

CUT CINEMA

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BANGLADESH'S **SAND CITY**
WINS TOP PRIZE AT
KARLOVY VARY

HAYAO MIYAZAKI, AI, AND
THE SOUL OF ANIMATION

KIAROSTAMI
CINEMA THAT QUIETLY
RADICALIZES

VENICE FILM FESTIVAL
UNVEILS DIVERSE LINEUP FOR
82ND EDITION

**The night is
darkest just
before the
dawn.**



**THE DARK KNIGHT
(2008)**

EDITORIAL

Gradually, we are making history through our cinema, consistently earning international acclaim—from Cannes to Karlovy Vary. These achievements are clear signs of progress and serve as beacons of hope, proving that young and talented filmmakers, cinematographers, editors, actors, and others are now capable of capturing the attention of global audiences and juries.

We are witnessing a transformative era in which Bangladeshi cinema is setting inspiring examples for the future. These international recognitions are a source of national pride, and we at Cut to Cinema share in that pride. Alongside the making of films, we also hope to foster a deeper appreciation for film literature.

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Cover Photo: Sand City. Courtesy: KVIFF



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We are associated with



Canvas Lifestyle Magazine



Jagotik Publication

Bangladesh's Sand City Wins Top Prize at Karlovy Vary



Film Director Mahde Hasan - Proxima Grand Prix - Sand City. Source: KVIFF

Mahde Hasan's *Sand City* emerged from the dusty alleys of Dhaka to claim the PROXIMA Grand Prix at the 59th Karlovy Vary International Film Festival. In the Great Hall of the Thermal Hotel,

Hasan stood overwhelmed as the gong sounded—his first feature had seized the spotlight, marking a triumphant leap onto the global stage.

In a city suffused with shifting dunes and hidden fractures, *Sand City* charts two solitary journeys bound by sand. Emma (Victoria Chakma), an ethnic minority woman, scavenges sand for cat litter—only to uncover a severed finger. Instead of recoiling in fear, she becomes transfixed by it, drawn into a silent dialogue with loss and memory. Meanwhile, Hasan (Mostafa Monwar), haunted by his own bleak existence, clandestinely pockets grains from his day job at a sand-washing plant. He forges glass in his dreams, each shard reflecting a fractured ambition that threatens to implode his psyche.

The film's visual language—crafted by cinematographer Mathieu Giombini—captures sand's mercurial luminosity: gray under smog-laden dawns, blush-gilded at dusk—each shot echoing inner rupture and fragile hope. Supported by Khona Talkies and Cinema Cocoon, and backed by development grants from Locarno, Nantes, and Film Bazaar, *Sand City* stands as an elegy to the porous boundary between environment and emotion.

As Hasan lifted the trophy, the world heard Dhaka's sandy heartbeat reverberate through *Proxima*. The award signals a milestone—not just for Bangladeshi cinema, but for the universal language of subtle, introspective storytelling. 🌍

Winners List of 59th KVIFF

GRAND PRIX – CRYSTAL GLOBE (25,000 USD)
Better Go Mad in the Wild, Directed by Miro Remo (Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, 2025)

SPECIAL JURY PRIZE (15,000 USD)
Bidad, Directed by Soheil Beiraghi (Iran, 2025)

BEST DIRECTOR AWARD – awarded ex-aequo
Vytautas Katkus for *The Visitor* (Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, 2025), Nathan Ambrosioni for *Out of Love* (France, 2025)

BEST ACTRESS AWARD
Pia Tjelta for her role in the film *Don't Call Me Mama*, Directed by Nina Knag (Norway, 2025)

BEST ACTOR AWARD
Alex Brendemühl for his role in the film *When a River Becomes the Sea*, Directed by: Pere Vilà Barceló (Spain, 2025)

SPECIAL JURY MENTION
Kateřina Falbrovová for *Broken Voices*, Directed by Ondřej Provozník (Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, 2025)

PROXIMA GRAND PRIX (15,000 USD)
Sand City, Directed by Mahde Hasan (Bangladesh, 2025)

PROXIMA Special Jury Prize (10,000 USD)
Forensics, Directed by: Federico Atehortúa Arteaga (Colombia, 2025)

PROXIMA Special Mention
Before/After Directed by: Manoël Dupont (Belgium, 2025)

BUZZ

South Asia Celebrates 100 Years of **Guru Dutt's** Timeless Legacy

The South Asian film fraternity is commemorating the 100th birth anniversary of legendary filmmaker Guru Dutt, whose poetic vision and timeless storytelling left an indelible mark on Indian

cinema. Born on July 9, 1925, Guru Dutt is celebrated for films like *Pyaasa* (1957), *Kaagaz Ke Phool* (1959), and *Sahib Bibi Aur Ghulam* (1962), which blended lyrical imagery with deep emotional and social themes. Events, retrospectives, and discussions are being held across India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan to honor his cinematic legacy. Filmmakers and critics alike continue to cite Dutt as a profound influence, praising his mastery of light, shadow, and human vulnerability. 🌟



Ryan Gosling's **Project Hail Mary** Trailer Sets Record-Breaking Views



Ryan Gosling in 'Project Hail Mary.'
Photo: Amazon MGM Studios

Although *Project Hail Mary* is scheduled to hit theaters in March 2026, it's already making headlines by smashing viewership records. The trailer for the upcoming Ryan Gosling-led sci-fi film has surpassed 500 million views since its release on June 30, making it the most-watched trailer ever for an original film — meaning it's not based on a prequel, sequel, or remake.

Directed by 21 Jump Street and *The Lego Movie* duo Phil Lord and Christopher Miller, the movie is adapted from Andy Weir's 2021 novel (*The Martian*). Gosling plays Ryland Grace, a school science teacher who finds himself stranded alone on a space station with no memory of how he got there — and no formal astronaut training. As his memories slowly return, he realizes he's humanity's last hope to stop a cosmic threat that's causing the sun to burn out — drawing comparisons to Danny Boyle's *Sunshine*. But he won't face the mission entirely on his own.

The film, which balances science fiction and humor, also features acclaimed German actress Sandra Hüller (*Toni Erdmann*, *Anatomy of a Fall*, *The Zone of Interest*). 🌟

Hayao Miyazaki, AI, and the Soul of Animation

Hayao Miyazaki. Photo: Internet

[illegible]

The Mechanical Muse: When AI Mimics Art

Today, AI can draw in 'Ghibli-style' with a simple text prompt. We need to type: "A magical forest, Studio Ghibli style, soft light, warm colors", and within seconds, an image appears complete with misty trees and childlike wonder. It's astonishing. It's fast. But... It's... empty... Totally empty... Soulless... Why? Because AI doesn't dream.

