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**Always make
the audience
suffer as much
as possible.**



ALFRED HITCHCOCK

EDITORIAL

The world is currently in the grip of Christopher Nolan's *The Odyssey* fever. Inspired by this excitement, our cover feature explores epic cinema and the enduring appeal of large-scale, mythic storytelling. We also take a comparative look at Nolan's remarkable body of work, examining the themes and techniques that define his filmmaking. We hope our readers will enjoy this special feature.

This issue also carries a major piece of news for Bangladeshi cinema. For the first time, a Bangladeshi film, *The Difficult Bride*, has been selected for the main competition of the 83rd Venice International Film Festival. This year's Venice lineup is packed with new works by some of the world's most celebrated arthouse filmmakers, and we have included the complete competition selection for our readers.

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Cover: 'The Odyssey'. Photo: IMDB.



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Matt Damon and Zendaya in the movie "The Odyssey." Photo: Melinda Sue Gordon / Universal Pictures

CHRISTOPHER NOLAN'S **THE ODYSSEY** SETS NEW GLOBAL BOX OFFICE BENCHMARK

Christopher Nolan has added another milestone to his celebrated career as *The Odyssey* stormed the global box office with an outstanding opening weekend, earning \$264 million worldwide. The remarkable debut not only exceeded industry expectations but also marked the biggest international opening of Nolan's filmmaking career, reinforcing his status as one of contemporary cinema's most bankable directors.

Before its release, analysts had predicted the film would generate around \$200 million globally, buoyed by exceptionally strong advance bookings and sold-out IMAX screenings. Instead, the epic adaptation comfortably surpassed those estimates, according to distributor Universal Pictures, delivering one of the strongest theatrical launches of the year.

In North America alone, *The Odyssey* collected \$124.5 million, making it the third-highest domestic opening of 2026. Only *Toy Story 5*, with \$159 million, and *The Super Mario Galaxy Movie*, with \$131 million, posted larger opening weekends this year. The achievement is particularly notable because Nolan's latest film carries an R rating, limiting access for younger audiences, and adapts Homer's 2,700-year-old Greek epic, a literary work traditionally considered challenging for mainstream audiences.

Internationally, the film has rewritten Nolan's own record books. Its \$264 million worldwide debut eclipses the opening of *The Dark Knight Rises*, which earned \$249 million globally in 2012, and comfortably surpasses the \$180 million opening weekend of *Oppenheimer* in 2023. That historical drama ultimately grossed nearly \$975 million worldwide and went on to dominate the Academy Awards, raising expectations that *The Odyssey* could enjoy a similarly successful theatrical run.

Produced on an estimated budget of \$250 million, *The Odyssey* has already distinguished itself technically as well. It is the first feature film to be shot entirely using IMAX cameras, underscoring Nolan's long-standing commitment to large-format filmmaking and immersive cinematic experiences.

Industry observers believe Nolan's reputation played a decisive role in the film's success. FranchiseRe analyst David A. Gross noted that few filmmakers today possess the ability to transform an ancient literary classic into a major pop culture event while assembling such an accomplished ensemble cast. According to Gross, Nolan has cultivated an exceptionally loyal global audience that eagerly supports his ambitious projects.

A 2,700-year-old Greek epic becomes 2026's biggest cinematic sensation under Christopher Nolan's visionary direction.

The film also enjoys a relatively clear path at the box office over the coming weeks. Its next major competitor, *Spider-Man: Brand New Day*, is not scheduled to arrive until 31 July, giving *The Odyssey* additional time to strengthen its worldwide earnings. Whether it ultimately joins the billion-dollar club remains uncertain, but its record-breaking debut suggests the possibility is well within reach.

Critics have praised Nolan's ambitious reinterpretation of Homer's epic, particularly his decision to downplay supernatural elements in favour of a more psychological exploration of Odysseus. While some reviews have highlighted issues with pacing, editing and narrative structure, many agree that the film's emotional final act and technical achievement make it one of the year's most significant cinematic events. 🌟

James Joyce understood that anyone returning to one of the foundational texts of European literature must find a new route through it. His *Ulysses*, published in 1922 became a modern classic precisely because it did not simply illustrate Homer. Joyce relocated the ancient epic to Dublin, transformed the warrior Odysseus into the Jewish-Irish advertising salesman Leopold Bloom, and replaced the slaughter of Penelope's suitors with cocoa and quiet conversation in a kitchen.

