

CUT TO CINEMA

A man with dark hair and sunglasses, wearing a black suit and tie, is holding an open blue box. Inside the box is a silver palm branch award. The background is a solid blue color.

ISSUE # 03
JUNE 2025

**PALME D'OR
GOES TO JAFAR
PANAHI'S IT
WAS JUST AN
ACCIDENT**

**DOGMA 25:
A RADICAL
CINEMATIC
REBELLION FOR
THE INTERNET AGE
OF FALLING**

**ALI HONORED
WITH SPECIAL
MENTION AT
CANNES 2025**

**Cinema is a
mirror by
which we
often see
ourselves.**



ALEJANDRO GONZALEZ INARRITU

EDITORIAL

By the time you have this magazine in your hands, you are likely already familiar with the names of the winners of the world's most prestigious film event — the Cannes Film Festival. Even so, like every year, the 78th edition of Cannes has generated plenty of buzz, debate, and controversy. Not only that, this year's festival was especially significant for Bangladesh, as for the very first time, a Bangladeshi short film, Ali, was honored with special mention—a big congratulations to the Ali team and the director.

In this third issue of Cut to Cinema, we feature writings from film critics around the globe, as well as contributions directly from Cannes, sent in by writers who responded to our call. We are deeply grateful to them.

And as time goes on, we've noticed a growing interest in Cut to Cinema among readers and film enthusiasts. Your support and love continue to be our biggest source of motivation and inspiration.

Email: bidhanrebeiro@cut2cinema.com



Advisor

Ahmed Muztaba Zamal

Editor & Publisher

Bidhan Rebeiro

CEO

Ayesha Akter

Marketing Manager

Ahmed Himu

Scan & Visit



info@cut2cinema.com

+8801844678933

Price: 90 BDT / 3 USD

Published from Dhaka, Bangladesh



MONTHLY MAGAZINE

NO.03 JUNE 2025

Contents

1. Palme d'Or Goes to Panahi's It Was Just an Accident- 01
 2. The Festival and the challenges of film criticism - 03
 3. Dogma 25: A Radical Cinematic Rebellion for the Internet Age of Falling- 06
 4. Cinema for Big Screen - 11
 5. Celebrating the Bond Between FIPRESCI & Egyptian Film Critics Association - 15
- And Many More...

Cover Photo: Getty Images





Photo: Al - Doumy, AFP

PALME D'OR GOES TO PANAHI'S IT WAS JUST AN ACCIDENT

The Palme d'Or at the 2025 Cannes Film Festival was awarded to the Iranian revenge thriller *It Was Just An Accident*, directed by renowned filmmaker Jafar Panahi. This marks a powerful return to the festival for Panahi, who last appeared at

Cannes over two decades ago in 2003, when his film *Crimson Gold* was screened in the Un Certain Regard section. Over the years, Panahi has faced repeated arrests and a strict travel ban due to his politically charged filmmaking. Only recently was he permitted to travel again.

Jury president Juliette Binoche, announcing the top prize, praised the transformative power of art, stating, "Art mobilizes the most alive part of us—it turns darkness into forgiveness, hope, and new life."

The winning film tells the gripping story of Vahid, portrayed by Vahid Mobasseri, who abducts a man with a prosthetic leg that matches the description of the man who tortured him in prison. Vahid, unsure if he has the right person, consults fellow survivors to confirm the identity of the abuser before deciding what action to take. The film is a deep exploration of trauma, justice, and moral reckoning.

Panahi appeared visibly emotional as he accepted the award on stage, donning sunglasses and thanking his cast and crew. In a heartfelt speech, he addressed Iranians both at home and abroad, emphasizing unity and freedom. "The most important thing," he said, "is our country and its freedom—let's reach a time when no one dictates how we live or what we wear."



Ali, a Bangladeshi short film by **Adnan Al Rajeev**, was honored with a Special Mention at Cannes 2025.

👉 Special mention for Short Film : *ALI* - Adnan AL RAJEEV & Short Film Palme d'or : *I'M GLAD YOU'RE DEAD NOW* - Tawfeek BARHOM. Photo: Daniele Venturelli/wireimage

CANNES 2025

Official Competition Winners



Winners and Jury of the 78th Festival de Cannes. Photo: Jean Louis Hupe/FDC

In Competition

1. Palme d'Or: "It Was Just an Accident" by Jafar Panahi
2. Grand Prix: "Sentimental Value" by Joachim Trier
3. Jury Prize: "Sirât" by Oliver Laxe & "Sound of Falling" by Mascha Schilinski (TIE)
4. Best Director: Kleber Mendonça Filho for "The Secret Agent"
5. Best Actress: Nadia Melliti for "The Little Sister"
6. Best Actor: Wagner Moura for "The Secret Agent"
7. Best Screenplay: "The Young Mother's Home" by Luc Dardenne & Jean-Pierre Dardenne
8. Prix Spécial: "Resurrection" by Bi Gan

Un Certain Regard

1. Un Certain Regard Prize: "The Mysterious Gaze of the Flamingo" by Diego Céspedes
2. Jury Prize: "A Poet" by Simón Mesa Soto
3. Best Director: Tarzan and Arab Nasser for "Once Upon a Time in Gaza"
4. Best Actor: Frank Dillane for "Urchin"
5. Best Actress: Cleo Diára for "I Only Rest in the Storm"
6. Best Screenplay: Harry Lighton for "Pillion"

Caméra d'Or

1. "The President's Cake" by Hasan Hadi
2. Special Mention: Akinola Davies Jr. for "My Father's Shadow"

Honorary Palme d'Or

1. Robert De Niro
2. Denzel Washington

Short Film Palme d'Or

1. "I'm Glad You're Dead Now" by Tawfeek Barhom
2. Special Mention: "Ali" by Adnan Al Rajeev

Cinéfondation

1. First Prize: "First Summer" by Heo Gayoung (KAFA, South Korea)
2. Second Prize: "12 Moments Before the Flag-Raising Ceremony" by Qu Zhizheng (Beijing Film Academy, China)
3. Third Prize: "Ginger Boy" (Separated) by Miki Tanaka (ENBU Seminar, Japan) & "Winter in March" by Natalia Mirzoyan (Estonian Academy of Arts, Estonia) (TIE)

Immersive Competition

1. "From Dust" by Michel van der Aa

FIPRESCI Prizes

1. In Competition: "The Secret Agent" by Kleber Mendonça Filho
2. Un Certain Regard: "Urchin" by Harris Dickinson
3. Parallel Section (first features): "Dandelion's Odyssey" by Momoko Sato



Photo: Getty Images

THE FESTIVAL AND THE CHALLENGES OF FILM CRITICISM

Marcelo Janot

B

ehind all the glamour typically associated with a festival like Cannes lies a far more demanding reality for the film critic. Watching three or four films a day, and being expected to write about them under tight deadlines, leaves little room for slow

reflection or careful digestion of what one has seen. Mediocre films—or those that inspire indifference, whether due to lack of ambition or excess of pretension—are often easier to write about.

