the box office is at home and away — within a relatively contained realm. We're still seeing some worldwide deals. I've loved the resurgence of comedy that we're seeing in the U.K. That's



From left: BFI's *Pillion* won the Un Certain Regard screenwriting award at last year's Cannes; Bays has high hopes for Clio Barnard's Directors' Fortnight entry *I See Buildings Fall Like Lightning*.

long overdue. Seven out of 10 of the qualifying indies at the U.K. box office last year were comedies or comedy-drama. I'm really excited about that. We've got a bit of a resurgence [with] films like *The Ballad of Wallis Island* and *Marching Powder*, *Pillion*, a very, very strong range of work. But again, we've got a really important comedy tradition, which I felt had slightly disappeared. Our own *The Incomer* made a really big mark in Sundance this year, very proudly and very culturally Scottish, and the human really translated. It was a joy to be in a room full of 400 people in Sundance guffawing away.

Talk to me about what's coming up — *I See Buildings Fall Like Lightning* is just brilliant.

I'm so delighted to hear that. I loved working on that film — it's a novelist collaborating with a screenwriter, collaborating with Clio Barnard, the director and

Tracy [O'Riordan], the producer. They were a really strong team. They gathered such an incredible crew. All of the cast are just absolute knockouts, not just in that piece, but they're all real rising stars. The kind of alchemy of what they create together ... they were so collaborative. So I'm really excited about that film, because I do feel that it really speaks to the challenges of a generation, particularly 30-somethings. It really opens up a very important conversation that perhaps isn't just British either, and it does it with such heart and such tenderness and with such care.

What advice would you offer to your successor?

I really like the principle of beginner's mind — coming

in and not thinking you know everything. You may have an idea, but context changes once you have more information. Just being able to listen is such an incredible part of what good leadership looks like, and then being able to act upon it and striking the balance between bringing your own ideas, but also the listening. You're really, really taking on what the industry are telling you they need now. Some of that you have to filter out. Some of it won't be possible. But there will be good ideas, and there could be important changes that are needed for the next five years. The fund may shift, because that's what the industry needs next.

Is there a particular project or creative you're especially proud of championing?

It's picking between children. It's too difficult. I would just center the work of the team. **VIR**

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FASHION

The Many Looks of Marion Cotillard

The iconic actress and longtime Chanel ambassador always brings her red carpet A-game to Cannes. She recalls her favorites here **BY CHRIS GARDNER**

Marion Cotillard may be a powerhouse onscreen, but offscreen the Oscar-winning actress describes herself as “a very sensitive person” who is less than comfortable with the “frantic, intense and chaotic” energy that comes when stepping out on the Cannes Film Festival red carpet.

“I’ve done it maybe 20 times, but it’s always the same anxiety that gets me,” the French superstar tells *The Hollywood Reporter* over Zoom. But as one of the most frequent movie stars to make it to the festival selection, the actress has developed a chic coping strategy. “I need to be comfortable with my clothes and with my look, so that I can be myself to walk through the intensity,” explains Cotillard, who has armfuls of luxury threads at her disposal as a longtime ambassador for Chanel.

“How I dress for Cannes depends on how I

want to feel,” she says, adding that her history reflects many periods in her life. “I had a film in the official selection for 12 years in a row, and there were moments when I was going through things that made it so I didn’t want to be in public. But I love being [in Cannes], so I wanted to look strong even when I felt a little weak. My outfits helped me do that.”

As she gears up to make another mark on both the Palais’ carpet and big screen with two films in 2026 — **Bertrand Mandico’s** *Roma Elastica* and **Guillaume Canet’s** *Karma* — Cotillard looks back on some of her favorite Cannes outfits and ahead to her back-to-back debuts: “These are two of my two favorite movies of all the movies I’m in, so I’m super excited for audiences to see them. The films are totally different and from different worlds, but I love both movies.”





1. Armani (2004)

"This was my first appearance in Cannes, and when I look at it now, it's not really a good look, but it's cute. We had a hair drama and I hated how it turned out. We tried to fix it in the elevator to make it right but couldn't get it to work. I was not really into fashion back then and I really didn't know anything. My younger self was much more accepting rather than being a part of the process."

2. Vivienne Westwood (2013)

"Vivienne Westwood is the genius of all geniuses. I love the way she designs for women's bodies. There's nothing better than those shapes. I love this dress so much. I don't have many crazy dresses in my closet, but I do have two Vivienne Westwoods that I bought for myself and will wear forever."

3. Maison Martin Margiela (2014)

"I love this dress because it's really crazy, beautiful and sexy at the same time. It's fun, fresh and super creative with all this mess of broaches, pins and even bottle caps. The hair is so cute, too. I used to wear my hair like that a lot back then."

4. Chanel (2017)

"This is the first time I wore

a Chanel dress after working with Dior for years, which was a fantastic experience because I got to work with so many designers at Dior and I loved it. But I always loved Chanel and was so happy to return to wearing it after some time. I wore this one even before I worked with Chanel officially, and it's a great beaded top with a leather skirt."

5. Y/Project (2017)

"I absolutely love Y/Project. I've always loved working with creative director **Glenn Martens**. We worked together on many things, including a show I have been doing for many years that he designed the costumes for, the dramatic oratorio *Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher* [*Joan of Arc at the Stake*]. This look is everything I love about fashion. It's edgy and cool, from the shirt to the jeans to the shoes, everything. I felt so myself while wearing it."

6. Koché (2018)

"We really love to have fun with the looks in Cannes. This was another fun night because it was for a big Chopard party late in the evening. My daughter was 2 or 3 months old, and I was really happy to be back in shape. We wanted to celebrate the workouts. The inspiration was a little in the

spirit of *Grease*, and I felt very comfortable, very myself. I also wanted to celebrate going back to work after having a baby. This is mom going back to work with a little teddy bear-shaped bag."

7. Chanel Haute Couture (2018)

"I had just started working with Chanel, and **Karl Lagerfeld** was there. He worked on that dress, and it was originally much shorter. They adapted it for me and made it longer. I really loved getting to work with Karl and I love this dress so much."

8. Awake Mode (2019)

"I haven't worn that much black velvet in my life, but it is one of my favorite fabrics and colors. I felt very good wearing this dress because it's classic and beautiful. The earrings are by Chopard, and they always make amazing, beautiful jewelry. [Chopard president] **Caroline Scheufele** is very edgy, and she always creates these very classic collections that are, at the same time, very rock 'n' roll, because she is very rock 'n' roll."

9. Chanel (2019)

"This dress is from an old Karl Lagerfeld collection, and I asked them to redo it in black. I don't usually show my belly that much

because I don't feel very comfortable doing it, but for some reason I did it a couple of times that year, so it became the belly year. The look came together with the hair and the makeup, everything. I wore this for a red carpet for *La Belle Époque* with my very dear friends, actors **Jean Dujardin** and **Gilles Lellouche**. I was not as anxious thanks to them, so I really loved this moment."

10. Balmain and Ludovic de Saint Sernin (2019)

"I mean, this is really me — a mix of masculine, feminine, sexy and kind of almost sportswear. We had a lot of fun creating this look. We found the coat first and wanted to create the look around it. The stylist I worked with found the perfect match by pairing it with the shorts, the boots and the jewelry. We had so much fun, and it worked for Cannes because it was a daytime premiere. This might be the most fun we had."

11. Chanel (2021)

"I'm not usually into prints, but I really liked this. I've always loved black-and-white, so the mix felt really easy. I have to feel myself in the clothes, and if I don't, I will not wear an outfit. I also love the shoes and the touch of pink with the bag."

The look was kind of messy and a little rock 'n' roll. I loved the spirit of it, especially for that movie [*Annette*]."

12. Chanel (2021)

"I love wearing jeans and I love the way Chanel transformed the jeans into a denim dress. I felt very good in that dress. I walked that red carpet with the team of a movie I produced called *Bigger Than Us*, so I wanted something simple yet edgy. I always like something kind of edgy, whatever that means. And this look really accomplished that."

13. Chanel (2021)

"This look reminds me of everything I love about having fun in Cannes. I love the shoes and the crazy top. We had fun putting it together, and styling it as a play on the codes of Cannes, which have changed a lot over the years. There's nothing classic with this look, but I think it's cute and fun."

14. Chanel (2021)

"This look is also very me. I could wear it in my life now. I like that Chanel took this fabric and turned it into a very chic outfit. There's something I love about it being almost masculine and feminine at the same time, with the shape and the

movement. I also love stripes, so the sparkly top is very cute. The glasses are Stella McCartney and were a fun touch. I was so comfortable."

15. Chanel (2021)

"This is one of my favorite dresses I've ever worn. I love everything about it. It's almost like a piece of art. The fabric, I believe, was half latex and the detail was painted on. I adore this dress."

16. Chanel Haute Couture (2022)

"We wanted the dress to stand out on its own, so there is no jewelry and the styling is simple except for the boots, which added just the right amount of fun and edginess that we needed. And I think it worked. The dress stands out and it's absolutely stunning."

17. Chanel (2023)

"I love this jacket so much. We had fun with the hair and it's a little too much, but we loved that it was too much for the way it complemented the very sparkly shoes. We wanted something sexy, like you can imagine a woman coming out of her bathroom in a robe. The jacket is just amazing. It's like a piece of artwork. You could wear it around the home but suddenly you're on a red carpet in Cannes." **VITTA**

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Catherine
Deneuve at the
Cannes Film
Festival in 1983.

