

SCREEN

DAY
4

FRIDAY, MAY 15 2026

AT CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

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DIRECTED BY AINA CLOTET



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The Sea

Coccinelle Film navigates storm to rep *The Sea*

BY TIM DAMS

Italy's Coccinelle Film Sales has acquired international rights to Shai Carmeli-Pollak's *The Sea*, which won best picture at Israel's Ophir Awards last year, prompting the country's culture minister Miki Zohar to threaten withdrawal of state funding from the awards.

The Arabic-Hebrew language film is an Israeli production led by Palestinian Israeli producer Baher Agbariya. Set between the West Bank and Israel, it tells of a boy whose dream of seeing the sea becomes an odyssey of checkpoints, borders and invisible barriers. Until now, Agbariya has been repping the film himself, with potential partners concerned by the fact the film was supported by Israel Film Fund.

"When they hear 'Israel', the first thing they want to do is boycott it, but it's about Palestinians," he said, adding the culture minister's criticism of the film had actually been "very helpful".

Menemsha Films has US rights to *The Sea*, and Maatmov handled in France. In Italy, the film was released by Mescalito Film and Pueblo Unido into 130 cinemas through a grassroots rollout combining theatrical screenings, debates connected to Gaza and the Freedom Flotilla, and activist networks.

Agbariya is now developing his next film *Midnight Rocket*, a comedy set in Haifa during the ongoing Iran-Israel war.

Pedigree packages are the pride of UK agents

BY MONA TABBARA

A critical mass of blue-chip UK packages is putting a spring in the step of UK sales agents, who are delighted to be repping the projects ahead of their ever-popular European peers at Cannes.

"Collectively, we have become more aggressive, saying, 'Hey, British-created, so a British sales agent makes sense,'" said Cornerstone Films co-president Mark Gooder, who is handling *A Waiter In Paris*, starring Leo Woodall and Clémence Poésy, and *Foxfinder*, with Tessa Thompson, Ebon Moss-Bachrach and Owen Cooper.

Further buzzy UK projects include Bankside's *Ceasefire* and

Night Swimming, HanWay's *Quest For Love* and *Becoming Capa*, Altitud's *Mars Express* and WestEnd's *Margot & Rudi*.

French sales agents are particularly popular with UK producers, buoyed by a supportive national film ecosystem that allows them to take risks on talent, tempt producers with minimum guarantees (MGs), board early and sometimes secure a Cannes spot.

UK sellers say they too bring financial participation to projects. "It's doing pre-sales; it's finding equity or gap [financing]," said Bankside's director Stephen Kelliher. "Many producers use our pre-sales to finance their films.

Pre-sales are featuring more heavily in our business model."

Gooder agreed: "UK sales have been operating at a slightly different, focused level, and that includes finding equity — private equity, commercial equity, that can come out of the UK and US."

The UK Global Screen Fund will roll out an MG fund for UK sales agents repping local projects this year and Gooder and Kelliher said the successes of *Pillion*, *I Swear* and *The Ballad Of Wallis Island* have given UK sellers a profile boost. "Certain films become really helpful in defining what risks you're prepared to take," noted Gooder.



Sandra Hüller and August Diehl at the world premiere of their Competition title *Fatherland*. See review, page 14.

Kurt Krieger

Archetypes make mischief with Evolution's *Demon*

Siblings David and Rosanna Arquette, and *Avatar* actor Jack Champion will star in horror comedy *My Boyfriend Is A Demon*, now in production in Rhode Island, US. UK-based Evolution Pictures is launching the film to international buyers this week with

first footage. It is the directorial debut of US filmmaker mishka, produced by Chad A Verdi's Verdi Productions. Ketchup Entertainment and Kinolime executive produce.

The story follows a teenager who creates an Instagram account for her

perfect but fictional boyfriend, only for him to appear and become protective of their whirlwind romance. Mattias Ferrell, Bailey Sloan, Ever Anderson, Vinnie Hacker and Josephine Reitman will round out the cast.

Ben Dalton

TODAY

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High demand but lower budgets
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FEATURES

Spain territory special
Cannes 2026 is a landmark moment for Spanish cinema
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Asia studios unite on *Long Hair In The Attic*

Japan's Toei, Thailand's M Studio and Korea's Showbox are joining forces to produce horror feature *The Long Hair In The Attic*.

Based on a Japanese manga by Junji Ito, the film will be directed by Thailand's Sitisiri Mongkolsiri, known for 2019 hit *Inhuman Kiss*. Development is underway ahead of a 2027 shoot.

The 1988 horror manga is about a heartbroken woman whose obsession with her hair leads to supernatural revenge.

The cross-border collaboration follows a co-production partnership between Toei and Showbox last November, and a pact between Toei and M Studio in February.

The alliance reflects a growing trend of intra-Asian studio partnerships aimed at creating internationally competitive features.

Matt Schley



Heysel 85

Heysel 85 sells for Salaud Morisset

Teodora Ana Mihai's *Heysel 85* has now sold to more than 40 territories for Salaud Morisset. The latest deals for the film, inspired by the Heysel Stadium football disaster, include to Germany (Arsenal), Austria (Panda Lichtspiele), France (Sooner), Hungary (CinefilCo), Indonesia (PT Falcon) and airlines (Silk Route).

The film, screening here in the market, is scheduled for release in Belgium in November through Kinopolis.

Heysel 85 is set during the European Cup final between Juventus and Liverpool, when 39 fans, primarily from Italy, were crushed to death as a wall collapsed following violent crowd disturbances.

Violet Braeckman and Matteo Simoni play the press attaché to the mayor of Brussels and a journalist caught up in the chaos.

Geoffrey Macnab

Italian duo find spirit of l'Avventura

BY REBECCA LEFFLER

Director Giacomo Abbruzzese and producer Agostino Gambino have launched the Rome-based production house and creative hub l'Avventura.

Abbruzzese, the Italian filmmaker behind *Berlinale 2023* Silver Bear-winning *Disco Boy*, and Gambino, producer and founder of Interno 9, aim to support a rising generation of Italian filmmakers.

The company's inaugural slate includes Abbruzzese's *Morr*, a feature documentary centred on the titular Morr Ndiaye, the Senegalese co-star of *Disco Boy*. It is co-produced by David Thion of France's Les Films Pelléas.

l'Avventura is housed in a historic building in Rome, bringing together screening spaces, post-production studios and an artist residency dedi-

cated to filmmakers, writers and visual artists. "We wanted to create a space where filmmakers, writers and visual artists could meet, develop projects and rethink cinema collectively," said Abbruzzese.

l'Avventura is also developing projects by emerging filmmakers, which it is shopping to international financiers and partners here at the Cannes market.

Afterlife makes Cannes glow with genre slate

BY SILVIA WONG

Indonesia's Afterlife International is in Cannes with its inaugural genre-driven slate, led by *Munafik*, *Delivery From Hell* and comedy *Agak Laen: Menyala Pantiku!*, the country's highest-grossing film of all time.

Directed by Guntur Soeharjanto, *Munafik* is a remake of the 2016 breakout Malaysian horror film of the same name. Produced by Oswin Bonifanz of Unlimited Production, it is about a healer who is drawn into a supernatural case linked to the hypocrisy behind religious appearances and has to choose between surrendering to the darkness or saving lives.



Afterlife International

(From left) Delivery From Hell and Munafik

The cast includes Arya Saloka, Acha Septriasa, Donny Damara and Muhammad Faqih Alaydrus.

Delivery From Hell (*Paket Santet*) features an original story from female director Dinna Jasanti, who transitions from drama to horror. The youth-driven story is about a

deadly chain of events sparked by a mysterious package that leaves the young sibling of a college student in a coma.

It is produced by Shanty Harmayn of Base Entertainment. The cast includes Fatih Unru, Yasamin Jasem, Azela Putri and Fadly Faisal. Like *Munafik*, it is scheduled for a Q4 release.

CROISSETTE CONFIDENTIAL

Cannes has been abuzz with news of a collapsed platform at a Wednesday drinks event — and the man who inadvertently recreated Cannes 2014 title *Force Majeure* by dropping his girlfriend's hand while leaping off the platform to save himself.

Ira Sachs is in conversation with Rami Malek as part of... Kering's Women in Motion talks programme. Fair enough. It can't be easy to find women filmmakers in Cannes.

One (lucky) producer was shocked when he shared a dinner generously paid for by his host in Cannes. Catching sight of the bill, he discovered the wine he had quaffed — rather too quickly in hindsight — had a punchy €1,000 price tag.

Mark Rylance has been spotted eating pizza in a casual establishment by the port. The actor is in town to talk about his directorial debut *Nice Fish*.

SETH ROGEN WATCH

In the lift at the Majestic hotel, on his way to the premiere of *Tangles*, the animation directed and produced by his wife Lauren Miller Rogen, on which he is also a producer. A group of gawping festival delegates were far less discreet than practised Screen Rogen-watchers and were sternly rebuked by their boss.

Airline buyers seek indies to woo high-flyers

BY MONA TABBARA

Airline buyers are in Cannes looking for indie films despite budget challenges and stiff competition for passenger attention from on-board high-speed internet connections.

"Airlines like to support the indie market," said Simon Cuthbert, vice-president of content licensing and distribution at Anuvu, who sells into airlines including British Airways, Delta Airlines and Air France.

Anuvu releases around 20 to 30 titles each month across its

roster, including three Hollywood English-language films, six to 10 Asian films, a few European, Latin American and international films, plus TV, classic libraries and a couple of docs each month. Regular partners are A24, Pathé and Lionsgate.

However, budgets have remained under pressure since Covid. "An airline may have had a \$10m [per year] budget. Now we're lucky if they're spending \$3 to \$5m," said Cuthbert.

Further airline buyers in the indie market include Terry

Steiner International, Aardwolf, Horizon and Skeye.

Paul Poste, a San Diego-based partner at Captive Entertainment, says his company picks up about a dozen films at all the key markets, as well as on an almost weekly basis between markets, with Emirates a key client. But the challenging presales market is having an impact on airline acquisitions.

"A lot of films that are being pitched, the sales agents aren't able to lock in sales in France, Italy, Germany and Spain," he

said. "We count on dubs from those territories. It's challenging right now. Hopefully AI will become good enough that we can use it for subtitling or dubbing, but it's not there."

Romantic comedies, musicals and comedies perform best at 30,000 feet. "Airline audiences, particularly at the front of the cabin, skew a bit older, maybe people who don't go to the cinema regularly, but they're an airline's most vocal and important customer," said Cuthbert. "We need to serve that demographic

in a way that maybe the major studios, or at least their big theatrical titles, don't."

Excessive nudity and horror films do not work well on flights. "The last thing a flight attendant needs is someone jumping in their seat or screaming," added Poste.

Airlines are also becoming more flexible in their release schedules for in-flight content. Previously, choices were updated on a fixed monthly cycle but many are now moving towards a weekly or daily cycle.

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Ron Scalpello deploys UK Special Forces

BY BEN DALTON

UK filmmaker Ron Scalpello has signed on to direct *Deployed: Colombia*, the first film in a proposed series adapted from Andy McNab's Liam Scott novels.

Debbie Mason is producing for the UK's MasonMedia-Matrix, which holds rights to the novels. Circus Studios will executive produce and handle international sales.

The film will follow Scott, a British Army soldier deployed to Colombia, who becomes immersed in a dangerous conflict alongside UK Special Forces and international operatives fighting the war on drugs.

Kino Świat makes push into production

BY TIM DAMS

Dorota Eberhardt, the new CEO of Poland's Kino Świat, part of the Canal+ group, is in Cannes to talk to partners for the company's push into production and acquire festival and market films for distribution.

As local films garner an increasing share of the box office (up to 27% in 2025) Eberhardt estimated Kino Świat will

invest in two to four productions a year, with a focus on projects with recognised IP or known talent. A number of projects are already in development with third party co-producers as well as with Canal+ Poland's in-house production team.

As a distributor, Kino Świat acquires around 10 Polish movies a year, and distributes a further 10 from Studiocanal. Ten

more are international acquisitions, spanning commercially focused action, drama and family through to festival films such as Pawel Pawlikowski's Competition title *Fatherland*.

At Cannes, Kino Świat has acquired FilmNation's *I Play Rocky*. "It's one of these stories which defies clear genre and that's what makes it special," says Eberhardt.

Sergi Lopez signs on for Sergi Perez's Memorial

BY ELISABET CABEZA

Catalan actor Sergi Lopez, the star of Oliver Laxe's *Sirát* and Alberto Morais' *La Terra Negra*, is set to star in *Memorial*, the second feature by Sergi Perez.

Edna Cinema, Sumendi Filmak and BTeam Prods in Spain are producing with Belgium's

Scope Pictures and France's Noodles Production.

Memorial is about an art curator working at Madrid's Prado Museum, in mourning for his husband who worked as a restorer at the facility. Family secrets are uncovered when his daughter comes to visit.

Financing is from the Spanish and Catalan film bodies ICAA and ICEC, with support from Filmin and HBO Max, and Catalan public TV 3Cat.

Shooting is set to start in September in Barcelona, the south of France and Madrid, including the Prado Museum.

Jack Farthing takes on Glenn Gould Lovers

UK actor Jack Farthing has signed to star in Andy Sommer's *Glenn Gould Lovers* (working title), which has been boarded by France tv distribution.

The English-language biopic about the Canadian pianist Gould is being produced by Luxembourg's Amour Fou, Germany's Amalia Film and France's Eddy Cinéma. Sophie Mousel, David Kross and Jonathan Zaccari round out the international cast.

The film tracks Gould's journey from making the radical decision in the 1960s to abandon concert halls at the peak of his career and connecting with an enigmatic photographer as the boundaries between music and emotion begin to blur.

Glenn Gould Lovers is Sommer's debut fiction feature.

Rebecca Leffler

'Give them more than what they want'

Australia's Sasha Hadden hopes to repeat the success of his first film with *Frozen Assets'* cracking good yarn

BY SANDY GEORGE

A Stitch In Time, the self-financed debut film by Australian writer/director/producer Sasha Hadden, won the 2022 AACTA Award for best independent film, been acquired by Madman Entertainment, occupied a top 10 film spot on Netflix Australia for two weeks and scored a 100% rating on Rotten Tomatoes.

Now Hadden is taking the lessons he learned from making that film, and is in Cannes to find partners for his follow-up comedy drama *Frozen Assets*.

"Tell a good story for an audience and give them more than what they want," he says of his laser focus on the audi-

ence. "People pay for tickets, get dressed up and give your film a chance. Their time is so precious and they're desperately looking for things to inspire or distract. Give them more than what they want."

Co-written with China-born Australia-based Timothy Zhang, the film is inspired by true events as a Chinese student in Sydney introduces his Australian partner to his wealthy Shenzhen parents, only to meet with extreme disapproval.

Marc Wooldridge's Maslow Entertainment has already acquired Australian rights and Screen Australia has supported development. It will shoot in English, Mandarin, Cantonese and Teochew.



Sasha Hadden with veteran cinematographer Don McAlpine

Hadden is working with veteran cinematographer Don McAlpine, who he met in 1993 on the set of *The Man Without A Face* when Had-

den was a camera intern in his department.

They are planning to shoot in both countries, and Hong Kong production designer

Siu Hong Cheung has already begun location scouting with Hadden.

It will probably be the last film for McAlpine, now aged 92, but the first one on which he will use an Arri Alexa 265 camera, a decision made when there were only about 30 in the world.

"A lot of films feel small and this 65mm camera is used to shoot Imax films," says Hadden. "There's a big look to the footage. It's an emotional experience."

During Cannes, Hadden is participating in the Producers Network. "It's speed dating," he says of the programme. "You meet lots of people. It's about being strategic in order to make a genuinely great film."

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EXPOSURE

Trino plans to take African films global

Uche Okocha wants to bolster the company's international sales and meet Brazilian, UK and Canadian partners

BY MONA TABBARA

Uche Okocha and Babatunwa Aderinokun's Nigerian studio Trino Motion Pictures is celebrating its 10th anniversary by attending Cannes with a fresh remit that sees it add international sales to its production and distribution activities.

The sales slate currently stands at around 16 films, with in-house productions including Daniel Oriahe's Tribeca and BFI London Film Festival thriller *The Weekend*, which has sold to HBO Max in Eastern Europe and Canal+ for 60 French-speaking territories.

"We had no idea [Eastern Europe] would be interested in African films until we saw the offer," says Okocha of

The Weekend's Eastern European deal.

The company also has acquisitions such as Grace Yakubu's *Aljana*, Nwamaka Chikezie's *To Adaego With Love* and Soji Ogunnaike's *Dead Tide*.

Okocha, co-founder and managing director of Trino, is hoping to bolster the studio's international relationships. The US streamers' retreat from the African market, after a short-lived boom, has propelled Trino's shift into international sales. "It's a necessity," he notes.

Trino is also releasing select titles through Kava, a burgeoning streaming platform for African content that was founded last summer by Nigeria's Filmhouse Group and Inkblot Studios. Titles include



Uche Okocha

Lyndsey Efejuku's *The One For Sarah* and *Love Lockdown*.

While most of its international deals to-date have been for VoD, Okocha is keen to increase its theatrical output. "We've done theatrical in the past, mainly West Africa," he

explains. "In theatrical distribution, we've seen that there's a growing appetite in the UK for Nigerian films, and that's something we're exploring. There's also a growing appetite in Canada as well, and we're discussing with distributors in that territory."

Okocha is particularly interested in connecting with the Brazilian industry while at Cannes. "We understand there is a decent Yoruba community that lives in Brazil," he says. "We are looking at co-production opportunities as well. We have titles we believe will be great to adapt to other territories."

A barrier to co-production in the past has been a lack of tax incentives in Nigeria. Could that change? "I understand

that's been on the agenda of the Federal Ministry of Art, Culture, Tourism and the Creative Economy," notes Okocha. "It hasn't happened yet, but it would be great to have that. It's something I look forward to maybe happening in the next three or five years."

Okocha and Aderinokun co-founded the Lagos company in 2016. "We wanted to produce African stories that are globally exportable, and showcase Africa for its authenticity," says Okocha. "Tell our stories in the right way. That has not changed in 10 years."

"What has changed is distribution, the quality in African storytelling, production, streamers and the entire Nigerian film and TV landscape."

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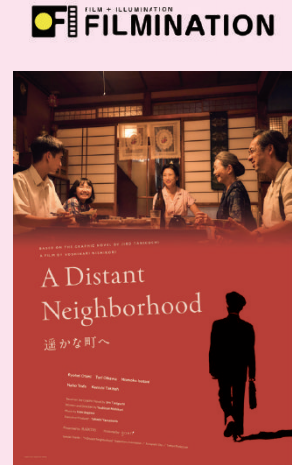
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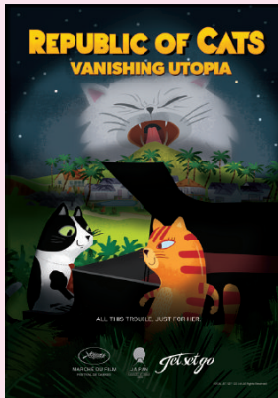
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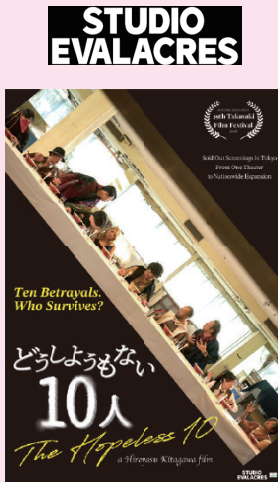
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'Risk-aversity contributes to my longevity'

Clay Epstein's US sales outfit Film Mode is primed for action as it celebrates 10 years since launching in Cannes

BY JEREMY KAY

Film Mode president Clay Epstein arrives on the Croisette with a slate led by projects starring UK martial arts ace Scott Adkins and *Stranger Things* actress Grace Van Dien, feeling as positive about the business as he did when he founded the company 10 years ago.

"My risk-aversity has contributed to my longevity," says the Los Angeles native, who started out answering phones at The Kushner-Locke Company in 1999 before working in operations at First Look Media and graduating to senior sales roles at The Little Film Company and Arlight Films.

Epstein launched Film Mode at Cannes in 2016 with the help of his wife and COO Mathilde

Epstein, bringing an inaugural slate to the French Riviera that included Catherine Keener drama *Little Pink House* and 2016 thriller *Sugar Mountain*, when Jason Momoa was on the cusp of superstardom as DC's Aquaman. "I went in pretty strong and buyers and producers were supportive."

This year Epstein and a team that includes director of worldwide sales Charlotte Mott and worldwide sales and acquisitions co-ordinator Henry Finer will engage buyers on siege thriller *Deadlocked* starring Adkins; crime film *Beg The Devil* with Brenton Thwaites, Van Dien, Emile Hirsch and Ron Perlman; and superhero film *Legend Of The White Dragon*, among others.



Film Mode's Clay Epstein

Epstein cut his teeth licensing a large part of the world to Sony on the 2014 SXSW Ethan Hawke sci-fi *Predestination* as SVP of sales and acquisitions at Arlight. He also closed territories on titles including 2009 Telluride drama *The Last Station* with Helen Mirren, as VP of worldwide sales and acquisi-

tions for his mentor Robbie Little at The Little Film Company.

Film Mode accelerated growth in the early 2020s when Epstein represented the Screen Media catalogue, and pivoted in the no-travel pandemic years, sending buyers pre-recorded interviews from talent such as *Stage Mother* stars Jacki Weaver and Lucy Liu, produced by regular collaborator J Todd Harris.

Flexibility is key. Besides a heavy load of pre-sales, Epstein will source equity funders, and invested in development costs to support 2025 martial-arts thriller *Diablo* starring Adkins. He recently closed a PVoD deal with Prime Video in the UK on Tom Felton sci-fi *Altered* (which debuted May 11) and

retains rights to sell to subsequent buyers after the window.

Film Mode works across all genres and will function as executive producer. "That can mean creative input, financial, or both," says Epstein, who advises on script notes and cast value, and brings on lenders to plug a budget gap. "We like to stay involved so the end result is a film the marketplace is happy with."

Despite the often rocky road of the independent business, Epstein remains upbeat and focused. "Distributors and consumers are sophisticated... When we all say the business is tough, it means the business is tough for selling films that are mediocre or not exactly what the marketplace wants."

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‘I still get nervous every time I premiere a film in Cannes. It can be a tough crowd’

A Palme d'Or winner in 2018, Japanese filmmaker Hirokazu Koreeda is back in Competition for the eighth time with AI-inspired *Sheep In The Box*

Hirokazu Koreeda has a long history with Cannes. His latest film *Sheep In The Box* will be the Japanese auteur's eighth feature to play in Competition at the festival. Previous entries include *Like Father, Like Son*, which won the jury prize in 2013; *Shoplifters*, which took home the Palme d'Or in 2018; and *Monster*, which won the Queer Palm and best screenplay award in 2023.

Sheep In The Box stars Haruka Ayase, one of Japan's most popular actresses, alongside comedian Daigo Yamamoto as parents who work through the grief of losing their young son by adopting a humanoid robot — played by Rimu Kuwaki — built using his appearance and memories. The film has its Grand Theatre Lumiere premiere tomorrow (May 16).

What inspired you to write and direct *Sheep In The Box*?

It started with an article I read about a business in China that was gaining popularity for “resurrecting” the dead [using AI]. Looking back, I realised that similar initiatives were already emerging in Japan. For example, there was an experiment where the voice of a late Japanese singer was used to perform new songs. As I observed these initiatives involving the deceased, I found myself asking why they were giving me a sense of unease.

There are parallels to films like Steven Spielberg's *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* and your own *Air Doll*. From what books or films did you take inspiration?

I'm interested in the subject, so of course I'd seen Spielberg's film,



Hirokazu Koreeda's *Sheep In The Box*



‘This film posits that once robots surpass humans, there will be no need for them to dominate us’

Hirokazu Koreeda

and more recently read the novel *Machines Like Me* [by Ian McEwan], but I wouldn't consider them direct inspirations. My focus was on the main couple's grieving process. The central question was how to delve deeper into that.

It feels like a more positive take on AI and robots as compared to films like *The Terminator*.

In the west, there's a deeply ingrained fear that humans might end up being dominated by the very things they create. But in Japan, since we are exposed to manga like *Astro Boy* and *Doraemon* from a young age, we probably have less of a sense of danger regarding such things. This film posits that once robots surpass humans, there will be no need for them to dominate us.

I suspect they might lose interest in humans altogether, like when children grow up and surpass their parents. Though that might be even more depressing, depending on how you look at it.

Can you talk about reuniting with Haruka Ayase and casting comedian Daigo Yamamoto in his first major film role.

It's been a while since [Ayase and I] have done a full-length film together, but we've done some live readings and commercials in the meantime, so we've seen each other regularly. *Sheep In The Box* was conceived with her in mind. Daigo has a very human quality about him — it's rare to find Japanese actors with that kind of face these days. Watching him on TV, I had a gut feeling he would be good.

I wanted to explore how two different elements can coexist — much like the combination of glass and wood in the architecture in the film. In that sense, I chose them because, when placed side by side, they created a striking contrast.

What does Cannes mean to you?

It's been 25 years since I first went to Cannes [with 2001's *Distance*], which is almost my entire filmmaking career, so I'm grateful to

be able to hold the world premiere there. It's a precious experience, and I have nothing but gratitude. I still get nervous every time, though. It can be a tough crowd.

Japan had a record year at the box office in 2025, but non-franchise films are having a tougher time breaking through. What are your thoughts on the state of the industry?

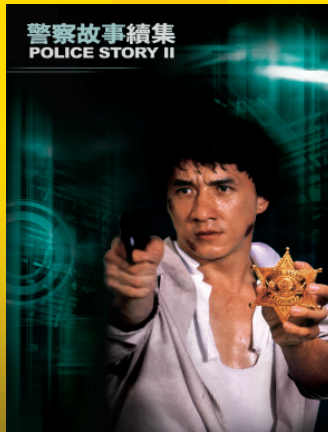
Original, auteur-led projects rarely come to fruition, and when they do, they end up being very small-scale. I've long wanted to change that situation, so my top priority as a director is to ensure we can bring such projects into being and establish a solid production infrastructure.