Christopher Nolan does the opposite. His adaptation of *The Odyssey* remains dutifully close to the famous stations of the journey, yet discovers neither a new form nor a convincing contemporary perspective. The result is a film of enormous technical ambition that adds surprisingly little to a story retold for almost three millennia.

For mostly Western audiences familiar with the myth, Nolan's three-hour production soon becomes an exercise in recognition. Here comes the Cyclops; therefore, the Sirens cannot be far away. Circe, Calypso and the descent into the underworld arrive more like compulsory entries on a syllabus than episodes charged with discovery or danger.

Even the dramaturgy operates through blunt verbal cues. When Telemachus declares that he feels his father is alive, the film immediately cuts to Odysseus sitting alone on a beach. Trojans are mentioned, and Troy appears. Odysseus tells Calypso, "I have a wife," and Penelope materialises in the next image.

Nolan's editing does not create associations; it merely illustrates dialogue.

Matt Damon brings the weary physical gravity to Odysseus that he already showed in Ridley Scott's modern „*Odyssey*“ *The Martian*, while Tom Holland gives Telemachus a plausible mixture of insecurity and resentment. Anne Hathaway's Penelope possesses dignity and restraint, Zendaya's Athena an appropriately spectral soft washed coolness. Robert Pattinson, Charlize Theron and Lupita Nyong'o also contribute forceful appearances. Yet the actors repeatedly seem like accomplished performers dressed in mythological costumes several sizes too large. The scale is monumental, but the characters remain strangely small inside it.

"Think you're escaping and run into yourself. Longest way round is the shortest way home."
– James Joyce, *Ulysses*

This has increasingly become Nolan's central limitation. He is more fascinated by systems than by people: by puzzles, temporal structures, technical processes and the machinery of perception. In his early films, this analytical instinct produced genuine cinematic tension. The reverse chronology of *Memento*, for example, was inseparable from its protagonist's damaged consciousness. Form became a mode of knowledge.

In *The Odyssey*, little remains except the machinery. Nolan answers the episodic nature of the source not by finding a new viewpoint, but by compressing as much material as possible into a single massive construction.



'Atlantis: The Lost City' bags best feature film at Shanghai International Film Festival. Photo: SIFF

The film is so crowded that no episode has enough time to accumulate emotional weight. Places, monsters and secondary characters disappear almost as soon as they arrive. The narrative speaks constantly of loss, temptation and trauma without allowing the audience to experience them.

The encounters with giants, witches and undead warriors sometimes resemble an attempt to turn Greek antiquity into a Marvel franchise. Yet Nolan is not a natural action director. His images are large and expensive, but rarely fluid. The Cyclops looks less archaic than technologically awkward, while the climactic slaughter on Ithaca becomes a heavy and confused sequence of bodies falling beneath pounding music.

The comparison with Uberto Pasolini's *The Return* with Ralph Fiennes as Odysseus and Juliette Binoche as Penelope is damaging. That film concentrates only on the final stage of Odysseus's homecoming and transforms it into a study of ageing, war trauma and estrangement. Its hero has survived the war but no longer fits naturally into the home to which he returns. Nolan needs three hours to reach similar material and still treats it with far less psychological and moral precision.

Ludwig Göransson's score avoids the familiar orchestra of the Hollywood sword-and-sandal film. Bronze gongs, synthesisers, the lyre and the ancient aulos suggest serious musical research. Yet these unusual materials are subordinated to Nolan's usual principle: sound should not accompany an image but physically overpower the viewer. During the screening, a friend measured peaks of approximately 95 decibels. Whether or not a telephone application provides laboratory accuracy, the result accurately describes the experience of being confronted with a jackhammer in front of you. This is cinema conceived as sensory domination.