LEGEND OF THE GROISSETTE

CATHERINE DENEUVE HAS NO INTEREST IN SLOWING DOWN

At 82, the French screen icon returns to Cannes with two films in competition, a Shiba Inu named Jack (not Jacques!) and a passion for filmmaking that shows no sign of fading: 'It's not just work — it's something I love'

BY SCOTT ROXBOROUGH

Catherine Deneuve, of course, brings her dog. Jack — “not Jacques, Jack!” — a pointy-eared Shiba Inu, stands at attention throughout the interview, his eyes fixed on her like a discreet, furry security guard. “I usually have him on set with me,” she says, patting his head. “He is always very good.” We’re tucked into a cozy corner of a boutique Left Bank hotel. Deneuve’s tasteful Louis Vuitton handbag is tossed on the chaise lounge. As we chat, she punctuates her answers with the occasional puff from her vape — “I did quit smoking for a while, even did hypnosis, but I started again,” she says, waving the vape. “This, however, is not smoking. It’s nothing.”

It’s a classy, casual, almost domestic setting for what at times feels akin to a papal audience. This is Catherine Deneuve! Not just the face of French film but quite literally the face of France. In 1989, for the bicentennial of the French Revolution, Deneuve’s face was used as the image of Marianne, the French national emblem of liberty and reason. She is, de facto, an icon.

Deneuve’s onscreen persona is simultaneously that of sweet Geneviève, romantic idealism personified, in Jacques Demy’s magical 1964 musical *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*; and Carole Ledoux,

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“I’M NOT A BIG FAN OF NUDITY IN FILMS. WHEN YOU ARE NAKED, YOU ARE NO LONGER QUITE A CHARACTER — YOU ARE JUST A PERSON, A BODY. IT’S DIFFICULT TO STAY IN THE STORY OF A CHARACTER.”



the Belgian girl in London whose sexual repression turns homicidal in Roman Polanski’s *Repulsion* (1965). She’s Séverine, haute-bourgeois housewife who moonlights as an S&M submissive in Luis Buñuel’s *Belle de Jour* (1967); and the camp star who sends up her own iconography in both Tony Scott’s lesbian vampire thriller *The Hunger* (1983) and François Ozon’s murder mystery musical *8 Women* (2002).

At once liberated and

conservative, radical and restrained (and, some would say, occasionally reactionary), Deneuve, more than any actress, more than any filmmaker, embodies French cinema in all its glorious, confounding contradiction. Deneuve is not just a legend of the Croisette. She’s *the* legend.

Deneuve returns to Cannes not as a retrospective figure but as a working actor. She has two films in official competition: Alongside Isabelle Huppert,

Vincent Cassel and others in the ensemble drama *Parallel Tales*, from two-time Oscar winner Asghar Farhadi (*A Separation*, *A Salesman*); and as the mother of Léa Seydoux in *Gentle Monster*, from Austrian director Marie Kreutzer (*Corsage*). “Oh, they are very small roles,” she says, modestly. “But even a small role must be necessary. When a role is small, I always ask myself: ‘If this character were removed from the script, would it matter?’ If not, then it

isn’t very interesting. I’m also of course interested in the director, especially if they are young and the way they speak about the film has energy, something open and new. Then I want to be part of it.”

But Cannes is more than a current stop on the circuit for Deneuve — it is the throughline of her career, the stage on which her legend was first forged.

Deneuve’s Cannes story began with a coronation. *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg*, her first lead role,

Deneuve walked the red carpet at the Palais at the 2024 premiere of *L'Amour Ouf* (*Beating Hearts*).



won the Palme d'Or and transformed the 20-year-old ingenue into an international star.

"We knew [the film] was special when we were shooting it — the story was very different, and the film was entirely sung. Everything had to be recorded before shooting, so we had to learn the whole film in advance. It was a very special experience," she recalls. "But it was the beginning of my career, and everything was new. Even winning [the Palme d'Or] felt unreal

because I didn't fully understand it yet. The moment I especially remember from Cannes is when [Lars von Trier's] *Dancer in the Dark* won the Palme d'Or [in 2000]. That recognition, that stayed with me."

Between *Umbrellas and Dancer* — two musicals at opposite poles of the joy-to-anguish spectrum — Deneuve has been back to Cannes so many times she can barely keep count. Her 1994 festival, where she served on the jury alongside Clint Eastwood, stands out. The jury's Palme d'Or pick was *Pulp Fiction*. Deneuve handed the trophy to Quentin Tarantino, anointing a new generation of indie cinema — a choice that would prove as divisive as it was defining.

"Oh, the reaction in the theater! People were shouting, they were so angry. It was such a new kind of film that some didn't understand it," she remembers. "But inside the jury, there was not much conflict. Clint Eastwood, though, didn't talk much. He knew what he decided, but he didn't explain it much to the others."

Scandal, for Deneuve, is nothing new. Over the course of six-plus decades onscreen playing serial killers, kinky housewives and lesbian vampires, she's rarely seen a cinema piety she wouldn't transgress. The fresh-faced Geneviève of *Umbrellas* would be shocked.

It was just a year after *Umbrellas* that Deneuve transformed for Polanski's dark, violent and over-the-top *Repulsion*. Her performance shifted from romantic transparency, from the open joy of Geneviève, to Carole Ledoux's unreadable froideur.

Repulsion and, more significantly, her performance two years later in Buñuel's *Belle de Jour*, would cement Deneuve's image as the "ice queen" of French cinema, as an unreadable projection of male desire, poised between repression and release. For a modern audience, the premise of the film, and its depiction of female sexuality, seems almost inconceivable.

Deneuve admits some

Belle de Jour scenes "were difficult. I wasn't ready to do everything exactly as written," she says. "And Luis Buñuel didn't explain much to actors, so at the beginning, it was complicated. But the film went well, and after that, we did another film together [*Tristana*], which was wonderful."

Repulsion and *Belle de Jour* turned her into a bona fide sex symbol. (Her two *Playboy* pictorials, in 1963 and 1965, the latter shot by future husband David Bailey, also helped.) But such is the apparent contradiction that is Catherine Deneuve that the actress who helped define the language of sexual liberation rarely bared it all onscreen.

"I'm not a big fan of nudity in films," she muses. "When you are naked, you are no longer quite a character — you are just a person, a body. It's difficult to stay in the story of a character."

There's a similar tension in Deneuve's public image and her cultural politics, which can appear, depending on where you're standing, to be simultaneously progressive and reactionary.

Offscreen, Deneuve has been a mostly dependable progressive: a signatory of the 1971 "Manifesto of the 343" protesting France's abortion laws; a petitioner against the death penalty; and, at Cannes last year, a voice condemning the killing of Palestinian photojournalist Fatima Hassouna. But the petition most people remember is her 2018 open letter in *Le Monde*, chastising #MeToo as a witch hunt. She later apologized to victims and distanced herself from those who had "found it strategic to support me." For many, however, the letter — combined with her refusal to distance herself from Polanski and longtime friend Gérard Depardieu — convicted in 2025 of sexually assaulting two women on a film set — places her firmly in the reactionary camp.

Asked who was her best screen partner — from an incomparable list that includes Marcello Mastroianni, Jack Lemmon, Burt Reynolds, Daniel

Auteuil and Michel Piccoli — she barely hesitates: "Gérard Depardieu. Because he is completely present. With some actors, you feel they are not fully listening. With him, everything is alive in the moment."

On #MeToo's lasting impact, she is circumspect. "It's very complicated," she says. "Sometimes accusations come many years later, which raises questions. People must be very careful. It has made everyone more aware, more cautious. I'm very careful [what I say]."

But the queen of French cinema is not one for regrets. She would have liked to work with Alfred Hitchcock — "We had a project. It was a sort of spy movie. It was a fine script, so I met him, but then nothing happened" — and to have made a few more American movies. "I had a very good experience working with Jack Lemmon [on her first Hollywood movie, 1969's *The April Fools*]. Then I did the film with Burt Reynolds [1975's *Hustle*], which I liked very much. He was a wonderful actor and such a nice man." And, as Deneuve put it in an earlier interview, "very funny ... for an American."

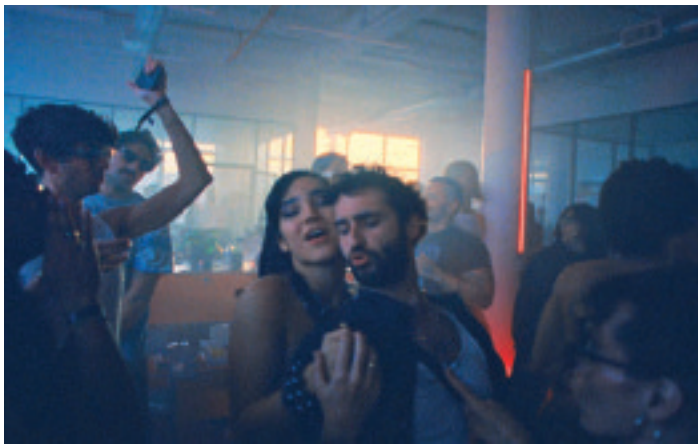
She does still long for celluloid and the era of screening the dailies. "I used to like watching dailies — discussing scenes afterward. You see some things that you wouldn't notice when you are shooting," she notes, wistfully. "[Now] directors watch monitors instead of being directly involved in the scene. That has disappeared. Everything is faster now, less collective."