Theoretically, a critic needs only the material on screen to formulate an analysis. Production context is often secondary. But “Sirat” might be an exception. Depending on how Laxe would justify his creative decisions, they could appear either completely misguided—or surprisingly inspired. Yet at the press conference, Laxe offered very little in the way of explanation. He stated simply that he prefers to let the film speak for itself.

Fair enough. But the impasse remains. “Sirat” presents one of the most bizarre and confounding screenplays I’ve encountered in years. The film begins as the story of a middle-aged Spaniard who travels to Morocco with his teenage son to search for his missing daughter, absent for months. The only clue to her whereabouts: a suspicion that she’s been attending electronic music raves in the desert—and a single photograph marked by a melancholic stare.

Father and son embark on a journey through the Moroccan desert, trailing behind a caravan of nomadic Spaniards and Frenchmen hauling massive sound systems en route to the next party. Nothing especially novel here—the classic road-movie elements are all

present: a car stuck in the sand, flat tires, lack of fuel. These obstacles serve as a vehicle for personal growth and gradually reduce the emotional and cultural distance between the uptight father and the free-spirited outsiders.



Poster of Sirat. Photo: IMDB

Then, a tragic accident—still within the realm of plausibility—sends the narrative careening in a radically different direction. What follows is a cascade of increasingly absurd deaths, at times eliciting nervous laughter from the audience. At this point, the viewer is forced to ask: what connects this avalanche of events to the ethos of rave culture? Could the same story unfold at a rock concert or samba festival?

At one point, a character declares that “electronic music isn’t something you hear—it’s something you feel.” Fine. But if the film’s ultimate message is that the cost of that feeling may be catastrophic, should we all just become fans of classical music instead? Perhaps critics must reach for a metaphor to make sense of this delirious trajectory.

The film’s title, “Sirat”, refers, within Islamic theology, to the razor-thin bridge that separates hell from paradise, which souls must cross on the Day of Resurrection (“Yawm al-Qiyamah”). The symbolism is clear, even if its application remains elusive.

I remain suspended in the same ambiguity I felt walking out of the screening. And yet, that very discomfort became fuel for over 600 words and 3,500 characters, written in the chaos of festival life. This is why, as a critic and a viewer, I’d much rather engage with a film like “Sirat” than the countless well-meaning productions that never dare to take a real risk. 🇵🇸

Writer: Brazilian film critic bringing insights from the 78th Cannes

BUZZ

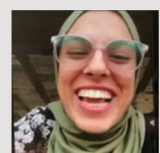


More than 400 global artists, including Pedro Pascal and Juliette Binoche, have signed an open letter condemning the killing of Palestinian photojournalist Fatma Hassona in Gaza, denouncing what they call a “genocide” and criticizing the film

industry’s silence. The letter, released during the Cannes Film Festival, followed Hassona’s death in an Israeli airstrike just after the announcement of her documentary *Put Your Soul on Your Hand and Walk*, which was set to premiere in Cannes.

Initially signed by over 350 industry figures such as Pedro Almodóvar, Susan Sarandon, Alfonso Cuarón, and David Cronenberg, the letter has since gained 60 more signatories, including this year’s Cannes jury president Binoche, Guillermo del Toro, Omar Sy, Riz Ahmed, and Jim Jarmusch. It calls out the global film community for failing to respond to the rising civilian death toll and attacks on journalists, artists, and filmmakers in Gaza.

Fatma Hassona. Photo: Cannes ACID



The signatories express shame at the industry’s passivity and urge cinema to reclaim its role as a voice for justice and truth, asking, “What is the point of our professions if not to protect oppressed voices?” The letter demands that art no longer be complicit in covering up atrocities, warning against propaganda and the loss of humanity.

French Culture Minister Rachida Dati supported the artists’ right to engage politically, affirming the link between culture and freedom of expression. She emphasized that artists must stand against growing global censorship and political violence, declaring, “Culture can also save the world.”

The letter is a powerful call to action: to remember Fatma, to reject silence, and to restore cinema’s responsibility in confronting injustice and telling suppressed truths. 🇵🇸

SOUND OF FALLING

ON THE INHERITANCE OF TRAUMA

Mariola Wiktor

This is a shocking, multi-generational study of the inheritance of trauma. The protagonists are four generations of women living on a German rural farm of nearly a century.

First, there are young girls, and then adult women who become hostages to their mothers behaviors. More or less consciously, they replicate similar behaviors, make the same mistakes, and experience the same violence they suffered in childhood. Life, death, illness, sex, the harshness of social relations, and two world wars comprise their existence. There are no images of the wars themselves, but there is a recurring eerie sound that resembles the approach of bombers, which heightens the sense of danger. It is excellently complemented by the unsettling visual aspect of the film. Frames with soft, warm, gentle light from oil lamps and candles contrast with grainy, rough images and the starkness of the subject. The boundary between what is real and what is unreal quickly blurs, leading to reflection on the very nature of what we see. Moreover, the camera often approaches the characters without their knowledge. They are spied upon through a keyhole, holes in the wall. The walls of the farm seem to hide secrets and sufferings, passing them on like a cursed legacy.

The exquisite visual beauty serves the narrative of terrifying and subtle psychological horror. The farm becomes a place of play but also a prison, a mausoleum. Mascha Schilinski films different eras in the same sepia color tone, which intentionally makes it difficult to distinguish them from one another, emphasizing that in fact, nothing really changes. Each of the protagonists must confront their own challenges related to their age, era, and family status, but the same curse seems to hang over them all. The director travels through eras from the end of the 19th century to contemporary times in a fluid manner, allowing herself to be carried away by the inner lives of her heroines. She masterfully uses sophisticated tracking shots, differences in framing, exposure, and focus.



Taken from the movie poster. Photo: IMDB

Through the reversal of images and slow motion, which deconstructs the monstrosity of reality that mercilessly, regardless of the era, befalls young girls and young women who inhabit this labyrinthine building. By intertwining the fates and sufferings experienced by the protagonists, "Sound of Falling" by Mascha Schilinski tells of patriarchal oppression that still remains intact, even if it has changed its form.

It is not by accident that the director introduces numerous scenes of funeral rituals into the film. The drastic act, from our point of view, of sewing the eyelids of the deceased girl so that her eyes remain open, finds its justification in the tradition of post-mortem photography, which was very popular at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. In this way, the film stages the idea that the awareness of death is more significant and integrated among women than men. This conviction brings sisters, mothers, grandmothers, and daughters closer together in a fascinating timelessness. 🇵🇱

Writer: Polish film critic bringing insights from the 78th Cannes

DOGMA 25

A RADICAL CINEMATIC REBELLION FOR THE INTERNET AGE OF FALLING

Thirty years after the groundbreaking Dogma 95 movement reshaped global cinema, a new collective of five Danish and Swedish filmmakers has launched Dogma 25, unveiling a bold and politically charged cinematic manifesto at the Cannes Film Festival. In sharp opposition to digital algorithms and the increasing artificiality of film, this new movement positions itself as both a “cultural uprising” and a “rescue mission.”