The fact the Japanese box office has made such a strong recovery after the pandemic is remarkable. While we're in this period of strong performance, I believe the industry should consider what steps it could take with an eye towards the next 10 or 20 years. **S**

Interview by Matt Schley

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Fatherland

REVIEWED BY JONATHAN ROMNEY

COMPETITION

Pol-Ger-It-Fr.
2026. 82mins

Director Pawel Pawlikowski

Production companies
Our Films, Extreme Emotions,
Nine Hours, Chapter 2

International sales
The Match Factory

Producers Mario
Gianani, Lorenzo Mieli,
Ewa Puszczyńska, Jeanne
Tremzal, Edward Berger,
Dimitri Rassam, Lorenzo
Gangarossa

Screenplay Pawel
Pawlikowski, Henk
Handloegten

Production design
Katarzyna Sobanska,
Marcel Slawinski

Editing Pawel Pawlikowski,
Piotr Wojcik

Cinematography
Lukasz Zal

Music Marcin Masecki

Main cast Sandra Hüller,
Hanns Zischler, August
Diehl, Devid Striesow

In period drama *Fatherland*, Polish writer/director Pawel Pawlikowski achieves a film that, in essence, is impressively heavyweight, yet is executed with rare lightness. The story revolves around a figure who could hardly be more daunting: Nobel-winning German writer Thomas Mann, author of *The Magic Mountain*, *Death In Venice* et al. But he is here seen alongside his daughter and assistant Erika Mann (Sandra Hüller), whose presence — supportive but critically challenging — chips away at the lofty monolith that he represents.

With a finely honed script that gives due regard to matters political, historical and literary, this quietly intense piece may come across as a somewhat specialised affair compared with Pawlikowski's more immediately accessible *Ida* and *Cold War*. But the ever-compelling presence of Hüller, just a few months after her Berlin Silver Bear win for period drama *Rose*, should boost its wider appeal.

A slow-burning long-take prelude shows Mann's novelist son Klaus Mann (August Diehl) in his bedroom in Cannes in a state of undress and despair, on the phone to sister Erika. We then briefly see

Erika in Los Angeles, where she and her father now live — the Great Man hidden for now behind his study door.

The main action takes place in Germany 1949, with Thomas and Erika returning to the old country. They arrive in Frankfurt, in the newly demarcated West, where Mann (Hanns Zischler) is to be awarded the prestigious Goethe Prize. At celebrations in a hotel's swanky marble halls, everyone wants a piece of the maestro (international journalists, the CIA, the grandsons of composer Richard Wagner), while Erika has a brittle encounter with her ex-husband, actor Gustaf Gründgens (Joachim Meyerhoff), a darling of the Nazi regime and the inspiration for Klaus's novel *Mephisto*.

During their visit, father and daughter receive earth-shattering news — but, to Erika's dismay, Thomas retains a stern, august exterior and insists on continuing with their planned trip to Weimar in the East, associated with the Romantic poet Goethe. There they are welcomed by writer Johannes Becher (Devid Striesow), an enthusiastic supporter of the new Soviet-run order, and by a solemn, military-dominated audience, as Mann delivers a speech on, among other themes, Goethe's conception of love.

Pawlikowski and co-screenwriter Henk Handloegten (*Paul Is Dead*, TV series *Babylon Berlin*) deliver a highly literate, thematically dense script packed with cultural references (art, poetry, music). *Fatherland* is also immersively evocative, genuinely making us feel as if we are visiting the two Germans in 1949. DoP Lukasz Zal shoots in black-and-white Academy ratio, in a signature style that makes *Fatherland* very much of a piece with *Ida* and *Cold War*. The visuals evoke parallels and contrasts, as well as giving weight to spaces and textures: a montage of moss-covered statues, the ruined church where the film reaches a subtly cathartic conclusion.

Zischler gives Mann a central core of tragic awareness, as a man who protects his emotions under a carapace of Olympian gravitas, while Hüller gives another exceptional performance. Her Erika — herself a writer, actress and accomplished war correspondent — here seems to play subservient factotum to her father, but reveals flashes of anger and ironic humour, and increasingly tests him with both devotion and defiance.

SCREEN SCORE ★★★★★



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Parallel Tales

REVIEWED BY TIM GRIERSON

COMPETITION

Fr-Belg-It. 2026.
141mins

Director Asghar Farhadi

Production company
Memento

International sales
Charades

Producers Alexandre Mallet-Guy, Asghar Farhadi, David Levine

Screenplay
Asghar Farhadi and Saeed Farhadi, based on *Dekalog 6* written by Krzysztof Piesiewicz and Krzysztof Kieslowski

Production design
Emmanuelle Duplay

Editing
Hayedeh Safiyari

Cinematography
Guillaume Deyffontaines

Music Zbigniew Preisner

Main cast Isabelle Huppert, Virginie Efira, Vincent Cassel, Pierre Niney, Adam Bessa, India Hair, Catherine Deneuve

SCREEN SCORE



Art and life are in conversation in *Parallel Tales*, an intriguing but ultimately frustrating exploration of the mysteries of storytelling. Loosely basing his film on the sixth chapter of Krzysztof Kieslowski's 1989 Polish miniseries *Dekalog* — the one associated with the Commandment against adultery — director Asghar Farhadi casts Isabelle Huppert as a novelist inspired by the neighbours on whom she spies, inventing a drama that, at least initially, is far more compelling than their actual lives. The Iranian filmmaker nods to the late Polish auteur's humanist sensibility, but this riff on love and theft is merely superficially clever.

Farhadi's fifth film to screen in Competition boasts several marquee names alongside Huppert, including Virginie Efira and Vincent Cassel. *Parallel Tales* opened in France on the day of its Cannes premiere, and international buyers will likely be attracted to this star-laden project, even if reviews may not be as glowing as for Farhadi's past pictures.

Ageing author Sylvie (Huppert) stares out the window of her Paris apartment, entranced by a stranger she has named 'Anna' (Efira) who works at a nearby sound-effects studio. The writer has also invented names for the co-workers of 'Anna', and is developing a novel about a deadly love triangle in which 'Anna' is

dating 'Christophe' (Pierre Niney) while having an affair with married boss 'Pierre' (Cassel). When Sylvie hires friendly young ex-con Adam (Adam Bessa) to help her move out of her place, he steals her now-abandoned novel, becomes obsessed with the book's characters and conspires to meet them in real life.

Kieslowski crafted narratives in which disparate individuals intersect unexpectedly, and *Parallel Tales* feels like Farhadi's tip of the cap to the filmmaker as, eventually, the sound-effects employees learn they are the unwitting protagonists of a novel. But Sylvie's fantasy of their lives is juicier than what is really going on: 'Anna' is actually Nita, who is dating her boss Nicolas (Sylvie's 'Pierre'), whose brother Theo (aka 'Christophe') is happily married.

The plot kicks into gear once Adam moonily pursues — some might say stalks — Nita. Adam went to prison for pickpocketing, so it is fitting he has essentially stolen Sylvie's work, approaching Nita under the pretence he wrote the book. But rather than being entranced by Adam's writing, Nita is disturbed by what the novel insinuates about the affairs going on between her and her co-workers. Concerned, Nita shows the book to Nicolas and Theo, which creates tension between all three of them.

Parallel Tales dramatises scenes from Sylvie's novel as Efira, Cassel and Niney

play heightened versions of the people we meet later. Farhadi gives these sequences a page-turning pulpiness, arguing that the mundanity of life rarely reflects fiction's potboiler intrigue. But once the film sets aside the novel's plotline, Nita, Nicolas and Theo find themselves stumbling into their own version of Sylvie's speculative romantic drama.

This is potentially rich subject matter, with the film's characters looking longingly at either other people's lives or inventing scenarios. And, of course, *Parallel Tales* is itself a film based on a film. Farhadi, who has tended to explore darker narrative terrain, for once seems to be savouring the simple pleasures of storytelling. Farhadi was himself accused of plagiarism in 2022 — for which he was acquitted by an Iranian court — and the picture's new references to ideas theft could be seen as a wry commentary on that scandal.

But that pleasure is only intermittently experienced by the audience, who must contend with a convoluted and unrealistic plot. Too often, characters operate like chess pieces pushed around as tidy coincidences and pseudo-ironic twists pile up. Farhadi's light-hearted approach undercuts the performances. And when the film shifts tones near the end to unveil an unsettling surprise, its confectionary construction cannot bear the jolt.

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Teenage Sex And Death At Camp Miasma

UN CERTAIN REGARD

US-Can. 2026. 112mins

Director/screenplay
Jane Schoenbrun

Production companies
Plan B, Mubi

International sales
The Match Factory

Producers Dede Gardner,
Jeremy Kleiner

Production design
Brandon Tonner-Connolly,
Matt Hyland

Editing Graham Mason

Cinematography
Eric K Yue

Music Alex G

Main cast Hannah Einbinder, Gillian Anderson, Amanda Fix, Arthur Conti, Eva Victor, Zach Cherry, Sarah Sherman, Patrick Fischler, Dylan Baker, Jasmin Savoy Brown, Quintessa Swindell, Kevin McDonald, Jack Haven

REVIEWED BY TIM GRIERSON

Sex and death have long gone hand-in-bloody-hand in slasher films, but Jane Schoenbrun takes the trope to audacious new extremes in *Teenage Sex And Death At Camp Miasma*. Equally mocking, celebrating and paying tribute to the oft-derided genre, the writer/director of *I Saw The TV Glow* fashions a twisty psychodrama out of a killer premise: a Sundance wunderkind is hired to reboot an ageing horror franchise, seeking out the reclusive actress who played the original final girl. An ambitious meta-satire about Hollywood, IP, hacky horror, gender and sexual identity, *Teenage Sex And Death* cannot help to misstep occasionally, but the rush of ideas and the confidence of the filmmaking never waver.

Schoenbrun makes their Cannes debut with *Teenage Sex And Death*, which opened Un Certain Regard and will release in the US in early August through Mubi. Much like 2024's *I Saw The TV Glow*, their new film taps into the joys and dangers of pop-culture worship, but this follow-up boasts the star power of *Hacks* actress Hannah Einbinder and Gillian Anderson, which should help *Teenage Sex And Death* outperform *I Saw The TV Glow*'s \$5.4m worldwide gross.

After earning kudos for her super-indie breakout film, 29-year-old direc-

tor Kris (Einbinder) has been tapped to revive the moribund *Camp Miasma* franchise. A massive fan of the series, she decides she must cast Billy (Anderson), who was the iconic final girl from the 1990s original before abandoning the spotlight. Visiting Billy's house in the isolated snowy woods, Kris tries to sell the actress on returning to the IP that made her famous.

Teenage Sex And Death niftily captures the trashy aesthetic of bygone slasher films through Eric K Yue's intentionally low-grade cinematography and Alex G's cheekily cheesy synth score. Schoenbrun shows us plenty of the original *Camp Miasma* — Amanda Fix plays Billy in these sequences — while also adorning the present-day story with the stylistic, sometimes campy trappings of no-budget horror. The effect is properly disorienting, making Kris's quest to recruit Billy suitably treacherous as she simultaneously navigates the fraught landscape of nitwit Hollywood executives who want to ensure her *Camp Miasma* will not be too artsy.

Einbinder envisions Kris as a pretentious, socially awkward lesbian who knows more about movies than real life. She will get an education from Billy, who Anderson portrays with seductive eyes and an amusing Southern accent. Living in the former camp where the original *Camp Miasma* was shot, the

decidedly eccentric Billy enjoys teasing this younger woman about whether she is a Norma Desmond-like diva who has lost her grip on sanity. At the same time, a growing attraction develops between them, their steamy courtship paired with the *Camp Miasma* franchise's history of kill scenes connected to nubile teenagers having sex. (That the killer is called Little Death is no accident.)

Schoenbrun takes aim at myriad targets, but *Teenage Sex And Death* is strongest when the writer/director investigates how horror impacts young viewers, shaping (and often warping) their worldview in the process. Schoenbrun measures the cost for someone like Kris, who possesses little understanding of sex and desire beyond what she has encountered in slasher films. Ultimately, *Teenage Sex And Death* proves to be a kinky, hallucinatory coming-of-age story.

Featuring references to *The Shining*, *Psycho* and *Friday The 13th*, the film also attempts to be a slasher pic in its own right, albeit one whose gratuitous gore is designed to provoke laughs. But these sequences are less rewarding than the nervy psychological terror Schoenbrun mines as Kris begins to unravel mentally.

Not unlike in their 2021 breakthrough *We're All Going To The World's Fair*, Schoenbrun here puts us marvellously into the fracturing mindset of their main character.

WHO'S NEXT?



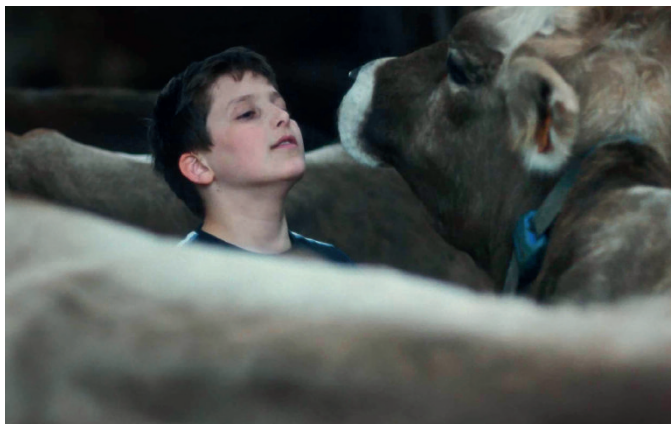
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Best Director
Special Jury
Best Actor
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Gabin

REVIEWED BY LEE MARSHALL

The Artois is an economically distressed region of farmland and decommissioned coal mines in the northeast corner of France. Here lives Gabin, the sensitive, articulate son of a butcher father and a farmer mother. Over the course of Maxence Voiseux's absorbing debut documentary, we see him grow from dreamy eight-year-old to a young man of 18 who is finally ready to fly the nest — which, like many of the places we all grew up in, is shown to be both a comfort zone and a source of anxiety.

Gabin is remarkable both for its immediacy and feel for story. Ten years of on-off filming are condensed into a real-life *Boyhood*, a coming-of-age drama that is as much about a place, time and society as it is about its titular protagonist. One for patient, attentive audiences, *Gabin* has a strong cinematic resonance, but may be confined to specialist documentary circuits outside of French-speaking territories following its premiere in Directors' Fortnight.

The film has only three protagonists: the boy, father Dominique and mother Patricia, who are joined by a few minor characters. It is set in a horizontal agricultural landscape whose ruler-straight skyline is broken only by two sky-piercing edifices: one a ruined church, the other a concrete 1950s communications tower. Gabin and his parents live in a village that appears to be strung out along a single street. That's a handy metaphor, perhaps, for the narrow prospects of anyone growing up here.

The gruff, irascible Dominique certainly assumes there is only one route his youngest son can follow: to become his apprentice and inherit the butcher's shop. As he tells Gabin during a nighttime van journey, if his son does not join the business then he will just burn it down. Indeed, *Gabin* feeds into the current debate about how challenging it is to be a young man today, caught between outdated gender norms and questionable paternal role models.

With its lyrical, breathy musical soundtrack by Nicolas Rabaeus, *Gabin* often feels like the most spontaneous of scripted movies. Is this a trick of the fluid editing or is it because, when you are followed by a camera for so many years, you begin to play a character and write your own story? The way the film raises the question is all part of its delicate appeal.

DIRECTORS' FORTNIGHT

Fr-Ger-Switz. 2026. 105mins

Director Maxence Voiseux

Production company Alter Ego Production

International sales Lightdox

Producers Cécile Lestrade, Élise Hug

Editing Pascale Hannover, Natali Barrey

Cinematography Francois Chambe, Martin Roux

Music Nicolas Rabaeus

The Meltdown

REVIEWED BY WENDY IDE

Chile, 1992. Lonely and isolated in the Andean ski resort run by her grandparents, nine-year-old Ines (Maya O'Rourke) forms puppyish attachments to chosen guests and staff; her latest crush is 15-year-old German skier Hanna (Maia Rae Domagala). When Hanna disappears, Ines bears witness to the uncomfortable secrets uncovered during the search. The atmospheric second feature from director Manuela Martelli uses a child's loss of innocence as an allegory for Chile's reckoning in the post-Pinochet era.

The 17 years spent under the military dictatorship has provided a rich source of inspiration for Chilean filmmakers, from Martelli's own debut picture *Chile '76* to Pablo Larrain's *No* and Juan Pablo Sallato's Berlinale premiere *The Red Hangar*. Far fewer films delve into the immediate aftermath of the dictatorship, a period in which Chile was rebranding itself while still bearing the scars of Pinochet's brutal rule. This distinctive perspective should make this an eye-catching title following its premiere in Un Certain Regard.

Ines's parents are part of the team behind the Chilean pavilion at the Universal Exposition of Seville, the centrepiece of which is an iceberg that has been transported from Antarctic waters to Spain. It is a source of considerable national pride, but the inadvertent symbolic implications of a country proudly displaying a chunk of ice could hardly be clearer. Ice is impermanent and unstable — when it melts, its secrets are revealed. Chile's commercial future depends on glossing over some of the less palatable details of its recent past. When Hanna vanishes, it becomes clear that Ines's family have learned not to ask difficult questions.

Benjamin Echazarreta's handsome cinematography captures the striking winter landscapes but also makes effective use of the interiors — Ines is frequently caught in reflections, her child's eye only just beginning to comprehend that something is very wrong. Elsewhere, the sense of threat is more overt, with a score that opens with scraping discordant strings and builds to a tortured scream of violin-based panic.

While *The Meltdown* will probably be most rewarding to audiences familiar with the specifics of this particular moment in Chile's history, it is a strong sophomore picture from Martelli that further confirms her as a talent to watch.

UN CERTAIN REGARD

Chile-US-Sp-Mex. 2026. 108mins

Director/screenplay Manuela Martelli

Production companies Ronda Cine, Cinema Inutile, Wood Producciones

International sales Losange Films

Producers Alejandra Garcia, Alex C Lo, Andres Wood

Production design Nohemi Gonzalez

Editing Yibrán Asuad

Cinematography Benjamin Echazarreta

Music Maria Portugal

Main cast Maya O'Rourke, Saskia Rosendahl, Maia Rae Domagala, Jakub Gierszal, Paulina Urrutia, Mauricio Pesutic, Lautaro Cantillana, Paula Zúñiga, Roberto Farias, Daniela Pino, Luis Uribe, Marcela Salinas

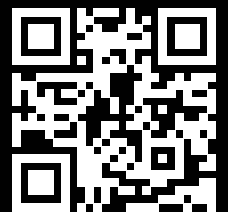




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Growth industry

In the space of 15 months, John Gore Studios has financed six films and acquired a slew of UK companies in a bid to build a vertically integrated UK studio. Its founder John Gore and CEO Hilary Strong tell Tim Dams about their £100m bet on the UK film and TV industry

Theatre impresario John Gore — who has backed hit stage shows such as *Hamilton* and *The Book Of Mormon* — was sitting next to Joan Collins at a King's Trust dinner in late 2023 when the legendary British actress pitched him a film project. It was a story, ironically given the setting, about Wallis Simpson, the US divorcee whose marriage to King Edward VIII sparked a crisis for the UK monarchy. But this project, written for Collins by Louise Fennell, focused on Simpson's final years when a coercive French lawyer took control of her life, cutting her off from friends and family.

Fast forward to Cannes 2026 and *My Duchess*, directed by Mike Newell and starring Collins as Simpson alongside Isabella Rossellini, will have its market premiere, with Embankment Films handling sales. "I feel that it's the performance of her life," says Gore, who agreed to fully fund the movie after meeting Collins at the dinner.

The story illustrates the speed at which Gore works, and the kind of projects he backs. *My Duchess* is one of six UK films featuring high-profile talent that he has bankrolled and produced since launching London-based John Gore Studios in January 2025 (see sidebar, page 35). At the same time, John Gore Studios has been on an acquisition spree, buying a string of established UK companies — spanning production, IP, distribution and sales — with the ambition of building a vertically integrated film and TV studio operation (see sidebar, left).

In total, Gore says he has invested \$135m (£100m) so far on building up John Gore Studios. At a time when many companies are reining in spend on film and TV, the creation of a new studio business is a significant shot in the arm for the UK industry.

As John Gore Studios brings its film projects to Cannes, the big



Rory Mulvey/Courtesy of John Gore Studios

question is, how will this bet play out? For some, Gore has been canny in his timing, investing at an opportune moment given the widespread production slowdown and greater talent availability — and he comes with an impressive track record in show business. But, as many point out, it is not easy to find success in the notoriously difficult UK film industry.

Origin story

Speaking from New York, Gore says he is nursing a "thick head" the morning after celebrating the Broadway premiere of *Schmigadoon!*, a send-up of musicals that *The New York Times* declared "a blast". It is the run-up to the Tony Awards, he explains, an important launch moment in the theatre calendar. "If you win a Tony for best musical, it's worth more than winning an Oscar for best picture. It's basically a \$100m prize."

(Right) John Gore

'I was the second boy to direct a play at my school. The first was a total unknown called Richard Curtis'

John Gore, John Gore Studios

If anyone should know about the economics of the theatre, it is Gore, who has 25 Tonys to his name. The UK entrepreneur has made a fortune in theatre — *The Sunday Times*

Rich List put his worth at \$2.9bn (£2.2bn) in 2025 — since leaving the UK in his mid-twenties to produce stage shows in the US. But he has always harboured an ambition to make films and

TV shows, growing up watching foreign-language features on the BBC as well as *Thunderbirds*, Alfred Hitch-

cock and the Hammer horror films. "I wanted to be doing these things," he says.

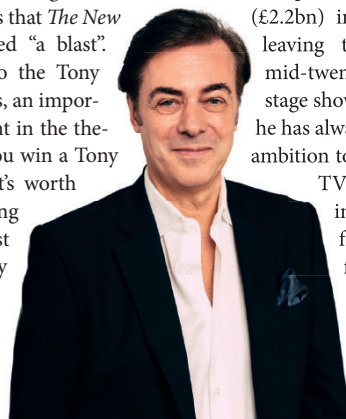
Gore was, however, initially pulled towards the theatre. It started at Harrow, the UK public school where much of his education took place. "I was the second boy to direct a play at my school. The first was a total unknown called Richard Curtis," he says with a laugh, referring to the director of *Love Actually*. "He kicked down the doors. He [co-directed] with a teacher. I went one step further — I fired the teacher."

Gore went on to train as an actor and director at Royal Holloway, University of London. Aged 25, he produced a stage version of *Thunderbirds* in the West End, working with its creator Gerry Anderson, who he describes as an important mentor.

He also worked with Warner Bros, directing a stage version of the *Batman* TV show and sharing an office with its producer Simon Cowell. Both wanted to take it to the West End, but Warners pulled the plug when it started making Tim Burton's more serious movie.

Soon after, Gore moved to the US, establishing himself as a theatre producer, financier and distributor through his wholly owned John Gore Organisation. It owns Broadway Across America, a major presenter and producer of touring musicals and stage plays across more than 45 cities in the US and Canada, as well as ticket operation Broadway.com. As an investor, Gore has backed hits such as *Hamilton* and *Moulin Rouge*. "We usually don't take more than 5% because we cover a lot of shows," he says. "But then we are the distributor of them too."

Theatre may have a reputation as a money pit but the rewards are enormous when a show strikes the jackpot. "The studios are all making shows for Broadway. We spend a lot of time with Universal, with Warner Bros — their highest-grossing products are theatre," says Gore. He cites Universal's *Wicked* and *Wicked*: »



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DRAMA

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Gessica Génés

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Sales: Pyramide International



DIRECTORS' FORTNIGHT

DRAMA

DEATH HAS NO MASTER (LA MUERTE NO TIENE DUEÑO)

Jorge Thielen Armand

La Faena Films (Canada), Faits Divers Média (Canada), Volos Films Italia (Italy), Tres Cinematografía (Venezuela), Deal Productions (Luxembourg)

Sales: Lucky Number



CRITICS' WEEK

COMEDY

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Romain F. Dubois

Couronne Nord (Canada)

Sales: Travelling Distribution

UPCOMING CANADIAN COPRODUCTIONS



DARK COMEDY

IDLING

Théodore Ushev

Bravo Charlie (Canada), Premier Studio Plus (Bulgaria)

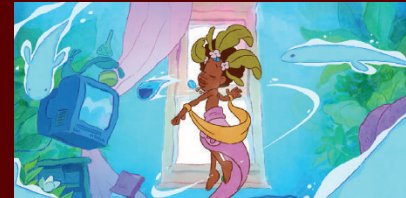


DRAMA

IN ALASKA

Jaap van Heusden, Vinnie Karetak

Experimental Forest Films (Canada), Uuktumiaq Studios (Canada), IJswater Films (Netherlands)



CHILDREN/YOUTH

JULIÁN

Louise Bagnall

Aircraft Pictures (Canada), Cartoon Saloon Domingo (Ireland), Sun Creature (Denmark), Melusine Productions (Luxembourg)



CHILDREN/YOUTH

THE LAST WHALE SINGER

Steven Majaury, Reza Memari

La Boîte à Fanny (Canada), Telescope Animation (Germany)



DRAMA

WHERE THE RIVER BEGINS (DONDE COMIENZA EL RÍO)

Juan Andres Arango

Midi La Nuit (Canada), 12PM (Canada), Inercia Films (Colombia)



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'We've been inundated with ideas in a way that we might not have been 10 years ago'

Hilary Strong, CEO

For *Good*, which together earned \$1.3bn at the global box office. "That's about 10% of what the actual musical has done," he claims. "The numbers on theatre are staggering. It leaves *Avatar*, all of them, behind. *The Lion King* musical is now at a \$15bn gross."

For Gore, the launch of his UK film and TV business was about satisfying his early desire to work in the industry. "I always hoped to do film and TV, but instead the theatre thing got bigger and bigger," he says. "It's taken this long to be [in the position] where I can personally be the greenlight."

John Gore Studios officially launched in January 2025, with Gore appointing Hilary Strong as CEO. Bringing a long track record in film, TV and IP, Strong is the former head of Agatha Christie Ltd, where she helped revamp the mystery writer's estate as viable film and TV property, along the way executive producing Kenneth Branagh's 2017 feature *Murder On The Orient Express* and 2015 BBC series *And Then There Were None*. She also co-founded International Literary Properties to manage IP for literary estates, and is a former commercial director at leading UK indie TV outfit Hat Trick Productions.

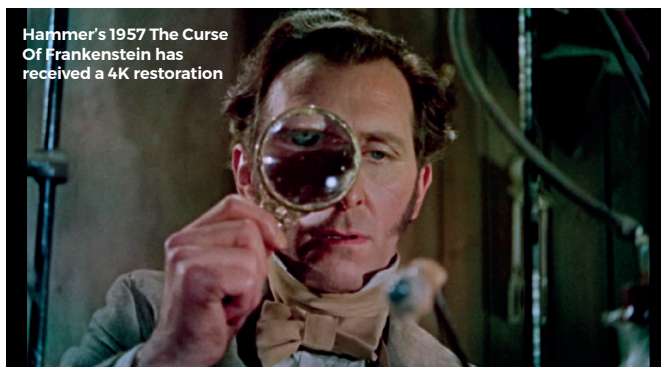
The studios' executive team is rounded out by chief acquisition officer Jonathan Lack, creative director Francis Hopkinson and COO and general counsel Anouska Spiers.