What hasn't changed for the 82-year-old actress is the essential appeal of the work: "I still love going to the cinema — being in a theater with people, feeling that shared atmosphere. And I still love making films. I try to choose only what I truly want to do. It's not just work — it's something I love."

Outside, Paris moves at its usual pace. Deneuve gathers her things. Jack rises with her, attentive as ever.

"It's a great luck to have a life like this." **THR**

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WELCOME TO THE NEW MARCHÉ: LEANER BUDGETS, BIGGER SWINGS

From Park Chan-wook's star-studded Western to Charlie Kaufman's long-awaited comeback, the 2026 Cannes market arrives with tighter purse strings, sharper concepts and plenty of reasons for cautious optimism **BY SCOTT ROXBOROUGH AND MIA GALUPPO**

The Cannes market arrived this year the way it often does: slowly, then all at once. On the eve of the 2026 Marché du Film (May 12-20), there was a late surge of fresh packages — prestige auteur plays, elevated genre films and star-driven indies — a tentative sign of green shoots for an global film industry badly in need of some positive momentum.

There are few of the giant \$50 million-plus action packages that once defined the Marché. The economics of independently financing big-budget films have become increasingly unforgiving, pushing producers and sales companies toward leaner, sharper concepts with clearer theatrical identities.

The indie market is also in flux, with hits coming from all over, but little in the way of a model to copy. Star-driven high-end auteur movies — A24's *Marty Supreme* and *The Drama* — sit alongside foreign-language breakthroughs like *No Other Choice*, *Sentimental Value* and *Sirat*, all Neon releases stateside.

"The definition of a

high-profile project is very different than it used to be," says Oliver Berben, CEO of German producer/distributor Constantin Film, which recently acquired A24's *Backrooms*, from YouTube creator Kane Parsons, for the German market. "Much more important right now is creating a project that will have the cultural relevance."

Stateside, the IFC Entertainment Group, which covers both the Independent Film Company and horror streamer Shudder, split the difference between genre acquisitions and director-driven dramas with its buys out of last year's Cannes. The company bought the Samara Weaving and Jason Segel horror comedy

Over Your Dead Body out of the Marché and *The Ugly Stepsister* off of a promo, the latter of which landed a surprise Oscar nomination.

"Genre, historically, is a margin business. Now everyone's business is a margin business, and I think that's why the studios have gone so full bore into genre," says Scott Shooman, the head of IFC Entertainment Group. "The audience is getting younger, and studio movies are great and scratch a certain itch, but the itch that a younger audience has is more auteur driven."

Major Hollywood studios that years ago shuttered their specialty divisions are tapping indie acquisition and producing talent in an apparent attempt to compete with the likes of IFC/Shudder, Neon and A24.

Paramount has a new genre label from the BoulderLight producers Raphael Margules and J.D. Lifshitz (*Barbarian*, *Companion*), who used to sell low-budget horror out of the Marché. Warner Bros. has tapped Neon alums for its new label, Clockwork, focused on projects that target a Gen Z audience. Clockwork's first

project is *Anora* filmmaker Sean Baker's next film, *Ti Amo*. That acquisition was not announced out of fest or market, but at CinemaCon during Warner's presentation to the nation's theater owners.

The always-active Neon swooped in early, pre-buying domestic rights for several of the shiniest festival titles, including James Gray's *Paper Tiger* starring Scarlett Johansson, Adam Driver and Miles Teller; and Cristian Mungiu's *Fjord* with Sebastian Stan and Renate Reinsve, as well as Jeff Nichols' market title *King Snake*, set to star Margaret Qualley and Michael Shannon.

But there is still plenty on offer. The festival lineup has award-ready finished films from Lukas Dhont (*Coward*), Asghar Farhadi (*Parallel Tales*) and Ira Sachs (*The Man I Love*), while the Marché presales lineup includes something in every genre, language and budget level, from Park Chan-wook's new Western; to the English-language debut of *Anatomy of a Fall* director Justine Triet, starring Mia Goth; Charlie Kaufman's comeback movie; and yes, a new Jason Statham vehicle.



Clockwise from top left: Jordan Firstman's *Club Kid*, Andy Garcia directs and stars in *Diamond*, and Isabelle Huppert in Asghar Farhadi's *Parallel Tales*.

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Film Frontier Pitch Session & Networking

Join us for a quick dive into JCSF, a creator support program—then hear bold pitches from Film Frontiers heading to Cannes this year. Stay for drinks, conversation, and great connections—with a few special guests in the mix.

Organizer: Japan Creator Support Fund, UNIJAPAN



UNIJAPAN



Cinema, Cities, and Creativity: UNESCO Creative Cities Yamagata & Cannes

Featuring a roundtable of filmmakers and panelists who support the activities of Yamagata and Cannes as designated Cities of Film in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, the event will close with a reception serving refreshments (including sake from Yamagata).

Organized by: Yamagata Creative City Promotion Council, Yamagata City, Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival
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Organizer: NOMA



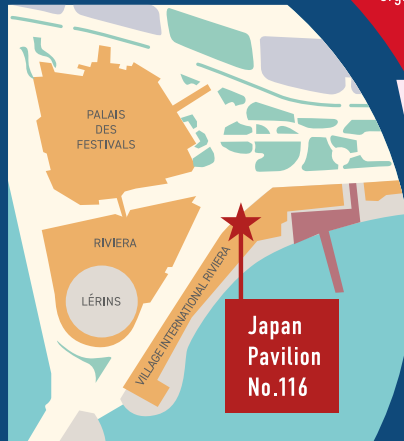
JAPAN PITCH presented by ATMOVIE GLOBAL TRACK

JAPAN PITCH is an official pitch event showcasing five fellows selected from ATMOVIE GLOBAL TRACK, an accelerator program dedicated to launching the next generation of Japanese filmmakers onto the global stage. Presented in English by the creators themselves, these pitches feature unique narratives and business plans meticulously polished to international standards. JAPAN PITCH serves as a "platform for co-creation," connecting global producers, investors, and sales agents interested in Japanese co-productions to propel these projects into their next phase.

Organizer: ATMOVIE GLOBAL TRACK



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JAPANESE PRODUCERS UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT –Presentation and Networking–

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Organizer: Visual Industry Promotion Organization



UNIJAPAN

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JAPANESE NIGHT Symposium 2026 Legacy & Actuality of Japanese Cinema

This symposium examines Japanese cinema's heritage and current challenges from a global perspective. Insights from international film professionals will highlight strategies to elevate Japanese cinema's visibility while honoring its legacy. The discussion will connect artistic traditions with today's cinematic landscape. The networking reception will facilitate exchanges to rediscover Japanese cinema's value and explore its future through diverse viewpoints.

Organizer: JAPANESE NIGHT Executive Committee

Invitation Only



JAPANESE FILMS IN CANNES

[In Competition]
ALL OF A SUDDEN

By HAMAGUCHI Ryusuke



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[In Competition]
Sheep in the Box

By KOREEDA Hirokazu



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[In Competition]
NAGI NOTES

By FUKADA Koji



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[Un Certain Regard]
ALL THE LOVERS IN THE NIGHT

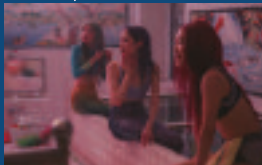
By SODE Yukiko



©2026 All the Lovers in the Night Production committee

[Un Certain Regard]
TITANIC OCEAN

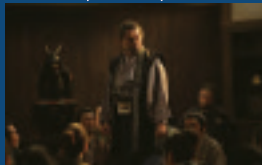
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[Cannes Premiere]
The Samurai and the Prisoner

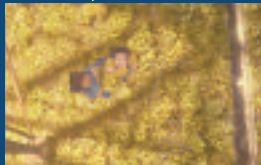
By KUROSAWA Kiyoshi



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[Directors' Fortnight]
WE ARE ALIENS

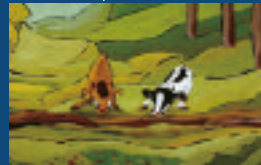
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[Directors' Fortnight]
Eri

By YANO Honami



© 2026 Miyu Productions, Au Praxinoscope, Honami Yano



Agency for Cultural Affairs,
Government of Japan

ART

DIRECTOR Fernando Meirelles

STARS Ralph Fiennes, Colin Farrell, Wagner Moura

BUZZ A high-profile take on Yasmina Reza's hit play — about three friends debating commerce, art and friendship — with *The Two Popes* director Meirelles and two-time Oscar-winning screenwriter Christopher Hampton (*The Father*, *Dangerous Liaisons*), teaming with an A-list trio, gives this sharp, dialogue-driven drama both prestige weight and strong commercial appeal. **SALES** 193/CAA Media Finance

BARRACUDA

DIRECTOR Neil Burger

STARS Anthony Mackie, Dafne Keen, Steven Bauer, Anthony Del Negro

BUZZ The global market loves an action thriller, and this looks like a by-the-numbers programmer for mainstream distributors and streamers to slot in their schedule. Mackie plays a former smuggler who, while rescuing a kidnapped teen (Keen) from a nightclub in Mexico, steals the club owner's 1973 Plymouth Barracuda, setting off a high-octane chase through the desert. **SALES** Highland Film Group/UTA Independent Film Group