Filmmakers May el-Toukhy, Milad Alami, Annika Berg, Isabella Eklöf, and Jesper Just announced their manifesto, highlighting a mission to uphold the flawed, human, and unpredictable elements of cinema. They resist the commodification of film and the transformation of audiences into passive consumers.

Dogma 25 has been publicly endorsed by legendary directors Thomas Vinterberg and Lars von Trier, key figures in Dogma 95, along with von Trier’s production company Zentropa. Their joint statement reflected on the historical context: “In ‘95, we made films in the certainty of peace. And created a revolt against conformity. In ‘25, new dogmas are created, now in a world of war and uncertainty.”

Dogma 95’s impact was seismic. Its famous “Vow of Chastity” outlined ten strict rules that emphasized realism and artistic purity—no artificial lighting, no genre films, no director credits, and more. This led to classics like *Festen* and *The Idiots*, which were pivotal to European cinema in the late 1990s.

Although Dogma 95 dissolved in the early 2000s, its spirit lives on through Dogma 25—now adapted for today’s digital and sociopolitical climate.



Dogma 25 collective announce their artistic manifesto at Cannes. May el-Toukhy, Milad Alami, Annika Berg and Isabella Eklöf and Jesper Just. Photo: Guardian

The new manifesto rejects most of the old rules but keeps their radical ethos. Only one original rule remains: shooting must take place where the narrative occurs.

Dogma 25 introduces ten new commandments, grounded in three themes: physical reality, aesthetic restraint, and accountability—both economic and geographic. Most provocatively, filmmakers vow to avoid the internet in all creative processes and complete their films within one year.

Here is the complete list of Dogma 25 rules:

1. Original, handwritten script by the director to nurture intuitive creativity.
2. At least half the film must be without dialogue, prioritizing visual storytelling.
3. No internet involvement in any creative phase.
4. Only accept funding with no strings attached, protecting artistic control.
5. Maximum 10 crew members behind the camera, encouraging trust and cohesion.
6. Shoot where the story takes place, ensuring authenticity.
7. No cosmetic alterations unless justified by the narrative—faces and bodies must remain natural.
8. Use only existing items (borrowed, found, or reused), rejecting consumerism.
9. Finish the film within a year, to maintain creative momentum.
10. Make the film as if it were your last, emphasizing sincerity and urgency.

In the words of its founders, Dogma 25 is “a cultural uprising” for a new cinematic age—one that challenges conformity, embraces imperfection, and fights for the soul of film. 🎬



Aishwarya Rai attends the "The History Of Sound" red carpet at the 78th annual Cannes Film Festival at Palais des Festivals on May 21, 2025 in Cannes, France. Photo by Andreas Rentz/Getty Images

PHOTO STORY

Glimpses of Cannes 2025



The Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning gang take a red-carpet selfie. Photo: Getty Images



Julian Assange at the photo call for The Six Billion Dollar Man. Photo: Getty Images



Elle Fanning at the Sentimental Value photo call. Photo: Getty Images



Rihanna and A\$AP Rocky light up the Croisette at the premiere of Highest 2 Lowest. Photo: Getty Images



Emma Stone was attacked by a bee on the red carpet. Photo: Getty Images

In the dazzling city of lights, people remain isolated. The blinding artificial light of urban spaces seems to prevent the human eye from perceiving the heart within the person standing beside them. It's reminiscent of mystic poet Lalon's song:

"In the mirror city by the house, the neighbour lives there,
Yet I never see them, even for a day."

Each person is like a mirror. When one looks into another, they discover themselves. But the thousand-watt glare of urban lights, reflecting off the mirror of another person, obscures their vision; they can't see either themselves or the other. In the cityscape, human insight appears to blur.

The film opens with scenes of Mumbai—a bustling metropolis, vibrant with lights. In the background, there is no single narrative voice. Instead, fragmented human expressions lash across like whips. Kapadia deliberately chooses this style to depict the city's character. She observes the city from afar, emphasising how the people who animate the city remain distant from it. The city never becomes their own. Crushed under the pressures of life and livelihood, they strive to adapt to its suffocating environment. Their feet sink into the daily muck; the city refuses to relent. Like a snake, the metro trains carry battered bodies to work and back, rendering life an exhausting loop where relationships and love struggle to breathe.



Payal Kapadia's *All We Imagine as Light* (2024). Photo: IMDB

In contrast, far from the city—amid quieter, simpler places devoid of frenzy and excessive light—people seem to come closer together. In the absence of overwhelming lights, they can read one another more clearly. Under starlight, much like a meditator immersed in quiet reflection, they can discover themselves.

It is this very sentiment, at least in my view, that Payal Kapadia, the filmmaker, captures in her film *All We Imagine as Light* (2024). The film explores the mechanical and organic dichotomy, centred around human relationships—fragile in the city yet profound in rural settings. This stark contrast between city and village life evokes Rabindranath Tagore's poem *To Civilization*:

"Give back the forest, take this city,
Take the iron, steel, wood, and stone,
O new civilisation, you ruthless devourer
...
We long for freedom, for open skies,
To regain our strength within,
To feel in our hearts, tearing the bonds,
The pulsations of this eternal universe."

Prabha, a nurse, is married. After her wedding, her husband immediately left for another big city in Germany for job purposes. One city's dreams seem to devour another's. Despite being married, Prabha lives as if widowed. A doctor from the hospital expresses love for her, but he, too, eventually leaves Mumbai, seeking an escape from its suffocating air. Alone, Prabha clings to a red rice cooker sent by her husband from Germany. On stormy nights, she sobs, holding this appliance close. Does the steam gathering in the rice cooker reflect the vapour of tears collecting in her heart? Perhaps that's why the rice cooker feels so intimate to her. The red colour, too, carries significance.

Prabha's colleague, Anu, is unmarried and in a relationship that the city and its society disapprove of. Her lover, Shiyaz, belongs to a Muslim family, forcing their love into secrecy. One day, Anu wears a burqa to meet him.

But that day was a stormy day; torrential rains paralysed the city—transport came to a halt, and the metro froze. Shiyaz informs her that their meeting is impossible. Suddenly, Anu and Shiyaz feel like strangers to each other, unsure of what to do. The city effortlessly estranges the familiar, just as it alienates Prabha's husband from her.

This estrangement extends to the very homes people live in. Parvati, another hospital colleague, lives on the edge of the city. Her husband, a laid-off jute mill worker, had secured a small house there. However, due to missing documents, they lost even that. Parvati can no longer stay in the city. She decides to move to a coastal village, where they own a small plot of land—at least no one can evict them from there. Prabha and Anu join her, embarking on a new journey.