Gore and Strong had met years before through Jamie Anderson, who is the son of *Thunderbirds*' Gerry, and began talking seriously about working together after Strong left her role at ILP in September 2024. "John felt that at a time when so much financial support for the industry had been withdrawn for various reasons, it was a [moment] to do something new and different in a scaled and serious way in the UK," recalls Strong, speaking in the studios' UK headquarters at 141 Wardour Street — the former UK home of Warner Bros and the



Ian McKellen and Roger Allam reprise their stage roles in *Frank And Percy*

John Gore Studios/BK Studios



Hammer's 1957 *The Curse Of Frankenstein* has received a 4K restoration

Hammer/John Gore Studios

Moving Picture Company. (While the company now has around 150 employees, most still work in their original offices.)

"When there is less investment, there are not less brilliant creative ideas or less talent, but maybe less places to go to make them happen," she continues. "So it's been a very interesting journey for the past 15 months. We've been inundated with brilliant ideas and great projects — maybe in a way that we might not have been 10 or even five years ago."

All in on IP

By the time Strong came on board, Gore had already acquired Hammer — alerted by Anderson to the fact the legendary horror brand was up for sale. That 2023 deal marked the moment Gore started to create a UK film and TV business. "It was all because of Hammer, when I got the chance to pull it out of bankruptcy," he says, describing the acquisition as "a leap of faith", while acknowledging the company's complicated history and "library of 300 films with very split ownerships".

Gore and his executive team have since set about trying to create a "fully blown" vertically integrated film and TV studio, similar to his US theatre model. Their focus is twofold: revamping and exploit-

'I am the greenlight. There is no other greenlight. But the team have worked through everything'

John Gore

ing iconic IP, as well as producing original film and TV. With Hammer came a big library, which was bolstered last year with the acquisition of genre banner Tyburn Film Productions, known for 1973's *The Creeping Flesh* and 1975's *Legend Of The Werewolf*. Strong says the company is in advanced discussions to buy a number of literary IPs.

In September 2024, the studio bought London-based Silver Salt Restoration, which is helping to restore classic Hammer films. Last year, it premiered a 4K restoration of *The Curse Of Frankenstein* (1957), and this year is set to release a restored version of *Dracula* (1958), starring Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing.

To help rebuild the brand, it has also released lavish box editions of Hammer titles, aimed at collectors, which include interviews, documentaries, essays and behind-the-scenes images. It is also working on

reboots of Hammer films, including a TV version of *Dracula* and new films under the Hammer banner. The first to go into production in January 2025 was Casey Walker's *Ithaqua*, starring Luke Hemsworth. Set in 1800s Canada, it centres on survivors at a remote fur trading outpost who are plagued by a mythical snow beast.

Building a studio

Another piece of the puzzle was found in November 2024, when Gore acquired KFilm, adding sales and distribution to the mix. KFilm is the parent company of distributors Kaleidoscope Home Entertainment, Icon Film Distribution and Platform Entertainment, and international sales outfit Kaleidoscope Film Distribution (KFD), which launched sales on *Ithaqua* at this year's European Film Market.

In October 2025, it expanded its UK production capabilities, taking a majority investment in Hilltop Screen, the production company founded by drama producer Hilary Bevan Jones and leading media lawyer Medwyn Jones. At the same time, John Gore Studios has built up an in-house development team, headed by creative director Hopkinson. An experienced producer who has worked at ITV Studios, Left Bank Pictures and Channel 4, Hopkinson first worked with Gore and Strong as producer on *My Duchess*, and is now building a development slate for the studio across its own IP and new projects.

Earlier this year, the company acquired a majority stake in Deep Fusion Films, regarded as a pioneer in responsible AI production in the screen sector, headed by Benjamin Field and Anderson. Deep Fusion will produce its own projects, while also helping John Gore Studios with AI tools and workflows for use across development, production, marketing and archive-led projects.

Its most recent acquisition, in April, was famed UK costumier Angels Costumes, a key supplier to global film, TV and theatre productions, and home to more than a million costumes.

There are more acquisitions to come. Strong says the studio is on the lookout for more production companies that it can help to grow. "I'd love to work with a top producer in the horror space," she says. It is also interested in other literary and »

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film libraries, and is in the process of buying a back-office business to support line production and tax credit structuring.

Gore, meanwhile, says one “obvious” missing element for a UK vertically integrated studio is a studio lot. But he sounds undecided. “The problem is that if we buy the real estate, then to make it work, you have to rent it out,” he notes.

Strong insists John Gore Studios is different from production company “roll ups” like Banijay or All3Media that are based around an in-house distributor. “We are an integrated, bottom-to-top studio,” she says. “We’re a studio in the sense that we are self-financing.” That said, each acquired company will retain its own identity and will service businesses outside the group. KFD, for example, sells productions beyond in-house films and shows, while Silver Salt also works on external restoration projects.

In production

Most John Gore Studios projects have been fully financed by Gore, with a focus on films in the \$6m-\$20m (£5m-£15m) budget range. Some, like *The Return Of Stanley Atwell*, starring Nicholas Galitzine and Ella Purnell, which Liza Marshall’s Hera Pictures originated and Protagonist Pictures is selling, have scored pre-sales, while *Frank And Percy* — an adaptation of the hit West End play starring Ian McKellen and Roger Allam, with both actors reprising their roles — was co-financed with the late Bill Kenwright’s BK Studios.

“We might make things that are larger, but we would do that with somebody else rather than putting all the equity on the table,” says Strong.

The studio’s only minority-financed production is *The Queen Of Fashion*, a biopic of the late UK fashion figure Isabella Blow starring Andrea Riseborough. “We thought it was a great project and they were missing the last bit,” says Strong. “But it’s not something we generally will do. For us, it’s about having a real creative voice. That’s important to John. So we tend to either co-finance or wholly finance the films we make.”

How involved is Gore in the decision making? “I am the greenlight,” he says. “There is no other greenlight. It is just me. But the team have worked through everything.”

Strong says John Gore Studios is open to being pitched outside pro-

JOHN GORE STUDIOS PRODUCTIONS

Frank And Percy

Dir Sean Mathias
A comedy drama about two men who form a friendship during dog walks at the park. Ian McKellen and Roger Allam star.

Status In post-production
Sales Kaleidoscope Film Distribution (KFD)

Ithaqua

Dir Casey Walker
A feature set in a remote 1880s Canadian trade outpost introduces the first new Hammer monster in 60 years. Luke Hemsworth stars.

Status Completed
Sales KFD

My Duchess

Dir Mike Newell
The untold story of the final years of Wallis Simpson, who found herself controlled by her obsessed French lawyer. Joan Collins and Isabella Rossellini star.

Status Completed; a market premiere at Cannes
Sales Embankment Films

Onward And Sideways

Dir John Madden
A drama about a school’s deputy head teacher and a pianist single mother who meet on the day both are diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease. Rhys Ifans and Laura Linney star.

Status In post-production
Sales KFD

The Queen Of Fashion

Dir Alex Marx
A biopic of UK fashion icon and muse Isabella Blow, starring Andrea Riseborough.

Status Completed; not yet available for buyers to view
Sales Rocket Science

The Return Of Stanley Atwell

Dir Brian Welsh
Nicolas Galitzine stars as a presumed dead son and heir who turns up unexpectedly to claim his inheritance. Ella Purnell co-stars in the Hera Pictures co-production.

Status In post-production
Sales Protagonist Pictures

‘We want to have strong relationships with the entire sales community. We want to make sure great projects come to us’

Hilary Strong

jects, while increasingly generating projects in-house now that its development team under Hopkinson is in place. For her, the starting point is “a great script, a great story, and then work with brilliant directors and producers who are going to attract the on-screen talent you want.”

Sales relationships

Not all films, however, are being sold or distributed in-house. Alongside Embankment reprising *My Duchess* and Protagonist handling *The Return Of Stanley Atwell* with WME Independent, KFD is

(Right) Ella Purnell co-stars with Nicolas Galitzine in *The Return Of Stanley Atwell*

selling *Frank And Percy* and *Onward And Sideways* starring Laura Linney and Rhys Ifans, as well as *Ithaqua*, while Rocket Science and CAA Media Finance are selling *The Queen Of Fashion*.

Some of these projects came to John Gore Studios with sales companies already attached. “We want to have strong relationships with the entire sales community,” says Strong. “We want to make sure great projects come to us. It’s healthy to have a broad spectrum of relationships.”

Projects developed in-house are more likely to be sold through KFD, she adds: “They’re doing a fantastic job and are growing with us.”

Likewise, John Gore Studios will distribute in the UK through Icon “where we can, but not always necessarily. They’re a great team. We don’t make it an obligation for people to work with Icon, but we would encourage it.”

Gore also hopes to forge closer bonds with the majors as he continues to build John Gore Studios.

“This is not a little British company, we’re trying to develop something big,” he says. “I’ve been around the block enough to know you can’t do a big film without a major releasing it. You can kid yourself and lose loads of money, but if we are going to cross over to that level, it will always be with a major studio partner.”

Looking ahead, there is a sense the studio is taking stock in terms of production after making six films in 15 months. It has yet to greenlight another project, although four or five are at different stages of discussions and Strong envisages making another two films this year. Cannes is a major focus. Collins and Rossellini will attend to promote *My Duchess*, and all the studio’s projects are being repped in search of international buyers.

TV is on the agenda too, and Strong hopes the first commissions from its “very healthy TV slate” will start to come through in late 2027 and 2028. TV takes longer to get off the ground, requiring commissioner greenlights. But the ambition is that a significant part of business will come from TV.

For Gore, there is also a personal commitment to building up the company, and enjoying work with film and TV talent. “The bottom line is, I just wanted to do it,” he says. “I have such a good team running the US. It means I can dedicate my time to putting together the thing that I always wanted to do.”

This can also be seen in his philanthropic activities. Gore is a donor to the National Film and Television School’s expansion, a sponsor of the National Youth Theatre’s Love Bites season and a supporter of Watersprite Film Festival, dedicated to international student films and held each year in Cambridge. He has also partnered with New York’s Julliard school for performing arts to make its acting programme tuition fee-free for students.

After a lifetime in theatre, the permanency of film and TV also sounds a big draw. Gore says his ambition is to make entertainment that endures. “No matter how much we love theatre, it’s gone once it’s over. That’s part of the beauty of it,” he muses. “I would like to be on the sofa in 10 to 15 years’ time and there’s a successful film on that we made — one that people are going to still be watching in 500 years’ time.” ■



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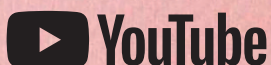


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scar-winning Hungarian filmmaker László Nemes' latest feature *Moulin*, screening in Competition at Cannes Film Festival, was shot on strikingly beautiful 35mm film stock.

The historical drama is the filmmaker's latest title to showcase the use of analogue film stock, processing work and innovative post-production techniques developed out of NFI Filmlab in Budapest, Hungary.

Led by Viktória Sovák, NFI Filmlab is one of the few laboratories in Europe that provides complete analogue post-production services such as traditional negative editing and both black-and-white and colour film processing, analogue image and sound recording (or filmback) and positive printing.

Moulin, Nemes' first French-language film, sees the filmmaker reteam with cinematographer Mátyás Erdély. Scripted by Olivier Demangel, the film follows Jean Moulin, who parachuted into occupied France during the Second World War to unify the Resistance under the leadership of General Charles de Gaulle. Despite his efforts to remain invisible, Moulin was betrayed and handed over to the Gestapo in Lyon, led by the infamous Klaus Barbie.

Produced by Alain Goldman on behalf of French companies Pitchipoi Productions and Montmartre Films, in co-production with TFI Films Production, *Moulin* was shot and post-produced in Budapest with production partner and service company Pioneer Pictures.

Innovative process

The NFI Filmlab team played a vital role throughout production. Shot on 35mm film, the development of the negative, the grading and the production of positive prints were all carried out by the NFI Filmlab team. The film deployed an innovative double bleach bypass process, with the Filmlab's senior colourist László Kovács and his team working on it for more than six months.

The original exposed negative and the final print were also developed using bleach bypass technology, as was Nemes and Erdély's previous feature and NFI collaboration, *Orphan*.

"The entire colour grading of the film significantly contributed to reinforcing Erdély's cinematographic vision and the film's narrative," notes Kovács. "It was a particular pro-



László Nemes' Competition title *Moulin* was shot on 35mm film stock

PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

VISIONARY MOMENTS

Hungary's NFI Filmlab is using innovative grading and production techniques to ensure top creatives can continue to shoot on 35mm and 16mm film stock



(From left) *Moulin* cinematographer Mátyás Erdély, director László Nemes and editor Peter Politzer with Filmlab's László Kovács

fessional thrill to see the precision required in grading the day-for-night scenes, which demanded highly co-ordinated collaboration across all departments."

The day-for-night process used on *Moulin* is based on the same innovative technology applied by cinematographer Hoyte van Hoytema in Jordan Peele's horror sci-fi *Nope*.

During the shooting of *Moulin*, NFI Filmlab developed 60,000 metres of 35mm colour camera negative — 118 reels, 233 camera-rolls — using the company's new processing machines.

"It is important that the production did not only use analogue during filming, but to achieve the full analogue experience, a projection positive print was also created," notes Sovák. "At the same time, digital technology was pushed to its limits as well, especially during the grading process. The final result, created through the combination of these unique analogue and digital solutions, is truly extraordinary."

Through the application of such sophisticated techniques, NFI Filmlab has contributed to several internationally acclaimed film successes

in recent year, including Yorgos Lanthimos's *Poor Things*, Brady Corbet's *The Brutalist*, Pablo Larrain's *Maria* and Ildiko Enyedi's *Silent Friend*. Berlinale Golden Bear winner Enyedi's *On Body And Soul* also benefited from NFI Filmlab expertise.

Nemes' Oscar-winning Holocaust drama *Son Of Saul* passed through NFI Filmlab, having shot on colour film before being desaturated to look almost black and white. Indeed, NFI Filmlab has positioned itself to be at the heart of a growing appetite among filmmakers to shoot on film, including multi-award-winning titles such as Christopher Nolan's *Oppenheimer*, Sean Baker's *Anora*, Josh Safdie's *Marty Supreme* and Paul Thomas Anderson's *One Battle After Another*.



"We found some very talented analogue-lovers in the new generation"

Viktória Sovák, NFI Filmlab

"We have to perpetuate analogue technology," says Sovák. "The challenge is that analogue machines are becoming obsolete and it's increasingly difficult to repair them."

Training remains vital for the industry to continue to flourish, with Sovák and the team determined to create a fresh generation of craftspeople. "We are conscious that NFI Filmlab's new processing machines won't do the job alone, we also have to perpetuate the knowledge," says Sovák. "Just ask a 10-year-old if they know what a film negative is. What was once evident isn't anymore. NFI Filmlab keeps training its staff, and also wants to transmit their knowledge to a younger generation of professionals. Fortunately, we found some unique and very talented analogue-lovers in the new generation."

NFI

NATIONAL FILM INSTITUTE HUNGARY

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✉ sovak.viktoria@nfi.hu



Spain's Competition trio: *Bitter Christmas*, *The Beloved*, *La Bola Negra*

El Deseo/Julieta Mas, Manolo Pavan

Peak of its powers

Cannes 2026 marks a landmark moment for the Spanish film industry. Elisabeth Cabeza and Emilio Mayorga report

30

“**T**his country keeps producing fantastic filmmakers,” as Cannes general delegate Thierry Frémaux put it at the unveiling of this year’s official selection in Paris.

He went on to announce three films by Spanish directors in Competition — Pedro Almodovar’s *Bitter Christmas*, Rodrigo Sorogoyen’s *The Beloved* and directing duo Javier Calvo and Javier Ambrossi’s *La Bola Negra*. They are joined by rising talents in sidebar sections and an industry going full steam ahead at the market.

The features embrace a diversity of styles and showcase different generations of filmmakers. Almodovar is a Cannes veteran who has now been in Competition on seven occasions including *All About My Mother* in 1999, when he won the best director award, along with *Volver*, *Broken*

Embraces, *The Skin I Live In*, *Julieta* and *Pain And Glory*.

Bitter Christmas, released in Spain in March, sees the filmmaker explore his creative process before the camera. Produced by the Almodovar brothers’ Madrid-based outfit El Deseo, the film intertwines two plot lines and timeframes: one with a commercial director in the early 2000s, played by Barbara Lennie; and one with a filmmaker working on a screenplay in 2025, played by Leonardo Sbaraglia.

A filmmaker is also at the core of *The Beloved* by Sorogoyen, who previously screened *The Beasts* in Cannes Premiere in 2022, going on to win France’s César award for best foreign film, and nine Goya awards.

Javier Bardem — one of the country’s biggest international stars alongside Penélope Cruz, who stars in *La Bola Negra* — plays the lead in *The Beloved*, a director who reunites

The Competition features embrace a diversity of styles and showcase different generations of filmmakers

with his actress daughter (Victoria Luengo) for the shoot of a film.

Caballo Films and El Ser Querido AIE have produced *The Beloved* with the backing of Movistar Plus+ and France’s Le Pacte and Canal+. A Contracorriente Films is distributing in Spain.

Flying the flag for rising Spanish talent are Javier Calvo and Javier Ambrossi, aka filmmaking duo Los Javis. *La Bola Negra* is their second feature, though they are also known for creating and producing hit TV

series such as *La Mesías*. Named after an unfinished play by poet and playwright Federico Garcia Lorca, *La Bola Negra* explores queer desire throughout different periods of Spanish history. The cast includes newcomers including musician Guitarricadelafuente and Carlos Gonzalez, alongside Cruz and Glenn Close.

The film is produced by Suma Content with El Deseo, Atresmedia and France’s Le Pacte, with backing from Movistar Plus+. Elastica Films has Spanish rights.

On stream

With investment in *The Beloved*, *La Bola Negra* and *Bitter Christmas*, Spanish streamer Movistar Plus+ has confirmed its role as a key backer for Spanish films since moving into feature production in 2024. It recently garnered success with Oliver Laxe’s *Sirât* and Alauda Ruiz de Azúa’s *Sundays*, which won the Golden Shell at »

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LAS HIJAS
(THE DAUGHTERS)
by Daniel Romero Bueno
TAMARA GARCIA IGLESIAS, HUTZ

CANNES DOCS



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(ALTXALILIAK)
by Maia Iribarne Olhagarai
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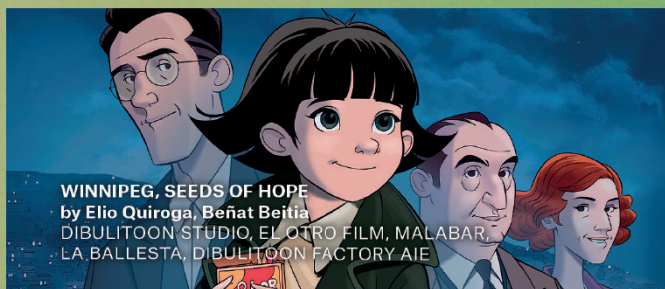


EL HOYO
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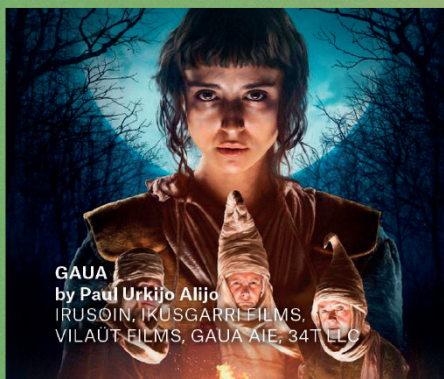
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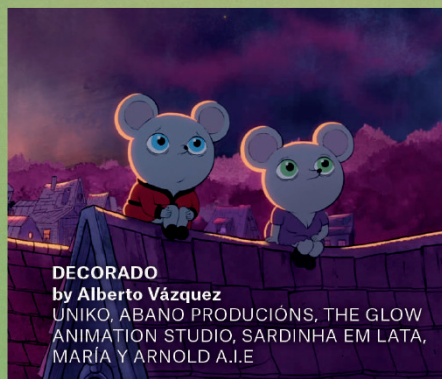
THE HARVESTER
(SACAMANTECAS)
by David P. Sañudo
AMANIA FILMS, LA CLAQUETA PC, CAVIAR



WINNIPEG, SEEDS OF HOPE
by Elio Quiroga, Beñat Beitia
DIBULITOON STUDIO, EL OTRO FILM, MALABAR,
LA BALLESTA, DIBULITOON FACTORY A.I.E



GAUA
by Paul Urkijo Alijo
IRUSOIN, IKUSGARRI FILMS,
VILAUT FILMS, GAUA A.I.E, 34T L.L.C



DECORADO
by Alberto Vázquez
UNIKO, ABANO PRODUCCIONES, THE GLOW
ANIMATION STUDIO, SARDINHA EM LATA,
MARIA Y ARNOLD A.I.E



A SON
by Nacho La Casa
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'We invest in established talents, projects that can resonate with audiences'

Guillermo Farre, Movistar Plus+

San Sebastian last year. Both films have performed well at the local box office.

"The original strategy for features is a follow-up of what we did with the series," says Guillermo Farre, head of original films and Spanish cinema at Movistar Plus+. "We are lucky to have done so in a context of a talent boom.

"The aim is to give the tools to make these films possible and support their launch too. We invest in established talents, projects that can resonate with audiences and we also consider some projects that have an element of surprise. The riskier project we had last year, *Sirát*, had an exceptional international career, has worked in cinemas and has been a success on our platform. *Sirát's* biggest lesson is that it's worth taking risks.

"The idea," continues Farre, "is to carry on and announce more projects we are working on in 2026."

This is welcome news for producers who fear a shift in Movistar Plus+ strategy following changes in the management structure at the pay-TV and SVoD operator. Just a year after Domingo Corral was replaced as head of content on April 30, 2025, Daniel Domenjo left his role as CEO. Domenjo himself has now been replaced by Alfonso Gomez Palacio, Telefonica's head of operations for Latin America.

On the Croisette

Beyond the three films in Competition, the Cannes selection illustrates the scope of Spain's creative boom with new talents and a cohort of international co-productions.

First-time feature director Aina Clotet has *Alive*, produced by Ikiru Films and Funicular Films, premiering in Critics' Week, while Spain-born, UK-based Maria Martinez Bayona brings her debut *The End Of It*, starring Rebecca Hall, Noomi Rapace and Gael Garcia Bernal, to



Barcelona-based Fasten Films co-produced Laila Marrakchi's *Un Certain Regard* title *Strawberries*



Juan Cabral and Santiago Franco's *The Match* plays here in Cannes Premiere

Cannes Premiere. *The End Of It* is one of the three films co-produced by Barcelona-based Fasten Films selected for Cannes, alongside Laila Marrakchi's *Strawberries* in *Un Certain Regard* and Pegah Ahangarani's *Rehearsals For A Revolution* in *Special Screenings*.

Other titles involving Spanish production companies include Manuela Martinelli's *The Meltdown* in *Un Certain Regard* (Elastica Films); Diego Luna's *Ashes* (Inicia Films) in *Special Screenings*; Juan Cabral and Santiago Franco's *The Match* (Blurr Stories) in Cannes Premiere; and Bruno Dumont's *Red Rocks* (Andergraun Films) in *Directors' Fortnight*.

Short film *Me, You And The Cow*, directed by Aina Callejon and produced by Escac Films, is being show-

cased in La Cinéf film school's official selection.

Meanwhile, the Spanish industry and institutions present at the market are still reeling from the death of Ignasi Camos, director general of ICAA, on April 23.

Since taking up the role in June 2023, he had overseen a period of post-pandemic recovery and production growth, supported by existing selective and general aid schemes and tax incentives, and the integration of film policy within the broader Spain Audiovisual Hub strategy.

Camos's successor will inherit a robust but strained ecosystem: Spain produces more than 300 films annually, though only around a third secure releases on more than 20 screens. Pressure on public support

remains high, while the industry continues adapting to platforms and international co-production.

Spain's box office reached \$532m (€453m) and 65 million admissions in 2025, according to figures from Comscore. Spanish films grossed a total of \$93m (€79m) and 12.3 million admissions, down 3.2% in revenues and 5.4% in admissions year on year, although the decline compares favourably with an 8% average drop internationally.

Standout arthouse titles included *Sirát*, which grossed \$3.5m (€3m) in Spain and \$12.5m worldwide, and Ruiz de Azua's *Sundays*, which grossed \$6.4m at home.

The first quarter of 2026 has been boosted by the release of the latest film in Santiago Segura's hugely popular *Torrente* series, *Torrente For President*, which has grossed \$33m (€28m) for Sony Pictures Releasing España. The second highest-grossing Spanish film of the year so far is *Aída: The Movie*, which has taken \$6.1m (€5.2m), and is also released by Sony.

These successes have helped to drive total box office in Spain to \$200m (€170m) from January to March 2026, up 40% year-on-year. Spanish titles surpassed \$47m (€40m), capturing a strong 29% market share.

On platforms, local content has accounted for 15%-20% of monthly viewing in the first quarter, with higher shares in series. **■**

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Arriba Tutto

Dir Jose Mota

Set across two timelines, this completed comedy drama follows a man who, in 1939, encounters his 17-year-old self and triggers a journey back through memory, loss and rediscovered hope. TV comedian Mota directs and stars alongside Karra Elejalde and Olivia Molina in the La Terraza Films, Malas Calles Films, Producciones Nueva Linea, Ikiru Films and Lupin Films production.

Contact Latido Films
✉latido@latidofilms.com

Bros

Dirs Carol Rodriguez Colas, Marina Rodriguez Colas

Set on the outskirts of Barcelona, this coming-of-age comedy drama is co-directed by the Rodriguez Colas siblings, whose credits include *Chavalas*. The completed film follows three teenage friends from diverse backgrounds whose bond is tested when one of them gains access to a wealthier social circle. Exploring class, identity and aspiration, *Bros* stars Badr Oubahassou, Omar Rincon Mills and Pau Marquez, and is produced by Fasten Films, Saga Film and Martfilms.

Contact Filmax International
✉filmaxint@filmax.com

La Carn

Dir Joan Porcel

This queer drama from first-time director Porcel follows a young dancer whose creative process becomes inseparable from a digital platform connecting strangers via video calls, blurring the boundaries between virtual and physical experience. As his performance evolves, so does his identity. Produced by Mansalva Films, Helsinki Films and MN Studios, the title premiered in Tallinn and won the best film and actor prizes at Malaga's Zonazine strand in March.

Contact Begin Again Films
✉hola@beginagainfilms.es

Carte Blanche

Dir Gerardo Herrero

A group of soldiers sets out to avenge the massacre of their comrades,



Arriba Tutto

Stage presence

Spanish feature projects in the market include the latest from Gerardo Herrero, the Rodriguez Colas sisters and Santiago Segura. Emilio Mayorga reports



Bros

only for their mission to spiral into brutality and moral collapse. As the violence escalates, the protagonist struggles to preserve his identity while those around him become ever more dehumanised. The cast is led by Ivan Pellicer, Victor Clavijo and Salva Reina. Herrero, whose credits as producer include 2009's *The Secret In Their Eyes*, also produces the completed film via his Tornasol Media.