It analyzes. It calculates. It chews up thousands of artworks many from artists like Miyazaki without permission, digests their styles, and spits out imitation beauty. The images are often stunning, yes, but they are shells without spirit. They are echoes of someone else's soul, sampled and remixed by a machine that doesn't know joy, fear, nostalgia, or grief.

In a now, famous moment from the 2016 NHK documentary *Never-Ending Man*, Miyazaki was shown an AI-generated animation a jerky, grotesque creature crawling unnaturally. The developers beamed with pride, expecting *Owaaaa...*

Miyazaki was quiet. Then he said, voice heavy: "I strongly feel that this is an insult to life itself." That was not just a rejection of a prototype. It was a warning to the future....

Animation: A Human Ritual, Not a Machine Process

Animation has always been a labor of painful, exquisite love. In Ghibli, each frame passes through dozens of hands. Every brushstroke has a heartbeat behind it. Every scene carries personal memory, cultural resonance, and emotional texture.

When Chihiro cries in *Spirited Away*, it's because someone, somewhere, remembered crying just like that. But in the age of AI, we're beginning to lose this touch.

Production houses are already using AI to speed up concept art, create filler animations, or replicate voice actors. Indie creators can make "animated shorts" without lifting a pencil. AI voices, AI music, AI editing, everything is getting faster, easier, cheaper. But also, more hollow... Emotionless...

When Art Becomes Echo: The Theft Behind the Tech
There's another shadow trailing this bright new technology:

"The Ethics"

Much of AI's training data comes from the internet art shared freely by passionate artists. Thousands of Miyazaki inspired pieces, Ghibli backgrounds, and fan drawings are quietly scraped into datasets without consent. The AI studies them, learns from them, and then creates "new" images in that style.

This is not inspiration. This is not homage... This is creative THEFT!! , dressed up as innovation... Just Imagine? You are spending 30 years building your own voice, your own colors, your own style, only to have a machine replicate it in 3 seconds and have companies profit from it while you're forgotten? Isn't it pathetic?... Isn't it hardest to digest? I'm traumatised... And I think we all should... if our artist soul is still alive... This is the bitter irony of AI in the arts: it feeds on the very human creativity it threatens to erase.

Miyazaki's Garden in a Concrete Future

Even as the world rushes toward automation, Studio Ghibli remains a garden of resistance.

No AI shortcuts...

No computer tricks...

Just people... Pencils... Patience...

In *The Tale of the Princess Kaguya*, every brushstroke feels like it might vanish. In *Ponyo*, water dances with a freedom no algorithm could understand. In *Howl's Moving Castle*, machinery itself becomes a metaphor for the soul inside the machine, a warning, perhaps, of what happens when the mechanical loses its human heart. And this resistance matters more now than ever. Because the world doesn't need more perfect images. It needs stories that touch us, haunt us, change us. Miyazaki reminds us that animation is not a product. It's a prayer...

The Seduction of Speed vs. The Beauty of Slowness

There is no doubt that, "AI is powerful" It can finish an animation in minutes. It never gets tired.

"I strongly feel that this is an insult to life itself."

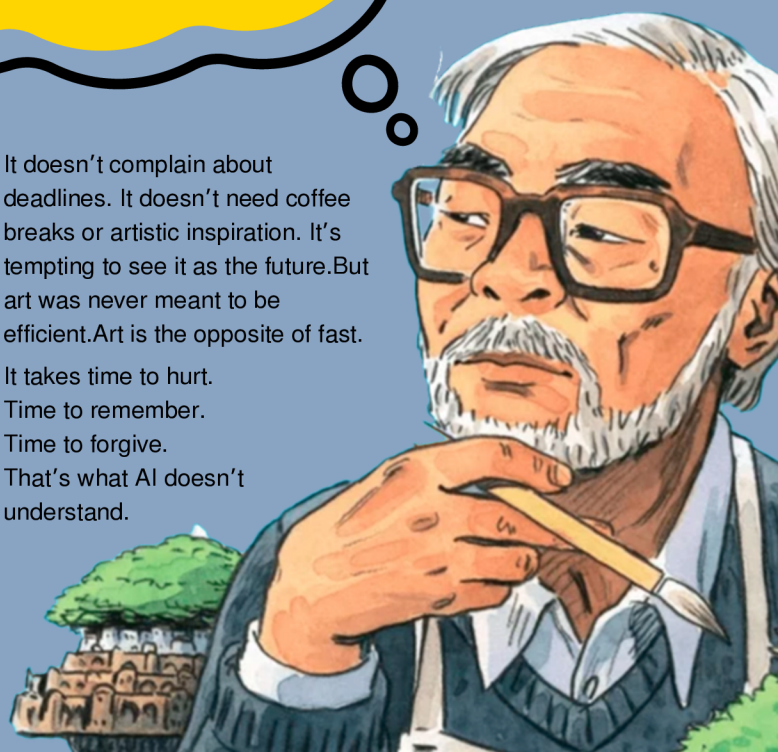
It doesn't complain about deadlines. It doesn't need coffee breaks or artistic inspiration. It's tempting to see it as the future. But art was never meant to be efficient. Art is the opposite of fast.

It takes time to hurt.

Time to remember.

Time to forgive.

That's what AI doesn't understand.



A Ghibli film might take years to finish but in those years, life happens. Animators fall in love. Background artists grieve. Directors take walks under autumn leaves and come back changed. That change seeps into the work. AI doesn't live. It only samples. And what kind of world are we building when we start replacing lived emotion with simulated style?

A Path Forward: Harmony, Not Replacement

Still, not all is bleak. Some animators are using AI with human creativity, not instead of it. AI generates rough sketches; humans refine the emotion. AI suggests; artists decide. In this model, AI is not the creator; it's the assistant. Like a brush in the hand, not the hand itself. This is where the future might bloom, in collaboration, not erasure. In using technology to amplify human imagination, not override it.

Miyazaki once said:

"We must try to live. Life is worth living."

And perhaps that is the heart of this whole debate. To create is to live. To live is to feel. And to feel is what makes art matter.

Closing the Book, Leaving the Door Ajar

Somewhere in the world right now, a child is watching Totoro for the first time. She is quiet. Her eyes are wide. She doesn't know who Hayao Miyazaki is. She doesn't care about AI. But something in the film reaches her—a breeze of memory she's never had, a longing for something she doesn't know she's lost. That is what real animation does. It leaves fingerprints on your soul. And those fingerprints are human. Let AI draw all it wants. Let it flood our screens with beauty. But beauty without spirit is just wallpaper.

