



ISSUE 8 VOL. 1

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RITWIK GHATAK
AT 100

CHARLIE CHAPLIN'S UNFINISHED
FINAL FILM SCRIPT PUBLISHED

WHAT'S NEXT FOR BANGLADESHI
CINEMA AND ITS AUDIENCE?

GEN Z TURNS AWAY FROM SEX ON
SCREEN

Think, think, practice thinking



RITWIK GHATAK

EDITORIAL

This month, we celebrate the 100th birth anniversary of Ritwik Ghatak, the legendary Bengali filmmaker born in Dhaka, Bangladesh. With our limited means, we honour this visionary artist by revisiting his life and work. In this issue, Cut To Cinema also pays tribute to Diane Keaton and Claudia Cardinale—two iconic figures of Hollywood and Italian cinema.

At Cut To Cinema, we continue to bring our readers the latest news and reviews of newly released films. We are grateful for the warm response from our readers and well-wishers, which inspires us to keep improving every issue.

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And Many More...

Cover Photo: Ritwik Ghatak, a renowned Bengali filmmaker, photo taken from Mathrubhumi online. The photograph was taken during the shooting.

Diane Keaton.
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THE FREAK

CHARLIE CHAPLIN'S UNFINISHED FINAL FILM SCRIPT PUBLISHED

Chaplin in 1969. He spent time in London that year exploring ways to pull off the flying scenes. Photograph: Jane Bown

A

long-lost screenplay by Charlie Chaplin — a fantasy centred on “a beautiful creature with wings” — is being reconstructed and published for the first time from scattered drafts, sketches and storyboards.

Chaplin, who rose from poverty in Victorian London to become cinema's first great comic icon with works like *The Great Dictator* and *Limelight*, had been developing this project until his death in 1977 at 88.

The film, titled *The Freak*, tells the story of Sarapha, an ethereal female being described by Chaplin as “a bird with a human body”. She possesses miraculous powers, able to heal and bring peace to humanity. Chaplin intended to make a cameo as a drunken passer-by stunned to see her soaring above London's Houses of Parliament.

The surviving materials for *The Freak* are more extensive than for any of his other productions. They include detailed scene breakdowns, special effects plans — including designs for Sarapha's wings — as well as financial estimates, technical meeting notes and production schedules, indicating the project was close to filming.

David Robinson, Chaplin's official biographer and editor of the forthcoming book, said: “It's a shame that it wasn't finished because it could have been a marvellous film.”

Chaplin had cast his teenage daughter Victoria as Sarapha. She recalled his obsessive research into flight: “For hours, for weeks, for months, he studied the movements of birds in flight. He watched films of men and women soaring through the air. But the techniques then did not satisfy him. He wanted his own method —

crafted, personal — to translate the sensation of flying to the screen. I believe he would have found it. But time clipped his wings. Charlie Chaplin never brought his vision to life.”



Chaplin's daughter Victoria is fitted with wings. Photograph: The Roy Export Company Ltd. All Rights Reserved

Sticking Place Books released *The Freak: The Story of an Unfinished Film* last month. Publisher Paul Cronin said Chaplin had created a heroine as enduring as the Little Tramp — another outsider — which is clear from the production notes.

This is the first publication of the script in English in its original form. It was previously released only in Italian in 2020 by the Cineteca di Bologna in a limited edition while cataloguing the Chaplin Archive.

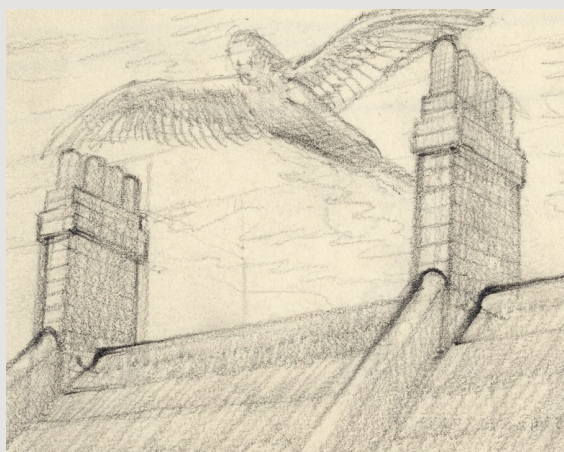
Cecilia Cenciarelli of Cineteca di Bologna, co-editor of the new release alongside the Chaplin family, said even scholars had barely known of the project: “We found ourselves handling hundreds of pages of a film we’d never heard of and turned to David [Robinson]’s ‘bible’, Chaplin: His Life and Art, for answers — only to find *The Freak* barely mentioned.”

Among the papers are confidential casting notes listing Robert Vaughn, James Fox and Richard Chamberlain as possible actors for the role of an English professor who finds Sarapha unconscious and injured on his rooftop and becomes her ally.

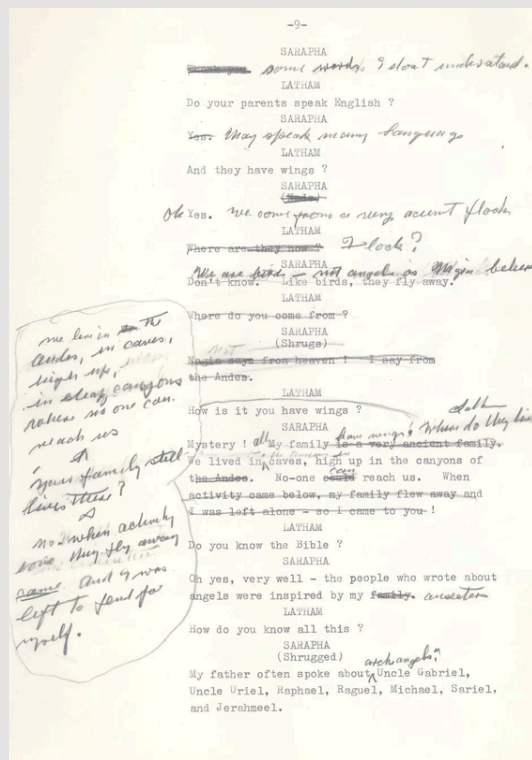
In one scene, she confesses her misery: “I don’t like mystifying and frightening people ... I am afraid of everyone and everyone is afraid of me.” Elsewhere, Chaplin writes that she “loved him in spite of the fact that he was without wings”.

By 1969, Chaplin was in London investigating flying techniques. He held discussions with stage-flight specialists and film effects teams, including those at Shepperton Studios.