THE BRIGANDS OF RATTLECREEK

DIRECTOR Park Chan-wook

STARS Matthew McConaughey, Austin Butler, Pedro Pascal, Tang Wei

BUZZ Park Chan-wook's first English-language feature since 2013's *Stoker* is a tale of vengeance and retribution set in the American West. Based on an original screenplay from S. Craig Zahler (*Bone Tomahawk*) and with an all-star cast, this looks like the rare auteur project that could spark a bidding war. **SALES** 193

CLUB KID

DIRECTOR Jordan Firstman

STARS Firstman, Cara Delevingne, Diego Calva

BUZZ The directorial debut from the *I Love LA* breakout overdelivers on charm. Firstman stars as a past-his-prime party promoter who finds out he has a 10-year-old, all of which is set against the backdrop of New York's club culture. **SALES** UTA; Charades

CRITTERZ

DIRECTOR Nik Klevorov

BUZZ This OpenAI-assisted family animation is the test case for cost-efficient AI-driven features. Written by *Paddington in Peru* duo James Lamont and Jon Foster and produced on a reported \$30 million budget, the project has plenty to offer indie buyers, if it can avoid an anti-AI backlash. **SALES** AGC International

DIAMOND

DIRECTOR Andy Garcia

STARS Garcia, Brendan Fraser, Vicky Krieps, Danny Huston, Rosemarie DeWitt, Demián Bichir, Bill Murray

BUZZ Garcia's passion project is a

contemporary film noir written, directed and starring the *Ocean's Eleven* actor as Joe Diamond, a man out of time with a traumatic past and an uncanny ability to solve crimes. Fifteen years in the making, *Diamond* arrives in Cannes with a deep bench of recognizable names and a classic genre appeal that should boost its sales chances. **SALES** The Veterans / CAA Media Finance

FONDA

DIRECTOR Justine Triet

STARS Mia Goth, Allison Janney, Andrew Scott, Odessa A'zion, Benedict Wong

BUZZ Triet's first English-language film after her Oscar-winning *Anatomy of a Fall*, featuring a stacked international cast and strong backing from StudioCanal and mk2, makes this psychological thriller one of the market's most anticipated prestige plays. **SALES** mk2 Films

HOLD ON TO YOUR ANGELS

DIRECTOR Benh Zeitlin

STARS Paul Mescal, Jessie Buckley

BUZZ The 2025 and 2026 Oscars season are colliding with this film that teams the

Statham programmer, and this actioner, from *End of Watch* director Ayer, is this season's model: an amnesia thriller with Statham as a trained killer hunted by his own handlers, torn between finishing the mission and protecting the woman he loves. **SALES** Black Bear

LATER THE WAR

DIRECTOR Charlie Kaufman

STARS Channing Tatum, Tessa Thompson, Patsy Ferran

BUZZ Kaufman's long-awaited return behind the camera — six years after his Netflix feature *I'm Thinking of Ending Things* — is a surreal comedy-drama about a successful actor-director chasing artistic legitimacy while his marriage unravels. Offering a rare blend of auteur cinema and star power, *Later the War* should resonate with specialty distributors and festival-driven buyers. **SALES** The Veterans/CAA Media Finance

THE MAN WHO STOLE PORTUGAL

DIRECTOR Thomas Napper

STARS Richard E. Grant, Dominic West, James Nelson-Joyce, Emily Fairn



Leah Nelson's animated *Tangles* stars Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Bryan Cranston and Seth Rogen.

Hamnet stars with *Anora* producer Alex Coco. The romance from the *Beasts of the Southern Wild* director is set in the Louisiana bayou and will see Mescal play "a hell-bound outlaw" and Buckley "a ferocious shepherd of lost souls." **SALES** CAA, Veterans

IMPUNITY

DIRECTOR Felipe Gálvez Haberle

STARS Sebastian Stan, Ana de Armas

BUZZ A geopolitical thriller set around the 1998 arrest of Augusto Pinochet — the first time an international court challenged the immunity of a former dictator — this feature from *The Settlers* director Gálvez Haberle led by two globally bankable stars offers commercial genre appeal with the upside potential of an awards season play. **SALES** Pathé

JOHN DOE

DIRECTOR David Ayer

STARS Jason Statham

BUZZ Every film market needs a Jason

BUZZ This true-crime period thriller from *Limitless* director Napper is about the 1920s hustler who pulled off one of history's boldest financial frauds, an ingenious scheme to legally counterfeit Portugal's currency. Combining genre hooks with period prestige, and a solid British cast, this could score with mainstream European distributors and specialty buyers in the U.S. **SALES** Beta Cinema

NICE FISH

DIRECTOR Mark Rylance

STARS Rylance, Michelle Williams

BUZZ Oscar and Olivier winner Rylance (*Bridge of Spies*) is set to star, alongside five-time Oscar nominee Williams, in his feature directorial debut, an adaptation of the stage play he co-wrote with prose poet Louis Jenkins. The plot follows two friends on an ice-fishing trip whose fragile bond is tested as they encounter surreal elements and reflect on friendship and adulthood. Expect the high-profile cast and prestige appeal to

pull in art house distributors hook, line and sinker.

SALES Palisades Park Pictures/CAA Media Finance

PARALLEL TALES

DIRECTOR Asghar Farhadi

STARS Isabelle Huppert, Virginie Efira, Vincent Cassel, Pierre Niney, Adam Bessa, Catherine Deneuve

BUZZ A top-tier prestige title from two-time Oscar winner Farhadi (*A Separation*, *The Salesman*) featuring an all-star French cast, this drama — supposedly inspired by Krzysztof Kieslowski's *Dekalog: Six* (the one about adultery) — is on every art house buyer's must-see list. **SALES** Charades / UTA Independent Film Group

PUMPING BLACK

DIRECTOR Mimi Cave

STARS Jonathan Bailey, Natalie Portman

BUZZ Lance Armstrong, eat your heart out. The director of cannibal romance horror comedy *Fresh* has set her next project in the cutthroat world of professional cycling, bringing perennial A-lister Portman and box office breakout Bailey along for the ride. **SALES** CAA, Anton

THE ROAD HOME

DIRECTOR Bill Condon

STARS Cynthia Erivo, Thabo Rametsi, Guy Pearce

BUZZ This ambitious musical drama, looking to draw in award-savvy distributors, traces the contentious creation of Paul Simon's 1986 *Graceland* album and his Apartheid-era tour with South African jazz legends Miriam 'Mama Africa' Makeba (Erivo) and Hugh Masekela (Rametsi). Pearce plays Archbishop Trevor Huddleston, who tried to boycott Simon for violating the U.N.'s cultural boycott of South Africa. **SALES** Palisades Park Pictures

TANGELS

DIRECTOR Leah Nelson

STARS Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Bryan Cranston, Seth Rogen

BUZZ A stellar voice cast, which also includes Wanda Sykes, Bowen Yang and Beanie Feldstein, leads this animated film that about a San Francisco artist who returns to her small, conservative hometown to help caretake for her mother who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. **SALES** UTA, CAA, Charades

A WAITER IN PARIS

DIRECTOR Peter Hoar

STARS Leo Woodall, Clémence Poésy

BUZZ An over-educated Englishman (*The White Lotus* star Woodall) arrives in Paris determined to reinvent himself as a waiter, only to discover exploitation and precarity behind the glamorous façade. Based on Edward Chisholm's best-selling memoir, this fish-out-of-water drama, set against the allure of Paris's restaurant world, offers buyers a character-driven crowd-pleaser with crossover potential. **SALES** Cornerstone **TV**

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JULIE PAQUIT, PRESIDENT OF SALES
JPAQUIT@VMIWORLDWIDE.COM
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LBOUEZ@VMIWORLDWIDE.COM

RON HOWARD AND THE MAN WHO CAPTURED THE 20TH CENTURY

The veteran filmmaker's new doc argues that no single artist documented American life more completely than Richard Avedon: 'He was on a mission to understand the world through his work' **BY MIA GALUPPO**

At one point in *Avedon*, Ron Howard's documentary about the famed photographer Richard Avedon, the claim is made that Avedon captured much of the 20th century. It's a bold assertion, but Howard's film, which distills a dizzying archive provided by the Richard Avedon Foundation, makes a compelling case over its 100-minute runtime.

After becoming the preeminent photographer at the height of American fashion magazines, Avedon was the inspiration behind the Audrey Hepburn and Fred Astaire musical comedy *Funny Face*. His notoriety led him to capture the most



"What I so love about this period of my life," says Ron Howard, "is the tempo and the pace of the documentaries is so different."

famous faces in entertainment, politics, society and culture, from James Baldwin and Allen Ginsberg to Marilyn Monroe and Charlie Chaplin to the Reagans and Warhol's Factory. In between his portraiture and commercial work (you have Avedon to thank for Brooke Shields' seminal Calvin Klein campaign), he documented the rubble of post-War Paris, the architects of the American Civil Rights movement and the napalm victims of the Vietnam War.

All of this, as well as the photographer's personal life and more, is explored in *Avedon*, which is getting a special screening in Cannes on May 17.