As long as there are storytellers who believe in silence, in breath, in the sacred imperfection of pencil lines, there will always be a place for real animation. And as long as Miyazaki's wind keeps blowing, somewhere deep inside us, the ink will never run cold... 🌿

*Writer: Student, Film and Television department,
Jagannath University*



My Neighbor Totoro is an animated movie produced by Studio Ghibli and directed by Hayao Miyazaki in 1988.

Photo: Internet

BUZZ

‘Rosebud’ Sled From Citizen Kane Fetches \$14.75 Million at Auction



A key piece of cinematic history has found a new home — and made history in the process. One of the original “Rosebud” sleds used in Orson Welles’ *Citizen Kane* (1941) sold for an astounding \$14.75 million at Heritage Auctions, making it the second most expensive movie prop ever sold, following the ruby slippers from *The Wizard of Oz*, which fetched \$32.5 million last year.



From left: Harry Shannon, George Coulouris, Agnes Moorehead and Buddy Swan (as a young Charles Foster Kane) in 1941’s ‘Citizen Kane.’ Photo: Everett Collection



Do Bigha Zamin. Photo: The Statesman



Do Bigha Zamin Restored for Venice 2025 Screening

Bimal Roy’s 1953 classic *Do Bigha Zamin* receives a 4K restoration and will be featured in the Venice Classics section at the 82nd Venice Film Festival, running from 27 August to 6 September 2025. The restoration, made possible through the Film Heritage Foundation, The Criterion Collection, and Janus Films, will be presented by Roy’s children alongside Shivendra Singh Dungarpur. Legendary filmmaker Gulzar, who once assisted Roy, praised the film’s global impact. Based on a Rabindranath Tagore poem, it captures a farmer’s struggle amid industrialisation. Roy’s family celebrated the screening as a “dream come true,” emphasizing his enduring legacy.

KIAROSTAMI

CINEMA THAT QUIETLY RADICALIZES

Iqra L Qamari

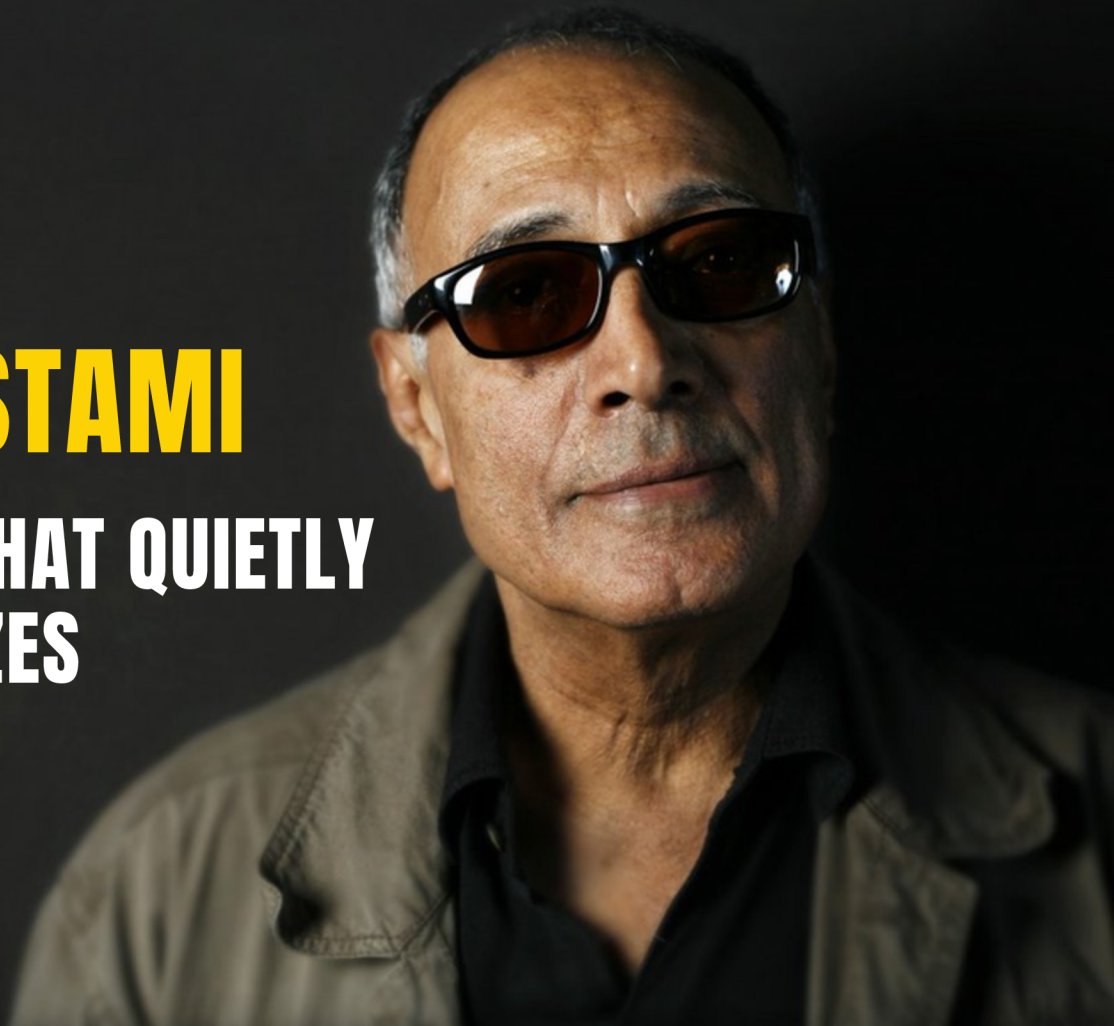


Photo: Screen Comment

When it comes to filmmakers, there are those who take your hand and show you the world out there and then there are those, like Abbas Kiarostami, who teach you how to see. Abbas Kiarostami was born on June 22, 1940, in Tehran, and passed away on July 4, 2016. Between those two quiet summer days, spanned a lifetime of work that gave cinema a new language, one that cleanses the soul with its simplicity and purity.

Donning his trademark dark shades, that left an impression that he was always at the movies—carefully watching life being played inside his tinted glasses, Kiarostami could almost single-handedly take the credit of putting Iranian cinema onto the stage of global cinema. He had the ability to make his audience want to spend time with the characters in his movies. As Martin Scorsese put it, “The spirit of his artistry makes you see people in a new, refreshing and hopeful way”.