The latter half of the film shifts to this rural setting. Here, events unfold that were impossible in the city. Anu and Shiyaz reunite amidst the serenity of nature near the frothy waves of the sea. When Prabha encounters a stranger washed ashore by the waves, for a fleeting moment, she imagines it to be her husband, miraculously returned from Germany. For a moment, she feels her husband's presence. Despite Shiyaz being a Muslim, he, Anu, Parvati, and Prabha sit together under the stars, bathed in their soft light.

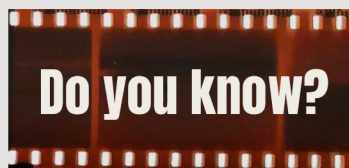
Village life, stripped of its artificiality, becomes a space of simplicity, beauty, and innocence. When night descends, it does not bring chaos but a soothing environment under the stars, allowing people to draw closer to one another. Artificiality dissolves, and they become children of nature, clearly seeing each other.

Kapadia masterfully crafts this interplay of light and reflection. Without proper reflection, the eyes fail to recognise what they see. Through her luminous frames, Kapadia conveys this profound truth.

The film, a collaboration between France, India, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Italy, premiered at the 77th Cannes Film Festival. It is the first Indian film since 1994 to compete in the main competition at Cannes, and Kapadia is the first Indian female filmmaker to win the Grand Prix.

In this Malayalam-language film, Kani Kusruti plays Prabha, Divya Prabha portrays Anu, Chhaya Kadam plays Parvati, and Hridhu Haroon excels as Shiyaz. Their performances have already earned them stardom, and they continue to shine brightly. 🌟

Writer: Editor of Cut to Cinema, film critic and journalist



Payal Kapadia at Cannes 2025. Photo: AFP

Payal Kapadia is one of the most exciting voices in contemporary Indian cinema.

Her debut feature, *A Night of Knowing Nothing*, won the prestigious L'Œil d'or (Golden Eye) for Best Documentary at the 2021 Cannes Film Festival.

She studied at the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), where her involvement in student protests shaped her political and artistic vision.

Kapadia's films blend documentary and fiction, often using voiceovers, letters, and personal memory to create lyrical narratives.

In 2024, her film *All We Imagine as Light* became the first Indian film in nearly 30 years to be selected for the Cannes main competition (Palme d'Or).

She has also served as a jury member at the 78th Cannes Film Festival—an incredible recognition of her global stature.

Cinema for Big Screen

Elena Rubashevskaya

I am invited to sit on the jury of yet another festival. I am excited and looking forward to bonding with people over the cinema. I anticipate rediscovering the magic of the moving image anew on the big screen.

However, the festival reaches me with a bunch of screeners a month ahead of the event and the jury deliberation is supposed to take place shortly after the start of the festival. After that, we are free to attend other screenings or just hang around until the closing ceremony.

Has it happened to you to agree to such conditions? If so, you have contributed to the mutual fault of undermining the very foundation of our industry: sharing a collective experience in front of the big screen, an experience that profoundly changes us and prompts us to start a dialogue to find common ground in this mad world.

I am guilty of this myself; it started as a compromise during COVID times and lingered when there was no more necessity to continue this way. Pandemic is over, yet the harmful ways it influenced the industry persist. There are other factors that contribute to things spiraling down. Let's look at them closer and see if they indeed are so unavoidable.

Festivals suffered from budget cuts, and many of them never truly recovered. At the same time, hundreds of new initiatives have popped up in more and more places; it seems that nowadays every city needs to have a film festival. But do all of them stand up to the standards we used to measure festivals with? Without a doubt, the very intention to bond over cinema is noble, but the more I observe the current situation, the more I feel that many festivals care more about how they will be reflected on social media rather than what they actually have to offer. Budgets and efforts are poured into creating an image of the festival rather than the festival itself.

Every day, a team is supposed to post a bunch of Instagram-worthy pictures (separate posts for every minor happening), and most importantly, upload videos titled "Day 3 of the festival" with the catchy music and exhaustingly derivative structure (happy festival guests, clapping festival guests, festival guests eating snacks generously provided by the sponsor, etc.). Has anyone watched such videos till the end? Meanwhile, plenty of resources were invested in making it happen.

Another justification that festivals use these days is that they need to know winners' names in advance to prepare posts for social media. Most people will scroll through these few pictures and forget them the next second, drowned in the incessant stream of trendy meme videos; those who truly care, value quality and meaning over the speed of posting. Yet festivals prefer to have beautiful posts rather than providing jurors with a fair opportunity to watch films on the big screen, and side by side with other people.

Perhaps someone might argue that in modern times, what's not on social media has never even happened but more and more often, I get the impression that things that actually never happened (or didn't happen as they should) are, however, on social media. Often, they look much better than they were in real life.

Now, I am not saying we should abandon social media for good; yet at the same time, I feel that if the resource that is going for creating the picture would be directed to actually securing something tangible, it would have been much more beneficial for both audience and the festival.

Let's discuss the most important point against watching films via screeners. Answer honestly: has it happened to you, while being on remote jury duty, to speed up the film that you found not so engaging? To watch a film in a several goes? To interrupt the screening because your work/family/any other reason needs your attention?

To watch a film under inappropriate technical conditions (bad screen resolution, sound, internet connection)? To watch a film on a tablet on the go because of the lack of time? Finally, to scroll through your feed while watching the film? Let the one who was never guilty of such things be the first one to throw a stone at me!

And did it happen to you to watch the same film on the big screen and change your opinion?..

By watching films via screeners, we unavoidably equalize it to the rest of the fast-food content we're consuming non-stop. The attention span shortens, and it's harder to focus. In the end, it turns out that the huge amounts of money and resources go into producing a movie that we would barely pay attention to. The technical aspects that make us appreciate certain films are often possible to be perceived on a big screen only: colors, sound, and the perception of rhythm. The films we watch at home, much like TV series, would be mostly judged by the story and characters. Big screen, on the other hand, makes us appreciate something more important: the complexity of the unique cinematic expression and all aspects that make cinema different from TV, streaming platforms, and most importantly, social media.

It concerns detecting not only good but bad films: what you can suffer through relatively engaged with the help of binge-scrolling, would be unbearable to sit through in the cinema.

I am not stating cinema shouldn't be watched at home at all, but I strongly believe that when it comes to festival perspective and especially jury duty, it is crucial that we watch films on the big screen, with co-jurors by our side, and also with the audience. It sets a different state of mind, and in the modern world, cinema becomes a spiritual meditation. Besides, the purpose of cinema does not end with the last frame of the film, it continues in discussions, sparks arguments, and makes us share sincere, first-hand emotions.

I urge festivals to reconsider priorities and to remember that our common purpose is to create connection through the medium of art and that without this foundation all further components are spare. At the same time, I urge festival guests, especially jurors and film critics, to not agree on compromises when it comes to the very foundation of our profession. Let's prioritize quality over formal media representation, and let's take on a responsibility to set standards and trends for respect for our profession based on digital and media hygiene. Cinema is much like food: it matters not only what you consume but how you do it: relaxed, stressed, focused, in a rush, watching something when you eat (harms digestion) or eating something – or scrolling – while watching cinema (harms the quality of perception).