The book also features an interview with artist Gerald Larn, who made 150 drawings of Victoria as Sarapha in flight. “Charlie was very clear and precise about what he wanted,” Larn said. “We expected it to be difficult, but not impossible. The best part was that Charlie always responded to what we sent.”



The scripts detail everything from scene breakdowns to special effects sessions, including wings for Sarapha. Photograph: The Roy Export Company Ltd. All Rights Reserved



A page of the script. Photograph: The Roy Export Company Ltd. All Rights Reserved

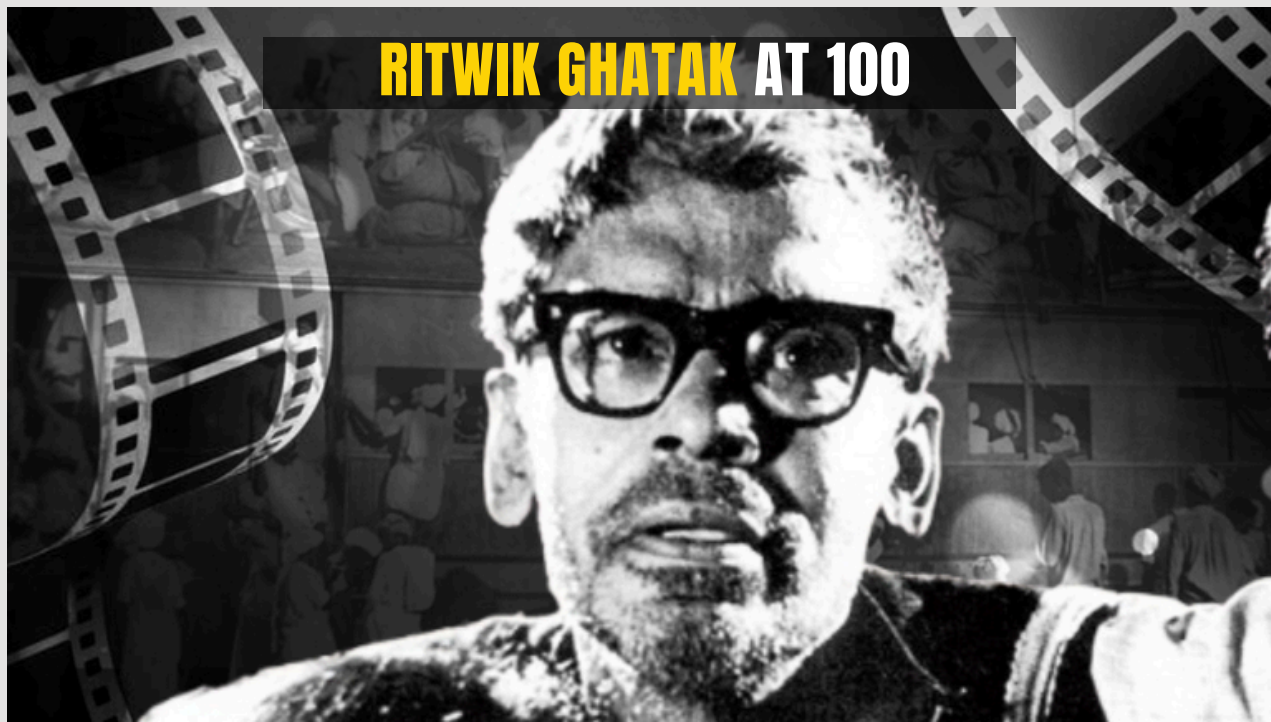
Arnold Lozano, manager of the Chaplin estate, called the publication “the first comprehensive presentation of Chaplin’s last, unfinished film project”. Assembled from nearly 3,000 pages of Chaplin’s writings, photos, design notes, recorded narration and piano score sketches, he said it reveals *The Freak* as “perhaps his final bequest — unique within his work yet still unmistakably Chaplinesque — offering a rare window into one of the most extraordinary projects of his 63-year career in cinema.” 🍷



A sketch by Gerald Larn of the winged character, described as ‘a bird with a human body’. Photograph: Unknown/The Roy Export Company Ltd. All Rights Reserved

As Ritwik Ghatak's birth centenary invites renewed attention to his legacy, Komal Gandhar stands as powerful proof of his prophetic vision. The article's exploration of its tender yet tumultuous rhythm shows why Ghatak was not merely portraying Partition but composing a universal raga of loss, union, and cultural resilience that still resonates today.

Written by **Bidhan Rebeiro**



REVISITING THE SORROW AND SONG OF KOMAL GANDHAR

“

I have therefore named it Komal Gandhar — / When one lifts their eyes they cannot tell / Why within the chest / Tears gather like mist.” In his poem Komala Gandhar (The Melancholy Note), Rabindranath

Tagore hinted at a tender, sorrowful note resonating through the tanpura of life. Ritwik Ghatak, too, tried to bind Anusuya's life with that very same note. In that cinematic melody, in the storytelling, or in the structuring of the scenes, it was not just pure lament we heard — he also went in search of its merciless origins.

Just as Bhriku feels the pain of his theatre group falling apart, Anusuya carries within her the torment of a love separated by exile. Their emptiness fuses together at the final edge of a railway track. From there one can only sink into memories — tears may dry and rise again like tides, but from that point no reconnection is possible. Standing by the banks of the Padma, Bhriku counts the waves of grief. Anusuya immerses herself in them. They realise that the shared rhythm of their losses is binding them together. Twisting and breaking them, it brings them into an uncanny coincidence.

Fate pulls people apart, rivers change course, theatre troupes crack open, nations are divided — and yet, somewhere, a new sandbank of hope emerges. Somewhere people find ground again. Bhriku and Anusuya's troupe too settles on such a halfway island, trying to reconcile country, people, religion, caste, community. As a few group members sail toward Jagna's Char (sandy island), we hear them cry, “Dohai Ali, Dohai Ali.” Such invocations of Allah by Muslim boatmen are not just rare in Bengali cinema — they are almost non-existent in West Bengal films.

At first glance it may seem as though Ritwik has stitched one dramatic scene after another to create an overblown melodrama. Compared to neatly packaged conventional stories, this one might even seem disjointed. At the time of release, Komal Gandhar endured no small share of mockery. Which is why Ritwik had said, “To enjoy this film, I think one must first abandon all mental agitation and remain free of preconceived expectations — only then can the viewer derive satisfaction.” Meaning it was the audience whose expectations were breaking.