In *Where Is the Friend's House?*, a boy of eight walks across a village to give back a classmate's notebook. This simple act turns into a moral journey. In *Taste of Cherry*, a man contemplates suicide, searching for someone to bury him, and meets people on his journey who try to talk him back into life. In *Close-Up*, fact and fiction blur together as a real man who is accused of pretending to be a filmmaker reenacts his own trial. These movies aren't about endings; they're about beginnings.



Where is the Friend's House? Photo:IMDB

His cinema embraces absence, repetition, silence, and longing, meant for the audience to experience in their rawness. “Movies are not to tell you one thing or another,” Kiarostami said. “They are a way to start you thinking.” He refused to narrate or moralize. Instead, he trusted the viewer to co-create meaning— “a half-fabricated cinema,” he called it, “an unfinished cinema completed by the viewer.” Kiarostami’s gentle yet profound cinema earned him some of the world’s highest honors. In 1997, he won the Palme d’Or at Cannes for *Taste of Cherry*, received the Akira Kurosawa Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000, a tribute to his extraordinary influence on filmmakers worldwide. His poetic vision was further recognized by UNESCO and numerous film festivals and institutions around the world, including retrospectives at the Smithsonian and the British Film Institute.

Kiarostami didn’t make “global” cinema by chasing the world. He did it by turning inward—toward Iranian poetry, dust, silence, and children’s questions. And from there, his cinema spoke across borders, religions, and ideologies. He truly believed “In order to be universal, you should be rooted in your own culture.”, and refused to leave Iran. “A tree uprooted from its soil may survive elsewhere,” he said, “but it will never bear the same fruit.”

“Movies are not to tell you one thing or another, they are a way to start you thinking.”

For Bangladeshi cinema, which is currently figuring out its identity and style, Kiarostami’s films, nine years after his passing, remain to draw inspirations from on how the weight of our realism can be shown on onscreen without a hard-hitting climax, and with something as simple as a child’s journey down a dirt road to return his friend’s notebook. His movies are lessons on how to stay rooted, to listen deeply, and to believe that what grows from our own soil can one day belong to the world. 🌍

Writer: consultant and a movie enthusiast.

BUZZ

TWO BANGLADESHI PROJECTS SHINE IN ASIAN PROJECT MARKET 2025 LINE-UP

W The prestigious Asian Project Market (APM) at the Busan International Film Festival has unveiled its 2025 selection, featuring 30 promising film projects from across Asia. Among them, two standout entries hail from Bangladesh, reflecting the country’s growing presence in the international film circuit.

Biplob Sarkar’s *The Magical Men* is a multinational co-production between Bangladesh, Singapore, France, and India. With producers like Fran Borgia (*A Land Imagined*) and Francois d’Artemare on board, the project hints at a bold and imaginative narrative rooted in cross-cultural collaboration. Sarkar, who also serves as co-producer, brings a fresh vision that has already caught the attention of global backers.

Another notable entry is *Silence Of The Looms*, directed by documentary filmmaker Mirza Shabnam Ferdousi and produced by Rajib Mohajan. The project is expected to explore the vanishing world of traditional textile weavers in Bangladesh, offering a poetic yet critical take on heritage, labor, and identity.

The Asian Project Market will take place from September 20 to 23, 2025, as part of the 20th Asian Contents & Film Market at BEXCO in Busan. These Bangladeshi entries not only represent national cinema but also signal its increasing impact on the wider Asian film landscape.



Mirza Shabnam Ferdousi.
Photo: Wikipedia



Biplob Sarkar.
Photo: Prothom Alo



VENICE FILM FESTIVAL 2025

UNVEILS DIVERSE LINEUP FOR 82ND EDITION

The 82nd Venice International Film Festival, scheduled from August 27 to September 6, 2025, has revealed its complete lineup. This year's selection showcases a diverse range of films from across the globe, highlighting works by both acclaimed filmmakers and emerging voices. Screenings will be organized into various sections, including 'Venice 82 Competition', 'Out of Competition', 'Horizons', 'Venice Spotlight', 'Venice Classics', among others.

Here's a look at the complete list of films which have been selected for the festival.

Competition

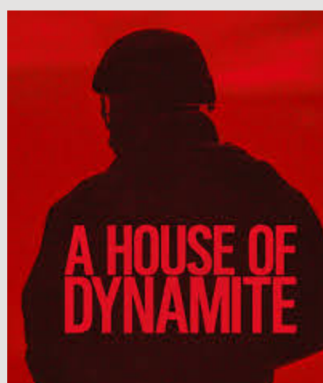
La grazia - Paolo Sorrentino (opening film)
 The Wizard of the Kremlin - Olivier Assayas
 Jay Kelly - Noah Baumbach
 The Voice of Hind Rajab - Kaouther Ben Hania
 A House of Dynamite - Kathryn Bigelow
 The Sun Rises on Us All - Cai Shangjun
 Frankenstein - Guillermo del Toro
 Elisa - Leonardo Di Costanzo
 À pied d'oeuvre - Valérie Donzelli
 Silent Friend - Ildikó Enyedi
 The Testament of Ann Lee - Mona Fastvold
 Father Mother Sister Brother - Jim Jarmusch
 Bugonia - Yorgos Lanthimos
 Duse - Pietro Marcello
 Un film fatto per bene - Franco Maresco
 Orphan - László Nemes
 L'étranger - François Ozon
 No Other Choice - Park Chan-wook
 Sotto le nuvole - Gianfranco Rosi
 The Smashing Machine - Benny Safdie
 Girl - Shu Qi

Out of Competition - Fiction

Sermon to the Void - Hilal Baydarov
 L'isola di Andrea - Antonio Capuano
 Il maestro - Andrea Di Stefano
 After the Hunt - Luca Guadagnino
 Scarlet - Mamoru Hosoda
 The Last Viking - Anders Thomas Jensen
 In the Hand of Dante - Julian Schnabel
 La valle dei sorrisi - Paolo Strippoli
 Dead Man's Wire - Gus Van Sant
 Orfeo - Virgilio Villoro
 Chien 51 - Cédric Jimenez (closing film)