Elena Rubashevskaya

Last but not least: if we agree to watch films online, we might as well agree to solely online discussions and in general virtual festival formats. Yet COVID times have shown us convincingly enough that it is not what human nature benefits from. So, until AI enslaves us and connects everyone to the Matrix, let us not allow imitation of activity to become more important than activity.

Let's watch cinema – at least within the festival's context – as it was intended, on the big screen. Together. 🍿

Writer: Ukrainian Film critic and festival programmer, FIPRESCI (The International Federation of Film Critics) vice president and communication officer.

In his major work, *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye* (1954), the German art and film theorist and perceptual psychologist Rudolf Arnheim (1904-2007) pays special attention to the complex psychophysiology of the perception of spatial

images in combination with their accompanying sound environment. It is not by chance that psychophysiology quite works explicitly with the concepts of synaesthesia (mixing of several sensory perceptions) and sensitisation (intensification of one sensory perception at the expense of another, e.g. blind people have enhanced auditory perception). And 430 years ago (!), the greatest playwright, Shakespeare, wrote in his play *Midsummer Night's Dream* the ingenious line 'I see a voice'!

1.

This is in relation to the visual perception of the spatial parameters of the frame, also with the participation of sound (music, sound effects).

However, since 1930 (the introduction of sound on the screen), dialogue has been even more important for the overall perception of the film (when translated and subtitled).

Then, the meaningful message is already specifically worded by the content of the lines and their acting presentation. And it is precisely in this way that the authors present their ideological messages to the audience most effectively. That is, the sound, through the dialogue, becomes the main component of the communication between the screen and the viewer!

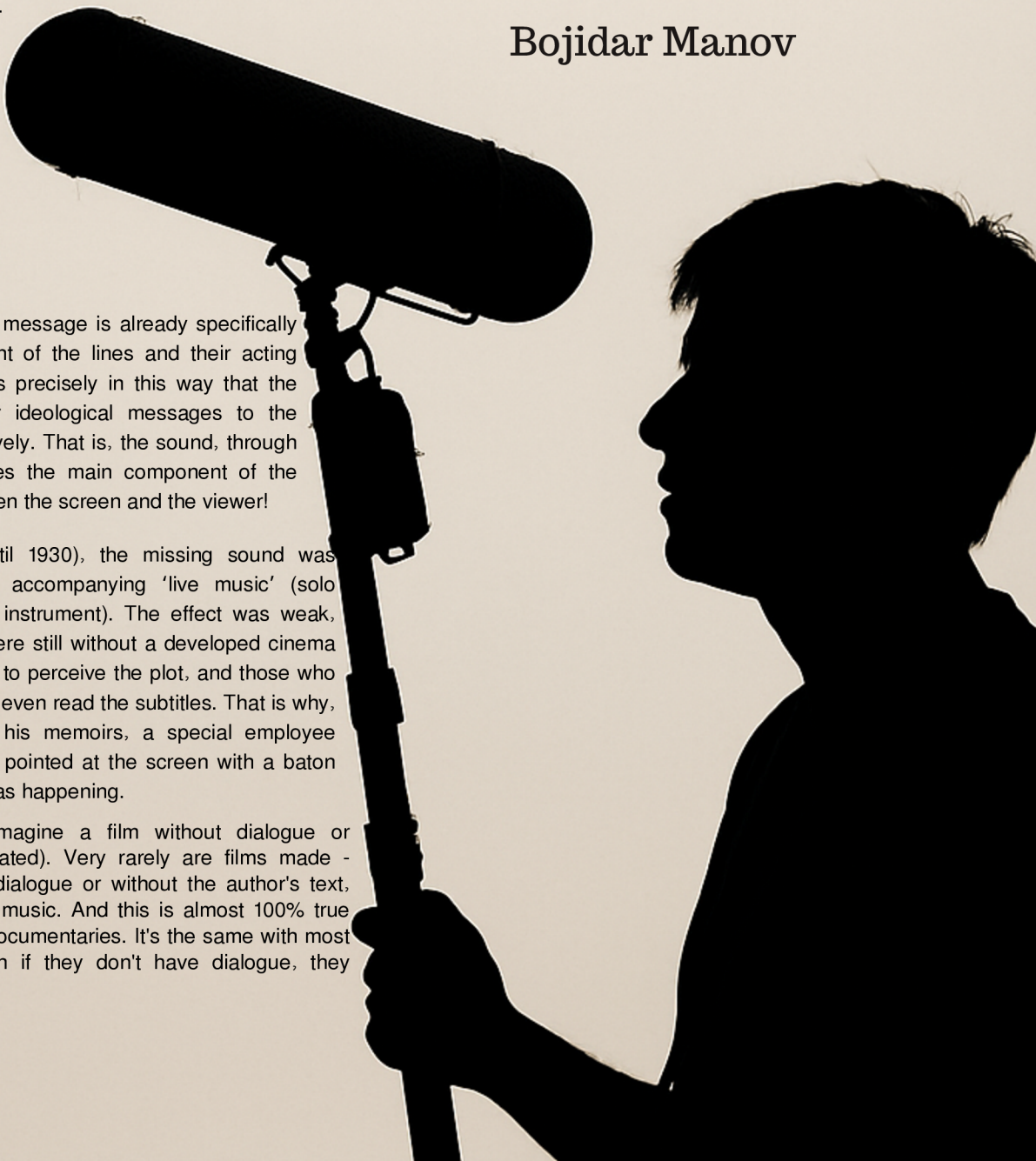
In silent cinema (until 1930), the missing sound was partially replaced by accompanying 'live music' (solo piano or some other instrument). The effect was weak, partial, the viewers were still without a developed cinema culture, it was difficult to perceive the plot, and those who were illiterate couldn't even read the subtitles. That is why, as Buñuel writes in his memoirs, a special employee called an 'explicador' pointed at the screen with a baton and explained what was happening.

Today, we cannot imagine a film without dialogue or subtitles (when translated). Very rarely are films made - impressions, without dialogue or without the author's text, but nevertheless with music. And this is almost 100% true for feature films and documentaries. It's the same with most cartoons, which, even if they don't have dialogue, they always have music!

SOUND

FROM THE SCREEN TO THE AUDIENCE

Bojidar Manov



2.

In 2011, the French director Michel Hazanavicius surprised the cinema world with the black and white silent film *The Artist* - a magnificent curtsy to the old cinema to recall its phenomenal power and ageless energy! It is not by chance that the film had a total of 162 awards, including 3 Oscars and 2 more nominations! Of course, *The Artist* is a beautiful and talented exception, and there can be no question of some renaissance of silent cinema. But it recalls its charm and the subordinate position of sound in the synthetic screen result!