Howard is no stranger to biodocs. With a focus on prolific creatives, he has directed docs about Luciano Pavarotti (2019's *Pavarotti*) and Jim Henson (2024's *Jim Henson Idea Man*), the latter of which also bowed at Cannes. He says of his choice of subjects, "We're all appreciative of their work, but maybe we didn't recognize quite what it entailed."

Ahead of touching down in France, Howard talked to *THR* about the origins of *Avedon*, the importance of authorship in imagery and how Avedon "used his work to satisfy his own curiosity."

When did you lock the documentary?

Just a few weeks ago.

Wow.

But it's been years of working on this, going back to our first visits to the archives.

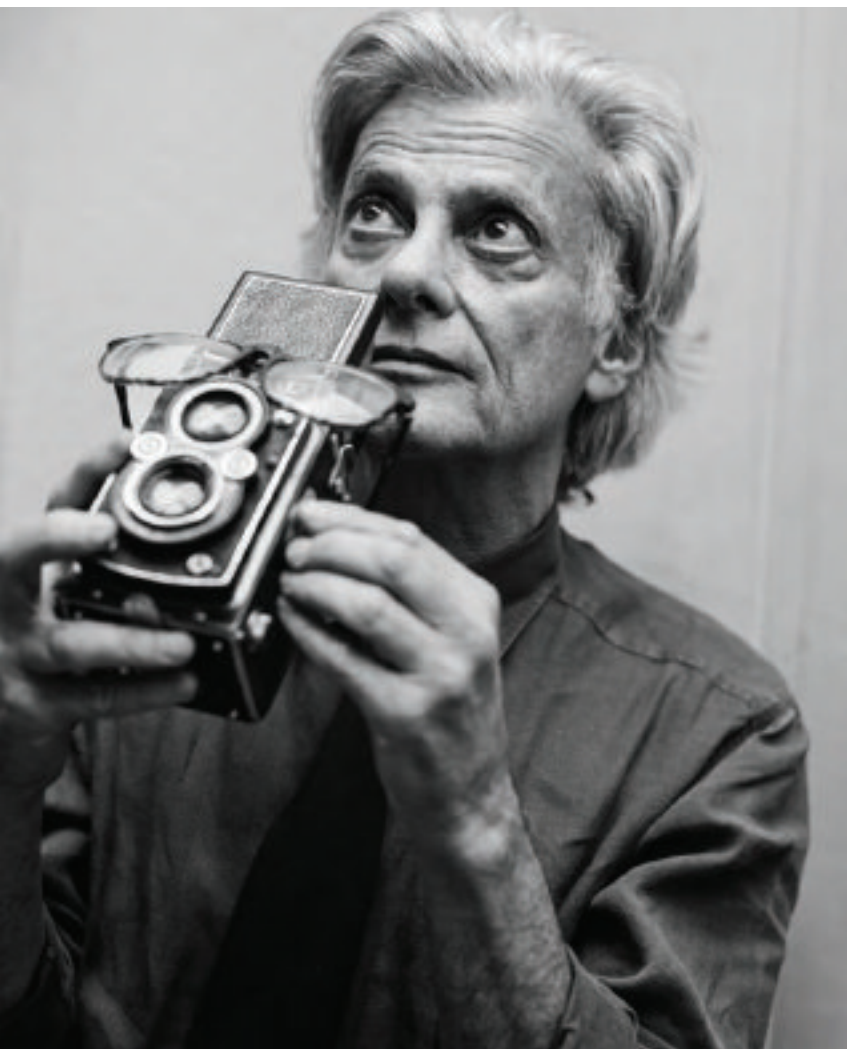
What I so love about this period of my life,



creatively moving back and forth between scripted narratives and doc films is, the tempo and the pace of the documentaries is so different. It's just always with you, percolating, for a long stretch of time. It's rarely that kind of flat out sprint. Sometimes the very last interview you do, it's not just a few quotes you can plug into the film, it instigates a real rethink, and deepens your understanding of the subject. I really love the opportunity to explore these other worlds, and quite often with me, it's been individual biographical work.

Why are you drawn to biographical film?

The only verité piece I did was when we followed [chef] José Andrés around. And when we did the Paradise fire film [2022's *We Feed People*], we had no idea exactly where that would go. But it's really been about the opportunities that came my way. I'm very interested in people who achieve artistic excellence. I'm interested in the life and the spark, along with the dues they had to pay and the cost to the other aspects of their life. That all goes into the stew that winds up being a career with significant output.



From top: Richard Avedon working on his *In the American West* series, circa 1985 (photo by Susan Middleton); Avedon in 1994 (photo by Bruce Weber).

How did Richard Avedon come on your radar as a documentary subject?

Sara Bernstein, the president of the documentary division at [Howard's production company] Imagine, had gotten wind that the Avedon family and the foundation were perhaps open to allowing a filmmaker to have access to the archives and be supportive of the effort of reaching out for interviews. So I went to the archive, and it happened to coincide with that [2023 retrospective] in New York. I had nothing but respect for the name Richard Avedon and the handful of images that I could ascribe to him, but no sense of the depth and reach of what he had done. You could open up every drawer and your head explodes with — who he photographed and under what circumstances. There were also these tapes that he recorded of the sessions, which weren't really right for the movie, but I could see that he wasn't just taking photos of human beings as symbols or reflections. He was actually drawing out their inner self and finding ways to let that inform the photo, even if it was his commercial, glossy magazine work or advertising. That was enough of a reason, to me, to talk about making the film.

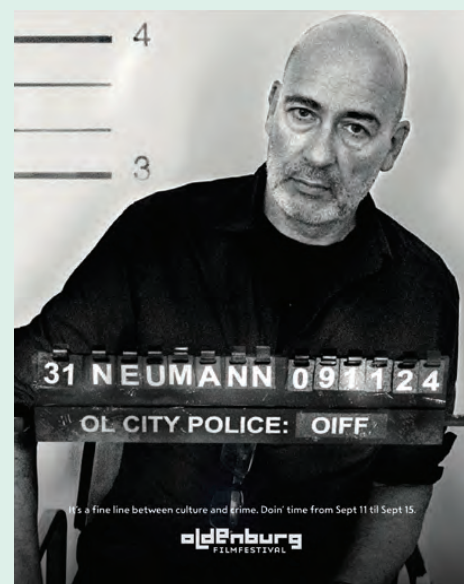
And then I had no idea how much of his life he committed to social observation, to civil rights, to exploring the lesser known corners in service of photo journalism. People weren't always supportive. Magazine people didn't want him running away and covering Vietnam. They weren't excited about that. That's not what they wanted him to do. I'm sure his business manager didn't like that. And the critics weren't always embracing it, and he had some very harsh criticism that really beat him up. And yet he persevered, and was just determined to fully apply his creativity in the ways that he understood best. To me, it just became this object lesson in creative endurance. He's using his cachet and stature to actually say something else and do more. I found that incredibly inspiring.

I wound up being really emotionally connected to Avedon. I'm not anything like him, outside of the fact that I love to work and I have a lot of energy around it. It was funny, he reminded me of a couple of mentors of mine from his era who shared similar qualities. That acerbic wit, who designed to be at the center of things.

Like who?

The director of all the episodes of *Happy Days*, a guy named Jerry Paris. Everywhere Jerry went, he was the ring master. He had these great parties at his house. They weren't Hollywood parties — it was swimming and playing basketball, it wasn't that he was fancy or outrageous. But he was

Continued on page 34



How the Oldenburg Film Fest Turned Marketing Into an Art

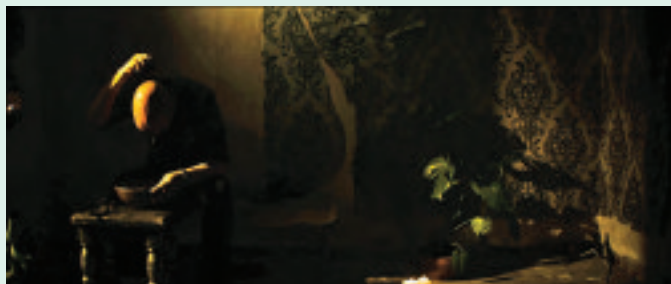
The scrappy German indie fest doesn't just champion maverick cinema — it makes it. From DIY spoof trailers to subversive Cannes campaigns, Oldenburg's promotions are as fearless as the films it shows **BY SCOTT ROXBOROUGH**

There's a scene in the trailer for the 30th Oldenburg International Film Festival that tells you everything you need to know about the event. Festival co-founder and director Torsten Neumann, half in shadow, delivers a brooding monologue inspired by Marlon Brando's "The Horror" speech from *Apocalypse Now* — except here, the existential dread comes not from war but from programming an independent film festival with global ambitions in a midsize German city.

The production, cheekily titled *Oldenburg Now*, was shot in an office building across the street from festival headquarters, with staff hauling in houseplants to approximate a Vietnamese jungle. It's indie

filmmaking in its purest form — improvised, resourceful and entirely in sync with the ethos Oldenburg has cultivated over the course of three decades.