But even if one lets go of excitement before watching, is it possible not to be stirred right from the film's opening moments?

Layer after layer, Ritwik attempts to paint the image of eternal motherhood. At times he casts Carl Gustav Jung's archetype of the primal mother onto Anusuya's character; at times he discovers her in the diary of a woman searching for flames in the mouths of her revolutionary sons; at other times he seeks the essence of motherhood in the low-caste mother weeping over her dead child in front of Bhriгу. And that is not all. He does not forget to mention that within the performance of Shakuntala rehearsed inside the film, Shakuntala herself was beginning to transform into the mother of the hermitage. In the full statement of the film, Anusuya ultimately appears as Bangladesh itself — as the Mother of the Nation.

On one side there is psychoanalysis and philosophy; on the other, Ritwik draws an epic mural of union forged through the fire of separation and conflict. He plays the raga of love glowing brighter under the weight of sorrow: yes, Partition happened, and to those who came from the other side of Bengal, the skies of Kolkata seemed murky. Their hearts would not settle. Yet unknowingly, they fell in love with Kolkata. Anusuya could not bear to be without her fiancé Samar, or rather Ferdinand, who used to call her Miranda. Yet she could not deny her pull toward Bhriгу either.

In *The Tempest*, Ferdinand and Miranda loved each other, married, and embraced an optimistic future. Against betrayal and revenge, they played a hopeful tune on the tanpura of love. Just like Shakuntala and Dushyanta. Just like our Bhriгу and Anusuya. After many storms, Ferdinand and Miranda were reunited — though Miranda had to leave her father's island. Shakuntala too had to leave the hermitage to go to Dushyanta's palace. Anusuya too left Bangladesh for Kolkata. And she did not even migrate to Paris. She stayed — with Bhriгу, in Kolkata.



Supriya Choudhury as Anusuya and Abanish Banerjee as Bhriгу in *Komol Gandhar* (1961). Photo: Collected



An unofficial poster of *Komol Gandhar* (1961).
Photo: Collected

So *Komal Gandhar* is not only a tale of Partition, broken hearts, or shattered theatre troupes. It is also a tale of union. That is why we hear, “Brahmane chitraichhe piri modhye shona diya, aij hobe Sitar biya,” it is a traditional wedding song. The banks of the Padma crumble on both sides; yet just as a new sandbar rises in the middle of Jagna, so too does the human mind float up somewhere, finding ground to place its feet. There it seeks address, and seeks the seed-spell of living together.

As Bhriгу's troupe reunites with newfound vigour while writing a new play on the Bengali Partition, Anusuya bids farewell to her old pull toward Samar and seeks refuge with Bhriгу. And Bhriгу, drifting like a lost boat, suddenly becomes the captain who finds his compass. He finds the inspiration to restart the theatre movement anew.

Perhaps the buffer of the railway tracks no longer touches the land left behind — but Ritwik Ghatak's characters, even with broken hearts, find new homes of their own. Amid the loud clamour of politics, society, and the state, people like Anusuya and Bhriгу endure as the soft raga of sorrow in human civilisation. In *Komal Gandhar* we witness a rare narrative born of duality — on one side the pain of loss, on the other the embrace of the new.

In this film, Ritwik blends literature, mythology, allegory, and philosophy — and above all, employs Rabindra Sangeet and folk music with such mastery — that his claim is unquestionably justified. He had said *Komal Gandhar* was his most “intellectual” film. After its release, the audience could not receive it freely, which deeply saddened Ritwik Kumar Ghatak. But today, when the doors of this 1961 film reopen after so many years, we can align our bloodstream with its heartbeat. We feel this film is an artwork ahead of its time. Progressive works often share the fate of tragic heroes. Yet, by their own merit, they emerge at the right moment. They receive praise. They are bathed in love. They are rewarded. 🙏

Writer: Editor, Cut To Cinema

The Oscar-winning star, born in Los Angeles, rose to prominence in the 1970s thanks to her portrayal of Kay Adams-Corleone in The Godfather series. She went on to become widely recognised for leading roles in Father of the Bride, First Wives Club and Annie Hall, the latter earning her the Academy Award for Best Actress in 1978.

Her death was confirmed to CBS News — the BBC’s US partner — by producer and longtime friend Dori Rath.

Annie Hall also brought Keaton the Golden Globe for Best Actress in a Comedy or Musical, as well as the BAFTA Award for Best Leading Actress.

Over a career spanning more than fifty years, she appeared in numerous other films including The Family Stone, Because I Said So, And So It Goes, and several Woody Allen movies such as Play It Again, Sam, Sleeper, Love and Death and Manhattan.

Keaton made her screen debut in the 1970 romantic comedy Lovers and Other Strangers. Her final appearance was in the 2024 comedy Summer Camp, acting alongside Eugene Levy and Kathy Bates.

She also worked behind the camera, directing several films. Her first was Heaven, a 1987 documentary exploring people’s beliefs about the afterlife. In 1995, she directed Unstrung Heroes, a comedy-drama starring Andie MacDowell, John Turturro and Michael Richards, which was selected for Cannes Film Festival’s Un Certain Regard section, highlighting distinctive work by emerging filmmakers.

Her most recent directing credit was Hanging Up in 2000, a comedy-drama featuring herself, Meg Ryan and Lisa Kudrow.

Keaton was celebrated not only for her film work but also for her distinctive sense of style, often marked by menswear-inspired outfits and wide-brimmed hats.

According to a family spokesperson speaking to People magazine — which first reported her death — Keaton died in California on Saturday.

Tributes poured in. Bette Midler, her First Wives Club co-star, posted on Instagram: “The brilliant, beautiful, extraordinary Diane Keaton has died. I cannot tell you how unbearably sad this makes me. She was hilarious, a complete original, and completely without guile, or any of the competitiveness one would have expected from such a star. What you saw was who she was ... oh, la, lala!”

Actor Ben Stiller honoured her on X, writing: “Diane Keaton. One of the greatest film actors ever. An icon of style, humor and comedy. Brilliant. What a person.”

Keaton received three additional Oscar nominations — all for Best Actress — for Something’s Gotta Give, Marvin’s Room and Reds.

She never married and was mother to two adopted children — her daughter, Dexter, and her son, Duke.