The first Bulgarian sound film, *Buntat na Robite* [*The Slave Rebellion*] (dir. Vassil Gendov), was produced in 1931 - a naive life story about the greatest Bulgarian national hero - revolutionary of the 19th century Vassil Levski. The film is best remembered for one famous gaffe: Levski sneaks into a village at night when hens jump out of nowhere. These domestic birds are known to always sleep at night! But because it was cheaper, the team shot the night footage as the so-called 'American night' (daylight photos with a dark filter), the hens did not comply with this circumstance and caused laughter in the audience!

In the following years, some jingoistic films related to Bulgaria's participation in the Second World War on the side of the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis (Italy, Germany, Japan) stand out, which are not distinguished by anything significant. In artistic terms, sound cinema, as an unwritten rule, sounded films predominantly with symphonic music. The dialogues, presented by theatre actors, without experience in front of the camera and the microphone, were too far from an excellent professional level.

Curious and valuable from a historical point of view is the documentary *A Day in Sofia* (1946, dir. Zahari Zhandov), which shows Bulgaria's capital after the war's end, the destruction from the bombing raids and the beginning of the recovery. The text behind the scenes is optimistically cheerful, reflecting post-war optimism. The film is very similar to the German documentary *Metropolis* (Berlin, symphony of the big city, 1927, dir. Walter Ruttmann), which is silent. The Bulgarian film won the first international awards for Bulgaria from festivals in Roma and Karlovy Vary.

After the war, and more precisely after the communist coup of September 1944, Bulgaria was among the Eastern European countries handed over by the Great Powers to Soviet influence during the years of Stalinism.

A period of propaganda films began, which, with false pathos, confirmed models characteristic of the period of Stalinism. Such is the film *Dimitrovgradtsi* [inhabitants of the town of Dimitrovgrad] (1956, dir. Nikola Korabov, Ducho Mundrov). A story about the construction of the new Dimitrovgrad (named after the Bulgarian communist leader Georgi Dimitrov). In such films, the music is usually of a heavy classical nature (symphonies, cantatas, oratorios).

The dialogues are like sentences from propagandistic journalistic clichés, delivered on the screen by theatre actors with the false theatrical pathos characteristic of the time. And the cinema does not tolerate such anti-credibility.

But even then, some talented and honest authors created honest films as opposition to official propaganda, e.g. *Partizani* [*Guerrillas*] (1957, dir. Binka Zhelyazkova). Screenwriter was her husband - former real partisan and talented writer - Hristo Ganev. At that time, such films were banned and not shown in movie theatres. Therefore, several similar films had their premiere 30 years later, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the democratic changes in Eastern Europe at the end of 1989. The only positive fact about this political and ideological censorship was that no films were destroyed and they lived to see their time! This process is now being studied by historians and critics in Bulgarian cinema.

A curious symmetry is observed in the already mentioned political transition from the end of 1989. Mirror-like propaganda films appeared, debunking the fallacy of the overthrown communist regime with spectacular plots about mafia structures. They have replaced political power with economic power through dirty money exported and laundered through hollow business operations. Similar titles created a so-called organised criminal group film category with a specific sound score style. The music has a simple, primitive melody. The dialogues are cheap lines, full of characteristic 'underworld' slang and vocabulary of the criminal contingent. The TV series *Undercover* (since 2011 in 5 consecutive seasons) followed the same direction. However, because it was created by talented screenwriters and young director Viktor Bozhinov, the series was a thriving genre (crime) film. It was, therefore, distributed with great success in many countries on all continents.

If we look to the near future, we will see the silhouette of AI (artificial intelligence). It still needs to write dialogues, although it has such software Pattern Models. But Artificial Intelligence Music Creators or AI Music Generators (from lyrics with vocals) are already a reality and 'authors' in several films.

Obviously, the future is pursuing us, and we should think about it! 🤖

Writer: Bulgarian film critic, teacher and journalist.

100 Years of FIPRESCI



Celebrating Bond Between FIPRESCI & Egyptian Film Critics Association

Mohamed Sayed Abdel Rehim

In 2025, the International Federation of Film Critics — FIPRESCI — marks 100 years since its founding, a century that has seen cinema evolve into a global language of culture, identity, and change. As part of this global celebration, the Egyptian Film Critics

Association (EFCA) proudly reflects on its longstanding and active relationship with FIPRESCI, a bond that underscores Egypt's deep commitment to the art of film criticism.

FIPRESCI was established in 1925 by critics from France and Germany to promote and safeguard the role of criticism in the development of film culture. Over the decades, the federation has become a vital voice in world cinema, best known for its juries and awards at more than 90 international festivals each year — from Cannes and Venice to Busan and Karlovy Vary.

The relationship between Egyptian critics and FIPRESCI began to take shape in the mid-20th century, as Egypt's film culture matured and a new generation of critics emerged. EFCA, founded in 1972, played a key role in formalizing Egypt's place within the global network of film critics. Through its affiliation with FIPRESCI, EFCA became not just a national body representing local critics, but a bridge between Egyptian cinema and the international film world until EFCA Board Director Ahmed Shawky mounted to FIPRESCI President.

Egyptian critics have been active members of FIPRESCI juries for decades, contributing to the international dialogue around cinema and amplifying the voice of Arab and African filmmakers on the global stage. Legendary critics such as Samir Farid, Youssef Cherif Rizkallah, and Magda Wassef have represented Egypt at festivals worldwide, serving on FIPRESCI juries and influencing generations of young critics through their writing, teaching, and mentorship.

EFCA and FIPRESCI have also collaborated in workshops, seminars, and joint initiatives aimed at supporting film criticism as a profession and a cultural necessity. This collaboration has helped nurture emerging critical voices in Egypt and reinforced the importance of criticism in fostering a vibrant, accountable, and diverse cinematic landscape.

As FIPRESCI enters its second century, EFCA reaffirms its dedication to continuing this legacy — championing the role of the critic, defending the freedom of artistic expression, and deepening the dialogue between Egyptian critics and their peers around the world.

Celebrating 100 years of FIPRESCI is not just a tribute to the past — it is an invitation to imagine the future of cinema through the lens of thoughtful, committed, and independent criticism. 🌍

Writer: Egyptian film critic, member of EFCA and FIPRESCI

Sinners



Iqra L Qamari

An Ode to the Blues That Haunt

When was the last time you shed a tear watching a horror movie and not just mindlessly flinch at the bang of a jump scare? Sound, or its lack thereof, historically and technically, has played a crucial role in the

horror genre. In this southern gothic nightmare, however, Ryan Coogler takes the genre's oldest trick to the next level, where the score not only sets the mood or plays as the credits roll in, it's at the forefront and it raises the dead.

Set in 1930s Mississippi, *Sinners* follows twin brothers, Smoke and Stack, (both portrayed with eerie emasculation by Michael B. Jordan) who come back to their hometown to start over, only to have to deal with terror—one that is more worldly than supernatural.

The cinematography is charged with remoteness and expectancy. Visually, the film oscillates between shadowy minimalism and bold, expressionistic tableaux. Coogler does not trade subtlety for spectacle. Instead, he introduces the dread slowly; it creeps in with every hymn and every stare. Thematically, there is a bit of whiplash in the film from how it goes from a time period piece about culture to vampires.