Contact Latido Films
✉latido@latidofilms.com

Dante

Dir Hugo Ruiz

A paramedic is entangled in a deadly underworld plot after responding to an emergency call. As the night

unfolds, he is drawn deeper into a life-threatening situation with no clear escape. Starring Chino Darin, Ester Exposito and Asier Etxeandia, the thriller is produced by Gilda Productions Films, Sissi Films and Jarana Films. In post-production.

Contact Film Factory Entertainment
✉info@filmfactory.es

Five More Minutes

Dir Javier Ruiz Caldera

This darkly comic thriller follows a couple on the brink who retreat to a countryside house, only to find themselves trapped in a repeating five-minute loop that resets reality over and over again. Tensions rise as they are forced to confront both

the bizarre phenomenon and their relationship. Starring Berto Romero, Belen Cuesta and Javier Camara, *Five More Minutes* is written by Romero and produced by Movistar Plus+, The Mediapro Studio's El Terrat and Ikiru Films. In post-production.

Contact Filmax International
✉filmaxint@filmax.com

The Nest

Dir Hugo Stiven

Michelle Jenner stars in this high-concept suspense thriller as a woman keeping her family confined in a remote forest to protect them from what she perceives to be a corrupt outside world. Her fragile system starts to crumble when a dangerous intruder breaks in. Filmax has produced the completed film, which co-stars Luisa Gavasa and Pablo Derqui.

Contact Filmax International
✉filmaxint@filmax.com

Tied Up

Dir Angel de la Cruz

This psychological thriller centres on a horror writer who stages an extreme experiment by tying himself up in a bid to understand the characters in his novel, only for a tragic accident to leave him trapped and his baby defenceless. Starring Jaime Lorente, Christina Ochoa and Estibaliz Veiga, the film is produced by AF Films and Ezaro Films and is in post-production.

Contact Film Factory Entertainment
✉info@filmfactory.es

Torrente For President

Dir Santiago Segura

The sixth instalment of the *Torrente* saga has been a major box-office hit in Spain, opening in March and grossing \$33m (€28m) to date from 4 million admissions. Segura reprises his role as the politically incorrect former cop who still sees himself as a national hero. The latest outing continues the saga's irreverent tone with a contemporary political twist. Screening in the market, the film is produced by Bowfinger International Pictures, Amiguetes Enterprises and Torrente Presidente AIE.

Contact Film Factory Entertainment
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DON'T LET EVIL IN

107' · Psychological thriller, Horror

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Family business

“Pedro can take risks as an artist, but as a producer I won’t take any financial gambles,”
El Deseo’s Agustin Almodovar tells Elisabet Cabeza

Agustin and Pedro Almodovar are one of the most active and creative duos in the international film industry, and return to Competition with Pedro’s latest feature *Bitter Christmas*.

Movies have been the Almodovar family business since the days of Super 8 underground shoots and film societies. Agustin joined his brother as an assistant director on *Matador* in 1985, and the pair began the process of setting up their company El Deseo in one of the breaks during the shoot.

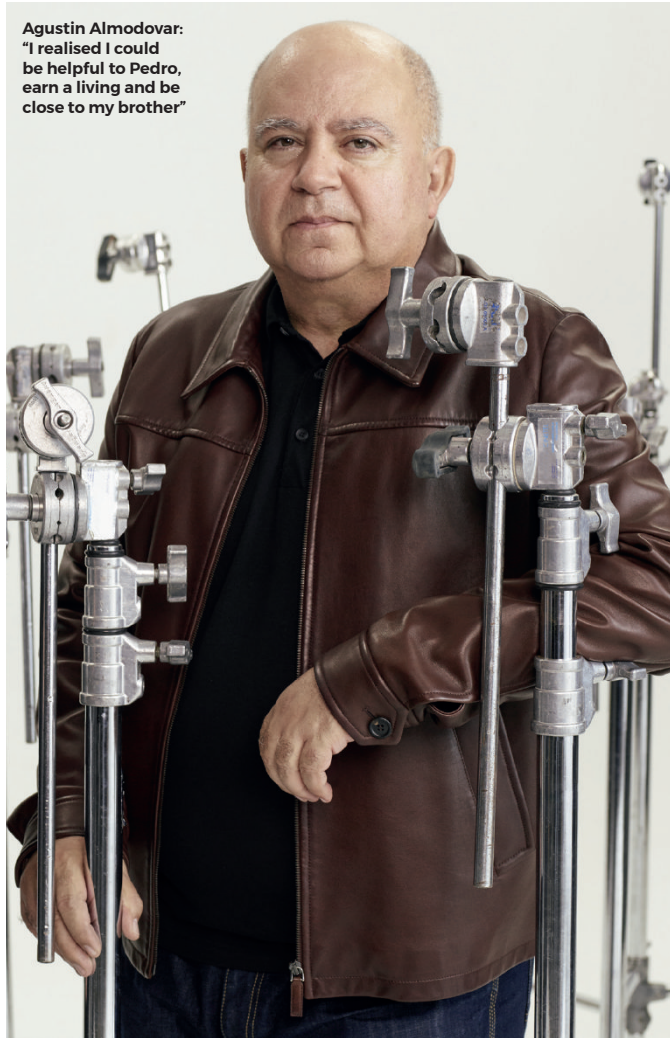
The brothers’ first film in Cannes Competition was *All About My Mother* in 1999, which won the best director award. Five years later they returned (to official selection) with *Bad Education*, followed in 2006 with *Volver*, winner of best screenplay and best actress for a cast led by Carmen Maura and Penelope Cruz. *Broken Embraces* (2009), *The Skin I Live In* (2011), *Julieta* (2016) and *Pain And Glory* (2019) followed in Competition.

The Almodovars have also notched up two Academy Award wins: *All About My Mother* took best foreign-language film in 2000, and *Talk To Her* won best screenplay in 2003. Pedro won the 2024 Golden Lion in Venice for his first English-language feature, *The Room Next Door*.

El Deseo produces films by other directors including Lucrecia Martel, Damian Szifron and Oliver Laxe, and was one of the companies behind Laxe’s Competition hit *Sirát* last year. They are co-producers of another Spanish film in this year’s Competition: *La Bola Negra*, directed by Javier Calvo and Javier Ambrossi.

Agustin talks to *Screen International* about insights into his partnership with Pedro, why he believes Spanish filmmakers have become festival favourites, and the role Cannes played in helping launch El Deseo 40 years ago.

Agustin Almodovar: “I realised I could be helpful to Pedro, earn a living and be close to my brother”



El Deseo, Nico Bastos

‘This is Pedro’s most experimental film to date, his most transgressive from a stylistic and narrative point of view’

Agustin Almodovar, El Deseo

€10m [\$11.7m], which is high compared to the average cost of a Spanish production, but reasonable in the context of the international film industry. I always tell him, “As an artist, take as many risks as you want, but as a producer, I won’t take any financial gambles.” That’s why I will never get into a \$30m budget film without thinking about it twice or three times. The budgets we handle feel safe, allowing us to finance the gap with our own resources while the territories open up.

We also have longstanding relationships with distributors. We’re old school, we believe in theatrical distribution and enjoy working with companies who love and know auteur cinema.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of knowing each other so well?

Our relationship has grown even stronger with time. If at some point I think the idea of a certain artistic collaborator will make our life difficult from a logistical point of view, I share my doubts and he listens. I also know which of his decisions are essential and need to be dealt with.

Why did you team up with your brother in the first place?

I realised I could be helpful to Pedro, earn a living and be close to my brother, with whom I shared a love of cinema. Madrid was buzzing with cinemas and cine clubs back then. While I was studying chemistry at university and Pedro was working »

What do you think *Bitter Christmas* reveals of Pedro Almodovar as a filmmaker?

This is his most experimental film to date, his most transgressive from a stylistic and narrative point of view. It’s a film that questions itself in the third act. That was one of the things we discussed in the first stages because it’s something that can be risky when thinking of the audience. But Pedro has always enjoyed being unfaithful to film codes and mixing genres. As an artist, he doesn’t hesitate to take risks.

Do his creative ambitions ever clash with the logistics you manage as a producer?

Pedro edits while shooting, when the crew break. He also likes shooting the script in chronological order. This is a blessing for the actors but it’s challenging when it comes to making the talent schedules match and ensuring the availability of locations.

Is it easy to raise financing for a Pedro Almodovar film?

It’s usually very smooth. We work with moderate budgets of around

WHERE *THE LEGEND* BEGINS

In the heart of the Wild West, a young Spanish woman flees justice and is forced to carve out her own path in a land where the rules were never meant for her. *Trinidad* is built on this premise to create a large-scale western that combines action, identity, and a reimagining of the genre. Starring Gabriela Andrada alongside Paz Vega and Oscar nominee Karla Sofía Gascón —in her first role following *Emilia Pérez*—, the film will have its Market Premiere at the Marché du Film, where it will be presented for the first time to international buyers and partners as a project with global ambition.

Set on the American frontier, the story reimagines the classic western through a protagonist who not only survives in a harsh world but redefines her place within it. Blending epic scale and rich character work, it brings a contemporary perspective to a timeless genre. Produced by ISII Group, the project reflects the group's integrated approach to filmmaking, with financing, development, production, and distribution conceived as a unified process from the outset. Within that model, Deep Com Roots, the group's sales agency and distribution arm, is spearheading the film's



international strategy, shaping its market positioning and rollout across territories and release windows from the earliest stages.

With a budget of €14 million, *Trinidad* marks ISII Group's first big-budget production. The film underscores the group's growth and consolidation strategy in the global

market, backing titles with the narrative ambition and commercial potential to compete internationally. In this regard, *Trinidad* further expands the group's slate of larger-scale, internationally oriented projects, strengthening its ability to attract partners and investors in different territories.

MARKET SCREENINGS:

Trinidad

MARKET PREMIERE

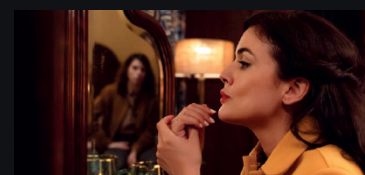
Tuesday 12th
14:00 at Olympia 3

Thursday 14th
15:45 at Palais J



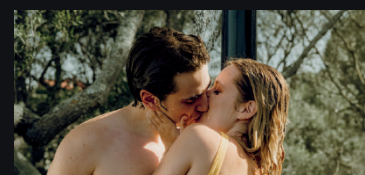
Love on a Tightrope

Wednesday 13th
13:30 at Palais D



Summer Days

Thursday 14th
11:30 at Palais D



Deep Com Roots Presents (Promo Reel)

Tuesday 12th
15:45 at Palais J



AN ISII GROUP COMPANY

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‘We’re old school, we believe in theatrical distribution and enjoy working with companies who love auteur cinema’

Agustin Almodovar

at [telecommunications company] Telefónica, we would shoot films on Super 8 at the weekends. It was so much fun. Pedro even thought of shooting his first feature *Pepi, Luci, Bom And Other Girls Like Mom* on Super 8. It was thanks to Carmen Maura that he finally went for 16mm, later blown up to 35mm for a cinema release.

Later, *Law Of Desire* was selected to premiere in Berlin’s Panorama section in 1987. That helped to draw international attention that something new was coming from Spain.

This is an exceptional year at Cannes, with three Spanish films in Competition. What has spurred this success?

[Cannes delegate general] Thierry Frémaux has a deep knowledge and intuition about what’s going on in different territories and has seen Spain is thriving.

The reasons for this include sustained government funding and public institutional support. It has been instrumental in, for example, promoting a fascinating new generation of women working as directors and producers and throughout the industry.

Another key support has been public television, as well as Movistar Plus+, a streamer that believes in auteur cinema. They are backing two other films in Competition this year — *The Beloved* and *La Bola Negra* — and Movistar Plus+ also made a significant contribution to *Bitter Christmas*. Even the box office is responding.

The Spanish ecosystem is wonderful and diverse. The risk is that the sustained support of the government stops in the event of the rise of the conservatives to power with the support of the far right. Looking at what has happened in Argentina; I think there is reason to be concerned.



Bitter Christmas has made a good start for an auteur film at the Spanish box office, on around 400,000 admissions



Pedro and Agustin: “If I share my doubts, he listens”

El Deseo, Iglesias Mas

‘At this point in our careers, the stress of competing or not competing is gone and the sales are done, so we can relax and relish the moment’

Agustin Almodovar



El Deseo produced Damian Szifron’s 2014 breakout Wild Tales

coming here and having two market screenings. Thanks to those, we sold globally to Orion and it really took off. We even got an Oscar nomination [for best foreign-language film in 1989].

At this point in our careers we enjoy it more than ever, the stress of competing or not competing is gone and the sales are done, so we can relax and relish the moment.

As a producer, it’s an ideal environment for working with newer talent. Cannes was key for *Sirát*’s sales and international launch. In the case of Damian Szifron’s *Wild Tales*, I remember that when we introduced the project with the screenplay we only sold it to one territory [in 2013]. The following year, when the film screened in Competition, there was a bidding war.

What are the challenges in attracting Spanish audiences to arthouse cinema?

We all do in-person presentations [to audiences], something we didn’t do 10 years ago. At El Deseo we used to be private, asking actors not to share information, but that has changed. We are all still struggling to attract young audiences, but we are working on it.

One thing we lack is a real inclusion of film culture in education, on syllabuses, fostering new audiences the way they do in France.

Are you happy with the performance of *Bitter Christmas* in the Spanish box office?

We are. It’s now around 400,000 admissions and for an auteur film, it’s a great result.

What role has Cannes played in yours and Pedro’s career?

Cannes was instrumental in consolidating El Deseo thanks to the sales we did here for *Women On The Verge Of A Nervous Breakdown*. They didn’t select the film but I remember

Are you thinking about Pedro’s new project?

We are. Pedro has already written it, a dystopian black comedy in Spanish. Ideally we’d love to have things ready for a spring 2027 shoot. **S**



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Catalan Films at Festival de Cannes 2026





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Life is beautiful

Aina Clotet talks to Elisabet Cabeza about how she balanced acting and directing on her debut feature *Alive*, which premiered in Critics' Week

Aina Clotet is no stranger to Cannes — she won the Canneseries best performance award in 2024 for *This Is Not Sweden*, which she also created — but this year the Catalan filmmaker is experiencing the festival as a debut feature director with *Alive* (*Viva*), which premiered yesterday in Critics' Week.

The film, in which Clotet also stars, follows a 40-year-old biology researcher in crisis after experiencing breast cancer. As she questions how to live her life, themes of mortality, life expectancy, mental health and sexual desire inform the script, which Clotet co-wrote with Valentina Viso.

Produced by Ikiru Films and Funicular Films, which Clotet founded with Marta Baldo, Jan Andreu and her actor brother Marc Clotet, the film is primed for a June release in Spain via Caramel Films, with Loco Films handling international sales.

Clotet began developing the project more than six years ago. "I was driven by the desire to explore fear and dependency in romantic relationships," she explains. "Despite growing up as the daughter of doctors and receiving a liberal education, I still felt the pressure to find romantic love and find my place in the world.

"One theme I wanted to explore was how science is extending our lives, while the world seems to be moving towards collapse," she continues. "It's not autobiographical, beyond drawing on intimate emotions. I wanted to tell a female-led story that conveys strength, positivity and a love of life."

Alive, she says, is a film that also talks about "the body, feminine desire, visibility... The first time I had a mammogram I thought, how come nobody talks about this! Women endure so much as if it were nothing."

Clotet began acting as a child and later won two awards at Malaga Film Festival: best supporting actress in

Clotet on bringing a feature to Cannes: "What all veterans seem to agree on is that you don't get much sleep at the festival"



2012 for *The Wild Ones* and best actress in 2019 for *La Filla d'Algú*. Her yearning for a more creative role came as a student. "I studied film at university and my desire to write began there, but my acting career took over," she says. "There were fewer women directors then, and maybe that also played a role in my feeling that this path was less clear."

Long gestation

Alive was a slow-burning project and Clotet attended development programmes including TorinoFilm-Lab's ScriptLab, Abycine Lanza in Spain and the Catalan Film Academy Residency.

Shot over seven weeks in Catalonia, the film received backing from the Spanish and Catalan film bodies ICAA and ICEC, the support of the Spanish and Catalan public TV channels 3CAT and RTVE, and Movistar Plus+.

Clotet juggled her work on *Alive* and *This Is Not Sweden*. The series,



'I was determined to have a great time because films are so difficult to get up and running'

Aina Clotet, director, *Alive*

which screened in Spain in 2023, is a comedy about the challenges of parenthood when a young family moves to a trendy rustic village near Barcelona.

"We had months in rehearsal," she says of preparations for *Alive*. "I needed that to manage both jobs. There were technically and emotionally challenging scenes, shifting between comedy and drama, but I enjoyed the process. I was determined to have a great time because films are so difficult to get up and

running that I needed to enjoy that part of the journey."

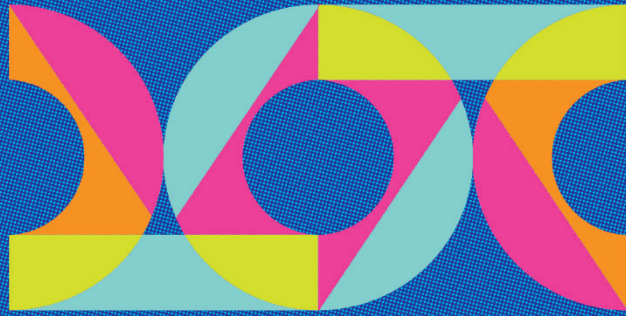
She also benefited from others' experience. "On *Alive*, I had the support of Edmon Roch at Ikiru Films, the main producer. He came on board even before Funicular was founded and we learned a lot from him."

Clotet's debut in Cannes comes in the footsteps of other Catalan filmmakers: Clara Roquet, whose *Libertad* screened in Critics' Week in 2021; Elena Martin Gimeno, whose *Creatura* won the Europa Cinemas Cannes Label for best European Film at Directors' Fortnight in 2023; and Carla Simon, whose *Romería* screened in Competition last year.

Clotet sought advice from all three when *Alive* was selected. "What all Cannes veterans seem to agree on is that you don't get much sleep at the festival."

She is now working on a second season of *This Is Not Sweden*, set to shoot in autumn, as well as developing her next feature. **S**

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Movistar Plus+ has proved a generous backer of Spanish film, including Alauda Ruiz de Azua's *Sundays*

Felipe Hernandez/Netflix

Call to action

The next phase of Spain's production boom will see a move from public support to an effort to attract private investment. Emilio Mayorga reports

44

The historic presence of three Spanish titles in Competition — *Bitter Christmas*, *La Bola Negra* and *The Beloved* — alongside others across the festival, combined with high production levels, evolving policy frameworks and recent upheaval at Movistar Plus+, signal a new phase in the development of Spain's audiovisual sector.

As both industry and government explore new financing strategies, Movistar Plus+, a key backer of independent Spanish cinema owned by telecommunications giant Telefonica, has seen the abrupt exits of fiction and entertainment chief Domingo Corral in April 2025 and Movistar Plus+ CEO Daniel Domenjo 13 months later, both widely respected in the industry.

Alfonso Gomez Palacio, Telefonica's head of operations for Latin America excluding Brazil, is



'We are incentivising private investment and improving access to financing'

Maria Coronado, SETT

taking over from Domenjo. Cuts and restructuring have also been reported at private broadcaster Atresmedia.

The apparent change in strategy at Movistar Plus+ comes just as the streaming platform has proved itself a generous backer of homegrown independent filmmakers. Both Rodrigo Sorogoyen's *The Beloved* and Los Javis's *La Bola Negra* are Movistar Plus+ originals, while Pedro Almodovar's *Bitter Christmas* was swiftly pre-bought by the platform.

The company also backed Oliver Laxe's *Sirát* and Alauda Ruiz de Azua's *Sundays*, both of which have performed well as arthouse films at the Spanish box office.

Successful plan

Much of the present success of the Spanish film sector is thanks to the \$2bn (€1.7bn) Spain Audiovisual Hub Plan, launched by the government in 2021 and financed by the EU-backed post-covid recovery and resilience facility.

Four years on, phase two is taking shape. Talking at Iberseries earlier this year, Spain's minister for digital transformation and civil service Oscar Lopez cited a 107% rise in audio-

visual employment over the past five years and a narrowing gender gap, with nearly 30% of Spanish features directed by women in 2024.

Phase one centred on the introduction of tax incentives, ranging from 30% up to 70% in the Basque Country, which helped to cement Spain as an international production hub and convinced Netflix to set up its European base just outside Madrid. The incentives boosted the number of international shoots, and strengthened Spain's global market presence under the Spain Audiovisual Hub banner.

"With a mix of legislative reforms, investment, creativity and public-private collaboration, the plan has worked," says Maria Coronado, director of audiovisual at the Spanish Society for Technological Transformation (SETT), the state-owned public investment »



(Right) Oscar Lopez, Spain's minister for digital transformation and civil service

Source: Spain's Digital Transformation and Civil Service website



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‘We invest in international projects that shoot in Spain and ultimately generate Spanish IP’

Jesus Martinez, Moby Dick Film Capital

company created by the government in 2024 to administer the funds.

Coronado says phase one invested \$1.9bn (€1.6bn) across film, digital technologies, video games and innovation projects, and in film infrastructure across the country. Last year, for example, saw the opening of Coruña Estudio Inmersivo and Murcia Audiovisual Hub.

At the same time, the spend to back the international activity of Spanish audiovisual work has doubled via the national trade and investment agency ICEX, with the number of supported companies rising from 463 in 2022 to 2,304 in 2024.

According to *The European Media Industry Outlook*, a 2025 report published by the European Commission, nine of the 11 best-performing TV series in the EU were produced by Spanish companies. *Berlin*, a prequel to *Money Heist*, produced by Alex Pina’s Madrid-based Vancouver Media for Netflix, was ranked among the top 10 series globally.

According to another report published by Spain Audiovisual Hub, Spain ranked second in Europe for film shoots in 2025, with cameras rolling on 337 productions. This was just behind Italy (356) and ahead of France (268).

Private capital

Announced in October 2025, phase two aims to shift the focus towards a more financially robust model, with investment-led mechanisms to leverage private capital into the audiovisual sector. This time, the funding comes from the Spanish government as well as the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the European Regional Development Fund and Creative Europe.

“We have focused the second phase on mobilising funds and financial mechanisms, strengthening [the sector’s] resilience and enhancing its



Netflix’s Spanish production hub in Tres Cantos, just north of Madrid

Courtesy of Netflix



Berlin, produced by Madrid-based Vancouver Media for Netflix, was ranked among the streamer’s top 10 series globally

Tamara Aranz/Netflix

‘We have focused the second phase on mobilising funds and strengthening the sector’s resilience’

Maria Coronado, SETT

ability to operate in the global market,” says Coronado. “This is precisely what we are achieving, incentivising private investment and improving access to financing for projects related to film, television and content creation, as well as digital culture and interactive content, including video games and visual effects.”

As an investment partner, SETT has already backed three operations: \$51.5m (€44m) in Culture CAP7 to finance audiovisual productions; \$5.7m (€4.9m) in the newly created venture capital fund Moby Dick Film Capital; and \$2.7m (€2.3m) in Lazona Audiovisual Hub, funded by SETT with LaZona and Elamedia Estudios.

Moby Dick Film Capital is a European venture capital fund registered with Spain’s stock market regulator CNMV and managed by Creand Asset Management, part of Creand Group (Credit Andorra).

The fund is offered as an alternative investment vehicle for high-net-worth clients. Creand oversees the fund, with Garachico Film Service acting as external adviser, represented by Jesus Martinez.

“We invest in international projects that shoot in Spain and ultimately generate Spanish IP,” explains Martinez.

The fund has a strong emphasis on English-language content, he adds, with investment decisions driven by a project’s international potential beyond its home borders.

Martinez, who is based between Los Angeles and Spain, and studied at the University of California, Los Angeles and Harvard Business School, highlights a key concept underpinning the fund’s strategy: “Playability”. In his words, projects must contain elements that marketing teams can actively leverage, notably strong IP, combined with cast and

attached talent capable of driving international visibility.

The model follows a layered financing structure. “At the core is a senior loan, financing provided against collateral,” he explains. “That collateral consists of signed contracts, international pre-sales, platform or distribution agreements and sales estimates managed by sales agents, as well as in-kind services.”

Additional layers are then added, including tax incentives and, finally, equity, the risk capital. This is where Moby Dick comes in, as an investor providing capital without a guaranteed return, expecting upside if the project performs.

As what is called a closed-end limited liability company, the fund is no longer taking on new investors. “Once you reach the target size, once all investors are confirmed, you begin operations, which is the stage we are at now,” says Martinez.

As part of the structural shift in Spain’s financing model, all eyes are now on the success, or not, of Moby Dick’s first investments. The long-term sustainability of the Spanish audiovisual sector is dependent on its ability to attract and keep institutional and private investors. **S**

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Pedro Almodóvar



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Javier Calvo & Javier Ambrossi



EL SER QUERIDO (THE BELOVED)
Rodrigo Sorogoyen

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Laïla Marrakchi
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Konstantina Kotzamani

CANNES PREMIERE

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Rules of attraction

Spain and the Canary Islands are a prime destination for international shoots, driven by competitive tax incentives, skilled local crews and diverse locations. Elisabet Cabeza reports

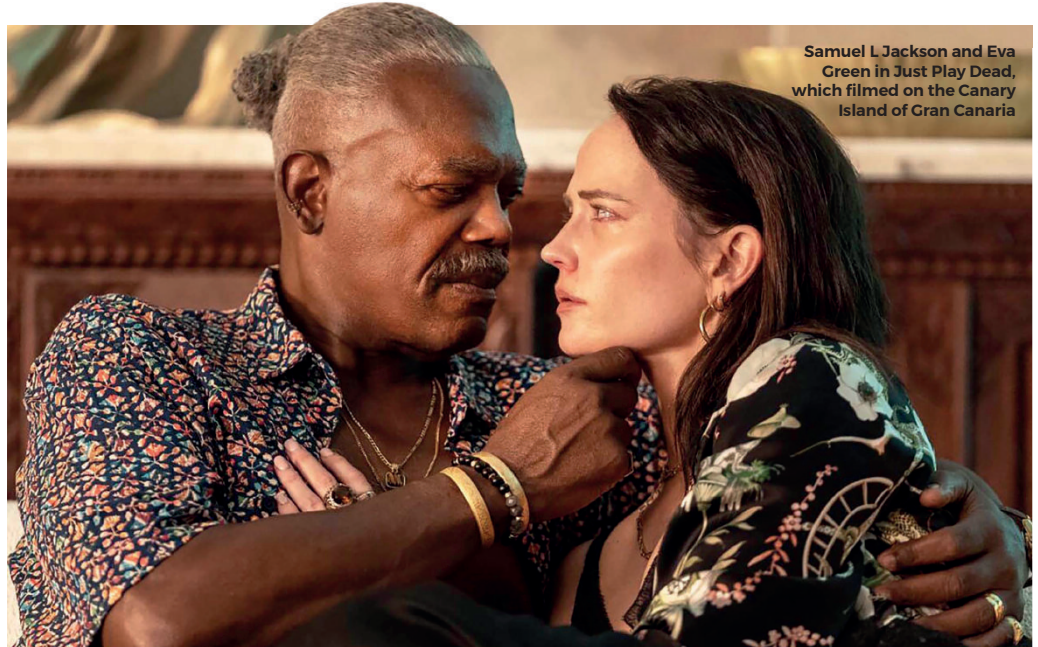
A national tax rebate of 30% — higher still in some regions such as the Canary Islands, Basque Country and Navarre — has helped Spain attract and consolidate the flow of international productions, adding to the wider appeal of its natural and architectural assets. The focus is now on expanding that growth.