ACADEMY AWARD-WINNING ACTRESS **DIANE KEATON** HAS PASSED AWAY AT 79



Diane Keaton. Photo: Ruven Afanador

In her 2011 memoir *Then Again*, she reflected: “I have assessed my happiness ratio and this is the result. I am totally content whenever the ones I love are happy about something little, big, insignificant, whatever. I just don’t think anyone could possibly have the same wonderful, intense, compelling feelings that I have for this family of mine.” 🍷



Film critic **Rita Dutta** writes this tribute exclusively for Cut To Cinema, celebrating Diane Keaton as Hollywood's most unconventional screen queen. From *Annie Hall* to *Book Club*, Keaton's audacity, intellect and style reshaped how generations perceive women on screen.

Diane Keaton, from different films. Photo: Photofest

Diane Keaton, one of the finest actresses Hollywood has ever produced, deserves accolades for most of her quirky roles and brilliant performances. Over the years, she developed a distinctive style of her own, with a great sense of fashion. She redefined the concept of a new American woman in *Annie Hall*. With her androgynous style, she challenged the status quo of society. Dynamic, chirpy and unapologetically herself, Diane was every thinking person's dream girl. Unlike popular belief, she was a beauty with brains — what a lethal combination!

She began her career in a Broadway play before landing a role in Francis Ford Coppola's masterpiece *The Godfather* and its sequels. But it was *Annie Hall* (1977 / Director: Woody Allen) that earned her lifelong recognition worldwide. She received her first Oscar for this extraordinary performance. Keaton often calls the character of *Annie Hall* the most "affable version of herself."

In her illustrious career, ranging from 1970 to 2024, Keaton played various roles without being typecast, even appearing in TV series. Still, a few memorable films always draw our attention while discussing her prolific journey — *Manhattan* (1979), again with Woody Allen; *Reds* (1981) as Louise Bryant; *Marvin's Room* (1996) as a terminal patient; the funny and smart Erica Barry in *Something's Gotta Give* (2003); and Dianne in *Book Club* (2018). Keaton has always managed to bring forth a kind of intellectualism in her performances that made her stand apart from her contemporaries.

In the midst of her career, she chose Gus Van Sant's *Elephant* (2003), stepping in as executive producer. In an interview about the film, she said, "It really makes me think about my responsibilities as an adult to try and understand what's going on with young people."

And obviously so, as Gus Van Sant is not typical Hollywood, and Keaton wanted to contribute to something alternative.

In Nancy Meyers' adorable film *Something's Gotta Give*, Keaton shared the screen with another gigantic performer, Jack Nicholson, and the two delivered some of the most remarkable performances of their lifetime. Keaton, all through her life, balanced her career quite well. Juggling proficiently between Hollywood commercial films and intellectually stimulating cinema, she did it all — commendably.



Diane Keaton and Woody Allen in Annie Hall (1977).

Photo: IMDB

Her directorial debut, *Unstrung Heroes*, was an unusual film, just like her persona. It was critically acclaimed, and Michael Richards' performance was widely acknowledged. A queen of comedies and dramas, she has, in her decades-long career, effortlessly mixed humour with brilliance. She constantly reinvented herself to adapt to the changing era, and therefore has remained relevant till date. 🍷

Bangladeshi Film **Suraiya** Wins Prestigious Berlinale World Cinema Fund Grant



Photo: Provided by the Suraiya team

Bangladeshi feature film *Suraiya* has been awarded a major production grant from the Berlinale World Cinema Fund (WCF), placing it among a select group of global independent projects backed by one of the world's leading film institutions.

The announcement came following the WCF's 42nd jury session, where twelve films from across Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Mexico, Panama, Sudan, Tunisia, Ukraine, and Venezuela were chosen for financial support. This year's selection was made from 236 submissions representing 63 countries — underscoring the competitiveness of the process.

Suraiya, directed by Robiul Alam Robi and produced by Ratherhood Initiatives Ltd, secured €40,000 (around Tk 55 lakh) in production funding. The film is produced by Fazle Hasan Shishir, who described the recognition as a significant milestone for Bangladeshi independent cinema.

"We are honoured to receive support from the Berlinale World Cinema Fund 2025," said Shishir in a statement. "To stand alongside such a diverse group of international projects from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe is both humbling and inspiring. This recognition reaffirms our commitment to telling stories rooted in Bangladesh yet resonant with global audiences."

The Berlinale World Cinema Fund allocated a total of €525,000 this cycle for twelve production grants and two distribution grants, alongside a €40,000 TUI Care Foundation Award.

Suraiya has already gained international industry attention prior to this win. The project was previously selected for the Asian Project Market 2023, Produire au Sud Dharamshala Lab 2023, and the Tasveer Film Market 2024.

With the WCF backing, *Suraiya* now advances toward production with heightened visibility on the global festival circuit — marking another notable step forward for contemporary Bangladeshi cinema. 🌍

Hollywood Backs Ongoing **No Kings** Movement Against Trump



Protestors march in the second 'No Kings' protest on Oct. 18, 2025 in Shelburne, Vermont. Robert Nickelsberg/Getty Images

The nationwide "No Kings" protest movement continues to draw growing participation from across the United States, with actors and filmmakers once again joining demonstrators in major cities, including Los Angeles and New York City, during rallies held last Saturday.

Organizers say the protests are aimed specifically at President Donald Trump and what they describe as his anti-democratic policies. Marchers carried placards denouncing political overreach and warning against the return of authoritarian-style leadership in American governance.

Spike Lee shared an image from a New York rally, urging followers to "get up, stand up." Jamie Lee Curtis posted scenes from the streets, praising "Democracy in action." Ben Stiller amplified protest imagery with a tongue-in-cheek sign reading, "No Kings except for Knicks player Jalen Brunson." Mark Ruffalo, ahead of the weekend gatherings, called on Americans to join one of more than 2,500 protests nationwide, reminding supporters that "courage is contagious."

In Los Angeles, Writers Guild of America West president Michele Mulroney addressed a crowd, warning that free speech was under direct threat. She pointed to recent disruptions of *The Late Show* with Stephen Colbert and *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* as examples of pressure on dissenting media voices.

"This isn't just about Hollywood," she said. "It's about the fundamental right to disagree with those in power. To debate. To reason. To question authority."

Mulroney vowed that writers would continue to "speak our minds, write our truths, and fight like hell for an independent media."