But overwhelming volume does not create emotional force. The story fails to overwhelm because it has no room to breathe. The music fails because it rarely offers silence as a contrast. The images fail because almost every shot announces its own monumentality. When everything is presented as momentous, very little retains significance.

More seriously, Nolan reduces the epic to the suffering and restoration of an exceptional man. Odysseus endures, fights, resists temptation and finally reclaims his household through violence. Athena appears less as a strategist or intellectual counterforce than as a supernatural adviser guiding him through another stage of his ordeal.

Yet Homer's epic offers far richer possibilities. Unlike the *Iliad*, dominated by honour, rage and martial prestige, *The Odyssey* belongs to a world of movement, trade, negotiation and cultural encounter. Its central questions remain urgent: Who can be trusted? Who respects hospitality? How does one survive among people whose

customs are unfamiliar? What happens to identity when a traveller must constantly adapt, deceive and reinvent himself?

Odysseus survives not merely through strength, but through language and flexible intelligence. Penelope, too, is not simply the faithful wife waiting at home. She deceives the suitors, manages competing expectations and conceals her intentions. Adorno and Horkheimer famously interpreted Odysseus as an early embodiment of instrumental reason: a figure representing both the achievements and the violence of European civilisation.

Nolan might have made a film about migration, exchange, identity, colonial imagination or the psychological impossibility of returning home unchanged. Instead, he revives the heroic masculinity the epic itself had already begun to question.

Joyce transformed Odysseus into an ordinary man whose heroism consisted partly in observation, endurance and compassion. Nolan transforms him back into a monument – one that must continually be made significant through scale, suffering and sound.

After three hours of wandering, the viewer is grateful simply to reach the harbour. Nolan's hero finally finds his way home. The film itself remains lost. 🏠

Writer: film critic, Germany



*Christopher Nolan Made the Trojan Horse Physically.
Photo: FilmoFilia*

ARTICLE

The Ultimate Christopher Nolan Ranking

Christopher Nolan has built one of modern cinema's most distinctive bodies of work. His films repeatedly explore fractured timelines, obsession, guilt, identity and the personal cost of ambition.

Following the release of *The Odyssey*, Euronews Culture ranked all 13 of Nolan's feature films from weakest to strongest.

Nolan's work has generated both intense admiration and recurring criticism. Supporters celebrate his practical spectacle, intricate plotting and technical precision. Critics, however, often point to emotionally distant characters, unnatural dialogue, overwhelming sound design and female roles that receive less development than their male counterparts.

Here is the complete ranking, beginning with the filmmaker's least successful feature and ending with what Euronews Culture considers his finest work.

13. *Following* — 1998

Nolan's feature-length debut is a 70-minute, black-and-white neo-noir made on a reported budget of approximately \$6,000. Jeremy Theobald plays an aspiring writer who begins secretly following strangers through the streets of London. His habit appears harmless at first, but it soon draws him into a dangerous relationship and a world of manipulation, theft and shifting identities. Despite its limited resources, *Following* introduces several themes that would later define Nolan's career. These include obsession, unstable identity, deception and nonlinear storytelling. The film is an impressive example of low-budget filmmaking, although its pacing and character development can feel underdeveloped compared with Nolan's later productions.



Following (1998). Photo: Netflix



Christopher Nolan won the Academy Award for Best Director for *Oppenheimer*.
Photo: Cover Media

12. Tenet — 2020

Few films in Nolan's career are as conceptually ambitious as *Tenet*. John David Washington stars as an unnamed intelligence operative who becomes involved in a global conflict centred on technology capable of reversing the movement of people and objects through time. The film contains several technically remarkable action sequences, including fights that unfold both forwards and backwards. Its visual construction and large-scale set pieces demonstrate Nolan's continuing commitment to practical filmmaking. However, the complicated rules of the story are explained through heavy exposition, while the characters often feel emotionally distant. The overwhelming sound design also makes portions of the dialogue difficult to understand. Elizabeth Debicki gives the film some emotional weight, but her character is largely defined by her relationship with an abusive husband. As a result, *Tenet* can feel more like an elaborate intellectual mechanism than a fully satisfying drama.