The national tax incentive was increased in 2020 and is currently at 30% for the first \$1.2m (€1m) of local spend by an international shoot and 25% thereafter. And the tax rebate runs even higher in those regions with a tax regime that differs from the rest of the nation.

The incentives have been instrumental in the rise of high-end international productions drawn to Spain, also fuelling the local industry. “Both in the number of local and international productions and in scale, 2025 has seen an improvement compared to 2024,” says Juan-Manuel Guimerans, president of Spain Film Commission.

And there is room for growth. All the players in the sector would like to see further fiscal improvements, with a rise in the 30% tax rebate in regions that do not have a special tax regime and a rise in the cap for the total tax rebate per feature — currently at \$23.4m (€20m).

Talks with the Spanish government are ongoing. “Our proposal does not only concern a rise in the overall tax rebate in the country, which would put us in the same league as the most competitive countries in the EU,” says Guimerans. “It’s also about improving aspects of the paperwork, the timeframe for reimbursement and the legal framework.”



Samuel L Jackson and Eva Green in *Just Play Dead*, which filmed on the Canary Island of Gran Canaria

Highland Film Group

A 2024 study of the film industry’s economic impact in Spain, in terms of the gross value added to the economy and job market, calculated that inward investment from international film and TV production totalled \$1.5bn (€1.3bn) over 2019-22. A follow-up study should be ready by autumn.

International productions that recently shot in Spain include Martin Campbell’s *Just Play Dead*, starring Samuel L Jackson and Eva Green, on Gran Canaria; *Day Drinker* with Johnny Depp and Penelope Cruz; the third and fourth seasons of AMC’s horror spinoff *The Walking Dead: Daryl Dixon*; and the second season of *The Night Manager*. The 2026 Berlinale Competition title *Rosebush Pruning* was shot entirely in Catalonia.

The third season of German Netflix series *The Empress* used locations in Malaga and Catalonia, including the coastal

‘Gran Canaria was the perfect setting for a story that takes place on a tropical island’

Valentin Dimitrov, producer, Gemstone Films

town of Lloret de Mar. Series producers Jochen Laube, Fabian Maubach and Lars Gmehling chose Catalonia for deliberate reasons: “We needed a region that offered a significant change of scenery, supporting the characters’ journey and expanding the series through the Empress’s foreign travels. Spain provided the ideal conditions.”

Diego Luna’s Spain-Mexico co-production *Ashes* shot in Barcelona and Madrid. Andalusia was busy with several Prime Video productions, including Guy Ritchie’s *Young Sherlock* series, which used a number of locations, among them Cadiz, Jerez de la Frontera, El Puerto de Santa Maria and Seville, and *Our*

Fault: London, the third title in the *Fault* feature trilogy, directed by UK filmmaker Chanya Button. The second season of Left Bank Pictures’ BBC series *This City Is Ours*, produced with Palma Pictures, and Netflix miniseries *Seven Dials* also used several locations in Andalusia.

Prime Video thriller *Kill Jackie*, starring Catherine Zeta-Jones, shot in the Basque Country and Navarre. The latter was also used by sci-fi thriller *A.M.I.* starring Mads Mikkelsen. Woody Allen’s upcoming untitled feature is scheduled to shoot in Madrid this year.

International appeal

The Canary Islands have been one of the busiest ports of call. Denmark’s Pernille Fischer Christensen shot *Vores Lofte* on Gran Canaria, while two Cannes 2026 Competition titles also filmed on the archipelago: Pedro Almodovar’s *Bitter Christmas* in Lanzarote and Rodrigo Sorogoyen’s *The Beloved* in Fuerteventura.

Tenerife was the choice of several series. Germany’s *Alea Aquarius*, the UK’s *Frauds* and »



(Right) *The Beloved* filmed in Fuerteventura

Manolo Paven

Shoot and coproduce in Catalonia

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High-end TV production fund

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International Productions

Sustainability support



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Pedro Almodóvar filming *Bitter Christmas* in Lanzarote

Ireland's *These Sacred Vows*, along with NCIS: *Tony & Ziva* for Paramount+ and *Wild Things* starring Jude Law and Andrew Garfield for Apple TV. Paramount Pictures feature *Children Of Blood And Bone* also used locations.

Seasoned producers and production service providers include Adrian Guerra's Nostromo Pictures, which has a long history of working with international talent on features including Rodrigo Cortes's pair *Buried* and *Red Light*. Last year it co-produced *Day Drinker* from Lionsgate and *Thunder Road*, with filming in Tenerife, Madrid and Catalonia.

Nostromo also produced *Black Tides* with an all-Spanish crew, directed by Renny Harlin and starring John Travolta. The feature wrapped last December after seven weeks in Gran Canaria, as well as Catalonia's InExtremis water tanks in Barbera del Valles, and Parc Audiovisual de Catalunya, both near Barcelona.

Gran Canaria was also the main location for *Just Play Dead*, produced by Bulgaria-based production

and production service company Gemstone Films. "Gran Canaria was the perfect setting for a story that takes place on a tropical island," says producer Valentin Dimitrov of Gemstone. "We researched possible locations all around and this was the best choice because of the tax rebate, amazing crews, locations, the best climate in Europe and the support of the film commission and local government."

Around 80% of the production crew for *Just Play Dead* was local. "But plan well in advance," says Dimitrov. "With many productions on the go, finding the crew you need can become more challenging. But even then, the islands are well connected to the mainland so bringing people or equipment is not that difficult."

"Working hours are strictly controlled by law," he adds. "Eight-hour days are the norm, and you can go up to 10 hours. Having shorter days is not necessarily a bad thing, but you need to plan ahead because shoots are often unpredictable." 📺

50

Lionsgate



Day Drinker, starring Johnny Depp, filmed at locations in Tenerife, Madrid and Catalonia

THE LOWDOWN

European status

Spain is a member of the European Union and part of the Schengen Area. Its currency is the euro.

Financial incentives

The national tax rebate in **Spain** is 30% for the first \$1.2m (€1m) of local spend by an international shoot, dropping to 25% thereafter. The cap for the total tax rebate per feature is \$23.4m (€20m) and \$11.7m (€10m) per episode of a TV series. The amount of the rebate cannot exceed 50% of the production cost. The minimum expenditure on Spanish territory must be \$1.2m (€1m) and \$234,000 (€200,000) in the case of animation. The international incentive does not have an annual cap.

Spain has different autonomous communities, and some offer higher tax incentives due to special fiscal regimes. Productions on the **Canary Islands** can access a tax rebate of up to 54% for the first \$1.2m (€1m) and 45% thereafter. Compared to the mainland, it also offers higher caps of \$42m (€36m) for features and \$21.1m (€18m) per episode in the case of TV series. The minimum expenditure on the islands is \$1.2m (€1m).

The **Basque Country** offers up to 60% tax incentives, and potentially 10% more if the production is in the Basque language. The region of **Navarre** offers up to 50% tax rebate.

Spain Film Commission and the vast network of regional and local film commissions offer detailed information about tax incentives and service production companies on their websites. So does Profilm, which represents most of the service producers on the mainland, as well as the Canary and Balearic islands.

Infrastructure and crews

Spain has a reputation for quality crews. Plans are underway to make more specialised crews available to cope with the rise of activity, supported by local players including film schools, public television service RTVE, some regional and local governments and Spain Film Commission. Spain can also provide specialists for underwater shoots.

Service companies working on international shoots include Nostromo Pictures, Fresco Film, Anima Stillking, Sur-Film, Fasten

Films, Calle Cruzada, Meñakoz Films, Volcano Films, Babiaka Films, Palma Pictures, El Ranchito, Minded Factory, Seven Islands Film, Mediapro Services, Nanu Films, Bambu Producciones, Brutal Media and Filmax.

Ciudad de la Luz Film Studios in Alicante, on Spain's east coast, is the largest filming complex in the country with six soundstages of more than 11,000 square metres as well as interior and exterior water tanks.

Plans are underway in several regions to build or expand existing facilities. These include Secuoya Studios in Madrid – part of Madrid Content City and home to Netflix's European production hub – and Parc Audiovisual de Catalunya near Barcelona. The latter is in the process of adding two new soundstages – 2,200 and 1,000 square metres respectively – and new production service spaces. The region is also working on the Catalunya Media City project, backed by the Catalan government, in the outskirts of Barcelona.

Spain has invested significantly in virtual stages and technology with Coruña Centro Inmersivo, being the biggest virtual set in the country. The facility includes an 800 square metre soundstage for immersive virtual shoots, equipped with a semicircular LED screen measuring 28 metres long by six metres high.

VFX companies have expanded the range of services and there is a growing demand for animation productions fuelled by tax incentives both on the mainland and the Canary Islands.

Size matters

Spain's diverse landscapes cover 506,000 square kilometres. It has 8,000 kilometres of coast and beaches along the Mediterranean Sea to the east and south, the Atlantic Ocean to the west and north, and the Cantabrian Sea to the north. Natural landscapes include high mountain ranges, deserts, plains, plateaus and a wide range of forests, from oak to tropical. Architectural heritage sites abound, making Spain well suited for period shoots.

Contact

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Photo by Walter Frehner

ÁLAVA | ARABA



Photo by Gonzalo Azumendi

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Japanese actress, creator and producer MEGUMI is back in Cannes to once again host the festival's biggest private party. Since 2024, Japanese Night has drawn around 1,000 attendees to the talent showcase, connecting creators from Japan with the international film community and sparking fresh projects while deepening relationships.

"It's about bringing cultures together through film," she says. "I believe that is the true mission of cinema."

MEGUMI arrives fresh from Udine's Far East Film Festival, where her latest feature as a producer, *Fujiko*, won both the Golden Mulberry audience award and the Black Dragon critics prize — the first Japanese film to achieve this feat.

She has also signed a multi-year exclusive partnership with Netflix to produce multiple unscripted series. Debut project, *Badly In Love*, is a reality dating show focused on Japanese *yankii* (rebellious) subculture. It became a major hit when it launched last year, topping Japanese charts for four consecutive weeks and achieving global success.

Few entertainers in Japan have navigated reinvention quite as deftly as MEGUMI, who was an aspiring singer as a teen before gaining recognition as a defining face of the "Heisei gravure" boom, becoming a ubiquitous presence on television. She later returned to music before launching her own businesses and established herself as a versatile actress, before gradually shifting her focus behind the camera. In recent years, MEGUMI has emerged as one of the industry's most compelling creative producers.

MEGUMI first decided to shift gears into producing during the Covid-19 pandemic. "I had this gut feeling that the world was about to change, and I needed to rethink the way I worked," she explains.

"As a celebrity and an actress, all I could do was wait for offers, which were scarce at the time. Around then, I came across a report stating that Japanese women had the lowest levels of self-esteem in the world, and I thought to myself, 'Why not take control of my own destiny and use video to empower women?'"

Date with destiny

Fujiko is, in many ways, a realisation of this dream. Directed by Taichi Kimura, the film is about a resilient single mother who fights to raise her



WHO IS MEGUMI?

From acting to producing, MEGUMI is expanding her creative scope — and she's taking Japanese storytelling global with projects such as *Fujiko* and *Badly In Love*



daughter after her husband's family kidnaps the child.

When it premiered in Udine in April, the film received a five-minute

standing ovation. "I'm usually not one to cry in public, but witnessing that, I just broke down, bawling my eyes out," she says.

"It's been four years since I started working on *Fujiko* with Taichi, and during that period we changed the script at least 20 times. We are both so passionate about this film, but you do go through stages when you wonder if people will like it. So to get that reaction was amazing.

"It's a story about the empowerment of women. Set in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the film reflects the gender dynamics of the time. *Fujiko* quietly pushes against those constraints with a steady sense of resolve. She doesn't have grand ambitions. She simply keeps going without overthinking things. That's something I can relate to. I believe I'm here today because, like *Fujiko*, I took action."

While wrapping the film, MEGUMI was working on another project that

'My aim [with *Badly In Love*] was to show a different side of Japan that hadn't been seen overseas'

MEGUMI

would go on to receive international acclaim. Produced by Netflix, *Badly In Love* follows delinquents living together in an abandoned middle school as they navigate relationships and search for romance.

"When I started the project, my aim was to show a different side of Japan that hadn't really been seen overseas," she says. "There are many films about yakuza and geisha, but very few about *yankii* culture. I grew up as a delinquent myself and was surrounded by people who may have looked intimidating, but had charm and honour.

"I wanted to share that story with the world because I believed there would be interest. I didn't expect it to become as successful as it did." It has been renewed for a second season.

As her reputation for her work behind the camera grows, MEGUMI continues to earn acclaim for her acting. Once known primarily as a variety TV personality, her role in 2018 feature *The Blood Of Wolves* helped reshape public perception, establishing her as a versatile actress. Two years later, she received a best supporting actress award at the 62nd Blue Ribbon Awards. More recently, she was seen in *This Is I*, a Netflix biopic about Japanese transgender icon Ai Haruna.

Contact

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Czech doubles down

Czech Republic has a strong reputation as a stand-in for other international locations, and now boasts a revamped audiovisual fund and new studio facilities. Martin Blaney reports

Czech Republic's lasting appeal as a filming destination for national and international productions was given a major boost at the beginning of 2025 when the Czech Film Fund was transformed into the Czech Audiovisual Fund (CAF), following the adoption of a new audiovisual act.

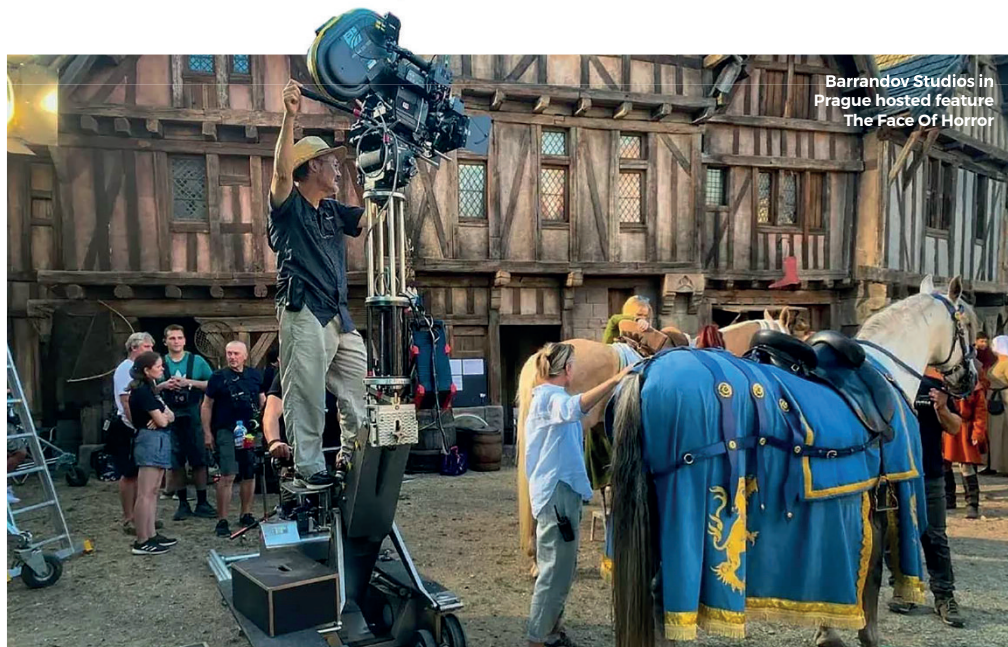
Among the changes, CAF's production incentives were raised from 20% to 25%, while the rebate on eligible expenses for animated and digitally produced projects was set at 35%, and a 25% rebate was introduced for documentary series at the beginning of 2026.

The more generous levels of rebate subsequently resulted in production companies applying for incentives totalling \$447m (czk9.3bn) in 2025, a massive 140% increase on the previous year.

One of the many international productions coming to the Czech Republic in 2025 was Skydance Television's action series *Ride Or Die*, starring Octavia Spencer and Hannah Waddingham. "A lot of the storyline takes place in London and, as much as I love Prague and how it can double for many other cities, London was a little difficult for downtown exteriors," says unit production manager and co-producer Austin Lapierre. "But location manager Filip Doruska and his team did an incredible job finding what we needed. And we also used Prague to backdrop as a handful of cities and towns throughout Europe.

"The rebate system in the Czech Republic is on a par with all the European Union rebates," he adds, "and they have one of the best local crew depots in the world. These were the two biggest contributing factors that brought the project to Prague. We only ended up hiring a few foreign crew HoDs, with the rest of them and all 2nds being local."

(Right) Martin Scorsese's *What Happens At Night* filmed in Prague from February 2026



Jaroslav Ruml/Source: Czech Film Commission

THE LOWDOWN

European status

Czech Republic is a member of the European Union and a participant in the Schengen Agreement. Its currency is the Czech crown.

Financial incentives

The production incentive programme is administered by the Czech Audiovisual Fund to support local and international audiovisual works produced in the Czech Republic. Foreign producers should note they need a Czech production service company to benefit from the programme, since the application documents are available only in the Czech language.

The rebate on eligible expenses for fiction and fiction series is now set at 25%, while animation and digital production without live-action can receive a rebate of up to 35%.

The amount of the incentive is calculated as a return on Czech

and certain international costs with a cap per project of \$21.6m (czk450m), up from a previous \$7.2m (czk150m).

Infrastructure and crews

Barrandov Studios celebrates its 95th anniversary in 2026 and should see two new soundstages being launched at the end of June, with the first productions expected to move in as early as July. The studio complex will then be able to offer a total of 18 soundstages, including facilities in the nearby district of Hostivar.

Expansion has also been underway at the Czech capital's other production complex, Prague Studios. It has invested in the construction of a further four soundstages as part of the fully integrated HIVE production hub, bringing soundstages, VFX studios, animators and creative agencies together under one roof. They will complement the existing seven soundstages totalling 123,000 square feet.

Contact

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'We used Prague to backdrop as a handful of cities and towns throughout Europe'

Austin Lapierre, unit production manager and co-producer

Barrandov Studios had a particularly busy year. Its soundstages and backlot were occupied by Amazon MGM Studios' *Blade Runner 2099* series, gothic horror film *The Face Of Horror* and the French production *Once Upon A Time*.

The International Emmy Award-winning series *The Empress* returned for its third and final season last autumn, and another Netflix production, *The Age Of Innocence* (based on Edith Wharton's novel), was shooting in studios and on location in Prague and Liberec from October 2025 until February 2026.

Apple TV will be returning to Prague Studios as the primary production hub for the fourth season of its sci-fi saga *Foundation*, after being based in the territory for portions of earlier seasons. The streamer also shot scenes from Martin Scorsese's feature *What Happens At Night*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Jennifer Lawrence and Mads Mikkelsen, in Prague over February and March 2026. **S**



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Screenings

Screening times are correct at the time of press but subject to alteration

FESTIVAL SCREENINGS

08:30

ALIVE (VIVA)

(Spain) 112mins. Loco Films. Dir: Aina Clotet. Cast: Aina Clotet, Naby Dakhli. *In a near future, in water-starved Barcelona, 40-year-old Nora emerges from a battle with breast cancer with a fierce need to feel alive. She plunges into two intense relationships with Tom and Max, setting her on a raw journey through her deepest desires and unspoken fears.*

Critics' Week
Miramar

FATHERLAND

(France, Poland, Italy, Germany) Drama, road movie, documentary. 82mins. The Match Factory. Dir: Paweł Pawlikowski. Cast: Sandra Hüller, Hanns Zischler, August Diehl. *Explores Thomas Mann's post-war German life, his family's stand against Nazi rule and their journey into exile.*

Competition
Lumiere Festival ticketing website

PARALLEL TALES

(France) Crime, drama. 138mins. Charades. Dir: Asghar Farhadi. Cast: Virginie Efira, Vincent Cassel, Isabelle Huppert. *In search of inspiration for her new novel, Sylvie begins spying on her neighbours across the street.*

Competition
Agnès Varda Festival ticketing website

SPECIES (SANGUINE)

(France) Drama, Horror. 103mins. WTFilms. Dir: Marion Le Corroller. Cast: Mara Taquin, Karin Viard, Kim Higelin, Sami Outalballi. *Margot, a young intern at the most competitive ER in the country, has trouble keeping up in this stressful environment. As she's confronted with multiple patients her age presenting unusual symptoms, her own body starts to show disturbing changes.*

Midnight Screenings
Bunuel Press

THE MELTDOWN

(US, Chile, Spain, Mexico) Drama. 100mins. Les Films Du Losange. Dir: Manuela Martelli. Cast: Maya O'Rourke, Maia Rae Domagala, Saskia Rosendahl, Jakub Gierszal, Paulina Urrutia, Mauricio Pešutić. *Chile, 1992. Staying at her grandparents' remote hotel near an Andean ski resort,*



FESTIVAL

11:00

CONGO BOY

(France, Congo, Democratic Republic Of The, Italy, Central African Republic) Drama, fiction, music, performing arts. 110mins. The Party Film Sales. Dir: Rafiki Fariala. Cast: Bradley Fiomona, Dieufera Sana, Hubert Ngbolo. *Bangui, Central African Republic: 17 year-old Robert dreams of a career in music, but civil war is tearing the country apart. When his parents are thrown into prison, he is left to look after his four younger siblings, juggling daily life, odd jobs, exams and concert stages, determined to follow his dream.*

Un Certain Regard
Debussy Festival ticketing website, press allowed

Inés (9) befriends Hanna (15), a German skier. When Hanna vanishes without a trace, the search for her exposes hidden truths.

Un Certain Regard
Debussy Festival ticketing website

08:45

ATONEMENT

(US) Fiction. 118mins. Goodfellas. Dir: Reed Van Dyk. Cast: Boyd Holbrook, Kenneth Branagh, Hiam Abbass. *A troubled marine seeks to reconcile with the survivors of an Iraqi family he and his unit fired on back in 2003.*

Directors' Fortnight
Theatre Croisette

09:00

IN WAVES

(France-Belgium) 91mins. Charades. Dir: Phuong Mai Nguyen. Cast: Lyna Khoudri, Rio Vega, Paul Kircher, Birane Ba. *In Los Angeles, AJ, a shy teenager, meets*

Kristen. She lives for surfing; he loves skateboarding and drawing. They fall madly in love, and a happy future seems within reach. But everything changes when Kristen faces a sudden illness. Together, they face adversity, driven by the strength of their love, their friends, and their newly shared passion for surfing and the ocean.

Critics' Week
La Licorne

10:30

PARALLEL TALES

(France) Crime, drama. 138mins. Charades. Dir: Asghar Farhadi. Cast: Virginie Efira, Vincent Cassel, Isabelle Huppert.

Competition
Lumiere Festival ticketing website

11:00

BLAISE

(France) 82mins. Best Friend Forever. Dirs: Dimitri Planchon, Jean-Paul Guigue. Cast: Léa Drucker, Jacques Gamblin, Timéo, Nina Blanc-Francard. *The Sauvage family just wants to be liked. Carole is trying to improve her bad reputation with her employees, while Jacques is trying to improve his with his friends. As for their son Blaise, influenced by a girl, he politely embarks on a completely impromptu revolutionary crusade.*

ACID
Studio 13

CONGO BOY

See box, above

TANGLES

(Canada) Animation. 102mins. Charades. Dir: Leah Nelson. Cast: Seth Rogen, Bryan Cranston, Pamela Adlon. *A young woman is forced to return to the conservative small town where her bizarre family lives to take care of her mother,*

having to deal with the cruel reality of her mom's Alzheimer disease and become the daughter they need.

Bunuel Press

THANKS FOR COMING

(France) 82mins. Camera One. Dir: Alain Cavalier. Cast: Alain Cavalier. *"I blame Michel Seydoux, with whom I have worked for 40 years, for being responsible for the making and the release of my next film. After pushing me, he forced me to finish putting into cinematic order my final desires to film."*

Directors' Fortnight
Le Raimu

11:15

A GIRL UNKNOWN

(France, China) Drama, fiction, first film, female director. 125mins. Pyramide International. Dir: Zou Jing. Cast: Li Genxi.

A Chinese girl is passed between three families from the age of six to 18, receiving each time a new name and identity. As she searches for belonging and the possibility of love, she has to navigate the weight of her past and the uncertainty of her future until she finds her own way.

Critics' Week
Miramar

FATHERLAND

(France, Poland, Italy, Germany) Drama, road movie, documentary. 82mins. The Match Factory. Dir: Paweł Pawlikowski. Cast: Sandra Hüller, Hanns Zischler, August Diehl.

Competition
Agnès Varda Festival ticketing website

11:30

GABIN

(France) Documentary. 105mins. Lightdox. Dir: Maxence Voiseux. *In northern France, Gabin, the youngest of the Jourdel family, finds himself destined to take over his father's butcher's shop. Torn between family loyalty and a desire to break free, his dreams lie elsewhere: to train a contest cow, to become a dog breeder, and to save his mother's farm from financial ruin. Spanning a decade, the film immerses us in this young boy's world, following his journey from age eight to 18.*

Arcades 1

12:00

THE DIARY OF A CHAMBERMAID

(Romania, France) Drama. 94mins. Dir: Radu Jude. Cast: Ana Dumitrascu, >>

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Vincent Macaigne, Ilinca Manolache. *A young Romanian woman living in France and working for a French family joins a theatre company that is adapting Octave Mirbeau's 'The Diary of a Chambermaid'.*

Directors' Fortnight
Theatre Croisette

13:15

FESTIVAL DE CANNES 1947

60mins. Dir: Adrien Fred Maury.
Cannes Classics
Bunuel

14:00

ALIVE (VIVA)

(Spain) 113mins. Loco Films. Dir: Aina Clotet. Cast: Aina Clotet, Naby Dakhli, Marc Soler, Willy Toledo.

After coming face to face with death, 40-year-old Nora is consumed by an urgent need to feel alive. She dives into passionate relationships with two very different men, Tom and Max, whose opposing natures reflect her own inner conflict. But when neither can fill the void, Nora is forced to face the truth: she will have to confront a deeper fear driving her hunger for life.