It is, in every conceivable way, a microbudget guerrilla filmmaking operation. And it is absolutely perfect. (It helps that



Clockwise from top: In 2025, the campaign from Portuguese director Edgar Pêra drew inspiration from *The War of the Worlds*; the movement from 2011 skewered Harvey Weinstein long before #MeToo. In 2024, Oldenburg staffers re-created iconic celebrity mug shots, with artistic director Torsten Neumann as Hugh Grant. The 2023 trailer featured Neumann as Marlon Brando from *Apocalypse Now*.

the svelte but follicle-challenged Neumann bears a cranial resemblance to late-era Brando.)

That contradiction — an audacious creative vision executed on a shoestring — sits at the heart of what has made Oldenburg one of Europe's most beloved indie showcases. Now

in its 33rd year, the September gathering in Lower Saxony has built an international reputation not only for its programming of boundary-pushing independent cinema but for its marketing campaigns, which have become events in and of themselves.

Annual trailers and print ads — including a long-running presence in *The Hollywood Reporter's* Cannes Dailies — have turned Oldenburg into a fixture of festival-circuit conversation.

"The shoots for the trailers reflect the independent drive of the whole festival," says Katrin Brinkmann, who first came to Oldenburg as an intern and has worked on numerous campaigns. "We're scouting for empty spaces, trying to make it look professional for no money. It's the same energy as our

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**Kevin Cassidy
and Lily Ford**

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filmmakers: You have an idea, and then you just figure out how to make it happen.”

The trailers lean hard into cinephile in-jokes, typically riffing on film history before colliding those references with the realities of running a defiantly non-mainstream festival. *Oldenburg Now* transplants Coppola's Vietnam epic to northern Germany, ending with Neumann — to the sound of Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" rising on the soundtrack — tucking into a local pastry: "I love the smell of [Oldenburg cafe] Janssen Brötli's in the morning."

The Lost Oldenburg — from 2012, shot at Marvin's, the city's legendary dive bar — paid homage to Billy Wilder's *The Lost Weekend*. Last year's trailer, *The Great Disillusionment*, created by Portuguese surrealist director Edgar Pêra (*Magnetick Pathways*), a frequent festival guest, staged sci-fi invasions à la *The War of the Worlds*, complete with retro UFOs laying waste to the streets of Oldenburg.

"All the visual motifs in the trailers and in print are essentially love letters to the industry," says Lukas Hausberger, another former Oldenburg intern who has worked as a designer on several campaigns. "They're intended for people who catch the references and appreciate the inside jokes."

While other festivals rely on external agencies and tend to settle on a generic style or recurring visual motifs — Berlin's Bears, the Cannes Palmes — every year Oldenburg tears up its previous campaign and starts from scratch.

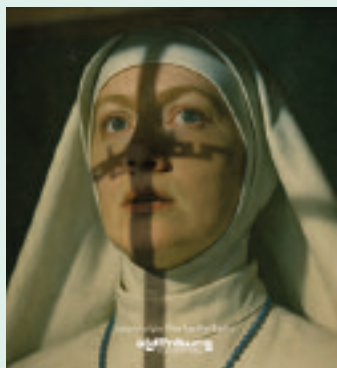
"The source of all the ideas is basically Torsten's brain," Brinkmann says. "He has this archive of concepts, and every year we sit down and figure out how to bring one of them to life."

Neumann himself sees the campaigns as inseparable from the festival's identity. "As with the programming, it's always about a love for the margins of

the film industry, where you often discover the best films," he says.

That philosophy has produced some of the festival's most memorable imagery. A 2014 "Icons" campaign, featuring a revolver cylinder and the tagline, "Five days to blow your mind — no liability for day 6," became a cult hit, even winning a design award in Chicago and selling out T-shirts. "That was the festival's image: Five intense days, then day six, the day after, is the hangover," says Neumann.

For the 2024 campaign, Oldenburg festival staffers restaged iconic celebrity mug shots in a campaign that



From left: The 2025 campaign drew inspiration from Powell and Pressburger's classic *Black Narcissus*. The 2012 campaign paid homage to Billy Wilder's *Lost Weekend*, and another poster from the 2025 campaign conveys that Oldenburg programmers are "addicted to cinema, the festival is in our blood."

managed to be simultaneously irreverent, politically resonant and deeply film-nerdy. Neumann played the crestfallen Hugh Grant after his 1995 arrest for solicitation in Los Angeles; Brinkmann was more defiant, her left fist raised, in her imitation of Jane Fonda's legendary arrest photo from 1970.

Last year's "Lose Your Religion"/"Addicted to Cinema" campaign was something completely different. Taking equal inspiration from the Powell and Pressburger classic *Black Narcissus*, David Cronenberg's *Naked Lunch* and a '90s PlayStation campaign ("Where the console buttons appear in the veins of a player's hand," notes Brinkmann), it mashed up religious, body horror and drug

imagery to suggest that visiting Oldenburg would result in physical and spiritual transformation.

"Transgression is a crucial element in art, one that is in danger of disappearing," Neumann says. "So our ads should push boundaries. We used a junkie's arm in last year's campaign, with its protruding veins forming the festival logo. It might seem shocking at first, but the message is clear: We are addicted to cinema — the festival is in our blood."

For his ads, Neumann is a fan of using "false" claims that are qualified in small print. Like his "Harvey Weinstein Is a Virgin" ad — done years before #MeToo

themselves — the outsiders, the rule-breakers, the ones Oldenburg programs. "We want to reach the people whose films we'll later be showing," Brinkmann says. "So they recognize themselves in it."

That connection appears to resonate. Each year, the festival receives what Brinkmann describes as "little love letters" from attendees — messages about the intensity of the five-day experience and the sense of belonging it creates. The campaigns are designed to bottle that feeling and project it outward.

"Oldenburg can't compete as a 'marketplace' where buyers and producers directly license

— "that made us the talk of the town in Cannes"; or one with the tagline, "Robert Redford Is the American Torsten Neumann," spoofing the label many use to describe Oldenburg as the "German Sundance."

This year's campaign tackles the "truly dreadful genre of motivational calendar sayings," with *Fargo*-style needlepoint murals and anti-inspirational slogans. "It's never too late to give up your dreams" reads Day 1.

"There will be plenty of irreverence in the coming days," Neumann promises, "and for the cinephiles, lots of little references to big films hidden within."

Ultimately, the target audience for all this isn't the broader industry but the filmmakers

talent and discoveries," says Neumann. "But these days, an invitation to Oldenburg is a seal of quality because unlike many other festivals, we are very radical in our evaluation criteria: We don't have to consider any film policy arguments, there are no quotas to meet, and we will never prioritize other criteria over cinematic quality."

And it's a connection that has helped nurture filmmakers early in their careers. "Filmmakers like Sean Baker showed their first films in Oldenburg," Neumann says. "And Sean's clear rejection of all expectations now that he's making studio films for big bucks is a source of hope for the survival of independent cinema and a confirmation of our tenacity in our struggles." **THR**

For all the latest coverage of the Cannes Film Festival, go to [THR.COM/CANNES](https://www.thr.com/cannes)

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WITH CHRIS KLEIN AND TOMMY FLANAGAN

MAY 12TH | 2:00 PM | PALAIS C

DAMNED - IF YOU DO -

KATE SIEGEL HARVEY GUILLÉN GINGER GONZAGA
PAULO COSTANZO BETH DOVER & MIKE FLANAGAN

MAY 12TH | 4:15 PM | PALAIS C

SCREENING GUIDE



TUESDAY May 12

8:45 *The Samurai and the Prisoner* (148 mins.), Olympia 9, Charades

9:00 *Seekers of Infinite Love* (91 mins.), Arcades 1, Protagonist Pictures

9:00 *Vision Promo Reel* (120 mins.), Lerins 2, Vision Distribution

9:00 *StudioCanal*

Promoreels 2026 (120 mins.), Lerins Cinema Club, StudioCanal (Fr)

9:00 *La Gradiva* (145 mins.), Olympia 4, Mk2 Films

9:00 *Promo Reel New Europe Film Sales* (110 mins.), Olympia 7, New Europe Film Sales

9:00 *Blood Barn*, (76 mins.), Online #1, Reel Suspects

9:00 *Young Washington* (120 mins.), Palais F, Angel Studios

9:00 *Piperplay Promo Reel* (120 mins.), Palais J, Piperplay

9:00 *The Helpers* (75 mins.),

Riviera 2, Inspire Film Company

9:30 *Goodfellas Promo Reel* (110 mins.), Arcades 2, Goodfellas

9:30 *Above and Below* (95 mins.), Lerins 1, Capture

9:30 *A Girl Unknown* (125 mins.), Lerins 3, Pyramide International

9:30 *My Duchess* (95 mins.), Olympia 2, Embankment Films Ltd

9:30 *Everybody Digs Bill Evans* Olympia 6, Mister Smith Entertainment

9:30 *Strawberries*

(103 mins.), Olympia 8, Lucky Number

9:30 *Princess Stella* (118 mins.), Palais C, Princ Films

9:30 *The Last Temptation of Becky* (93 mins.), Palais K, Altitude Film Sales / Altitude Film Entertainment