Tenet (2020). Photo: IMDB

11. Insomnia — 2002

A remake of Erik Skjoldbjærg's 1997 Norwegian thriller, *Insomnia* follows an experienced detective investigating a murder in an Alaskan town where the summer sun never sets. Al Pacino plays Will Dormer, a detective whose judgment becomes increasingly unreliable as sleep deprivation, guilt and professional pressure begin to affect him. Hilary Swank appears as a local investigator, while Robin Williams delivers an unsettling performance that contrasts sharply with the comedic roles for which he was best known. Unlike many of Nolan's later films, *Insomnia* does not rely on complex timelines, enormous action sequences or elaborate science-fiction concepts. Instead, it operates as a tense and morally bleak psychological thriller. Although it is one of the director's less distinctive works, it remains an effective and frequently overlooked part of his filmography.



Insomnia (2002). Photo: MUBI

10. The Dark Knight Rises — 2012

The final instalment of Nolan's Batman trilogy expands the conflict into a battle for the future of Gotham City. Christian Bale returns as Bruce Wayne, who has withdrawn from public life following the events of *The Dark Knight*. He is eventually forced to become Batman again when the masked revolutionary Bane threatens the city. Tom Hardy brings considerable physical menace to the role of Bane, while Anne Hathaway delivers an energetic and charismatic performance as Selina Kyle. The film draws partly from Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, particularly in its depiction of revolution, social division and sacrifice. However, the story is less controlled than those of the previous two Batman films. Plot inconsistencies, uneven pacing and an overextended screenplay prevent it from reaching the level of *Batman Begins* or *The Dark Knight*. It remains an ambitious conclusion, but not an entirely successful one.



The Dark Knight Rises (2012). Photo: IMDB

9. Dunkirk — 2017

Dunkirk recreates the evacuation of Allied soldiers from France during the Second World War through three overlapping timelines. The first follows soldiers trapped on the beach over the course of one week. The second follows civilian boats crossing the English Channel during a single day. The third takes place in the air during one hour of combat. These separate timelines gradually converge as soldiers, pilots and civilians struggle to survive. Rather than relying on conventional dialogue or detailed backstories, Nolan uses sound, editing and visual composition to create a continuous sense of pressure. The ticking structure of Hans Zimmer's score contributes to the feeling that time is constantly running out. The technical execution is extraordinary, and the film places the audience inside the evacuation instead of explaining it through traditional exposition. That approach is also one of its limitations. Many of the characters function primarily as parts of the film's structure rather than as fully developed individuals.



Dunkirk (2017). Photo: WARNER BROS

8. Interstellar — 2014

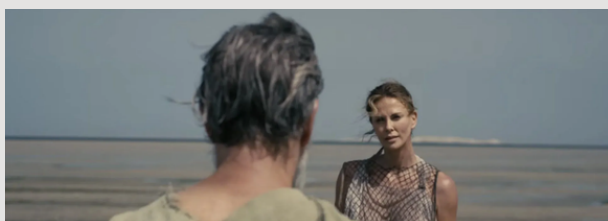
Matthew McConaughey plays Cooper, a former pilot who leaves his family to join a mission searching for a new home for humanity. Earth is becoming increasingly unable to sustain human life, forcing Cooper and a team of scientists to travel through a wormhole and investigate potentially habitable planets. The film combines theoretical physics and cosmic spectacle with an emotional story about the relationship between a father and his daughter. Hoyte van Hoytema's cinematography gives the production enormous visual power. The sequence set on a water-covered planet, where time passes at a radically different rate, remains one of Nolan's most memorable creations. McConaughey also delivers one of the film's strongest moments when Cooper watches years of recorded messages from his children after experiencing only a short period of time himself. However, the screenplay frequently explains its themes too directly. The final section, involving a multidimensional structure that allows Cooper to communicate through time, has also divided audiences. Its ambition is undeniable, even when its emotional and scientific ideas do not fully come together.