Out of Competition - Non-fiction

Kabul, Between Prayers - Aboozar Amini
 Ferdinando Scianna - Il fotografo dell'ombra - Roberto Andò
 Marc by Sofia - Sofia Coppola
 I diari di Angela - Noi due cineasti. Capitolo terzo - Yervant Gianikian, Angela Ricci Lucchi
 Ghost Elephants - Werner Herzog
 My Father and Qaddafi - Jihan K
 The Tale of Sylian - Tamara Kotevska
 Nuestra tierra - Lucrecia Martel
 Remake - Ross McElwee
 Kim Novak's Vertigo - Alexandre Philippe
 Cover-Up - Laura Poitras, Mark Obenhaus
 Broken English - Jane Pollard, Iain Forsyth
 Notes of a True Criminal - Alexander Rodnyansky, Andriy Alferov
 Director's Diary - Aleksandr Sokurov
 Back Home - Tsai Ming-liang



A House of Dynamite directed by Kathryn Bigelow. Photo: Wikipedia

Out of Competition - Series
 Portobello - Marco Bellocchio
 Un prophète - Enrico Maria Artale
 Etty - Hagai Levi
 Il mostro - Stefano Sollima

Out of Competition - Short Films
 Origin - Yann Arthus-Bertrand
 Boomerang Atomic - Rachid Bouchareb
 How to Shoot a Ghost - Charlie Kaufman

Orizzonti

Mother - Teona Strugar Mitevska (opening film)
 Divine Comedy - Ali Asgari
 Hiedra - Ana Cristina Barragán
 Il rapimento di Arabella - Carolina Cavalli
 Estrany riu - Jaume Claret Muxart
 Lost Land - Akio Fujimoto
 Grand ciel - Akihiro Hata
 Rose of Nevada - Mark Jenkin
 Late Fame - Kent Jones
 Milk Teeth - Mihai Mincan
 Pin de fartie - Alejo Muguillansky
 Father - Tereza Nvotová
 En el camino - David Pablos
 Songs of Forgotten Trees - Anuparna Roy
 Un anno di scuola - Laura Samani
 The Souffleur - Gastón Solnicki
 Barrio triste - Stillz
 Human Resource - Nawapol Thamrongrattanarit
 Funeral Casino Blues - Roderick Warich



Frankenstein dir. by Guillermo del Toro. Photo: Netflix



No Other Choice dir. by Park Chan-wook. Photo: Mubi



Father Mother Sister Brother dir. by Jim Jarmusch. Photo: Netflix

Out of Competition - Film & Music

Nino. 18 giorni - Toni D'Angelo
 Piero Pelù. Rumore dentro - Francesco Fei
 Newport and the Great Folk Dream - Robert Gordon
 Francesco de Gregori Nevergreen - Stefano Pistolini

Venice Spotlight

Hijra - Shahad Ameen
 Un cabo suelto - Daniel Hendler
 Made in EU - Stephan Komandarev
 Motor City - Patsy Ponciroli
 La hija de la española - Mariana Rondón, Marité Ugas
 À bras-le-corps - Marie-Elsa Sgualdo
 Calle Málaga - Maryam Touzani
 Ammazzare stanca - Daniele Vicari

Venice Classics

Mata Hari - Joe Beshenkovsky, James A Smith
 Elvira Notari. Oltre il silenzio - Valerio Ciriaci
 Louis Malle, le révolté - Claire Duguet
 Memoria de los olvidados - Javier Espada
 Megadoc - Mike Figgis
 Boorman and the Devil - David Kittredge
 Holofiction - Michal Kosakowski
 Sangre del toro - Yves Montmayeur
 The Ozu Diaries - Daniel Raim

Biennale College Cinema

Agnus Dei - Massimiliano Camaiti
 One Woman One Bra - Vincho Nchogu
 Becoming Human - Polen Ly
 Secret of a Mountain Serpent - Nidhi Saxena



La Grazia, dir. Paolo Sorrentino. Photo: Venice Film Festival

THE OLD WOMAN WITH THE KNIFE A POIGNANT TALE OF AGING AND ISOLATION

Aina Randrianatoandro

Photo: Soo Film

With his latest film, *The Old Woman with the Knife* (2h04min, 2025), South Korean filmmaker Min Kyu-dong delivers far more than a typical dramatic action movie; he offers a deep and poignant reflection on aging, loneliness, and resilience. Adapted from the eponymous novel by South Korean author Gu Byeong-mo, published in 2013, the film follows an aging contract killer in a world where usefulness determines survival. A strong premise matched by a visual execution as sharp as the knife wielded by its protagonist.

The film opens on a snowy scene. One winter evening in 1975, a trembling, starving homeless young woman stumbles and collapses. This prologue, both mysterious and poetic, sets the tone for a world in which visual beauty contrasts with cold and calculated violence. Taken in by a couple, including Ryu, the founder of the Shingseong Agency, a secretive, self-proclaimed justice organization, the young woman, initially nicknamed Fingernail, becomes Hornclaw. Trained in the shadows, she rises to become the agency's most fearsome executioner.

Now over sixty, Hornclaw still carries out her mission with unwavering precision: to eliminate pests, those the agency deems disruptors of social order (criminals, corrupt officials, harassers, and more). For the Shingseong Agency, these eliminations are not crimes but regulatory actions—a necessary evil brought on by the failure of official institutions to maintain peace and

cohesion. Through *Hornclaw*, the film questions the legitimacy of vigilante justice—one based on efficiency rather than law, on selective elimination rather than rehabilitation. Her violence is never emotional or gratuitous; it is instrumental, cold, and part of a system that claims to safeguard social peace by eradicating sources of disorder.

Hornclaw's bloody routine is disrupted when she encounters Bullfight, a promising young killer. Twenty-five years ago, he witnessed the death of his father... at the hands of Hornclaw. Yet, against all expectations, while seeking to surpass her, he harbors a mix of fascination and gratitude: as a child, she was the first person to show him kindness.

Already recognized at the Berlinale and the Brussels International Fantastic Film Festival, Min Kyu-dong once again demonstrates his talent for transcending genres. He injects this action film with psychological drama, film noir, and even existential fable tones. His elegant sense of framing captures both the intensity of the fight and the quiet silences of an aging woman.

As Hornclaw, Hyeyoung Lee is deeply moving. Her internal, minimalist, and tightly controlled performance gives the character a rare emotional depth for an action film. Opposite her, Kim Sung-cheol (as Bullfight) embodies a young and ruthless rival in a symbolic generational clash. Their confrontation, marked by

radical solitude, lies at the heart of the film, building in tension until their showdown at Happyland, an abandoned amusement park. Surrounding them is a cast of equally strong and well-acted secondary characters: Yeon Woo-jin (as Dr. Kang), a tender veterinarian who tends to Hornclaw's injuries; Kim Moo-yul (as Ryu), the cold but protective mentor; and Shin Sia, who gives a powerful performance as young Fingernail.