The "No Kings" protests have been gaining traction over recent months. A previous nationwide gathering took place on June 14, just hours before a military parade for the U.S. Army's 250th anniversary in Washington. Organizers say more demonstrations are being planned as the movement expands. 🇺🇸



Claudia Cardinale, 1938 - 2025

CLAUDIA CARDINALE INDOMITABLE ON AND OFF SCREEN

This tribute has been written exclusively for Cut To Cinema by **Paula Cassela**, an Italian film critic, drawing on her personal memories and firsthand encounters with Cardinale over the course of decades of interviews and friendship.

“When I arrived in Hollywood they wanted to change everything about me: my weight, my look, even my teeth. For a while I was intimidated, but eventually I replied, ‘If I am so ugly, why did you call me here?’” This, followed by her trademark throaty laughter, is what Claudia Cardinale told me when I interviewed her in the Eighties, and it represents her personality in a nutshell: defiant, brave, dignified.

In 2022, Cinecittà dedicated a book to her, curated by her daughter Claudia Squitieri, titled “The Indomitable,” and indeed, Cardinale was indomitable. Born in Tunisia to Southern Italian parents, she was raped at 20 and bore a son, Patrick. She had to hide him at the insistence of her producer companion, Franco Cristaldi, whom she always called by his last name because he was older and extremely powerful in the Italian film industry. But eventually she reclaimed her independence from him and fell in love with director Pasquale Squitieri, the father of her daughter Claudia.

Federico Fellini gave her a piece of advice that she never forgot: “When your mouth smiles, your eyes should be serious, and vice versa.” It was a great acting tip, but it also mirrored her complex nature. Her pout, reminiscent of Brigitte Bardot’s — the diva Claudia most wanted to look like as a young actress — expressed her melancholia; her full laughter, with that husky timbre, communicated her joie de vivre and her irony.

Claudia Cardinale wearing the stage costume and revising the script before the shoot of a scene of the film 'The Pink Panther', 1963. Photo: Wikipedia

She worked with Fellini and with Visconti, whose rivalry was legendary, shooting their masterpieces *8½* and *The Leopard* at the same time, jumping from set to set. She worked with great Italian directors such as Sergio Leone, Mario Monicelli, Pietro Germi, Marco Ferreri, Liliana Cavani, Franco Zeffirelli and Marco Bellocchio, and with many international auteurs, including Abel Gance, Jerzy Skolimowski, Blake Edwards, Claude Lelouch and Manoel de Oliveira. Everybody wanted her, but nobody ever pinned her down. She was indomitable as an actress and as a woman, and the world is not likely to forget her. 🌹





*Tilly Norwood, an AI-generated 'actress', smiles in an AI-generated image obtained by Reuters on October 1, 2025.
Particle6/Handout via REUTERS*

AI ACTRESS **TILLY NORWOOD** TRIGGERS BACKLASH IN HOLLYWOOD

A new figure is making waves in Hollywood — but she isn't human. Tilly Norwood, a fully AI-generated character created by Dutch actress and technologist Eline Van der Velden, is being positioned as cinema's next rising star. Her creator claims that major talent agencies are already considering representing her, sparking an industry-wide debate over the future of acting and the ethics of synthetic performers.

Norwood was developed through Van der Velden's AI studio Xicoia, an offshoot of her production company Particle6. Soft-launched earlier this year on social media, Tilly currently has over 39,000 Instagram followers, introducing herself as an "aspiring actress" and asking fans what kind of roles she should play.

Van der Velden makes no secret of her ambitions. "We want Tilly to be the next Scarlett Johansson or Natalie Portman," she told Broadcast International. Speaking

later at the Zurich Summit, she claimed studios initially dismissed AI performers but are now actively seeking partnerships. Norwood has already appeared in a short comedy sketch titled *AI Commissioner*, celebrating her "first ever role."

But while her creator frames the project as innovation, many in the film industry see it as a threat. Social media quickly filled with alarmed reactions, with users calling it "the end of real actors" and urging others not to support AI performers.

Well-known actors soon joined the criticism. Emily Blunt called the concept "terrifying," Natasha Lyonne urged unions to boycott any agency representing AI actors, and Mara Wilson accused Norwood's creators of exploiting real women's likenesses without consent. Kiersey Clemons demanded transparency over which agencies were in talks.

SAG-AFTRA, the actors' union that fought for AI protections during the 2023 Hollywood strikes, issued a firm statement rejecting the idea that Norwood could be considered an actor. "She is not a performer but a character trained on the work of real artists without permission," the union said, warning that synthetic actors risk replacing human labor.

Van der Velden has defended her creation, comparing AI performers to animation or puppetry — tools meant to expand storytelling, not erase human actors. She insists that Tilly is "a creative work, not a replacement for a person."

However, critics argue that the issue is not technological creativity but consent, compensation and employment. With AI already reshaping multiple industries, many fear that unregulated synthetic performers could undermine livelihoods built on human experience and emotional authenticity.

For now, the spotlight remains on Tilly Norwood — but whether she earns applause or rejection may determine how Hollywood navigates the age of artificial talent. 🤖



The SAG-AFTRA logo is displayed outside of the National Headquarters on Wilshire Blvd. Photo: Patrick T. Fallon/AFP/Getty Images/File

Do You Know?



Short film Sunspring. Photo: Collected

In 2016, an AI named Benjamin co-wrote a short film called *Sunspring* using a neural network trained on hundreds of sci-fi scripts. The result was surreal yet oddly coherent, proving that machines can mimic screenwriting patterns. While AI still lacks true creativity, *Sunspring* sparked ongoing debate about authorship, originality, and the future of storytelling.

BRIEF

GUILLERMO DEL TORO SLAMS AI AT LUMIÈRE FESTIVAL

Guillermo del Toro premiered his long-awaited *Frankenstein* at the Lumière Film Festival, declaring, “Art is urgent — and AI can go f*ck itself!” Calling the film the culmination of a lifelong obsession, he said Boris Karloff was his “messiah,” crediting *Frankenstein* for inspiring his filmmaking journey.

Oscar Isaac in *'Frankenstein.'*
Ken Woroner/Netflix



Guillermo del Toro Pierre Assemat - Euronews Culture

LEGENDARY MOVIE POSTER ARTIST DREW STRUZAN DIES AT 78

Drew Struzan, the artist behind iconic posters for *Star Wars*, *Blade Runner*, *Indiana Jones* and *Back to the Future*, has died aged 78 after battling Alzheimer's. Praised by George Lucas and Steven Spielberg, Struzan's artwork defined generations of moviegoers' imaginations. His family called him “a force of nature.”



Credit: Kyle Lambert

Copyright Drew Struzan - Universal Pictures /
Paramount Pictures / Warner Bros.