It is a big-screen delight, rich in sonic and visual storytelling—which brings forth the tragic realization that most cinephiles from Bangladesh will miss out on this grand cinematic experience, and only be confined to laptops or pirated streams. But that is a horror to be dealt with for another day. Until this cultural disservice is rectified, smaller screens offering next-to-no immersive experiences will have to do.

This might seem like a vampire genre renaissance—with *Nosferatu* first, and now *Sinners*—except, this movie was never really about vampires. Underneath this comic-book bravado, the essence of these blood-sucking monsters symbolizes cultural appropriation. Coogler manages to capture an accurate historical retelling of what happened to the Blues in America. This is horror, that is much palpable in the real world given its themes of racial tension, cultural upheaval and historical erasure. *Sinners* stand out quiet blatantly refusing to offer catharsis to its audience. There is no hidden chest containing the secret on how to get rid of the demon. There is simply no redemption here, perhaps only reckoning.

Writer: Contributor, Cut to Cinema

Photo: Warner Bros.





Cardinals Turn to film **Conclave** for Insight During Papal Election

Following the death of Pope Francis on April 21, 2025, at the age of 88, the College of Cardinals convened to elect his successor. In a historic decision, Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost, a Chicago native, was elected on May 8, 2025, becoming Pope

Leo XIV—the first American and the first member of the Order of Saint Augustine to ascend to the papacy. His election marks a significant moment in the Catholic Church's history, reflecting a blend of tradition and modernity.

Amidst the solemn proceedings of the conclave, some cardinals and clerics reportedly sought guidance from an unexpected source: the 2024 Oscar-winning film *Conclave*, directed by Edward Berger. The film, which dramatizes the intricate process of electing a new pope, saw a surge in viewership following Pope Francis's passing. According to Luminata, a media analytics firm, streaming of *Conclave* spiked by 283 percent, jumping from 1.8 million minutes viewed the day before the Pope's death to 6.9 million minutes by April 21.

A report from Politico highlighted that several cardinals and clerics watched *Conclave* ahead of their voting sessions. An unnamed priest described the film as “remarkably accurate,” noting its usefulness as a “helpful research tool,” especially for those less familiar with the intricacies of Vatican politics and conclave protocols.

Some even viewed the film in cinemas to better understand the process they were about to undertake. Religious scholars have praised *Conclave* for its fidelity to real-life church procedures, even as it takes certain dramatic liberties. Euronews Culture conducted an analysis detailing where the film aligns with authentic practices and where it diverges for narrative effect.

Based on Robert Harris's bestselling novel, *Conclave* follows Cardinal Thomas Lawrence, portrayed by Ralph Fiennes, as he navigates the complexities of a papal election over three days in the Vatican.

The narrative delves into the political maneuverings and personal revelations that influence the selection of a new pope. The film garnered eight Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture, Best Actor, and Best Supporting Actress, ultimately winning Best Adapted Screenplay for Peter Straughan.

Pope Leo XIV, born Robert Francis Prevost on September 14, 1955, in Chicago, has a rich history of service within the Church. He joined the Order of Saint Augustine as a young man and was ordained a priest in 1982. His extensive missionary work in Peru and leadership roles, including serving as the Prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops, have equipped him with a global perspective. His election is seen as a continuation of Pope Francis's emphasis on social justice, environmental stewardship, and outreach to marginalized communities.

In his first address as pope, Leo XIV expressed gratitude for Pope Francis's legacy and called for unity and peace among all nations. His leadership is anticipated to navigate the Church through contemporary challenges, maintaining a balance between tradition and progressive values. 🙏



Ralph Fiennes as Cardinal Thomas Lawrence in movie Conclave.

Photo: EURO News

Scorsese to Produce Final Pope Francis Documentary

Aldeas A New Story



Martin Scorsese is producing a documentary made with Pope Francis that will chronicle the late pontiff's work with cinema in the global educational movement he founded before his death. Legendary filmmaker Martin Scorsese

is producing a documentary about the late Pope Francis, featuring his last on-camera interview.

The pontiff, who became pope in 2013 after his predecessor Benedict XVI resigned, died on 21 April aged 88.

Scorsese met numerous times with Pope Francis over the years, and their conversations sometimes informed work undertaken by the 82-year-old filmmaker of the acclaimed yet polarizing 1988 film *The Last Temptation of Christ* and his 2016 film *Silence*, which chronicled the plights of Portuguese Jesuit missionaries in 17th-century Japan. The director shared his thoughts at the time of Pope Francis' death and said: "The loss for me runs deep — I was lucky enough to know him, and I will miss his presence and his warmth. The loss for the world is immense. But he left a light behind, and it can never be extinguished."

Variety has reported that he will now produce *Aldeas – A New Story*, a feature-length documentary and worldwide cultural project developed by Scholas Occurrentes, the global educational movement founded by the Pope. *Aldeas – A New Story* will feature the final on-camera interview with Pope Francis, filmed especially for the documentary.

Prior to his death, Pope Francis said of the film: "'Aldeas' is an extremely poetic and very constructive project because it goes to the roots of what human life is, human sociability, human conflicts... the essence of a life's journey."

Scorsese said in a statement: "Now, more than ever, we need to talk to each other, listen to one another cross-culturally. One of the best ways to accomplish this is by sharing the stories of who we are, reflected from our personal lives and experiences."

He continued: "It helps us understand and value how each of us sees the world. It was important to Pope Francis for people across the globe to exchange ideas with respect while also preserving their cultural identity, and cinema is the best medium to do that." 🌍



*Martin Scorsese and Pope Francis.
Photo: Vatican Media via AP*



REELS OF RESISTANCE

TIMELESS **ANTI-WAR** MASTERPIECES

Paths of Glory (1957) by Stanley Kubrick

A powerful critique of military hierarchy and the futility of war, this World War I drama follows a French officer defending innocent soldiers from a wrongful execution. Kubrick's stark visuals and moral clarity make it a haunting anti-war statement.

Come and See (1985) by Elem Klimov

This harrowing Belarusian film plunges into the horrors of Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe through the eyes of a young boy. It's a surreal, brutal experience that strips war of all its glory and leaves behind only trauma.

Grave of the Fireflies (1988) by Isao Takahata

An emotionally devastating animated film about two siblings struggling to survive in post-bombing Japan. Its quiet sorrow and tender storytelling reveal the human cost of war, especially on children.

The Great Dictator (1940) by Charlie Chaplin

Chaplin's bold satire mocks fascism and totalitarianism with humor and heart. His closing speech, a plea for peace and unity, remains one of cinema's most iconic anti-war moments.

Apocalypse Now (1979) by Francis Ford Coppola

A descent into the madness of the Vietnam War, this adaptation of Heart of Darkness portrays war as chaos, illusion, and psychological collapse. Its nightmarish tone captures the moral disintegration at war's core.