Some critics have compared *The Old Woman with the Knife* to *John Wick*, and while the comparison is understandable due to the virtuosity and choreographic precision of the fight scenes, it is ultimately reductive. Where *John Wick* glorifies revenge, *The Old Woman with the Knife* interrogates violence. Min Kyu-dong, far from trying to compete with Hollywood action cinema, takes a similar narrative foundation and turns it into a social fable, an existential drama—delivering a film of unexpected depth, miles away from the sheer spectacle-driven impulse of *John Wick*. 🍷

Writer: film critic, Madagascar



Photo: IMDB

BUZZ

MICHAEL MANN TO RECEIVE LUMIÈRE AWARD AT LYON FESTIVAL

Renowned American filmmaker Michael Mann, best known for classics like *The Last of the Mohicans*, *Heat*, and *The Insider*, has been announced as the recipient of this year's prestigious Lumière Award. He will be honoured at the 17th

edition of the Lumière Festival, set to take place in Lyon from 11 to 19 October, with the award ceremony scheduled for 17 October.

The Lumière Award celebrates a filmmaker's entire body of work and their contribution to the legacy of cinema. The Institut Lumière highlighted Mann's four-decade-long career, praising his impactful films such as *Manhunter*, *Collateral*, and *Heat*, and his work with iconic actors like Al Pacino, Robert De Niro, and Daniel Day-Lewis.

Festival director Thierry Frémaux described Mann as "a major artist" whose influence on cinema is enduring.



Michael Mann. Photo : Annie Tritt, The New York Times

Calling the honour both a "dream" and a "source of pride," Frémaux lauded Mann's distinctive style and deep engagement with cinematic history.

Mann joins an esteemed group of past Lumière Award recipients, including Martin Scorsese, Jane Fonda, Francis Ford Coppola, Quentin Tarantino, Tim Burton, and last year's honouree, Isabelle Huppert. 🍷



The Eye of Italian Cinema

Remembering Suso Cecchi D'Amico

Sara D'Ascenzo

Suso Cecchi d'Amico with the Special David di Donatello Award for 1979–80, presented to her in 1981.

Photo: Fondazione Accademia del Cinema Italiano – David di Donatello Awards.

W had always thought that, if there were a tutelary deity of cinema, it could be no one but her." Suso Cecchi D'Amico is Italian cinema—or at least, its finest part. She was the favored pen of a season that now seems light-years away, a time when talent appeared to be a contagious disease, and script meetings might include Ennio Flaiano and Giorgio Bassani sitting next to a Roman lady—the daughter of the writer Emilio Cecchi. A lady who came to screenwriting almost by chance, yet took it far—writing, side by side with directors, the masterpieces that still shape the history of cinema: from *Senso* by Luchino Visconti, shot in a twilight Venice, to *Rocco and His Brothers*, from *Bellissima* to *The Leopard*—all born from her collaboration with Visconti, whom she met in 1944 at the opening of an art exhibition.

To each of the giants of our cinema, she offered something of her unique sensibility: to Vittorio De Sica, the compassionate gaze upon the downtrodden found in *Miracle in Milan* and *Bicycle Thieves*; to Mario Monicelli, her irony, which still echoes in *Let's Hope It's a Girl* or *Casanova '70*—a film that playfully inverts the stereotype of the Venetian seducer, with scenes set in the Teatro Olimpico of Vicenza.



Fifteen years after her death, Einaudi has decided to honor this pioneering woman—a precursor to the many female screenwriters (and directors) working in cinema today—by dedicating a monographic volume to her in the I Millenni series: Suso Cecchi d'Amico, *The Good Fortune of Being a Woman. And Other Stories for Cinema* (Einaudi, edited by Caterina d'Amico, Suso's daughter, and Francesco Piccolo, with an introduction by Piccolo himself).

The book includes four screenplays (essential reading not just for film buffs or aspiring screenwriters, but also for anyone wanting to better understand the inner workings of cinema and storytelling), six story treatments, one hybrid treatment (between a synopsis and a screenplay), a character-focused narrative (on Nadia, from *Rocco and His Brothers*), and a letter to director Mikhalkov, in which the idea for *Dark Eyes*—a film starring her friend Marcello Mastroianni—is already present.

Suso had strong ties to Veneto, through several films and her frequent presence at the Venice Film Festival, including a memorable moment in 1954 when *Senso*, expected to win, lost the Golden Lion to *Romeo and Juliet* by Renato Castellani. One book that had great personal and professional significance for her was *The History of My Life* by Giacomo Casanova, which—as her daughter recounts—became the basis for the film *Childhood, Vocation and Early Experiences of Giacomo Casanova*, co-written with Luigi Comencini.

Caterina also recalls Suso's deep love for painting: "If you say 'Suso,'" writes Piccolo, "you can only mean her."

Suso adored Venetian Renaissance painting, so rich in exotic elements, whether real or imagined—Giovanni Bellini, Vittore Carpaccio—those squares full of fairytale figures, dressed in exotic garments, precious fabrics, and inflated turbans.



*Suso Cecchi d'Amico with her dog Iasha, early 2000s.
Photo: Fiorenzo Niccoli.*



*Suso Cecchi d'Amico with her son Masolino and Ennio Flaiano at an amusement park in Livorno, summer 1955.
Photo: Cecchi d'Amico family archive.*

She also wrote the screenplay for *The Dark Evil* by Giuseppe Berto, adapted into a film in 1990 by Mario Monicelli, shot partly in Saletto and Montagnana, in the province of Padua. And she co-wrote *The Lady Without Camelias* by Michelangelo Antonioni (1953), parts of which were shot in Venice—in the slightly reworked *Sotoposte della Pasina* and at the Hotel Bauer, where the protagonist, played by Lucia Bosè, vents to a producer about being valued only for her looks. This theme revisits the world of cinema, as in *Bellissima* by Visconti, where Anna Magnani starred alongside Walter Chiari from Verona, playing a sly schemer.

"The screenwriter," Suso used to say, "is not a writer; they are a filmmaker, and as such, must not chase words, but images. They must write with their eyes." And she did—she truly wrote. 🎬

Writer: Italian film critic and journalist



My Cinema journey

Telling Stories of Migration

Proshoon Rahman

A Migration is not just a word—it's a wound, a dream, a struggle, and sometimes, a silent scream. For me, as a filmmaker and storyteller, the subject of migration has always been more than a topic. It's been a deep and personal interest, something

I keep coming back to in almost all my films. In different forms—forced or voluntary, internal or across borders, visible or emotional—I have tried to explore what it means to leave something behind and search for a new identity, a new place, a new sense of belonging.