BUZZ

LANDMARKS LEADS POWERFUL LINEUP OF BFI LONDON FILM FESTIVAL WINNERS



'Landmarks' (Nuestra Tierra) Courtesy of Venice Film Festival

The 69th BFI London Film Festival has announced its major award winners, with Lucrecia Martel's *Landmarks* (*Nuestra Tierra*) earning the festival's highest honour — the Best Film Award in the official competition.

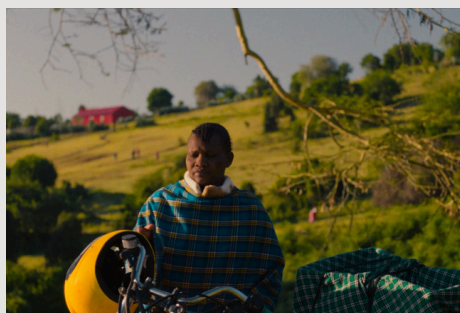
Martel's documentary, her first full-length non-fiction feature, investigates the 2009 murder of Indigenous leader Javier Chocobar in Argentina's Tucumán Province and the broader issue of native land theft. The jury praised the film for its "deep empathy and extraordinary journalistic and cinematic rigor," noting that Martel "foregrounds present-day voices and neglected histories" while offering "a portrait of — and for — an Indigenous community long denied justice."

In the documentary competition, the Grierson Award was presented to *The Travelers* (*Les Voyageurs*) by David Bingong. The film follows a group of young Cameroonian migrants on a dangerous sea crossing from Morocco to Spain. The jury commended its "kinetic intensity" and "deeply personal perspective," pointing out that Bingong, once a migrant himself, captures both the camaraderie and despair of those trapped between perilous waters and an unforgiving immigration system. A special mention was also awarded to *Always*, directed by Deming Chen, described as "a lyrical portrait of a gifted young poet growing up in rural China."

The Sutherland Award for Best First Feature went to *One Woman One Bra* by Kenyan filmmaker Vincho Nchogu. The film tells the story of a woman fighting to retain her ancestral land through a blend of humour and

emotional depth. The jury praised Nchogu's command of tone, calling the film "funny, life-affirming, and deeply moving," while applauding its performances and "stunning cinematography."

In the short film competition, *Coyotes* by Said Zagha was named the winner. The film depicts a Palestinian doctor whose journey home is disrupted by Israeli soldiers, forcing her into an increasingly tense confrontation. The jury highlighted its ability to evoke "a psychological state of fear faced by people caught in the midst of conflict," acknowledging its subtle character work and craftsmanship.



"One Woman One Bra". Courtesy of Conceptified Media

Across categories, this year's winners shared a thematic thread: stories of land, belonging, and resistance — told through voices rarely centred on the world stage. The 2025 line-up reaffirmed the festival's commitment to politically charged, socially resonant cinema from emerging and established filmmakers alike. 🌍

T We often wonder about the future of Bangladeshi cinema, thinking the answer lies with a director's vision or a producer's pockets. But the truth is, our films won't change until we do. A nation gets the cinema it is willing to sit through. Unless we become an audience that seeks more than just escape, our cinema will not evolve, and no breakthrough will come.

For decades, our industry has shown a limited view of who we are. We have seen romantic melodramas, clear moral lessons, and villains we love to hate, with endings tied up neatly. Yet society has changed. Cities have become more chaotic, inequality has increased, women's voices have grown stronger, and migration has

groundwork for a culture ready to engage with the tonal shifts of *Oldboy* and ultimately *Parasite*. Great cinema arises only when societies allow themselves to be depicted honestly, no matter how unflattering that mirror may be.

The old question that confronts us—do films shape audiences, or do audiences shape films? —is really a cycle. However, in fragile industries like ours, audiences often lead the way. A bold film doesn't mean much if theatres are empty and investors withdraw. Risk becomes manageable only when viewers reward it. This happens when we buy the ticket, sit through the silence, accept the ambiguity, and leave with more questions than answers. That calls for a change in mindset. We should view cinema not just as entertainment but as a cultural act, a shared reflection. We need to resist



What's next for Bangladeshi Cinema and its audience?

IQRA L QAMARI

Photo: BD News 24

altered families. Still, our screens often hesitate to show this complexity, as if audiences cannot handle the truth. However, when films push boundaries, the reaction can be surprising. Rehana Maryam Noor invited viewers to endure relentless tension without relief. *Hawa* engaged them with allegory and ambiguity, and audiences remained for weeks. Made in Bangladesh highlighted garment workers in global cinema. Each of these films expanded what a Bangladeshi audience could accept and even appreciate.

The lesson is clear. Audiences must evolve for cinema to do the same. This concept is not new. In postwar Italy, the same people who once cheered Mussolini's spectacles watched *Bicycle Thieves* and *Rome, Open City*, learning to see themselves in the ruins of their past. In South Korea, years of low-quality films laid the

dismissal of a challenging film as “too slow” or “too strange,” and instead ask what it reveals about us. The discomfort a story creates is not a failure but a success.

Bangladesh has yet to earn an Oscar nomination, not due to a lack of stories but because there isn't an audience demanding them. Filmmakers can spark ideas, but only a society willing to change can fan those sparks into flames. So, what's next for Bangladeshi cinema? It's not just one director's masterpiece but a collective movement. The day our audience craves cinema that challenges norms, our filmmakers will be empowered to take risks. Only then will the environment be ripe for a truly great film to emerge. 🍿

Writer: A movie enthusiast

A House Named Shahana

Freedom Without Fireworks

Md. Raabbi Islam

Leesa Gazi's *A House Named Shahana* (Barir Naam Shahana) begins with a simple and disarming image, Dipa's divorce papers fluttering away from a rickshaw. The moment carries the weight of an entire life, one that has been denied, silenced and finally set loose. The accidental loss feels almost poetic. She is so overwhelmed by freedom that she momentarily forgets the document that makes it official.

The story rewinds eight years and through flashbacks Gazi takes us into a household fluent in the language of control. Dipa, played with haunting restraint by Aanon Siddiqua, is forced into marriage with a widower in England over a phone call without her consent. The men in her family decide everything. Her silence is taken as agreement. The film moves through these moments without melodrama. It exposes the quiet machinery of patriarchy, the way cruelty is enforced with a smile, the way gossip becomes law.