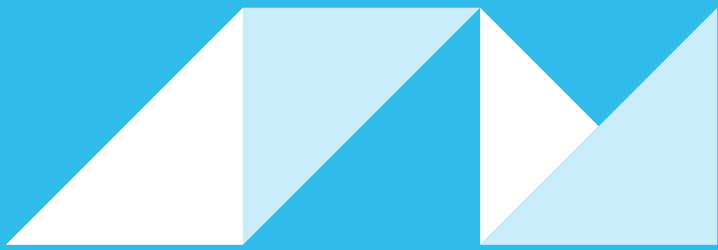
9:30 *Vita Mia* (125 mins.), Riviera 1, Beta Cinema

11:00 *Not a Hero* (97 mins.), Online #1, MMM Film Sales

11:00 *Totem Films Promo Reel 2026* (110 mins.), Online #5, Totem Films

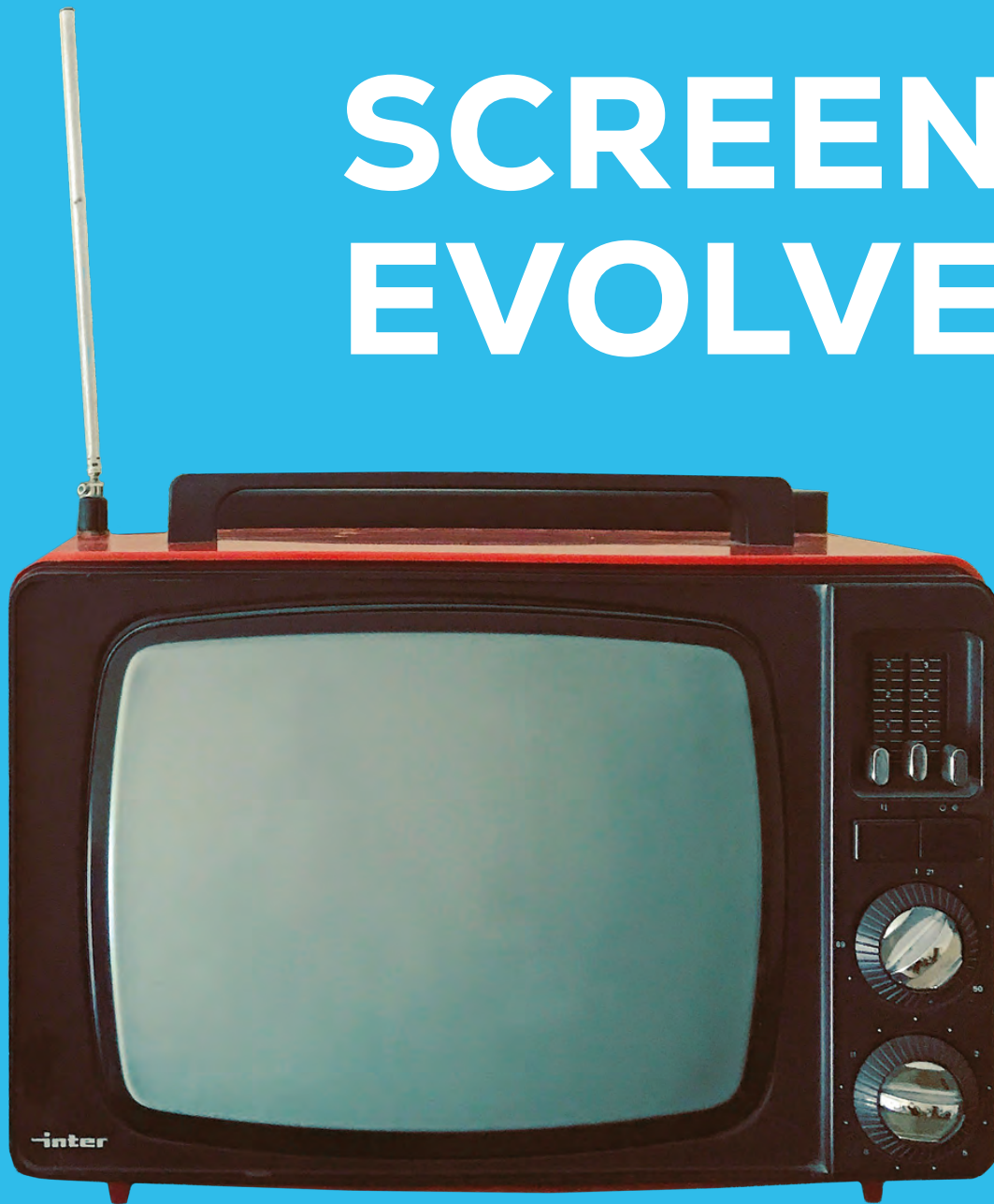
11:30 *The Saviors* (92 mins.),

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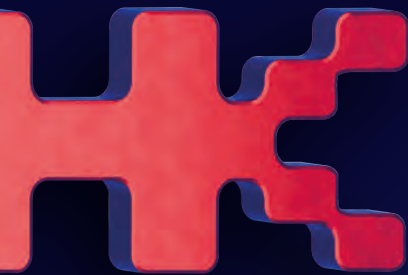
November 10 – 15, 2026
Fairmont Century Plaza
Los Angeles



Strawberries

- Arcades 1, Protagonist Pictures
- 11:30** *I Want to Be Like You* (97 mins.), Arcades 3, Latido Films
- 11:30** *Still Afloat* (88 mins.), Lerins 2, Latido Films
- 11:30** *Rolling Loud* Olympia #4 Online, Evolution Pictures Ltd
- 11:30** *Promoreel — Lucky Number* (101 mins.), Olympia 4, Lucky Number
- 11:30** *And Promoreel Loop* (60 mins.), Olympia 5, SND — Groupe M6
- 11:30** *Rai Cinema International Distribution Promoreel Screening* (20 mins.), Olympia 9, Rai Cinema
- 11:30** *Buffet Libre* (119 mins.), Online #2, Reel Suspects
- 11:30** *The Retreat* (90 mins.), Palais B, Princ Films
- 11:30** *Miss You, Love You* (120 mins.), Palais F, Architect
- 11:30** *Promoreel Global Constellation* (110 mins.), Palais H, Global Constellation
- 12:00** *God Forgives Everyone* (114 mins.), Lerins 3, Piperplay
- 12:00** *Sola Media Promo Reel* (110 mins.), Olympia 3, Sola Media GmbH
- 12:00** *No Rest for the Wicked* (103 mins.), Olympia 6, Charades
- 12:00** *Carousel* Palais C, Stoic
- 12:00** *True Colours Promo Reel Cannes 2026* (110 mins.), Riviera 1, True Colours Glorious Films SRL
- 13:00** *The Playmaker Munich Promo Reel* (110 mins.), Lerins Cinema Club, The Playmaker Munich (A Brand of B.A. Produktion GmbH)
- 13:20** *The Phantom of the Opera* Olympia 1, SND — Groupe M6
- 13:30** *Red Rocks* (90 mins.), Arcades 1, Luxbox
- 13:30** *Good Vibes Only* (95 mins.), Olympia 4, Studio TF1
- 13:30** *Things We Don't Say* (115 mins.), Olympia 5, Rai Cinema
- 13:30** *The Keeper of the Camphor Tree* (114 mins.), Olympia 9, Charades
- 13:30** *The Last Supper* (120 mins.), Palais B, Pinnacle Peak Pictures
- 13:30** *Empty Nesters* (90 mins.), Riviera 2, Picture Tree International GmbH
- 14:00** *Ikatan Darah* (119 mins.), Lerins 1, WTFilms
- 14:00** *Trinidad* (115 mins.), Olympia 3, Deep Communication Roots SL
- 14:00** *Labyrinth* (92 mins.), Palais C, Stoic
- 14:00** *Bollywoof* (92 mins.), Palais I, Embankment Films Ltd
- 14:00** *In the Shadows* (117 mins.), Palais K, Altitude Film Sales / Altitude Film Entertainment
- 14:00** *Class Reunion* (101 mins.), Riviera 1, True Colours Glorious Films SRL
- 14:30** *Pan's Labyrinth* Debussy, Cannes Classics
- 15:45** *The Greater Good* (102 mins.), Lerins 2, Piperplay
- 15:45** *Sola Media Promo Reel* (110 mins.), Olympia #4 Online, Sola Media GmbH
- 15:45** *Piperplay Promo Reel* (120 mins.), Olympia #9 Online, Piperplay
- 15:45** *TrustNordisk Promo Reel* (110 mins.), Olympia 1, TrustNordisk
- 15:45** *Their Town* (80 mins.), Olympia 4, Visit Films
- 15:45** *Low Expectations* (105 mins.), Olympia 7, Salaud Morisset
- 15:45** *I See Buildings Fall Like Lightning* (109 mins.), Olympia 9, Charades
- 15:45** *Dante* (89 mins.), Palais D, Film Factory Entertainment
- 15:45** *22 Lengths* (102 mins.), Palais H, Beta Cinema
- 15:45** *Deep Communication Roots Presents* (110 mins.), Palais J, Deep Communication Roots SL
- 16:15** *Blue Lock* Arcades 2, Goodfellas
- 16:15** *Runner* (96 mins.), Lerins 1, Latido Films
- 16:15** *Barry & Me* (97 mins.), Lerins 3, The Playmaker Munich (A Brand of B.A. Produktion GmbH)
- 16:15** *Double Freedom* (100 mins.), Olympia 3, Luxbox
- 16:15** *From the Dark* (95 mins.), Olympia 6, Minerva Pictures
- 16:15** *Damned if You Do* (107 mins.), Palais C, Stoic
- 16:15** *Miss You, Love You* (120 mins.), Palais E, Architect
- 16:15** *Pretty Ugly* (87 mins.), Palais I, The Film Sales Company
- 16:15** *November 1963* (120 mins.), Palais K, K5 International GmbH
- 17:00** *Mayilaa* (111 mins.), Lerins Cinema Club, Newton Cinema
- 17:45** *Pierre the Pigeon Hawk* (75 mins.), Lerins 2, Toonz Media Group
- 17:45** *Charades Promo Loop* (105 mins.), Olympia 5, Charades
- 17:45** *Zero Ad* (120 mins.), Palais B, Angel Studios
- 18:15** *Violette* Olympia 2, StudioCanal (Fr)
- 19:00** *The Electric Kiss* (122 mins.), Lumiere, Playtime
- 20:00** *The Convent* (100 mins.), Olympia 4, Filmsharks / The Remake Co.
- 20:30** *Julian* (85 mins.), Olympia 8, New Europe Film Sales
- 23:15** *The Electric Kiss* (122 mins.), Lumiere, Playtime