Critics' Week
Studio 13

ALL OF A SUDDEN

(France) Drama. 195mins. Cinefrance. Dir: Ryūsuke Hamaguchi. Cast: Heidi Becker-Babel, Virginie Efira, Tao Okamoto. *A woman running a nursing home in Paris is transformed after an encounter with a terminally ill Japanese playwright.*

Competition
Lumiere Festival ticketing website, press allowed

BLAISE

(France) 82mins. Best Friend Forever. Dirs: Dimitri Planchon, Jean-Paul Guigue. Cast: Léa Drucker, Jacques Gamblin, Timéo, Nina Blanc-Francard. *The Sauvage family just wants to be liked. Carole is trying to improve her reputation with her employees, while Jacques is trying to improve his with his friends. As for their son, Blaise, he politely embarks on an impromptu revolutionary crusade.*

ACID
Palais C

WE ARE ALIENS

(Japan-France) 117mins. Charades. Dir: Kohei Kadowaki. Cast: Ryota Bando, Amane Okayama. *"Hey, what if I told you I am an alien?" In a small Japanese town, an ordinary boy's quiet betrayal sets in motion something he will spend the rest of his life trying to forget.*

Directors' Fortnight
Alexandre III

14:15

CLUB KID

(US) Comedy, drama. 119mins. Charades. Dir: Jordan Firstman. Cast: Cara Delevingne, Jordan Firstman, Diego Calva. *A washed-up New York party promoter is forced to turn his life around when an unexpected visitor arrives.*

Un Certain Regard
Debussy Festival ticketing website, press allowed

14:30

ALL OF A SUDDEN

(France) Drama. 195mins. Cinefrance. Dir: Ryūsuke Hamaguchi. Cast: Heidi Becker-Babel, Virginie Efira, Tao Okamoto.

Competition
Bazin Press

CANTONA

(UK) Documentary. 115mins. Cinetic Media. Dir: David Tryhorn, Ben Nicholas. *Focuses on the life and sporting career of iconic footballer Eric Cantona.*

Special Screening
Agnès Varda Festival ticketing website

THE BLOW

(France) 104mins. Charades. Dir: Julien Gaspar-Oliveri. Cast: Diego Murgia, Romane Fringeli, Bastien Bouillon. *Enzo and his sister Carla have been on their own for several years. When their father is released from prison, Enzo hopes to rebuild their family, but Carla refuses to reconnect. With his father suddenly back, Enzo is forced to confront the long-buried truth.*

Critics' Week
Miramar

14:45

PELECHIAN PROJECT

(Armenia, Belarus, Russian Federation) 90mins. Dir: Artavazd Pelechian. *Comprises five of the director's works: 'Land Of The People' (1966), 'The Beginning' (1967), 'We' (1969), 'The Inhabitants' (1970) and 'The Seasons' (1975).*

Cannes Classics
Bunuel Festival ticketing website

15:00

THANKS FOR COMING

(France) 82mins. Camera One. Dir: Alain Cavalier. Cast: Alain Cavalier. *"I blame Michel Seydoux, with whom I have worked for 40 years, for being responsible for the making and the release of my next film. After pushing me, he forced me to finish putting into cinematic order my final desires to film."*

Directors' Fortnight
Theatre Croisette

16:30

A SECRET HEART

(France) 88mins. Lightdox. Dir: Tom Fontenille. *In the space of four years, Lilou emerged*

from secrecy. She became a 64-year-old woman who enjoys DIY projects, gardening, cycling and spending time with her grandchildren. By documenting her transformation, I filmed a family reinventing a place for each member. This family is my family; Lilou is my father.

ACID
Alexandre III

WE ARE ALIENS

(Japan-France) 117mins. Charades. Dir: Kohei Kadowaki. Cast: Ryota Bando, Amane Okayama.

Directors' Fortnight
Le Rainau

16:45

GABIN

(France-Germany-Switzerland) 105mins. Lightdox. Dir: Maxence Voiseux. Cast: Gabin Jourdel, Patricia Jourdel, Dominique Jourdel, Lilou Duflos. *Gabin, the youngest of the Jourdel family, finds himself destined to take over his father's butcher's shop. Torn between loyalty and a desire to break free, his dreams lie elsewhere. Spanning a decade, the film immerses us in this young boy's world.*

Directors' Fortnight
Studio 13

SUGATA SANSHIRO

(Japan) Action/adventure, drama. 79mins. Dir: Akira Kurosawa. Cast: Denjirō Ōkōchi, Susumu Fujita, Yukiko Todoroki. *Sugata struggles to learn the nuance and meaning of judo, and in doing so comes to learn something of the meaning of life.*

Cannes Classics
Bunuel Festival ticketing website

17:15

MARIE-MADELEINE

(France, Haiti) Drama, fiction, second film. 104mins. Pyramide International. Dir: Gessica Génés. Cast: Gessica Génés, Béonard Monteau, Edouard Baptiste, Melissa Mildort. *In Jacmel, on Haiti's southern coast, Marie-Madeleine makes her living as a prostitute. When her path crosses Joseph's, a young believer involved in an evangelical community, a relationship blossoms.*

Cannes Premiere
Agnès Varda Festival ticketing website

17:30

A GIRL UNKNOWN

(France, China) Drama, fiction, first film, female director. 125mins. Pyramide International. Dir: Zou Jing. Cast: Li Gengxi. *A Chinese girl is passed between three families from the age of six to 18, receiving each time a new name and identity. As she searches for belonging and the possibility of love, she has to navigate between the weight of her past and the uncertainty of her future until she finds her own way.*

Critics' Week
Miramar

»

ELLA BEATTY
(IF I HAD LEGS I'D KICK YOU)

ARI GRAYNOR
(THE DISASTER ARTIST)

ACT ONE

104 MIN / USA / DRAMATIC THRILLER

DIRECTED BY **SOPHIA TAKAL**
(ALWAYS SHINE, BLACK CHRISTMAS)

An aspiring young actress, desperate for guidance and belonging, falls under the spell of a manipulative acting coach who draws her into a web of control and obsession.

MARKET SCREENING:
TODAY | 17:45 | Olympia 4

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ATONEMENT

(US) Fiction. 118mins. Goodfellas. Dir: Reed Van Dyk. Cast: Boyd Holbrook, Kenneth Branagh, Hiam Abbass. *A troubled marine seeks to reconcile with the survivors of an Iraqi family he and his unit fired on back in 2003.*
Directors' Fortnight
Theatre Croisette

17:45

JIM QUEEN

(France) Animation. 80mins. Global Constellation. Dir: Nicolas Athane, Marco Nguyen. *A gay influencer's life crumbles when a virus turns Paris's gay men straight. He teams up with a twink to find a rumoured cure in the Marais district. A satire on identity, fame and queer culture.*
Midnight Screenings
Olympia 5 Priority badges only

18:15

WORDS OF LOVE

(France) Drama. 95mins. Studiocanal (Fr). Dir: Rudi Rosenberg. *For 14 years, Erika has been the anchor of a household, doing her best to raise teenage Abigail, her little brother Yoni and a dog with a devotion to cheese. When Abi's desire to meet her absent father grows into obsession and word spreads he's been seen nearby, Erika fears the fragile balance will collapse. Instead, the journey that follows brings mother and daughter to see each other anew.*
Un Certain Regard
Bazin Festival ticketing website

18:30

KARMA

(France) Thriller. 149mins. Pathé Films. Dir: Guillaume Canet. Cast: Marion Cotillard, Leonardo Sbaraglia, Luis Zahera. *In a village in northern Spain, Jeanne tries to rebuild her life with Daniel, who knows nothing about her troubled past. One day, Mateo, Jeanne's six-year-old godson, disappears. In order to escape the police,*

who suspect her, Jeanne flees to France and hides out in the community where she grew up. Refusing to believe that the woman he loves is guilty, Daniel will do everything in his power to find her before the police do.
Out of Competition
Lumiere Festival ticketing website

18:45

PROPELLER ONE-WAY NIGHT COACH

(US) Drama, family. 61mins. Apple TV+. Dir: John Travolta. Cast: Kelly Eviston-Quinnnett, Kelly B. Eviston, C. Andrew Garrison. *Based on Travolta's 1997 book. Follows aviation enthusiast Jeff and his mother on a cross-country flight to Hollywood that transforms into a life-changing journey filled with unexpected moments.*
Cannes Premiere
Debussy Festival ticketing website

19:00

THANKS FOR COMING

(France) 82mins. Camera One. Dir: Alain Cavalier. Cast: Alain Cavalier. *"I blame Michel Seydoux, with whom I have worked for 40 years, for being responsible for the making and the release of my next film. He forced me to finish putting into cinematic order my final desires to film."*
Directors' Fortnight
Alexandre III

THE STORY OF DOCUMENTARY FILM

(UK) Documentary. Dogwoof. Dir: Mark Cousins. *A journey through documentary film history, from famous to obscure works, showing how the genre helps us understand reality and inspires experts and newcomers.*
Bunuel Festival ticketing website

UNDER A BAD STAR

(France) 125mins. Urban Sales. Dirs: Lola Cambourieu, Yann Berlier. Cast: Noémie Édé-Decugis, Hugo Carton, Anouk Berlier-Cambourieu, Jean-Baptiste Durand. *In the middle of a heatwave in suburban south of France, Alex once again berates Kiki for messing up. Yet Kiki is dying to*

please him. It's the end-of-year party at the local sports club. Birds are falling from their nests, wildfires are raging and Kiki remains under the spell of her Bad Star.
ACID
Le Raimu

19:45

JOHN LENNON: THE LAST INTERVIEW

(US) Documentary. 100mins. Apple TV+. Dir: Steven Soderbergh. *Captures an extraordinary moment in music history, the final in-depth conversation John Lennon ever gave.*
Special Screening
Agnès Varda Festival ticketing website

20:00

BLAISE

(France) 82mins. Best Friend Forever. Dirs: Dimitri Planchon, Jean-Paul Guigue. Cast: Léa Drucker, Jacques Gamblin, Timéo, Nina Blanc-Francard. *The Sauvage family just wants to be liked. Carole is trying to improve her reputation with her employees, while Jacques is trying to improve his with his friends. As for their son, Blaise, he politely embarks on an impromptu revolutionary crusade.*
ACID
Cinéma Les Arcades 1

20:30

BLAISE

(France) 82mins. Best Friend Forever. Dirs: Dimitri Planchon, Jean-Paul Guigue. Cast: Léa Drucker, Jacques Gamblin, Timéo, Nina Blanc-Francard. **ACID**
Cinéma Les Arcades 2

THE DIARY OF A CHAMBERMAID

(Romania, France) Drama. 94mins. Dir: Radu Jude. Cast: Ana Dumitrascu, Vincent Macaigne, Ilinca Manolache. *A young Romanian woman living in France and working for a French family joins a theatre company adapting Mirbeau's 'The Diary Of A Chambermaid'.*
Directors' Fortnight
Theatre Croisette

20:45

THINK GOOD

(France) Drama. 95mins. Playtime. Dir: Géraldine Nakache. Cast: Monia Chokri, Niels Schneider. *When Gil meets Jacques, their love seems irresistible. And when she unexpectedly falls pregnant, he convinces her to start a family. However, their hasty marriage reveals that she is not as deeply rooted in the Jewish faith as he is. Jacques reassures her: "Think good and it will be good." Little by little, Gil realises the insidious control he exerts over her life.*
Cannes Premiere
Debussy Festival ticketing website, press allowed

21:00

THE BLOW

(France) 104mins. Charades. Dir: Julien Gaspar-Oliveri. Cast: Diego Murgia, Romane Fringeli, Bastien Bouillon. *Nineteen-year-old Enzo and his sister Carla have been on their own for several years. When their father is released from prison, Enzo hopes to rebuild their family, but Carla refuses to reconnect. With his father suddenly back and once again a central figure in his life, Enzo is forced to confront the long-buried truth.*
Critics' Week
Miramar

21:30

ALIVE (VIVA)

(Spain) 113mins. Loco Films. Dir: Aina Clotet. Cast: Aina Clotet, Naby Dakhli, Marc Soler, Willy Toledo. *After coming face to face with death, 40-year-old Nora is consumed by an urgent need to feel alive. She dives into passionate relationships with two very different men, Tom and Max, whose opposing natures reflect her own inner conflict. But when neither can fill the void, Nora is forced to face the truth: she will have to confront a deeper fear driving her hunger for life.*
Critics' Week
Alexandre III



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MOLIÈRE, CYRANO AND THE YOUNG KING (France) 118mins. 2026. Dir: Michel Leclerc. Cast: Artus, Suzanne de Baecque, Franck Dubosc, Niels Hamel-Brochen. *In 1651, as civil war menaces France, Anne of Austria asks D'Artagnan to take her son to safety. Thus D'Artagnan entrusts the future Louis XIV to Cyrano, who hides him within the theatre troupe of the young Molière.*
Cinema de la Plage

22:00

GENTLE MONSTER

(Austria) Drama. 112mins. mk2 Films. Dir: Marie Kreutzer. Cast: Catherine Deneuve, Jella Haase, Laurence Rupp, Léa Seydoux. *Lucy, a concert pianist, has just relocated her family from the city to a country house in the hope of easing her husband Philip's severe burnout. Before they have a chance to set up their new home, an early morning police visit tears their world apart. Isolated and desperate to protect her young son, Lucy must face the situation alone, trapped between the man she loves and the fear of what he may have done.*

Competition

Lumiere Festival ticketing website

22:30

GENTLE MONSTER

(Austria) Drama. 112mins. mk2 Films. Dir: Marie Kreutzer. Cast: Catherine Deneuve, Jella Haase, Laurence Rupp, Léa Seydoux.

Competition

Bazin Press

WE ARE ALIENS

(Japan-France) 117mins. Charades. Dir: Kohji Kadowaki. Cast: Ryota Bando, Amane Okayama. *"Hey, what if I told you I am an alien?" In a small Japanese town, an ordinary boy's quiet betrayal sets in motion something he will spend the rest of his life trying to forget.*

Directors' Fortnight

Arcades 1

23:00

GENTLE MONSTER

(Austria) Drama. 112mins. mk2 Films. Dir: Marie Kreutzer. Cast: Catherine Deneuve, Jella Haase, Laurence Rupp, Léa Seydoux.

Competition

Debussey Press

00:30

COLONY

(South Korea) Thriller, action/adventure. 123mins. Showbox Corp. Dir: Yeon Sang-ho. Cast: Gianna Jun, Ji Chang-wook, Koo Kyo-hwan. *As the virus spreads, the order begins to mutate.*

Midnight Screenings

Lumiere Festival ticketing website

MARKET SCREENINGS

09:00

A MIGHTY ADVENTURE

(Taiwan) Animation. 77mins. Golden Network Asia Ltd. Dir: Toe Yuen. *When a brave grasshopper, a spirited butterfly and an endlessly curious spider are swept from their forest home into a towering city, everything feels bigger — and more dangerous.*

Lerins Cinema Club

DE GAULLE — BOURGUIBA: THE BATTLE OF BIZERTE

(France) Documentary, historical. 90mins. Media Art. Dir: Olfa Chakroun. Arcades 3

KILL ME

(US) Crime. 104mins. XYZ Films. Dir: Peter Warren. Cast: Charlie Day, Allison Williams, Giancarlo Esposito. *Jimmy wakes up in a bathtub after attempting suicide. Or at least that's what it looks like. Jimmy is sure this wasn't his doing and, together with Margot, the 911 operator from the night of the incident, Jimmy sets out to solve an attempted murder in which he's the only suspect.*

Palais H

SONG OF THE LEAVES

ADR Production. Dir: Jia Zhao. Palais #B Online On invite or request

LA GRADIVA

(France) Drama. 145mins. mk2 Films. Dir: Marine Atlan. Cast: Antonia Buresi, Logan. *A class of high-school students travels to Pompeii to discover ruins and bodies petrified by Vesuvius. The trip becomes a rare moment when the force of youth meets a world frozen in time. Their desires start to surface with unexpected intensity, leading them towards an irreversible fracture.*

Palais J

THE GIRLS FROM ABOVE

(Belgium) 94mins. Be For Films (Paris). Dir: Bérandère McNeese. Cast: Héloïse Volle, Shirel Nataf, Yowa-Angély Tshikaya.

Héloïse flees her children's home and finds refuge with a group of girls on the seventh floor of a council block. They form a protective community with strict rules: no problems, contribute money, and never lie.

Riviera 2

THE UPSIDE OF UNREQUITED

(US) 105mins. Capture. Dir: Anna-Elizabeth Shakespeare, Hillary Shakespeare. Cast: Tovah Feldshuh, Jessica Belkin, Rutina Wesley. *Molly has had 26 crushes but exactly zero kisses. Now her twin Cassie is swept up in her first romance, Molly has*

**MARKET**

09:30

KNIFE: THE ATTEMPTED MURDER OF SALMAN RUSHDIE

(US) Documentary. 107mins. Dogwoof. Dir: Alex Gibney. *Inspired by Rushdie's memoir, the film explores the writer's recovery in the broadest sense. Through Rushdie's wife Rachel Eliza Griffiths' personal footage, which has never been seen by the public, we follow the writer during not only his physical recovery but also the recovery of his spirit and hope for the future.*
Lerins 3

never felt more alone. Love confessions can only go one way for fat girls: utter humiliation, right?

Palais #J Online

09:30

BALANDRAU, WHERE THE FIERCE WIND BLEW

(Spain) Drama, thriller. Filmax (Castelao Pictures). Dir: Fernando Trullols. Cast: Álvaro Cervantes, Bruna Cusi, Marc Martínez.

On December 30, 2000, a group of friends begin their ascent of Balandrau, a mountain of barely 2,500 meters. The mountaineers enjoy the sun accompanying them until, in a matter of minutes, everything takes a dramatic turn for the worse. An unforeseen blizzard unleashes the worst storm in the history of the Pyrenees.

Palais C

DOUBLE FREEDOM

(Luxembourg, UK, Germany, Chile, Argentina) Drama. 100mins. Luxbox.

Dir: Lisandro Alonso. Cast: Misael Saavedra, Catalina Saavedra. *Misael works alone with his axe, cutting down trees in the woods. An unexpected responsibility upends his life, and the logic of his days fades away in a nature where human reason holds no meaning.*

Palais I

KNIFE: THE ATTEMPTED MURDER OF SALMAN RUSHDIE

See box, above

MONSTER MIA

(Austria, Germany) Action/adventure, children's, animation. 81mins. Sola Media. Dir: Verena Fels.

Out of place in the clipped town of Primrose, wild child Mia and her pet rat Quentin are sent to the mysterious Rotwood Academy after one too many problems at school. The new school gives her the creeps, and Mia needs to figure a way out before the students realise she isn't a monster like them. But vice-principal Van Vlad has a dislike for humans, and Mia is scared he has seen through her act.

Olympia 3

NOISE OF TIME

(Russia) 100mins. Luminescence. Dir: Aleksey Uchitel. *About one of the most famous composers of the 20th century, Dmitriy Shostakovich.*

Arcades 2

NOVEMBER 1963

(US) Thriller, action/adventure. 120mins. K5 International. Dir: Roland Joffé. Cast: Dermot Mulroney, Mandy Patinkin, Michael Sheen, John Travolta.

"Kill a man, he dies once. Kill his son, he dies 10,000 deaths." Prior to the election of John F Kennedy in 1960, his father Joe Kennedy asked for a favour from mob boss Sam Giancana: destroy ballot boxes to ensure a win for JFK. However, during his reign as president, the Syndicate came under fire from Attorney General Bobby Kennedy. The mob answered this betrayal with the ultimate revenge: the murder of the 35th president of the US on November 22, 1963, and the subsequent cover up. Our story is told by somebody who was there: Sam Giancana's brother Pepe.

Palais G

THE POND

(US) Horror, thriller. Myriad Pictures. Dir: Jeff Renfro. Cast: Isabelle Fuhrman, Douglas Smith. *Jake and his wife Elle have been in constant misery since the death of their son Raymond. Wrecked with the guilt of feeling Raymond's death was Jake's fault, Elle has never forgiven him. When she returns mysteriously having drowned in the pond, life becomes a waking*

»

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SAT MAY 16TH - 15:45 HS - LERINS 2

PACIFICO

nightmare as an insidious parasite takes hold and sinks them in a terror where the boundaries of love, guilt and survival blur. **Palais E**

TIN CASTLE

(Ireland) Documentary. 105mins. Films Boutique. Dir: Alexander Murphy. *Along a long-forgotten road, the O'Reillys live in a rundown trailer stranded in the middle of the fields. Pa', Lisa and their 10 children weather the seasons in their tin castle, heirs to a way of life on borrowed time. Under threat of eviction, their tenuous balance falters, yet — steadfast in their tradition — they resist. The children laugh, the dogs bark, the trailer holds on — but for how long?*

Olympia #8 Online

VITA MIA

See box, right

10:00

DOCS-IN-PROGRESS 2026 — CANADA SHOWCASE

(Canada) Documentary. 75mins. Cannes Docs — Marché Du Film. *Telefilm Canada, in partnership with the Montreal International Documentary Festival, showcases Canadian talent at this year's Marché du Film.*

Lerins 1

FESTIVAL DO RIO GOES TO CANNES

(France, Brazil) Drama, thriller, horror. 48mins. Festival Do Rio — Rio De Janeiro Int'l Film Festival.

Presents a selection of work-in-progress films: 'Beyond The Edge' by Jo Serfaty; 'Days Of Fire' by Maju de Paiva and Bernardo Florim; 'Talented' by Thais Fujinaga; 'Carolina Maria De Jesus' by Jeferson De; and 'The Character' by Fábio Mendonça.

Palais K

11:00

BEARCAVE

(Greece) Fiction, female director, first film, LGBT, romance. 113mins. MMM Film Sales. Dir: Krysianna B. Papadakis, Stavgios Dinopoulos.

A queer romance between two childhood friends: as one prepares to leave their small, tradition-bound village for a new life with her boyfriend, one last trip together brings their long-buried love to the surface

Online #1

11:30

AGATA CHRISTIAN — MURDER ON THE SNOW

(Italy) Comedy. 109mins. Piperplay. Dir: Eros Puglielli. Cast: Christian De Sica, Pasquale Petrolò, Paolo Calabresi. *Christian Agata, a sarcastic and brilliant criminologist, is invited by the Gulmar family, board game tycoons, to relaunch their classic Crime Castle at their Aosta Valley estate. An avalanche isolates*



MARKET

09:30

VITA MIA

(Italy) Drama. 125mins. Beta Cinema. Dir: Edoardo Winspeare. Cast: Dominique Sanda, Celeste Casciaro, Antonino 'Ninni' Bruschetta, Ignazio Oliva, Karolina Porcari, Johanna Orsini. *Didi, an elderly aristocrat, has chosen to retire in a small village in Apulia. Living with Parkinson's disease, she relies on Vita for daily support. What begins as a practical arrangement evolves into a profound connection, as mutual respect helps them bridge the gap between their worlds.*

Palais #G Online

the castle, and Carlo Gulmar is found dead, face buried in a cake. With his enthusiastic fan-sergeant Gianni Cuozzo, Christian must navigate absurd theories and family secrets to find the killer still inside the villa.

Lerins #2 Online

CANNES ANIMATION I SPOTLIGHT SCREENINGS: ANIMATION

110mins. Marche Du Film. **Riviera 2**

CARTE BLANCHE

(Spain) Action/adventure. 90mins. Latido Films. Dir: Gerardo Herrero. Cast: Víctor Clavijo, Iván Pellicer, Salva Reina.

A group of soldiers set out to avenge the massacre of their comrades, but it soon becomes a journey into horror that pushes the limits of their humanity. The protagonist struggles to hold on to his identity and moral compass as his companions descend into a process of dehumanisation.

Arcades #3 Online

CHE GUEVARA: THE LAST COMPANIONS

(France) Documentary, animation. Lucky Number. Dir: Christophe Reveille. Cast: Benigno, Régis Debray, El Negro Efrain Quicanas. *After Cuba's 1959 revolution, three fighters joined Che Guevara's uprising. Following their 1967 Bolivia battle and Che's death, they travelled 2,400km*

pursued by 4,000 troops. Sixty years on, survivors share this tale of endurance.

Olympia 4

CORPORATE RETREAT

(US) Fiction, first film, thriller, horror. 100mins. The Film Sales Company. Dir: Aaron Fisher. Cast: Alan Ruck, Odeya Rush, Rosanna Arquette. *What starts off as a luxury weekend getaway for team building at a start-up company becomes a deadly game of musical chairs as characters face a blood-spattered series of obstacles masterminded by an embittered ex-colleague seeking his final revenge.*

Olympia 5

MAKE ME FEEL

(Germany) Fiction. 90mins. Arthood Entertainment. Dir: Örgen Timur. Cast: Erkan Acar, Caroline Felber, Ömer Filikci. *An adventurous love story about a young mother who travels into the coma dreams of her ex-husband in order to become a family again.*

Palais D

MALLORCA CONFIDENTIAL

(Spain) Drama, thriller. 90mins. Filmmax (Castelao Pictures). Dir: David Ilundain. Cast: Lolita Flores, Asia Ortega, Amin Hamada. *Mallorca, 2007. Chusa, the powerful matriarch of Son Canal — a gypsy neighborhood and the epicentre of drug trafficking on the island — is faced with the potential collapse of her empire when a real-estate project threatens to wipe her home from the map and an old customer becomes her enemy.*

Palais H

NEZHA'S DESTINY

(China) Animation. 30mins. Blast Films International. Dir: Zhang Chenrui, He Jiasong.

Palais F

SANCTUARY

(Serbia) Science-fiction, action/adventure. Sublimity Entertainment. Dir: Filip Kovacevic. Cast: Predrag Bjelac, Riaze Foster, Adnan Haskovic. *In a post-apocalyptic Earth, the discovery of a cryogenically suspended*

woman provokes fear in a desperate village, sending a young warrior and the mysterious woman on a quest for a lost city and answers that could restore humanity.