When Dipa finally escapes and returns to Bangladesh she encounters another kind of imprisonment, the social shame of being a divorced woman. Yet here the film begins to breathe. She studies medicine, adopts a child and rebuilds herself piece by piece. She does not rage. She endures and through endurance she transforms.

Her line, "I didn't come to ask for permission, I came to inform," is not written for applause. It is a whisper of rebellion, honest and necessary.

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What makes *A House Named Shahana* stand out among recent Bangladeshi films is its refusal to dramatise womanhood. Gazi's storytelling is not loud, it is patient, intimate and entirely human. Even when the pacing drags or the symbolism overreaches, the film's truth remains intact.

Dipa's freedom is real, brittle and incomplete, never triumphant. That is precisely what makes the film unforgettable. It is not just about a woman who survives. It is about the silent revolution of learning to live on her own terms. 🌸

Writer: Student, Film and TV media, Jagannath University



Aanon Siddiqua in A House Named Shahana. Photo: IMDB

One Battle After Another Farewell to yesterday

Axel Timo Purr

Paul Thomas Anderson's crazy amalgam of the film languages of the Coen brothers, Quentin Tarantino and himself sees the director reinventing himself. Despite some annoying moments, *One Battle After Another* is astonishingly contemporary and fun.

'It is not an abyss that separates us from yesterday, but the changed situation'

– Alexander Kluge, *Yesterday Girl*
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yesterday_Girl)

At first, there is simply irritation. Anyone who, like me, fell in love with Paul Thomas Anderson's last two films because they represented the cinematic formula for great happiness is likely to be completely baffled, if not a little shocked, by the first 15 or even 30 minutes of *One Battle After Another*, wondering what the whole thing is actually about. *One Battle After Another* is, like *Inherent Vice* (2014), based on a Thomas Pynchon novel. However, unlike *Inherent Vice*, Anderson does not translate the novel into cinematic language; rather, he draws inspiration from a few plot and idea strands from Pynchon's *Vineland*. And all that remains of the narrative

lightness and associative depth of *Licorice Pizza* (2021), Anderson's latest film, are Alana Haim and Sean Penn. Unfortunately, Heim soon becomes a narrative nonentity and Penn mutates into something resembling one of the grotesque heroes from Tarantino's bizarre cinematic fantasies of violence.

However, those who can come to terms with this and rejoice in the fact that a director has finally found the courage to reinvent himself instead of following his own 'beaten tracks' will be rewarded.

As in his films *There Will Be Blood* (2007) and *The Master* (2012), Anderson irritates in *One Battle After Another* with an almost visionary, prophetic political and social presence. He extracts the core story of a militant collective called the People's Republic of Rock and Roll from Pynchon's *Vineland*, renaming it *French 75*, as well as the twisted four-way relationship from the novel. However, while for Pynchon the setting is the 1980s after Reagan's re-election, for Anderson it is the absolute present. Although *One Battle After Another* was filmed before Trump's re-election (which, of course, is another frightening parallel to Reagan's re-election), the film radiates an almost impossible sense of immediacy, especially in the first part with its militant terrorist liberation of migrants from an ICE unit. Just think of the recent second attack on an ICE facility.

The second part takes place 16 years later, with completely different relationship dynamics. Not much seems to have happened except that the baby from the love triangle in the first part has grown up to be Willa Ferguson-Beverly Hills (*Chase Infiniti*). Unlike anyone else in this film, she does not know which gods have abandoned her. Her supposed father, 'Ghetto Pat' (Leonardo DiCaprio), has settled into a life as a washed-up version of the character 'The Dude' from the Coen brothers' iconic film *The Big Lebowski*, with no prospects or goals, only the paranoid concern that his daughter might be in danger forever. A concern kept alive by the third madman in the team, former ICE Col. Steven J. Lockjaw (Sean Penn). And then, of course, there are the lunatics of the Christian Adventurer Club, a white supremacist militia that could well have been recruited from today's Tea Party movement or Charlie Kirk's Turning Point USA association.

Anderson throws these ingredients into his nearly three-hour film rather erratically, amalgamating them into an absurd, grotesque action film. Although it lacks depth of character due to its annoying focus on the two main lunatics, Ghetto Pat and Lockjaw, it makes up for this with action sequences that are almost as crazy as they are stunning. The final chase scene, set on a winding road through the vast prairie, is one of the greatest in recent years. This is due not only to its twists and turns and surprising ending, but also to the visual impact created by Michael Bauman's amazing camera work. Here, as in many other parts of the film, Radiohead's Johnny Greenwood's fantastic score comes into its own. And not only that, but in this brilliant finale, the real acting discovery of Anderson's film, *Chase Infiniti* as Willa, is once again and finally given the recognition she deserves.



And with the otherwise brilliant cast – the scenes with Benicio del Toro as a migrant smuggler alone would be worth many more lines – the film ultimately leaves the viewer with a sense of cinematic happiness. Admittedly, not to the same extent as Anderson's last two films, but that doesn't matter, because this time it is more of a selective than a general, all-encompassing happiness, and it is certainly appropriate to the subject matter. For when, if not now, should we ask ourselves whether armed resistance was ever a good option and could be one again today? Just as Alexander Kluge did in *Yesterday Girl* with the similarly isolated and driven Anita, played by Alexandra Kluge, Anderson's *Perfidia* and Willas mother, obsessively and with a lot of overacting portrayed by Teyana Taylor, shows that yesterday is always today. 🌍

Writer: film critic and journalist, Germany

GEN Z

TURNS AWAY FROM SEX ON SCREEN



Photo: AI

A new study from UCLA reveals that Generation Z is losing interest in the sexualized storytelling that once dominated film and television. The latest Teens & Screens report, titled “Get Real: Relatability on Demand,” surveyed 1,500 young people aged 10 to 24 across the United States and found that most are seeking more realistic, friendship-centered stories rather than romantic or sexual narratives.

Nearly 60 percent of respondents said they prefer shows and movies that focus on friendships, while more than half (54.1 percent) expressed a desire to see characters who aren’t involved in romantic relationships. Almost half (48.4 percent) felt that there is simply “too much sex and

sexual content” in today’s entertainment. Romance ranked near the bottom of topics Gen Z wanted to see on screen, with toxic relationships and love triangles listed among the most overused and unappealing tropes.

The report also noted a growing preference for animation over live-action content. This year, 48.5 percent of Gen Z participants said they favored animation, up from 42 percent in 2024. Researchers at UCLA describe this broader trend as “nomance” — an increasing focus on platonic bonds and self-discovery rather than on romantic or sexual relationships.