Most of my films, directly or indirectly, deal with migration, identity, and displacement. These are not just social issues to me—they are human conditions. The way people move, settle, adjust, resist, or even lose themselves in the process—this existential complication is what draws me in. I often ask, 'Who are we when we are uprooted?' What do we carry, and what do we leave behind? How do borders—not just physical but emotional, social, cultural—shape or break us?

We are living in a time when movement—both chosen and forced—is shaping the world. Climate change, war, economic hardship, political instability, urbanization, globalization—all these push people to migrate. But in many films, migration is either reduced to headlines or statistics. What's missing is the human face of migration—the emotions, the inner conflicts, the dreams that people carry while leaving their homeland.

Cinema has the power to bring those silent struggles to light. I believe that sharing such stories can foster empathy and understanding. Migration is not only about crossing a border—it's also about losing your language, being misunderstood, rebuilding identity, finding love in new places, or even feeling like a stranger in your own home.

I didn't start out planning to make films on migration. But when I look back, I realize that almost every film I've made touches this theme in some way. My first feature 'Her Own Address' (Sutopar Thikana) portrays womanhood in South Asia—how women go through different stages of life often depending on others for their identity, safety, and even a physical address.

It's about internal displacement—how marriage, poverty, social judgment, or simply being a woman and dependency, can push someone to feel dislocated within her own society. In this film, migration is emotional and social, not just geographic.

Feature film 'The Birth Land' (Jonmobhume) made in the world's largest refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, where Rohingya refugees have taken shelter. We filmed in real locations with real people with very few professional actors. The film explores forced migration—how people are stripped of nationality, treated as a burden, and yet they hold onto hope. It's a mix of fiction and documentary, blending real lives and imagined journeys to show the pain of being stateless.

At my third feature 'Dhaka Dream', which is story of outlying people coming to the capital from different parts of the country in search of a better life. It reflects on internal migration, how cities like Dhaka absorb millions, offering both promise and pain. The film talks about dreams, disappointments, and the invisible battles of those who leave their homes behind but never fully belong anywhere. It also raises the question about reasons of internal displacement and requirements of decentralization.



Poster of *The Roots*. Photo: Imation Creator

ARTICLE

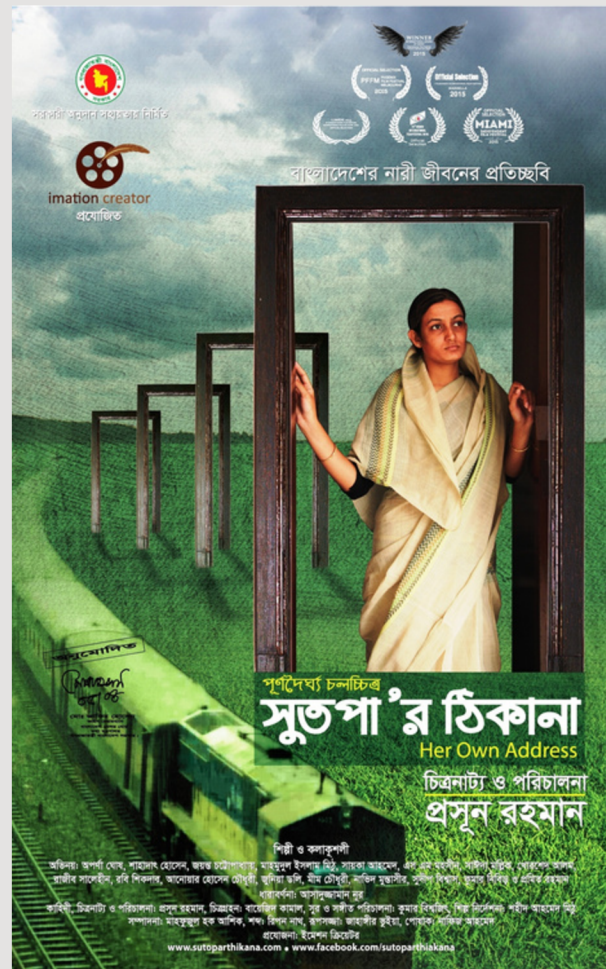
And The Roots (alternatively- Immigrant) is my latest feature film. A Bangladeshi-Canadian immigrant returns to his homeland after twelve years to reconnect with his roots. It's a personal journey, full of emotional contradictions. The film explores international migration, how memories, regrets, and identity travel with us. Even if we live abroad, the past never really leaves us. The film also try to explore- can anyone ever truly go back home or not!

Through my journey, one of the key things I've learned is that most people don't migrate because they want to. They migrate because they have to. Whether it's to escape war or poverty, to find work, or simply to survive—migration often comes from helplessness. But at the same time, it also comes from courage. It takes strength to start over.

Even those who migrate 'legally' or through privilege, like through citizenship schemes or global passports, are often driven by insecurity, ambition, or fear of being left behind. This is something I will try to explore in my next film. The film looks at how people from different social classes in Bangladesh try to buy citizenship in Western countries, and what this means for identity, morality, and the global power imbalance.

One thing I try to show in my films is that migration doesn't end at the airport or the city gate. It continues inside the person. People become torn between past and present, between the language they speak and the one they dream in. Many migrants live in a limbo—never fully accepted in the new place, and no longer belonging to the old one. This emotional and psychological state is something cinema can portray deeply and honestly. As a filmmaker, I find this gray zone of identity—this in-between space—very powerful. It opens up questions rather than giving answers. And that's what I try to do in my storytelling.

I grew up in Bangladesh but have travelled, studied, lived, and worked in different places. I've always felt connected to stories of people who are in transit, in search, in confusion. I've worked with refugees, migrant workers, rural poor, vulnerable, non-privileges and diaspora communities. My objective is not to represent them, but to create a space where their stories can be heard with dignity and honesty. I believe, Cinema has the power which can make people see things they often ignore. I don't try to make films that preach. Instead, I try to create moments that stay with the audience—sometimes through silence, sometimes through a look or a landscape. The films we make with limited resource, if it can make someone pause and reflect on what it means to be home or to be lost—that's enough for me.



Poster of Her Own Address. Photo: Imation Creator

Again, Migration is not going to stop. In fact, it will grow even more in the coming decades—with climate displacement, economic gaps, and political unrest. That's why we need more stories, more films, more conversations on this issue. Not just from the West, but from every parts of the world—from people who live and breathe these realities every day. Migration is not just about the journey—it's also about the cost, the loss, and the reinvention of self.