All Quiet on the Western Front (1930) by Lewis Milestone

One of the earliest and most enduring anti-war films, it follows young German soldiers in WWI as their patriotic dreams give way to horror and disillusionment. A bleak, powerful reminder of war's dehumanizing force.

La Grande Illusion (1937) by Jean Renoir

Set in a World War I POW camp, this French classic emphasizes shared humanity over national borders. Renoir's humanist vision questions the divisions that lead to war and celebrates dignity in captivity.

Dr. Strangelove (1964) by Stanley Kubrick

A razor-sharp black comedy about nuclear annihilation, this satire exposes the absurdity of Cold War paranoia and military logic. Kubrick again turns war into a dark farce where reason loses all ground.

Hirak Rajar Deshe (1980) by Satyajit Ray

Disguised as a children's fantasy, Ray's sequel to Goopy Gyne Bagha Byne critiques authoritarianism, mind control, and state violence. Through song and wit, it argues for resistance, knowledge, and freedom over tyranny.

The Deer Hunter (1978) by Michael Cimino

Spanning before, during, and after the Vietnam War, this epic explores the emotional scars left on a group of working-class American friends. It reveals how war destroys communities, identity, and the sense of home.

Utpal Dutt, acted in Hirak Rajar Deshe by Satyajit Ray



QUIZ



FINAL CUT TRIVIA

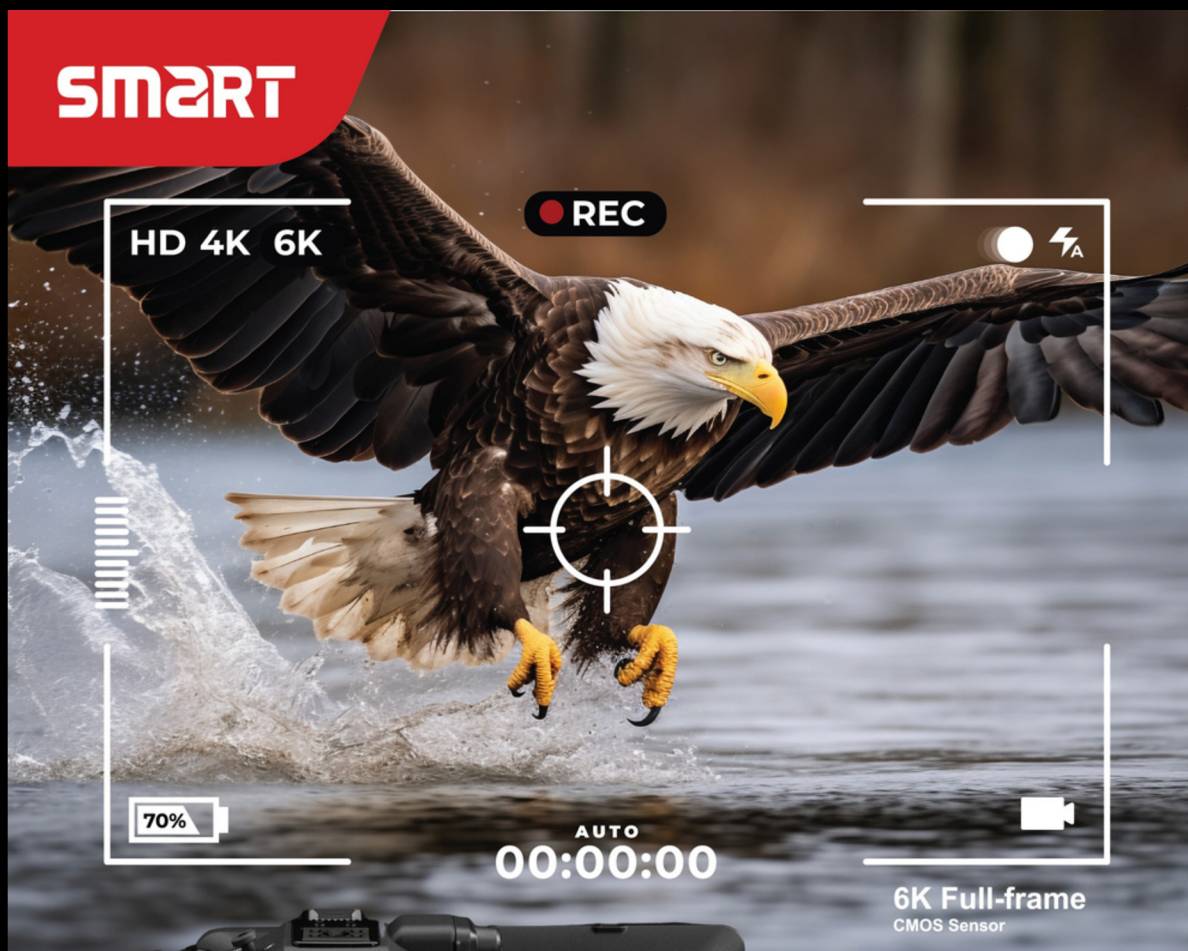
1. Which film features a harrowing journey through Nazi-occupied Belarus seen through the eyes of a teenage boy?
A. All Quiet on the Western Front
B. Come and See
C. The Pianist
D. Life is Beautiful
2. In Paths of Glory (1957), what is Colonel Dax trying to prevent?
A. The bombing of a civilian village
B. The assassination of a general
C. The execution of innocent soldiers
D. A mutiny among the troops
3. What is the main message of Grave of the Fireflies (1988)?
A. War strengthens family bonds
B. Children are resilient in war
C. War leads to senseless suffering and loss, especially for the innocent
D. Patriotism justifies sacrifice
4. Who directed La Grande Illusion, a World War I film known for its strong humanist message?
A. Jean-Luc Godard
B. Jean Renoir
C. François Truffaut
D. Marcel Carné
5. In Dr. Strangelove, what global crisis does the film satirize?
A. World War I trench warfare
B. Vietnam War protests
C. Cold War nuclear tensions
D. Colonial occupation
6. What form of control does the villain use in Hirak Rajar Deshe to suppress dissent?
A. Surveillance drones
B. Physical punishment
C. Mind control rhymes
D. Book burning



1. B. Come and See
2. C. The execution of innocent soldiers
3. C. War leads to senseless suffering and loss, especially for the innocent
4. B. Jean Renoir
5. C. Cold War nuclear tensions
6. C. Mind control rhymes

Answers

SMART



6K Full-frame
CMOS Sensor

Cinema Camera

**Precision motion images
for cinematic storytelling**



Cinema Prime Lenses (RF) - Ready for Every Shoot

EOS C80

Key Features :

- 1- RF Mount System
- 2- Full Frame 6K BSI Sensor
- 3- Triple-Base ISO
- 4- Dual Pixel CMOS AF II
- 5- 12G-SDI
- 6- Cinema RAW Light



Call for more details

01799986870

Smart Technologies (BD) Ltd.

Jahir Smart Tower, 205/1/A, West Kafilul, Begum Rokeya Sharani,
Agargaon, Talitola, Dhaka.

Canon

Delighting You Always