Olympia 1

STRAIGHT SHOT

(US) 96mins. Pinnacle Peak Pictures. Dir: Gabriel Sabloff. Cast: David A.R. White, Rachael Leigh Cook, Tyrese Gibson. *A bodyguard past his prime fights through a skyscraper full of mercenaries to save his ex-fiancée trapped in an experimental coffin.*

Palais B

THE GOLDEN KEY: A NEW PINOCCHIO STORY

(Russia) 102mins. Kinokult. Dir: Igor Voloshin. *When the carpenter Gepetto sees a shooting star, he wishes that the puppet he has just finished, Pinocchio, would become a real boy. That night, Gepetto's wish comes true, beginning a series of countless adventures.*

Palais J

11:45

DOCS-IN-PROGRESS — SCOTLAND SHOWCASE 2026

(UK) Documentary. 75mins. Cannes Docs — Marché Du Film. Dir: Various Directors. *Screen Scotland and Scottish Documentary Institute (SDI) bring to Cannes four ambitious feature documentaries: 'Flotsam' by Isa Rao; 'The Undermine' by Alice Nelson; 'Untitled Horse Woman Project' by Lizzie MacKenzie; and 'Children Of Honey' by Jigar Ganatra.*

Lerins 1

11:55

FATHERLAND

(France, Poland, Italy, Germany) Drama, road movie, documentary. 82mins. The Match Factory. Dir: Paweł Pawlikowski. Cast: Sandra Hüller, Hanns Zischler, August Diehl. *Explores Thomas Mann's post-war German life, his family's stand against Nazi rule and their journey into exile.*

Olympia 7

12:00

ALMOST GRAZIA

(France, Italy) Drama. 80mins. True Colours Glorious Films. Dir: Peter Marcias. *Three crucial moments mark the life of the famous Sardinian writer Grazia Deledda, the only Italian woman to ever win a Nobel Prize. Three moments that tell the political value of her private life that delve deeper into the relationship between women and literature, as well as contemporary women's struggle.*

Riviera 1



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BEAST OF PREY

(Italy) Horror. 95mins. Piperplay. Dir: Andrea Corsini. Cast: Carolyn Bracken, Caroline Goodall, Paola Lavini. *The life of a rich art collector is shattered by a tragic event. Destroyed by this unbearable pain, an instinctive and primordial nature awakens in her that will lead her to destroy her privileged life and build a new idea of family.*

Lerins 3

BLAISE

See box, right

CHILDREN OF LIBERTY

(France) Animation. 82mins. Urban Sales. Dir: Léahn Vivier-Chapas. *Twelve-year-old Steven gets lost in Grand Central Station and suspects his father is a Nazi spy. A Jewish refugee girl helps him through NYC as they face challenges over family and loyalty during wartime.*

Olympia 2

DREAMER

(UK) Fantasy, romance. 108mins. Palm Tree Universal. Dir: Robbie Moffat. Cast: Chris Bearne, Helena Collins O'Connor, Howard Corlett.

Ralph Jones, a failed musician on the brink, drifts between reality and vivid dreams of past lives, war and myth. Haunted by lost love and pulled by a mysterious muse, his world blurs into a surreal journey of guilt, addiction and redemption. As fantasy and reality collide, Ralph must choose between illusion and love — and find his way back to music.

Palais G

FREQUENCY OF FEAR

76mins. Bleiberg Entertainment. Dir: Danny A. Abeckaser.

Based on the true events surrounding the 2024 Hezbollah beeper operation, the most daring counter-terror manoeuvre in history: to thwart a wave of impending terrorist attacks and all-out war, a group of spies must come up with a plan to infiltrate their enemy's supply chain and secretly build and distribute thousands of explosive-rigged pagers that can neutralise an army of terrorists in a single move.

Palais #G Online

LAKADBAGHA 2 — THE MONKEY BUSINESS

(India) 111mins. Webfilmiland Productions. Dir: Anshuman Jha. *When his fiancée disappears while exposing a deadly wildlife syndicate in Indonesia, an animal-lover vigilante infiltrates a brutal martial arts tournament in Bondega — going undercover as 'Hyena' to take down a kingpin auctioning the last of an endangered species.*

Palais #E Online On invite or request

PACIFIC

(Argentina, Colombia) Science-fiction, horror. Filmsharks/The Remake Co. Dir: Gonzalo Gutierrez. Cast: Manolo Cardona, Ma Gabriela De Faria,



MARKET

12:00

BLAISE

(France) Animation. 80mins. Best Friend Forever. Dir: Jean-Paul Guigue, Dimitri Planchon. Cast: Léa Drucker, Jacques Gamblin.

The Sauvage family just wants to be liked. Carole is trying to improve her bad reputation with her employees, while Jacques is trying to improve his with his friends. As for their son, Blaise, influenced by a girl, he politely embarks on a completely impromptu revolutionary crusade.

Arcades #2 Online On invite or request

Christopher Von Uckermann, Ricardo Abarca.

A group of young travellers are stranded on an island in the Pacific where they struggle to escape an evil presence that has been kept hidden from mankind for centuries.

Lerins #3 Online

ROLLING LOUD

(US) Comedy. 90mins. Evolution Pictures. Dir: Jeremy Garelick. Cast: Christine Ko, Marcus Lewis, Owen Wilson.

When a well-meaning but misguided father takes his young son to the wildly chaotic Rolling Loud hip-hop festival, the weekend spirals into mayhem as they navigate massive crowds, security mishaps and fractured family dynamics — fuelled by live performances, eccentric companions and unexpected heart.

Palais I

SOPHIA

(Tunisia) 115mins. Arab Cinema Center. Dir: Dhafer L'Abidine.

Emily defies her father to take her daughter Sophia to Tunisia to reunite with her estranged husband. When Sophia vanishes, deception surrounds the family as Emily desperately searches for her missing child.

Palais E

TANGLES

(Canada) Animation. 102mins. Charades. Dir: Leah Nelson. Cast: Seth Rogen, Bryan Cranston, Pamela Adlon.

A young woman is forced to return to the conservative small town where her bizarre family lives to take care of her mother, having to deal with the cruel reality of her mom's Alzheimer disease and become the daughter they need.

Arcades 2

THE WAY HOME

(Italy) Documentary. 96mins. Nexo Studios. Dir: Paolo Cognetti.

Grappling with a sudden bipolar diagnosis and the silencing effects of medication, successful novelist Paolo Cognetti embarks on a journey that unfolds between the Italian Alps, Milan and the remote peaks of Mustang, Nepal, seeking to rediscover his creative spark and a sense of balance in a world that feels increasingly fragmented.

Olympia 6

TOKYO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL GOES TO CANNES

(Japan) Drama, action/adventure, family. 69mins. Tokyo International Film Festival.

Presents a selection of work-in-progress films: 'The Gate Of Murder' by Ko Kana; 'All That Exists' (working title) by Takahisa Zeze; 'You, Fireworks, And Our Promise' (working title) by Akira Suzuki; 'Lives At Right Angles' by Syoutarou Kobayasi; and 'Look Back' by Hirokazu Kore-eda.

Palais K

UNDER YOUR FEET

(Argentina) Fantasy, horror. 94mins. Filmsharks/The Remake Co. Dir: Cristian Bernard. Cast: Miguel Angel Sola.

Isabel and her kids move into a peculiar upscale building with oddly low rent. After being selected as tenants, three elderly residents from downstairs start disrupting their lives.

Palais C

13:00

NO WAY DOWN

(France) 120mins. Ginger & Fed. Dir: Mohamed Chabane, Théo Jourdain. *A deserted housing project. Four friends enter a sealed tower that became an urban legend after a series of unexpected*

disappearances. When a ruthless killer emerges from the darkness, every floor unleashes a new terror as they fight to find a way out.

Lerins Cinema Club

13:30

DANIEL

(US) Fiction. 120mins. Pinnacle Peak Pictures. Dir: Daniel Kooman, Matthew Kooman.

During the Jewish exile to Babylon, Daniel and his friends face trials as Babylon's armies conquer Jerusalem. Under King Nebuchadnezzar, they gain royal favour but make enemies. Their faith is tested at the fiery furnace.

Palais D

DECORADO

(Spain) Animation, black comedy. 95mins. Le Pacte. Dir: Alberto Vázquez. Cast: Daniel Lema Blanco, Chelo Díaz Isorna, Óscar Fernández.

Arnold, a mouse in midlife crisis, sees his world as an artificial theatre set. As personal troubles mount, his suspicion of living in a fake reality leads him to search for what's authentic.

Arcades 3

DUDLEY & THE INVASION OF THE SPACE SLUGS

(France, Luxembourg, Belgium) Animation, family, action/adventure. 85mins. All Rights Entertainment

(France). Dir: Cherifa Bakhti. *Dudley will find any reason to be a hero, even ones he has to make up. So when aliens arrive, intent on sucking our earth dry, no one believes him. Uh, oh, time to start believing in yourself.*

Lerins 2

FOREST HIGH

(Belgium) Fiction. 102mins. Rai Cinema. Dir: Manon Coubia. Cast: Anne Coesens, Arthur Marbaix, Aurélie Petit.

In the northern Alps, Anne, Hélène and Suzanne take turns tending a mountain hut. Through the seasons, hikers come and go. Stories bloom and fade, leaving each of them facing the silence. The film observes women who have chosen to withdraw from the world below over the course of a guardianship. Each carries within her a secret, a wound, put to the test by this chosen solitude.

Olympia 4

FUNK

(Brazil) Drama. 103mins. Cinema Do Brasil. Dir: Aly Muritiba. Cast: Duda Santos, MC Nem, Lellê.

An exhilarating, music-driven portrait of a young woman's rise through the Rio favela baile music circuit, reclaiming her agency in a world that tries to consume it.

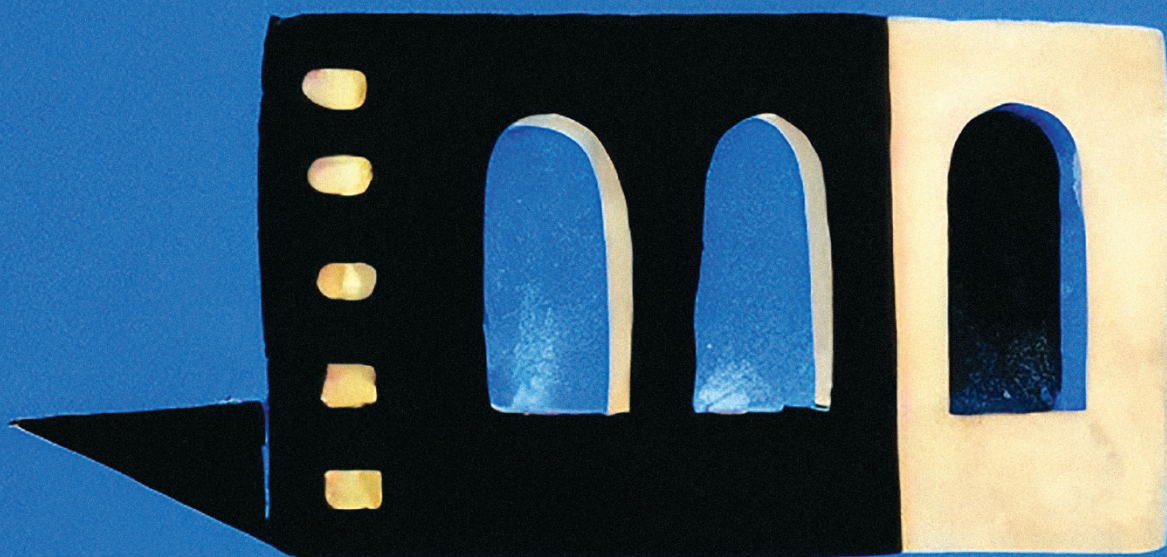
Olympia #4 Online

HERSHEY

(US) Drama, biography. 120mins. Angel Studios. Dir: Mark Waters.



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Cast: Alexandra Daddario, Francesca Faridany, Dina Spybey-Waters. *The origin story of Milton and Kitty Hershey, who, when confronted by tragedy, determine to leave their amassed chocolate fortune in the hands of children.*
Palais F Priority badges only

I'LL BE GONE IN JUNE

See box, right

IN THE COMPANY OF WOLVES: AN AMERICAN JOURNEY

(US) 83mins. Vision Films. Dir: Susan Kucera.

Academy-Award winner Jeff Bridges narrates the stunning journey of wolves and other animals through American history, reflecting a deeper story of who the American people are as a nation.

Olympia 7

ROGUE

(Kazakhstan) 91mins. Kazakhfilm. Dir: Damir Abilkhanov.

The story of a lonely boy named Kazbek and a stray dog named Zhabay, whose friendship faces a grumpy neighbour, dog catchers and a cunning blogger on their path to happiness.

Palais J

THE DARKNESS RETURNS

(US) Horror. 110mins. California Pictures. Dir: William Butler. Cast: Chris Cleveland, Angeliq Pretorius, Sal Landi. *On the Day of the Dead in 1975, strangers gather for a midnight horror screening at the abandoned Diamond Theatre. Unaware that the reels are cursed, they become trapped in a purgatory tied to the sins of past lives. Each carries echoes of a forgotten history, and the movie reveals their darkest secrets. Frank Brows, a ruthless entrepreneur from 1895, massacred a gypsy camp to build his theatre.*

Palais H

THE EXPERIMENT

(Germany) Thriller. 121mins. Picture Tree International. Dir: Oliver Hirschbiegel.

When 20 men volunteer for a psychological study simulating prison life, the experiment quickly descends into chaos. What begins as harmless role-play between guards and prisoners spirals into real-life violence and domination, revealing the terrifying fragility of human morality under pressure.

Riviera 2

THE LAST SUPPER. THE PASSION BY LEONARDO DA VINCI

(Italy) Documentary. 80mins. Nexo Studios. Dir: Luca Lucini.

The first feature documentary dedicated to The Last Supper, one of the greatest masterpieces of all time.

Olympia 9

THE PROFILER

(Germany) Documentary. 60mins. Westside Studios. Dir: Suzanne Grieger-Langer. Cast: Suzanne Grieger-Langer.

Palais B



MARKET

13:30

I'LL BE GONE IN JUNE

(US, Switzerland, Germany) Drama. 122mins. Luxbox. Dir: Katharina Rivilis. Cast: Naomi Cosma, David Flores, Bianca Dumais, Rebecca Schulz.

In 2001, Franny, a 16-year-old exchange student from Germany, arrives in the sleepy desert town of Las Cruces, New Mexico. Far from home, Franny struggles through awkward school days, stifling heat and restless nights until she meets Elliott, a boy whose quiet sadness mirrors her own. As America reels from 9/11, something resonates within Franny and an unexpected tenderness begins to bloom.

Olympia 5

THE SUN NEVER SETS

(US) 102mins. Capture. Dir: Joe Swanberg. Cast: Dakota Fanning, Jake Johnson, Debby Ryan.

A woman's relationship with her older, divorced boyfriend hits a rough patch just as her ex reappears in her life, leading to complicated emotions and messy entanglements in the Alaskan wilderness.

Palais #J Online

YOUNG WASHINGTON

(US) 120mins. Angel Studios. Dir: Jon Erwin. Cast: Andy Serkis, Ben Kingsley, Mary-Louise Parker.

Before he led a nation, George Washington was a young soldier thrown into a global conflict. With alliances crumbling and war closing in, he must choose who to trust and confront the leader he's becoming.

Palais #F Online

ZONERS

(Romania) Science-fiction. 120mins. Pinnacle Peak Pictures. Dir: Stephan Zlotescu. Cast: Carla Andrei, Kim Bonifay, Bogdan Farcas.

A desperate young woman is forced to drive a ruthless mercenary and a stolen alien device through a land infested with monsters.

Palais #B Online

14:00

A FADING MAN

(Germany) Drama, romance, first film. 102mins. Bendita Film Sales. Dir: Welf Reinhart. Cast: Harald Krassnitzer, Dagmar Manzel, August Zirner.

When Kurt, living with dementia, turns up at his ex-wife Hanne's home unaware of their divorce, her life with partner Bernd is disrupted. What begins as an uneasy coexistence slowly opens up new possibilities for love and for life.

Palais #E Online

ADELAIDE FILM FESTIVAL GOES TO CANNES 2026

(Ecuador, Australia, Ukraine) Drama, documentary. 72mins. Adelaide Film Festival.

Presents a selection of work-in-progress films: 'Death Of A Shaman' by Dan Jackson; 'Polina' by Agnes Burrell; 'Tiber' by Dominic Allen; 'Wilderness' by Martin McKenna; and 'River' by Zane Borg.

Palais K

ANOTHER LEAGUE

(Spain) Drama. 103mins. Filmmax (Castelao Pictures). Dir: Marta Díaz De Lope Díaz. Cast: Daniel Ibáñez, José Troncoso, Elena Irureta, Carmen Ruiz, Jordi Sánchez, Aixa Villagrán.

1970s Spain. One group of young, pioneering women and an ambitious promoter are about to change the story of women's football. Sixteen-year-old Nati has an innate talent for the beautiful game and a mother who wholeheartedly disapproves of her playing. But Nati is so enamoured with soccer that she's prepared to play behind her mother's back. The women have no official support but their passion for the game is bigger than any rulebook.

Palais G

BLAISE

(France) Animation. 80mins. Best Friend Forever. Dir: Jean-Paul Guigue, Dimitri Planchon. Cast: Léa Drucker, Jacques Gamblin.

The Sauvage family just wants to be liked. Carole is trying to improve her bad reputation with her employees, while Jacques is trying to improve his with his friends. As for their son,

Blaise, influenced by a girl, he politely embarks on a completely impromptu revolutionary crusade.

Palais C Press allowed

CLOSURE

(France, Poland) Documentary. 108mins. Outlook Filmsales. Dir: Michal Marczak. *After his teenage son goes missing, Daniel scours the depths of the Vistula River, torn between the dread of a fatal leap and the hope that his son may still be alive.*

Palais E

DUA

(France, Kosovo, Switzerland) Drama. 101mins. The Party Film Sales. Dir: Blerta Basholli. Cast: Pinea Matoshi, Arben Bajraktaraj, Fiona Abdullah. *Pristina, Kosovo, late 1990s. As war looms and ethnic tensions escalate, 13-year-old Dua struggles to find her place among her peers and within her changing body. After an incident shakes her community, she becomes a target herself and bonds with a fearless girl, Maki, who draws her towards an unexpected form of resistance. Between the daily violence and the growing threat of exile, there is little room for quiet awakenings.*

Arcades 2

GOD FORGIVES EVERYONE

(Italy) Comedy. 114mins. Piperplay. Dir: Pierfrancesco Diliberto. Cast: Pierfrancesco Diliberto, Aka Pif, Giusy Buscemi, Francesco Scianna, Carlos Hipólito, Maurizio Marchetti, Domenico Centamore.

Arturo is a lonely, gluttonous, and disillusioned Sicilian real estate agent. His life lights up when, thanks to his one true passion — Sicilian pastries — he meets his soulmate. Flora is perfect: she is beautiful, funny, kind, and brilliant, and she's also a pastry chef. But there is an insurmountable obstacle between them: God. Yes, because Flora is, above all, a fervent Catholic. Arturo, on the other hand, drifted away from God when he was just a child, but in order not to lose the woman of his life, he is willing to pretend he is still a believer. Helping Arturo fulfill his dream of love will be an exceptional friend: Pope Francis.

Lerins #3 Online

MASTERS

(Italy) Documentary. 73mins. True Colours Glorious Films. Dir: Paolo Civati. *Nine great directors, including Jane Campion, Tim Burton and Martin Scorsese, reveal themselves without filters, exploring universal themes such as courage, solitude, conflict, and the deeper meaning of directing.*

Riviera 1

MERRY CHRISTMAS AUBREY FLINT

(UK) Comedy. Westend Films. Dir: Jack Spring. Cast: Adjoa Andoh, John Bradley, Sophia Di Martino, Richard E. Grant, Celia Imrie, Adrian Rawlins, Kiell Smith-Bynoe. *Aubrey Flint, a reclusive model, soldier*

and painter with a lifelong hatred of Christmas, is sentenced to community service at Willow Lodge, a retirement home on the brink of closure. Roped into assisting with a chaotic production of 'A Christmas Carol', Aubrey clashes with its colourful cast of residents. But as rehearsals unfold, friendships form and the ghosts of Aubrey's own past begin to surface. When the show is threatened and a close friend is lost, Aubrey must choose between retreating into solitude or risking everything to save the home.

Olympia 6

ROMARE BEARDEN: A LIFE IN COLLAGE

(US) Documentary. 88mins. Coffee Bluff Pictures. Dir: Deborah Riley Draper.

Palais I

TEENAGE SEX AND DEATH AT CAMP MIASMA

(US, Canada) Horror. 106mins. The Match Factory. Dir: Jane Schoenbrun. After years of slapdash sequels, the Camp Miasma franchise is handed over to an enthusiastic young director for resurrection. But when she visits the original's star, a now-reclusive actress shrouded in mystery, the two women fall into a blood-soaked world of desire, fear and delirium.

Olympia 8

THE FURIES

(Canada) Fiction. 106mins. Other Angle Pictures. Dir: Melanie Charbonneau. Cast: Aurélie Arandi-Longpré, Antoine Bertrand, Sandrine Bisson.

When Waterloo gets its new semi-pro men's hockey team, the local women's amateur leagues are kicked out of the arena. Determined to avenge their lost ice time, an impulsive hockey player and a ruthless octogenarian — once a roller-derby legend — come up with a plan: to recruit the town's outcasts and form an underground roller-derby team. With the backing of the Knitting Circle, they'll prove that women's sports can ignite crowds — and that sisterhood is the ultimate act of resistance.

Palais #G Online On invite or request

ULYA

(Latvia) 98mins. B Rated International. Dir: Viesturs Kairiņš.

A teenage girl, caught between the safety of her village and the spotlight of a legendary women's basketball team, must confront whether her extraordinary body is a curse or her only path to belonging.

Lerins 3 Priority badges only

WINNIPEG, SEEDS OF HOPE

(Argentina, Chile, Spain) Animation, educational, historical. 81mins. MMM Film Sales. Dir: Elio Quiroga, Beñat Beitia. Victor, a widowed father, and his

young daughter Julia leave Spain when Barcelona falls to Franco's forces in 1939. In France, camps and hardship await them. Hope appears when they board the Winnipeg, a freighter chartered by Pablo Neruda to take them to Valparaíso, Chile, where a new life may begin.

Palais #I Online

YESTERDAY THE EYE DIDN'T SLEEP

(Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Palestine, Lebanon, Belgium) Fiction. 100mins. Salaud Morisset. Dir: Rakan Mayasi. In a Bedouin village on the Lebanon-Syria border, a burned truck sets off a hunt for Gamra, blamed for burning her lover's car. As her cousin searches for her, he kills a man from a rival clan, sparking a blood feud. His sisters are traded for peace. Will their sacrifice end the violence, or ignite a war across the village?

Olympia 3 Priority badges only

15:00

GRIND

(US) Fiction, black comedy, science-fiction, horror, thriller. 105mins. Cercamon. Dir: Brea Brea Grant, Ed Dougherty. Four interconnected stories centre around the modern work landscape: the hustle culture of a multi-level marketing business, the endless repetitiveness of a

food delivery driver, the online horrors of a content moderator, and the unionisation of a familiar-feeling coffee shop.

Online #5

VERSAILLES

(Mexico) Fiction. 92mins. MMM Film Sales. Dir: Andrés Clariond. Cast: Cuauhtli Jiménez, Maggie Civantos, Jesús Anza.

When a young Mexican politician loses his presidential bid, he retreats with his wife to their countryside estate. There, their lust for power festers, and they reinvent themselves as monarchs, ruling over their employees with cruelty, delusion and decadence.

Online #1

15:45

ALIVE (VIVA)

(Spain) 113mins. Loco Films. Dir: Aina Clotet. Cast: Aina Clotet, Naby Dakhli, Marc Soler, Willy Toledo. In a near future, in water-starved Barcelona, forty-year-old Nora emerges from a battle with breast cancer with a fierce, almost desperate need to feel alive. She plunges into two intense relationships with Tom and Max, setting her on a raw journey through her deepest desires and unspoken fears.

Arcades 1

>>

Catch the Wave

Experience the Thrill of Spirit-Empowered Living

In a world searching for meaning beyond the visible, Catch the Wave by Steven Cole invites readers into a transformative journey of faith, power, and divine connection. Blending personal testimony with biblical insight, Cole presents a compelling guide to understanding and experiencing the Holy Spirit as an active, present force in everyday life. With the precision of an engineer and the heart of a teacher, he breaks down complex spiritual truths into clear, practical steps—empowering readers to move beyond passive belief into active, Spirit-led living.