This cultural shift isn’t limited to the screen. Broader social research supports the idea that Gen Z is engaging less in sexual activity overall. A 2021 study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that only 30 percent of teenagers had had sex, down from 38 percent in 2019 and more than 50 percent in previous decades. While some experts view this as a sign of healthier choices, others warn that it may also reflect growing social isolation among young people.

Last year’s Teens & Screens report, “Reality Bites! More Fantasy, More Friendship,” already hinted at this shift, with 62 percent of respondents saying that

sexual content isn’t necessary for a compelling story. The Economist also reported that sexual content in Hollywood films has dropped by 40 percent since the early 2000s, with nearly half of all movies now containing no sexual scenes at all.

Friendship is the new romance for a generation craving authenticity.

Despite the changing tastes, UCLA’s latest study shows that Gen Z remains passionate about cinema. They continue to watch films and series regularly and enjoy sharing and discussing them with friends — just with less desire for sex and more craving for sincerity. 🍿

10 Timeless Films That Celebrate the Power of Friendship

Stand By Me (1986), Rob Reiner

A coming-of-age story about four boys who set out to find a dead body and in the process learn about courage, loyalty and growing up. It explores how childhood bonds are forged under pressure and how one shared adventure can change lives. Nostalgic, intimate and grounded in friendship rather than romance.

The Shawshank Redemption (1994), Frank Darabont

In a brutal prison setting, a banker and a long-time inmate form a deep bond that becomes the heart of the story. The film shows that friendship can offer hope, transformation and a reason to endure even the darkest circumstances. It's less about romantic love and more about human connection and survival.

The Intouchables (2011), Éric Toledano & Olivier Nakache

A wealthy quadriplegic and his energetic carer, from very different backgrounds, form an unlikely friendship that changes both their lives. The film highlights how friendship can transcend class, difference and expectation. Warm, funny, and emotionally resonant, it underscores the power of solidarity.

Dil Chahta Hai (2001), Farhan Akhtar

Three college friends navigate relationships, life choices and divergent paths in urban India. The film captures how friendships evolve when priorities shift and each person tries to find themselves. It remains a landmark for youth and friendship in Hindi cinema.

Booksmart (2019), Olivia Wilde

Two high-achieving best friends realise on the eve of graduation that they might have missed out on the full high-school experience — so they try to cram in one wild night. This one shows female friendship in full force: messy, joyful, supportive. It reminds us that friends can push each other to grow, not just stay the same.

Rang De Basanti (2006), Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra

A group of friends turn political awakening into personal responsibility and activism after tragedy. The film shows friendship evolving into something larger—shared purpose, idealism, and even sacrifice. It underlines that friendship isn't only fun but can also be profound and consequential.

The Breakfast Club (1985), John Hughes

Five teenagers from different cliques spend a Saturday in detention and unexpectedly open up to each other. It demonstrates how friendship can be formed across unlikely lines when people truly listen. A classic in depicting how vulnerability can forge a connection.

The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants (2005), Ken Kwapis

Four lifelong friends stay connected over a summer apart through a pair of jeans that fits them all and shares their experiences. It's a gentle film about female camaraderie, separation and staying true to yourself through friendship. Friendship here is a continuum, not bound by geography or time.

The Goonies (1985), Richard Donner

A group of kids on the verge of losing their homes goes on a wild adventure to find treasure and, in doing so, strengthens their bonds. The film is adventure-driven, but the heart is in the friendship: loyalty, shared risk, and standing up together. It reminds us that friendship can feel heroic.

Toy Story (1995), John Lasseter

As rival toys become lost, Woody and Buzz must work together, discovering unexpected kinship and loyalty. An animated example of friendship formed under pressure, learning to trust and accept the other. It shows that even when everything else changes, friends can help you stay grounded.



The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2 Poster. Photo: Collected

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boom
FILMS

BACHELOR POINT

SEASON 5



WATCH ON
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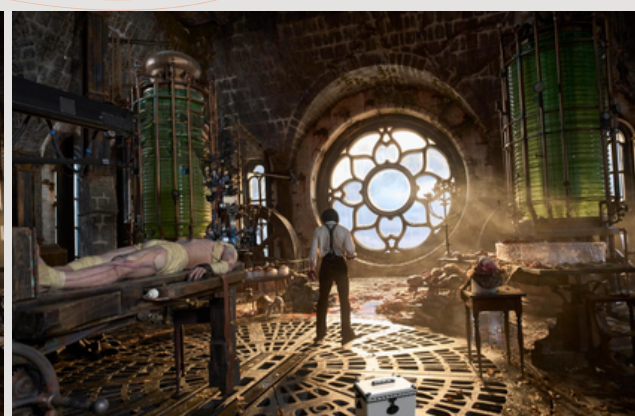
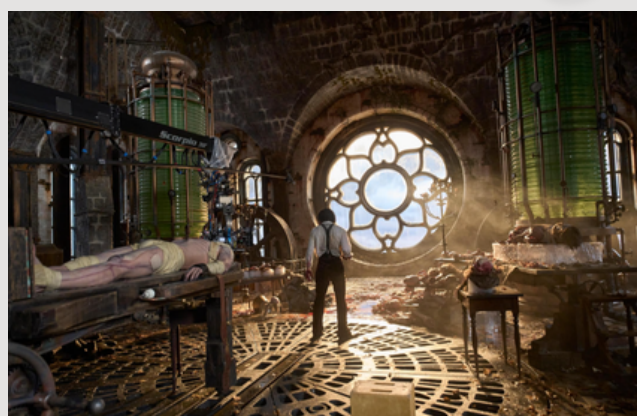


KAJAL AREFIN OME
ENTERTAINMENT

FUN

Final Cut Trivia

FIND 3 differences



Frankenstein (2025). Photo by Ken Woroner/Netflix

TEST YOUR Knowledge

1. Who directed Psycho (1960)?
2. Which country is the birthplace of cinema?
3. What was the first feature-length sound film?
4. Who played the character Forrest Gump?
5. Which film won the first Academy Award for Best Picture?



Tom Hanks in Forrest Gump (1994)

 11-15 Gold Medal	 06-10 Silver Medal	 01-05 Bronze Medal	 00 Wooden Spoon
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Answers: 1. Alfred Hitchcock, 2. France, 3. The Jazz Singer (1927), 4. Tom Hanks, 5. Wings (1927)

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