My journey as a filmmaker is ongoing. I don't follow a fixed style or method—I prefer to explore, question, and evolve with each passing day. But one thing remains constant: my deep interest in the human condition—identity, belonging, displacement, and migration. What troubles others troubles me just the same. To me, these are not just themes; they are urgent truths of our time. Through my work, I hope to contribute—however modestly—to a deeper understanding of what it means to move, to search, and to belong.

If cinema can give voice to the voiceless, if it can bring dignity to the displaced, if it can help us understand each other a little better—than it's worth making. 🌍

Writer: Filmmaker, Founder- Imation Creator

2025 SO FAR**20 Must-Watch Movies
That Ruled the First Half****A**

richly diverse cinematic first half of 2025 has dazzled audiences—from innovative horror and intimate dramas to high-octane blockbusters and imaginative remakes.

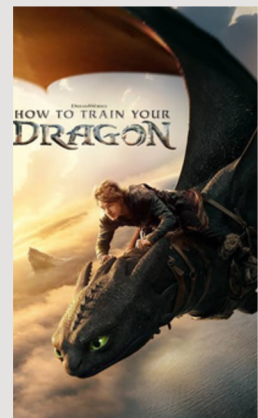
Studios and indie filmmakers alike took bold swings, delivering both crowd-pleasing spectacles and deeply resonant stories. Ryan Coogler's supernatural vampire-thriller *Sinners* showcased emotional depth and thematic weight, while Bong JoonHo's *Mickey 17* blended sci-fi humor with existential flair. Marvel and franchise releases like *Captain America: Brave New World* and *Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning* reaffirmed their box-office dominance, and fresh spin-offs such as *Ballerina* kept action fans captivated. Meanwhile, smaller films—*Companion*, *Black Bag*, and *Materialists*—sparked critical buzz and highlighted emerging voices. This mid-year lineup underscores an exhilarating balance between blockbuster entertainment and art-house originality, setting high expectations for the rest of 2025.



Wolf Man. Photo: IMDb



11. How to Train Your Dragon (live-action) – Director: Dean DeBlois; Release Date: June 13, 2025
12. F1 – Director: Joseph Kosinski; Release Date: June 27, 2025
13. Ballerina – Director: Len Wiseman; Release Date: June 6, 2025
14. The Phoenix Scheme – Director: Wes Anderson; Release Date: June 6, 2025
15. Sinners – Director: Ryan Coogler; Release Date: April 2025
16. Black Bag – Director: Steven Soderbergh; Release Date: early 2025
17. Materialists – Director: Celine Song; Release Date: early 2025
18. Jurassic World Rebirth – Director: Gareth Edwards; Release Date: June 17, 2025
19. Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning – Director: Christopher McQuarrie; Release Date: May 23, 2025
20. M3GAN 2.0 – Director: Gerard Johnstone; Release Date: June 27, 2025



Top 20 Films (Jan 1 - Jun 30, 2025)

1. Companion – Director: Drew Hancock; Release Date: January 31, 2025
2. Better Man – Director: Michael Gracey; Release Date: January 10, 2025
3. Den of Thieves: Pantera – Director: Christian Gudegast; Release Date: January 10, 2025
4. Wolf Man – Director: Leigh Whannell; Release Date: January 17, 2025
5. Presence – Director: Steven Soderbergh; Release Date: January 24, 2025
6. I'm Still Here – Director: Fernanda Torres; Release Date: February 14, 2025
7. Paddington in Peru – Director: Dougal Wilson; Release Date: February 14, 2025
8. Captain America: Brave New World – Director: Julius Onah; Release Date: February 14, 2025
9. Mickey 17 – Director: Bong Joon Ho; Release Date: March 7, 2025
10. 28 Years Later – Director: Danny Boyle; Release Date: June 20, 2025



These 20 films—ranging from January to June—represent the most compelling cinematic offerings of the first half of 2025, offering a rich blend of storytelling, innovation, and audience appeal. 🎬



NOLAN'S THE ODYSSEY IMAX TICKETS SELL OUT A YEAR BEFORE RELEASE

Tickets for Christopher Nolan's much-anticipated adaptation of Homer's *Odyssey* have already sold out – despite the film not yet being completed and its release still a year away, making this one of the longest pre-sales in cinema history.

Starring Matt Damon as Odysseus, the epic is scheduled to hit theatres on 17 July 2026. Yet, on Thursday, IMAX opened ticket sales for the initial screenings across 26 IMAX theatres worldwide equipped to project the film in Nolan's favoured 1570 format – the largest, highest-resolution film format, known for its 15 perforations per frame and 70mm height.

The pre-sale covers only the opening weekend (16–19 July 2026), with just one screening per cinema per day due to the unknown runtime. In Melbourne, around 1,800 tickets were snapped up overnight. "Selling tickets a year early isn't typical, but Nolan is worth it," joked Jeremy Fee, Imax Melbourne's general manager.

In the US, tickets were gone within an hour, with scalpers reselling them online for \$300–\$400. London's BFI IMAX and the Science Museum IMAX have also sold out. Nolan, a long-time Imax advocate since *The Dark Knight* (2008), is shooting *The Odyssey* entirely on Imax film cameras, following the success of *Oppenheimer* (2023), which grossed \$975.8 million globally, with Imax screenings contributing \$190 million.

Fee anticipates *The Odyssey* will surpass *Oppenheimer*'s success, drawing "cinema tourists" who plan trips around screenings. He noted this pre-sale is just a fraction of the total tickets that will be available closer to release, urging fans not to buy from scalpers. 🍿

Matt Damon in Christopher Nolan's epic
The Odyssey. Photo: Universal Pictures/X

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differences



Rachel Brosnahan and David Corenswet play Lois Lane and Superman. Photo: Warner Bros.

Test your knowledge



1. Who plays the new Superman in the upcoming 2025 film Superman? (1 point)
2. Which film starring Emma Stone won Best Picture at the 96th Academy Awards in 2024? (2 point)
3. Which country produced the award-winning film Sand City, honored at the 2025 Karlovy Vary International Film Festival? (3 point)
4. What is the title of the 2024 sci-fi film starring Ryan Gosling that broke trailer viewership records? (4 point)
5. Who directed Dune: Part Two, released in 2024? (5 point)



Answers
David Corenswet 2. Poor Things 3. Bangladesh 4. Project Hail Mary 5. Denis Villeneuve

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