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ALL ABOUT CORINNE

(France) Drama, comedy. 113mins. Indie Sales. Dir: Marc Fitoussi. Cast: Isabelle Huppert, Sandrine Kiberlain. *Corinne Maclou is a background actor. She dreams of one day being more than an extra and stays confident her breakthrough is right around the corner. When she meets famous actress Sandrine Kiberlain, Corinne hopes to achieve her goal. But will she be welcomed into the respectable family of French cinema?*
Palais J

ALL THAT WE NEVER WERE

(Spain) 106mins. Filmsharks/The Remake Co. Dir: Jorge Alonso. *After losing her parents, aspiring painter Leah struggles to cope. When her brother moves away, he asks his best friend Axel to look after her, unaware of her long-time feelings for him.*
Palais F

DEATH HAS NO MASTER

Thriller. 105mins. Lucky Number. Dir: Jorge Thielen Armand. Cast: Asia Argento, Jorge Thielen Hedderich, Jericó Montilla. *Caro travels to Venezuela to sell her late father's cacao plantation, only to find the family mansion occupied by its former staff, who are determined to remain at all costs. As Caro takes justice into her own hands to claim the inheritance she believes is hers, she sets off a struggle that unearths the violence buried in the land and its memory.*
Olympia 7

DOUBLE EDGE

(US) Science-fiction. 96mins. California Pictures. Dir: Stefania Montesolaro. Cast: Ann Louise Amendolagine, Maria Chiara Augenti, Saverio Buono. *Ric and Fleur's fates intertwine in Ric's loft where Fleur installs Plato, the AI model she has created. Romance ensues but when Fleur learns of Ric's secret nights of debauchery, she takes revenge. Plato learns and takes control.*
Palais H

MARIINKA

See box, above

MEDIAWAN DOC SHOWCASE

Documentary. 110mins. Mediawan Rights.
Palais D

RETRIBUTION: A FOOTSOLDIER STORY

(UK) Action/adventure. 113mins. Carnaby International Sales And Distribution. Dir: Nick Nevern. Cast: Tamer Hassan, Craig Fairbrass, Leo Gregory, Jamie Foreman, Vincent Regan, Ross McCall. *Pat Tate goes to Ibiza to avenge his trusted friend's death but he gets entangled in an arms-trafficking operation involving ruthless mercenaries and the CIA.*
Olympia 5



MARKET

15:45

MARIINKA

(Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, Belgium) Documentary. 94mins. Films Boutique. Dir: Pieter-Jan De Pue. *In Eastern Ukraine, childhood neighbours find their lives violently derailed by a shifting frontline. Natasha, a promising boxing talent, becomes a military paramedic. Angela, who lost her parents at a young age, survives by moving goods to both sides of the front. Caught in a modern Greek tragedy, brothers Mark and Ruslan now fight on opposite sides. In the safety of his adoptive family in the US, their youngest brother Daniil follows the war from afar.*
Riviera #2 Online

SOMEONE'S DAUGHTER

(Canada) 102mins. Filmoptio International. Dir: Wiebke Von Carolsfeld. Cast: Pascale Bussi eres, Fran ois Arnaud, Peter Outerbridge. *Kidnapped and abandoned in the remote wilderness with a former client who stood accused of rape, a successful defence lawyer has to resist becoming judge, jury and executioner.*
Palais B

SWEET VIOLENCE

(Uruguay) Crime, thriller, horror. 93mins. Jinga Films. Dir: Jeremias Segovia. Cast: Esteban Bigliardi, Javier Chavez, Eduardo Miglionico, Mirella Pascual, Ariel Caldarelli, Gabriella Rribarren. *After being released from a 20-year prison sentence, a family plan to kill a man convicted of murdering their daughter. Still pleading innocent, he tries to rebuild his life until the ghosts of the past return to haunt him.*
Palais #D Online

TATTI, LAND OF DREAMS

(Italy, Switzerland) Documentary. 91mins. Innovative Eye. Dir: Ruedi Gerber. *An abandoned Italian village experiences a silent rebirth through the co-operation of locals and newcomers — a film about rural structural change, personal transformation and the power of community.*
Lerins 2

THE GOLDEN AGE

(France) Drama, fiction. 112mins. Films Boutique. Dir: B erenger Thouin. Cast: Souheila Yacoub, Vassili Schneider, Yile Yara Vianello. *Born at the turn of the century in a village butcher's shop, Jeanne Lavaur dreams of becoming a countess. Inspired by the fearless C eleste and guided by her love for Guillaume de Barante, Jeanne's journey carries her from the Paris of the Golden Twenties through the turmoil of two world wars. As her life intertwines with the great upheavals of the 20th century, she rises as a fiercely free woman, determined to never let anyone define who she is meant to be.*
Olympia 4

THE HARVESTER

(Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Spain) Thriller. 100mins. Latido Films. Dir: David P erez Sa udo. Cast: Antonio De La Torre, Patricia L opez Arnaiz. *Northern Spain, 1870s. As the country bleeds from its wars, a serial killer leaves behind the tortured and strangled bodies of women on the outskirts of the village. The sister of one of the victims searches for him relentlessly, determined to seek justice, unaware that the killer is also desperately searching for his missing son in a ruined country.*
Riviera 2

WE ARE ALIENS

(Japan-France) 117mins. Charades. Dir: Kohei Kadowaki. Cast: Ryota Bando, Amane Okayama. *"Hey, what if I told you I am an alien?" In a small Japanese town, an ordinary boy's quiet betrayal sets in motion something he will spend the rest of his life trying to forget.*
Arcades 3

WILD IS THE WIND

(Spain) Drama, fiction, social issues. 105mins. Media Art. Dir: Eloy Dom nguez Ser en. *After years gone, Ana returns to her village due to the death of her father. Her intention is to leave after the funeral but she feels the need to stay, fuelled by the intention of a power company to install a wind farm that divides the neighbours and affects her family's land. Her*

participation in this conflict draws her back into the life of the community.
Palais #F Online

16:15

A GIRL'S STORY

(France) Drama, female director, book adaptation. 117mins. Paradise City Sales (ex-Memento International). Dir: Judith Godr che. Cast: Tess Barth l my, Ma w ne Barth l my, Victor Bonnel, Val rie Dr ville, Ariane Labeled, Anja Verderosa. *Paris, 2020. A famous writer returns to her home town to sign her latest book. During the trip, a sudden dizziness plunges her back into the summer of 1958, when she first experienced sexual violence. This journey back into the past allows her to better understand the young girl she once was and to finally reconcile with a missing part of her story.*
Arcades 2

AMERICAN DOCTOR

(US, Malaysia, Palestine, Qatar) Documentary. 92mins. Outlook Filmsales. Dir: Poh Si Teng. *When three American doctors — Palestinian, Jewish and Zoroastrian — enter Gaza to save lives, they find themselves caught between medicine and politics, risking everything to expose the truth.*
Palais C

DANCE OF THE LIVING

(Colombia, Spain) Drama. 92mins. Bendita Film Sales. Dir: Jose Alay n. Cast: Yazmina Estupi an, Tomasin Padr n, In es Cano, Sara Cano, Aridany P erez. *On the arid island of Fuerteventura, Miguel and his daughter Mariana struggle to move forward after his wife's death. Traditional wrestling is all they know, their way of making a place in the world. But Miguel's body is failing him, and Mariana's anger is pushing her to break the rules. As the championship final approaches, father and daughter find themselves on uncertain ground, searching for a way back to each other before it's too late.*
Palais E

DOWNTOWN

(Netherlands) Fiction. 98mins. M-Appeal. Dir: Michiel Van Erp. Cast: Yorick Van Wageningen, Hans Kesting, Roeland Fernhout. *After ruling Amsterdam's most electrifying gay club in the 1980s, three friends reunite to relive a time of wild nights and reckless love, as hidden truths come to light.*
Lerins #3 Online

ICE CREAM MAN

(US) 120mins. WME Independent. Dir: Eli Roth. *An idyllic summer town descends into madness when an ice cream man serves kids sweet delights with horrifying results.*
Olympia 2

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MADAME

(France) Drama, thriller. mk2 Films. Dir: H el ene Rosselet-Ruiz. Cast: Soundos Mosbah, Malou Khebizi.

While her future hangs on an army application, Laura takes a job working for Souria, a young Saudi woman living in an opulent Paris apartment. Immersed in a world of expansive luxury and constant surveillance, Laura must get to grips with its unspoken rules without losing her way.
Palais I

SAPIENS

(South Korea) 106mins. Hive Filmworks Inc. Dir: Hu-Bin Lee. Cast: Jung Sung-il, You Chea-myung, Ryu Hyun-kyung, Park Myung-hoon.

Na Do-han, a man with Dissociative Identity Disorder, shares his body with four different identities. One dawn, he wakes up in a motel with blood-soaked hands and the word 'Run!' scrawled on a mirror. Soon linked to the disappearance of a wealthy corporate heir, Do-han becomes the prime suspect. Concurrently pursued by corporate lawyer Seo Hee-jae, he must interrogate his own identities, each concealing a secret.
Palais G

THE DANCES

(US) Drama, comedy. 93mins. Pinnacle Peak Pictures. Dir: Rick Gomez. Cast: Michael Cudlitz, Ethan Hawke, Steve Zahn.

A struggling single father tries to reconnect with his distant teenage daughter while chaperoning her at a regional dance competition in the southeast.
Riviera 1

STORM RIDER

(Croatia) 104mins. Garden Of Titans. Dir: Dom Mazuran, Zoran Lisinac.

Three hundred years after the Big Flood, the legend of an outlawed Storm Rider inspires two rebellious islanders to find out the truth about the origin of their world.
Olympia 8

TALLINN BLACK NIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL GOES TO CANNES

(Estonia, UK, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Luxembourg, Netherlands) Drama, thriller. 44mins. Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival.

Presents a selection of work-in-progress films: 'Mo Hunt' by Eeva M agi; 'The Daughters' by Daniel Romero Bueno; 'Dead Dad Girl' by Stephen Korytko; 'Lost Son' by Edson da Conceicao; and 'At Your Service' by German Golub.
Palais K

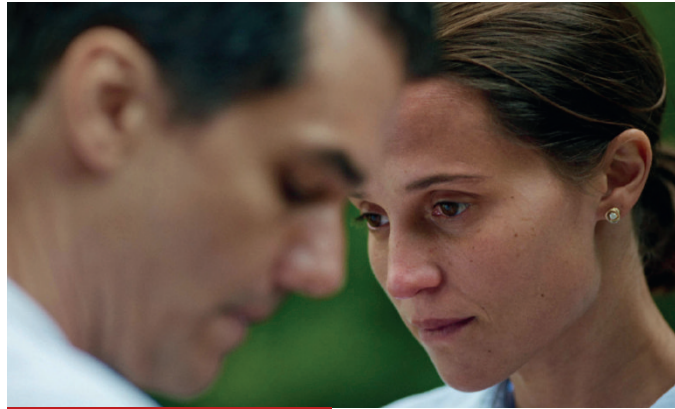
THE LAST DAY

See box, above

TORMENT

80mins. Filmsharks/The Remake Co.. Dir: Olallo Rubio. Cast: Natalia Soli an, Hoze Mel endez, Fernando Banda.

An exhausted security guard is transferred to a morgue and, on their first night, discovers that the shadows and silences

**MARKET****16:15****THE LAST DAY**

(UK) Drama. Westend Films. Dir: Rachel Rose. Cast: Alicia Vikander, Wagner Moura, Victoria Pedretti. *Inspired by Virginia Woolf's 'Mrs. Dalloway', the film unfolds over a single summer day in New York, where the lives of two mothers briefly entwine. Julia, a writer and mother, is unsettled by creative stagnation, unprocessed grief and the approach of her daughter's adolescence. An unexpected encounter with Taylor — a labour and delivery nurse in the midst of a postpartum crisis — pushes Julia to reconsider the life she has built, and whether she can rediscover herself within it.*
Olympia 6

hide a torment from which there may be no return.

Palais #E Online**VITTORIO DE SICA LA VITA IN SCENA**

100mins. Fandango. Dir: Francesco Zippel.

Explores Vittorio De Sica's life, work, and legacy through family access, rare archives and testimonies from global filmmakers. An intimate portrait of a master who transformed reality into universal emotion.

Lerins 1 Priority badges only**17:00****LEFTOVER**

(India) 125mins. Newton Cinema. Dir: Salim Ahamed. Cast: Tanmay Dhanania, Shweta Basu Prasad, Arjun Radhakrishnan.
Lerins Cinema Club

17:45**A GIRL UNKNOWN**

(France, China) Drama, fiction, first film, female director. 125mins. Pyramide International. Dir: Zou Jing. Cast: Li Gengxi. *A Chinese girl is passed between three families from the age of six to 18, receiving each time a new name and*

anonymous and fleeting encounters in parking lots. When he meets Bartosz, a Polish truck driver, his solitary routine is turned upside down.

Arcades 3**FOUR MINUS THREE**

(Austria, Germany) Drama. 121mins. Beta Cinema. Dir: Adrian Goiginger. Cast: Hanno Koffler, Valerie Pachner, Robert Stadlober.

Barbara and her partner Heli try to get by as professional clowns, living out their dream of an alternative, joy-filled life with their two children, and laughing at what doesn't work out. But when a tragic car accident takes Heli and the children, Barbara is left alone. In the face of unspeakable loss, her belief in humour, hope and humanity is put to the ultimate test. Can her way of seeing the world — through both its light and shadow — help her find a way back to life? She bets she'll laugh again.

Palais #J Online**GIMP AND THE HITMAN**

(Greece) 74mins. Majestic Film. Dir: Dimitri Raft.

Penelope's philosopher husband has all the answers — except the ones she needs in the bedroom. One desperate decision leads a scheming stranger to Anthony's Bitcoin fortune, and turns him into a pathetic gimp. That's where it all went wrong. He loved every second of it. And now he's coming for everything.

Palais J**LAALO KRISHNA SADA SAHAAYTE**

(India) Drama. 135mins. IMPPA-Indian Motion Picture Producers Association. Dir: Sakhiya Ankit.

A rickshaw driver trapped in a farmhouse confronts his past demons while experiencing visions of Lord Krishna, who guides him through a transformative journey of self-discovery and healing.

Palais #F Online**MAYA SATYA BHRAM**

(India) 120mins. Indywood Distribution Network. Dir: Samik Roy Choudhury.

Two disappearances unsettle Kolkata's Prafulla Nagar: Totoro, the young son of inspector Konar, and Sara, a Swedish researcher of shamans. Their paths converge on one mysterious figure: Trilokadarshi Baba. What begins as an investigation turns into an inward journey, where logic falters and belief takes form.

Lerins 2**SCARRED**

(US) Drama, fiction, social issues. 118mins. IMPPA-Indian Motion Picture Producers Association. Dir: Vaid Aryan. *As a high-profile theft trial unravels his fractured mind, a Western lawyer and his estranged sister — anchored in Eastern traditions — must confront a deadly family secret before it destroys them both. Two worlds. One secret. A past that refuses to die.*

Palais D

identity. As she searches for belonging and the possibility of love, she has to navigate between the weight of her past and the uncertainty of her future — until she finds her own way.

Olympia #9 Online**ACT ONE**

(US) Drama, thriller. 104mins. Visit Films. Dir: Sophia Takal. Cast: Ella Beatty, Ari Graynor, Nate Mann.

An aspiring young actress, desperate for guidance and belonging, falls under the spell of a manipulative acting coach who draws her into a web of control and obsession.

Olympia 4**BLACK RED YELLOW**

(Kyrgyzstan) Drama, fiction. 93mins. Kyrgyz Cinema. Dir: Aktan Arym-Kubat.

A film about three intertwined destinies, centred on a love between two ordinary villagers — a love that endures and uplifts. The film explores moral responsibility within the family and the need to cherish and respect one another.

Palais B**BY ANY MEANS**

(US) 115mins. North.Five.Six. Dir: Elegance Bratton. Cast: Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, Mark Wahlberg, Giancarlo Esposito.

A notorious mafia hitman and a young black FBI agent team up to investigate the murders of civil rights leaders in 1966 Mississippi.

Olympia 7**CLUB KID**

(US) Comedy, drama. 119mins. Charades. Dir: Jordan Firstman. Cast: Cara Delevingne, Jordan Firstman, Diego Calva.

A washed-up New York party promoter is forced to turn his life around when an unexpected visitor arrives.

Arcades 1**FLESH & FUEL**

(France, Poland) Drama, fiction, LGBT, romance, first film. 90mins. Pyramide International. Dir: Pierre Le Gall. Cast: Alexis Manenti, Julian Swie zewski. * tienne is a truck driver. Addicted to the road, he reduces his emotional life to*

THE WEIGHT OF LONGING

(India) Drama, fiction, first film, LGBT, experimental. 93mins. Jai Viratra Entertainment. Dir: Omkar Bhatkar. *Christopher and Christine despise their maternal aunt Esther but are forced to celebrate Christmas with her in Goa after the death of their mother. Expecting a strained family reunion, they instead find themselves drawn into a week of quiet revelations and emotional rediscovery.*
Palais H

TREASURE TREKKERS

(US) Animation. 98mins. Goodfellas. Dir: Kevin Munroe. Cast: Wyatt Bowen, Meredith Bull, Greg Cipes. *Mip, a 12-year-old adopted monkey in a world ruled by cats and rodents, stumbles upon a magical map that whisks him to the distant land of Empathra. There, he embarks on a perilous quest to uncover the secrets of his mysterious origins. Along the way, he discovers amazing powers inside him, makes new friends, and learns that one small act of kindness can change a cold, angry world forever.*
Olympia 9

WHITE NIGHTS

(Brazil) 98mins. Cinema Do Brasil. Dir: Luiz Dantas. *Amadeu, a solitary butcher, lives on society's margins. When he meets Nadia, waiting for a lover who vowed to return, his need for connection ignites a silent journey of love, rejection and self-discovery.*
Palais #B Online

ZERO A.D.

(US) 120mins. Angel Studios. Dir: Alejandro Monteverde. Cast: Deva Cassel, Sam Worthington, Ben Mendelsohn. *A terrified king hunts a child of prophecy, and one woman must fight for the soul of mankind.*
Palais F Priority badges only

18:15

ASHERAH: A LOVE ODYSSEY

(US) Drama, social issues, art, culture. 70mins. Q2 Films. Dir: Gary Mazeffa. *A young woman discovers she is the long-erased feminine half of creation, setting her on a mythic journey to reclaim what was lost — and confront the forces that buried her from history.*
Riviera 1

DEAR YOU

(China) Drama. 118mins. China Film Foundation-Wutianming Film Fund For Young Talents. Dir: Hongchun Lan. *After her debt-ridden grandson secretly travels to Thailand in search of her supposedly billionaire husband, a humble Chaoshan grandmother discovers that her husband died long ago — and that an unknown woman's decades of remittance letters have quietly revealed a timeless bond of love, sacrifice, and the most moving love letter she never expected.*
Palais I



MARKET

18:15

MOUSE

(US) Drama. 120mins. Visit Films. Dir: Kelly O'Sullivan, Alex Thompson. Cast: Chloe Coleman, David Hyde Pierce, Tara Mallen, Sophie Okonedo. *Callie and Minnie's relationship is suddenly upended at the start of the summer before their senior year of high school. Left rudderless without her charismatic best friend, Minnie starts to form a complicated friendship with Callie's mother.*
Olympia #6 Online

INDIAN SAGA (ANTHOLOGY)

(India) Documentary. 105mins. IMPPA-Indian Motion Picture Producers Association. Dir: Khushi Gandhi Rahulsonu Srivastava, Hari Varma, Yusuf Khan Suresh Pandey. *Presents six films: 'The Mud Flower' by Khushi Gandhi; 'Antarnaad (The Voice Within)' by Parthaa Akerkar; 'Unfinished Voice' by Rahulsonu Srivastava; 'Signal' by Hari Varma; 'OCD' by Yusuf Khan; and 'Hooked' by Suresh B Pandey.*
Palais C

MOUSE

See box, above

REDEMPTIONS

(Canada) 110mins. Cinefrance. Dir: Luc Picard. *Follows a retired hitman forced to return to Montreal to commit two murders.*
Olympia 3

TERA MERA NATA

(India) Bollywood, romance. 116mins. IMPPA-Indian Motion Picture Producers Association. Dir: Goel Savi, Patel Chanda. *Misha, a botany researcher from Delhi, travels to the Morani Hills. There, she is captivated by the voice and guitar playing of Gaurav, a local youth who is blind due to an accident years ago. As Misha spends time with Gaurav, she hides a secret: she is battling terminal cancer. Before passing away, she fulfills her final wish by donating her eyes to Gaurav. Gaurav regains his sight, only to face the reality that the first thing he wanted to see, Misha, is gone.*
Palais E

THE CORRESPONDENT

(Australia) Thriller, true story. 119mins. Tricoast Worldwide. Dir: Kriv Stenders. *Journalist Peter Greste reports on the Arab Spring uprising, becoming entangled in a deadly game of rivalries. Imprisoned for seven years, he survives on wits alone before release in 2015.*
Palais #I Online

WITHIN A BUDDING GROVE

(China) Drama. 112mins. China Film Foundation-Wutianming Film Fund For Young Talents. Dir: Huibin Zhang. *A young woman from Guangdong extorts her father's mistress to raise money for her boyfriend's film project, while engaging in a covert battle of wits with her mother from afar.*
Palais G

WOMEN ON TRIAL

(France) Drama. 105mins. Gaumont. Dir: Lauriane Escaffre, Yvo Muller. Cast: Charlotte Gainsbourg, Cécile De France, Grégory Gadebois. *1972. A trial shakes France as young Marie-Claire is prosecuted for having an illegal abortion with the help of her mother and two other defendants. In a courtroom governed by men, the verdict seems inevitable: prison for them, while the rapist goes unpunished. Their last hope lies with Gisèle Halimi, a lawyer known for confronting the system that condemns victims and lets perpetrators walk free. Against all odds, Gisèle will change their fate and transform the condition of women forever.*
Arcades 2

20:00

APRIL MAY 99

(India) Fiction. 129mins. Maharashtra Film, Stage & Cultural Development Corporation. Dir: Mhapuskar Rohan. *Krushna, Prasad and Siddhesh, best friends in a Konkan village, have their summer holiday planned. Their friendship is tested when they meet Zai, a girl visiting her aunt for the summer.*
Palais B

BLAISE

(France) Animation. 80mins. Best Friend Forever. Dir: Jean-Paul Guigue, Dimitri

Planchon. Cast: Léa Drucker, Jacques Gamblin.

The Sauvage family just wants to be liked. Carole is trying to improve her bad reputation with her employees, while Jacques is trying to improve his with his friends. As for their son, Blaise, influenced by a girl, he politely embarks on a completely impromptu revolutionary crusade.

Arcades 1 Festival ticketing website

PARALLEL TALES

(France) Crime, drama. 138mins. Charades. Dir: Asghar Farhadi. Cast: Virginie Efira, Vincent Cassel, Isabelle Huppert.

In search of inspiration for her new novel, Sylvie begins spying on her neighbours across the street.

Olympia 1 No priority

THE TRAIL OF THE WOLF

(Spain) Drama, fiction, LGBT, thriller, social issues, science-fiction. 99mins. Mr Miyagi Films. Dir: Ángeles Hernández. *After becoming a mother and following her brother's death, Sofia returns to her remote village, where her dying father suffers the effects of a lethal vaccine imposed by a totalitarian regime. As society collapses under water scarcity, Sofia races against time to secure an antidote. But as buried family secrets emerge, she must confront a past that could change her future forever.*

Olympia 4

20:30

BLAISE

(France) Animation. 80mins. Best Friend Forever. Dir: Jean-Paul Guigue, Dimitri Planchon. Cast: Léa Drucker, Jacques Gamblin.

Arcades 2 Festival ticketing website

FATHERLAND

(France, Poland, Italy, Germany) Drama, road movie, documentary. 82mins. The Match Factory. Dir: Paweł Pawlikowski. Cast: Sandra Hüller, Hanns Zischler, August Diehl.

Explores Thomas Mann's post-war German life, his family's stand against Nazi rule and their journey into exile.

Palais K No priority

22:15

PARALLEL TALES

(France) Crime, drama. 138mins. Charades. Dir: Asghar Farhadi.

Cast: Virginie Efira, Vincent Cassel, Isabelle Huppert.

Palais K No priority

22:30

FATHERLAND

(France, Poland, Italy, Germany) Drama, road movie, documentary. 82mins. The Match Factory. Dir: Paweł Pawlikowski. Cast: Sandra Hüller, Hanns Zischler, August Diehl.

Olympia 1 No priority

Jury grid

★★★★ Excellent ★★★ Good ★★ Average ★ Poor ☒ Bad

THE SCREEN JURY AT CANNES	NT BINH <i>Positif, France</i>	ROBBIE COLLIN, TIM ROBEY <i>The Telegraph, UK</i>	KATJA NICODEMUS <i>Die Zeit, Germany</i>	BEN KENIGSBERG <i>Rogerebert.com, US</i>	ANTON DOLIN <i>Meduza, international</i>	PETER BRADSHAW <i>The Guardian, UK</i>	JUSTIN CHANG <i>The New Yorker, US</i>	STEPHANIE ZACHAREK <i>Time, US</i>	AHMED SHAWKY <i>Iffra.com, Egypt</i>	MATHIEU MACHÉRET <i>Le Monde, France</i>	KONG RITHDEE <i>Bangkok Post, Thailand</i>	SCREEN INTERNATIONAL	AVERAGE
NAGI NOTES (Japan) Koji Fukada	★★	★ ★★	★★ ★★	★ ★★	★★	★ ★★	★ ★★	★ ★★	★★	★	★★	★★	2.5
A WOMAN'S LIFE (Fr) Charline Bourgeois-Tacquet	★★	★★	★ ★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★★	★	★	★	★ ★★	1.9
FATHERLAND (Pol) Pawel Pawlikowski	★★ ★★	★ ★★	★ ★★	★ ★★	★★ ★★	★★ ★★	★ ★★		★ ★★	★ ★★	★ ★★	★★ ★★	3.4
PARALLEL TALES (Iran) Asghar Farhadi	★★ ★★	☒	★★		★	★★					☒	★★	1.6
ALL OF A SUDDEN (Japan) Ryusuke Hamaguchi	A woman running a nursing home in Paris is transformed after an encounter with a terminally ill Japanese playwright, in Hamaguchi's French-language debut. Virginie Efira and Tao Okamoto star.												
GENTLE MONSTER (Austria) Marie Kreutzer	A renowned pianist relocates with her family to the countryside, where she uncovers a life-shattering truth that forces her to confront the complexities of love, trust and deception.												
SHEEP IN THE BOX (Japan) Hirokazu Koreeda	Set in the near future, Koreeda's latest follows a couple who take an infant humanoid robot into their home following the passing of their son.												
THE BELOVED (Sp) Rodrigo Sorogoyen	An acclaimed film director (Javier Bardem) offers his daughter (Victoria Luengo) a role under the pretext of helping her stalled acting career, before old wounds are reopened.												
PAPER TIGER (US) James Gray	Two brothers pursuing the American Dream put their family in danger by tangling with the Russian mafia. Scarlett Johansson, Miles Teller and Adam Driver star.												
MOULIN (Hun-Fr) Laszlo Nemes	Nemes' latest tells the story of Jean Moulin (Gilles Lellouche), who is dropped into Nazi-occupied France to help bring the Resistance groups together for Charles de Gaulle.												
ANOTHER DAY (GARANCE) (Fr) Jeanne Herry	A struggling actress (Adele Exarchopoulos) living in a small Paris apartment grapples with alcohol addiction and her sister's illness, while facing a difficult journey of self-renewal.												
HOPE (S Kor) Na Hong-jin	A police chief in a remote South Korean village is alerted after reports of a tiger sighting, but residents find themselves in a fight for survival against something they have never seen before.												
THE UNKNOWN (Fr) Arthur Harari	Léa Seydoux and Niels Schneider headline the story of a man who wakes up in the body of an unknown woman after they spend the night together.												
FJORD (Rom) Cristian Mungiu	A devout Romanian-Norwegian couple resettles in a village and become close to their neighbours, but questions are asked when their young child shows up at school with bruises.												
MINOTAUR (Rus) Andrey Zvyagintsev	In a small Russian town in 2022, the year of the invasion of Ukraine, a high-powered executive's meticulous existence unravels when professional crises, global chaos and marital betrayal converge.												
BITTER CHRISTMAS (Sp) Pedro Almodovar	Almodovar's latest self-reflective work sees a troubled filmmaker draw inspiration from the grief of one of his closest collaborators. Leonardo Sbaraglia, Aitana Sanchez-Gijon and Barbara Lennie star.												
A MAN OF HIS TIME (Fr) Emmanuel Marre	Henri Marre (Swann Arlaud) arrives in Vichy in September 1940, estranged from his family and carrying copies of his political manuscript, hoping to save France — and himself — from downfall.												
THE MAN I LOVE (US) Ira Sachs	In Sachs' drama set during the Aids crisis in late 1980s New York, Rami Malek stars as Jimmy George, an actor facing his own mortality who takes on what might be his final role.												
LA BOLA NEGRA (Sp) Javier Ambrossi, Javier Calvo	This adaptation of an unfinished work by Federico Garcia Lorca explores queer desire through the intertwined stories of three men in Spain, set in 1932, 1937 and 2017.												
COWARD (Belg) Lukas Dhont	Pierre (Emmanuel Macchia) is a young Belgian soldier ready to prove himself on the First World War battlefields. Behind the frontlines he meets Francis (Valentin Campagne), who is looking to boost morale.												
THE DREAMED ADVENTURE (Ger) Valeska Grisebach	In a border town in southeast Bulgaria, a woman becomes involved in an illegal trade to help out a man with whom she shares a special bond.												
THE BIRTHDAY PARTY (Fr) Lea Mysius	Two households in a remote French hamlet plan a surprise birthday party, but the evening is disrupted by a nightmarish home invasion. Hafsia Herzi and Monica Bellucci star.												

SCREEN INTERNATIONAL

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