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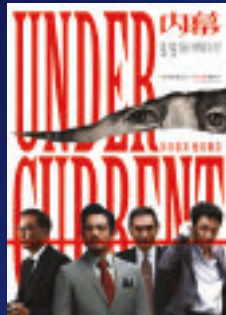
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GHOSTING

Continued from page 2

being released worldwide nine days later, on May 27. But, by this time, *Maverick* had already screened to rave reviews from the industry (it held a surprise screening for theater owners at CinemaCon that April) and the press (its world premiere was in San Diego in early May). If anything, the Cannes event, which included a fly-by from the French Air Force, was a victory lap for the film, which had already collected a month's worth of goodwill and rave reviews.

Looking at this year's release calendar, very few studio films fall close enough to Cannes to make a festival debut advantageous within a larger publicity tour. **Steven Spielberg's** *Disclosure Day* comes out weeks after Cannes' close, on June 12. Other Cannes-worthy tentpoles are even later. Disney's hotly

anticipated *Toy Story 5* comes out June 17; **Christopher Nolan's** *The Odyssey*, from Universal, hits theaters July 17 (Nolan, in any case, prefers to bypass festivals); and Warners' *Digger*, from **Alejandro G. Iñárritu** and starring **Tom Cruise**, comes out Oct. 1.

A24, the indie studio with major-studio ambitions, also appears to have gotten the memo. This is the first Cannes since the 2020 edition canceled by the pandemic that does not feature any films from the company, long a Croisette regular. Last year, A24 brought several movies to Cannes, most notably **Ari Aster's** starry competition entry *Eddington*, top-lined by **Joaquin Phoenix** and **Pedro Pascal**, which met with a muted reception and went on to underperform at the box office despite warmer reviews in the intervening months. By contrast, **Josh Safdie's** *Marty Supreme* bypassed the A-list festivals altogether,

opting for a lower-pressure New York Film Festival launch and a tightly controlled rollout, with strong critical support and a social media campaign driven by star **Timothée Chalamet** helping to turn the film into one of A24's biggest hits, with box office topping \$190 million worldwide.

Even without the promise of a box office boost, Cannes traditionally has been able to trade off its reputation as an awards predictor. For international and indie films, this is still the case. The triumphant 2025 competition premieres of **Joachim Trier's** *Sentimental Value* and **Jafar Panahi's** *It Was Just an Accident* catapulted the films all the way to the Oscars. But awards success of films like **Ryan Coogler's** *Sinners* (four Oscars) and **Paul Thomas Anderson's** *One Battle After Another* (six, including best picture), both of which ignored the festival circuit to go straight to theaters, has taught the studios a

different lesson. As one European marketing exec notes, "If you have the right film, you can make it soar without a festival."

As the majors retreat to safer, more controlled launches, the Cannes festival's center of gravity is shifting back to its roots — as a showcase for auteurs, risk-takers and the global indie sector that built its reputation long before Hollywood came calling.

"At the moment, it feels like the studio system and their theatrical approach are out of sync with the festivals," says **Mike Downey**, an exec producer on the 2026 competition titles *Parallel Tales* from **Asghar Farhadi** and **Ryūsuke Hamaguchi's** *All of a Sudden*. "But if Cannes is moving away from Hollywood a bit, it puts the spotlight back on world cinema — and for that side of the business, that's a good thing."

David Canfield and Lily Ford contributed to this report.

RON HOWARD

Continued from page 25

funny at all times, and he loved people. Avedon would go up and photograph people on the street. If we were with Jerry and in some city because of some promotional tour, he would just go up and talk to people in restaurants.

Someone in the doc points out that you can see the arc of the 20th century in Avedon's work. He was prolific [and] in demand, and that's a hell of a combination, especially in that era where magazines were the social media. That was a lot of water cooler conversation. It was television and magazines during the his era, even more than cinema. He was so tireless. Despite the fact that he destroyed thousands of negatives, he just covered a lot of ground. I relate to this, too: He used his work to satisfy his own curiosity, to explore the world, not just to eat in great restaurants or stay in nice hotels.

In the process of making *Avedon*, did you pinpoint a personal favorite image of his?



Richard Avedon with Richard Wheatcroft in Jordan, Montana, June 27, 1983 (photo by Laura Wilson).

There are so many that aren't even in the film. I really wanted the movie to be a movie. I really wanted it to work the way a movie works, as a journey. So, I had to make some decisions. But there is something about his straight humanistic portraiture, like a young Lou Alcindor, who later was Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, holding the basketball when he's 18 or 19 years old on a New York playground. I grew up loving

the movies of John Ford, and it turned out that my favorite photograph of John Ford as an old man with an eye patch was Avedon and I didn't even know.

And you, yourself, never had any run-ins with Avedon?

You know, I wasn't really going to be in the fashion magazine [world], nor was I a controversial, sociologically edgy or surprising subject. So I'm not surprised, but

I would have loved to have been in there.

I'm not sure if you saw it, but Avedon gets a shout-out in *The Devil Wears Prada 2*.

I saw that! I really enjoyed that movie.

It's a testament to his staying power in the world of fashion, and the sentiment expressed in that movie was that his work and way of working couldn't be replicated today.

It's hard to know. That's why we use that quote at the end [of the doc] where he says, "I don't even think there'll be photographers later," and that images, wherever they exist, will just be called down. But then, conversely, he turns around and says the thing that I believe, which is for human beings to feel a kind of depth or connection with an image it needs to run through the filter of an artist to give it a soul and an intention. All an all, whatever the tools that are used to generate images or capture images, I feel like authorship is going to be something that we still appreciate. **TJR**

The Organizing Committee of the 79th Cannes Film Festival "China Night" & "China Film+"

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Peter Jackson's *LOTR* Preview Rang True in Cannes

Peter Jackson will be presented with an honorary Palme d'Or at the opening night ceremony at this year's 79th edition of the Cannes Film Festival, even though he's never had a film play the fest itself. Nevertheless, he's left a lasting imprint on Cannes. Jackson has recalled first visiting the Croisette in 1988 because his first movie, *Bad Taste*, was in the marketplace. But it was his return trip in 2001 that made cinema history, when he offered the first glimpse of footage from *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*.

New Line Cinema's decision to invest more than \$270 million in three films based on the J.R.R. Tolkien classic was

considered a big gamble, if not an outright folly. But the 26 minutes of footage previewed for the press quickly silenced the naysayers. Writing in a blog he maintained at the time, Ian McKellen, who played the wizard Gandalf, wrote, "With relief and some excitement I can report that Peter Jackson's images not only look convincing, they look stunning." And then, New Line upped the hype by staging one of the most legendary of Cannes parties, high on a hill at the Château Castellaras. As described in exhaustive detail on the fan site *TheOneRing.net*, "Orcs, hobbits, elves and men were dancing wildly to French versions of 'Oh What a Night' and the latest Latin offerings.

In the back of the crowd, you could see the flicker of candles as a huge cake floated toward the front. The band played a rather strange/disturbing version of Happy Birthday, and Bilbo's cake appeared before us. We all cheered wildly and toasted our favorite hobbit."

Festival director Thierry Frémaux wasn't exaggerating

when, in announcing the honorary Palme, he said there is "clearly a before and an after Peter Jackson. Larger-than-life cinema is his trademark, and his all-encompassing art of entertainment is particularly ambitious. He has permanently transformed Hollywood cinema and its conception of the spectacle." —GREGG KILDAY

MAGIC TICKET

The toughest ticket to get in Cannes may be for the medieval-themed party held by New Line for its upcoming "Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Rings." The film is New Line's first entry in its ambitious feature-film trilogy based on the novels of J. R. R. Tolkien. The site: An unspecified castle somewhere in town. (Hmm ... near Le Suquet?) Attending the event will be co-writer and director Peter Jackson and stars Elijah Wood, Sean Astin, Sir Ian McKellen and Ian Holm. The party will follow a 20-minute screening of completed "Rings" footage, which will surely impress New Line's international partners on the project.

The *Fellowship of the Ring* director Peter Jackson (center) was flanked by stars (from left) Sean Astin, Elijah Wood, Billy Boyd and Dominic Monaghan at a party *THR* described as "the toughest ticket to get."



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