Interstellar (2014). Photo: IMDB

7. The Odyssey — 2026

Nolan's adaptation of Homer's ancient Greek epic represents one of the largest productions of his career. Filmed entirely using IMAX technology, the movie follows Odysseus on his difficult journey home after the Trojan War. Rather than presenting the source material as a straightforward fantasy, Nolan reduces some of its supernatural elements and adopts a more psychological and modern interpretation of its central character. The scale of the production is immense, while the technical craftsmanship reflects the director's continuing interest in practical environments and large-format filmmaking. However, the film's fragmented chronology and abrupt transitions sometimes weaken the story's momentum. Several of Odysseus' encounters pass without developing the tension or emotional weight they require. The first half is particularly slow, although the final section is more focused and dramatically effective. The Odyssey inspires admiration for its scale and construction, but it does not always establish a strong emotional connection with its characters.



The Odyssey (2026). Photo: IMDB

6. Oppenheimer — 2023

Adapted from Kai Bird and Martin J. Sherwin's biography American Prometheus, Oppenheimer examines the life of physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer. Cillian Murphy plays the scientist who led the Manhattan Project, the secret American programme responsible for developing the atomic bomb during the Second World War. The film also explores the political campaign that later damaged Oppenheimer's reputation and resulted in the removal of his security clearance. Murphy anchors a large ensemble with a restrained and intense performance. Robert Downey Jr., Emily Blunt, Matt Damon and Florence Pugh appear in supporting roles. The film's fragmented chronology moves between Oppenheimer's scientific career, the development of the bomb and later political hearings. Unlike some of Nolan's more confusing narrative experiments, the structure here strengthens the themes of memory, guilt, ambition and historical responsibility. Ludwig Göransson's score adds considerable tension, particularly during the Trinity test sequence. However, the female characters played by Blunt and Pugh receive considerably less development than the central male figures.



Oppenheimer (2023). Photo: IMDB

5. Batman Begins — 2005

After the critical failure of Batman & Robin, Nolan rebuilt the Batman franchise by focusing on Bruce Wayne's psychology. The film follows Wayne's childhood trauma, his training and his eventual decision to create Batman as a symbol capable of frightening Gotham's criminals. Christian Bale's performance makes the conflict between Bruce Wayne and his masked identity central to the story. The grounded treatment differs significantly from both Tim Burton's gothic Batman films and Joel Schumacher's colourful, exaggerated approach. Nolan presents Gotham as a city shaped by corruption, organised crime, economic inequality and institutional failure. The supporting cast includes Michael Caine as Alfred, Gary Oldman as Jim Gordon, Liam Neeson as Ra's al Ghul and Cillian Murphy as Jonathan Crane. By treating the superhero origin story with the structure and seriousness of a crime drama, Batman Begins helped redefine the genre and laid the foundation for the trilogy's strongest instalment.



Batman Begins (2005). Photo: IMDB

4. Inception — 2010

Leonardo DiCaprio stars as Dom Cobb, a specialist who enters other people's dreams to steal valuable information from their subconscious minds. Cobb is offered an opportunity to return to his children if he completes a more difficult task: planting an idea inside someone's mind. The mission requires Cobb and his team to create several dream levels, each operating at a different speed and with its own physical conditions. The cast also includes Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Elliot Page, Tom Hardy, Ken Watanabe, Marion Cotillard and Cillian Murphy. Despite its complicated rules, *Inception* maintains the momentum of a large-scale heist and espionage film. Its most memorable sequences include a fight in a rotating corridor, a collapsing cityscape and the simultaneous climax unfolding across multiple dream layers. Hans Zimmer's score adds further intensity, while the unresolved final shot has remained a subject of debate. The film demonstrated that a major studio blockbuster could challenge audiences intellectually while still delivering action, spectacle and suspense.



Inception (2010). Photo: IMDB

3. Memento — 2000

Guy Pearce plays Leonard Shelby, a man who is unable to form new long-term memories after suffering a serious injury. Leonard is searching for the person he believes murdered his wife. Because he cannot remember recent events, he relies on photographs, handwritten notes and tattoos to guide his investigation. Nolan presents the story through two narrative strands. The colour sequences move backwards, while the black-and-white scenes progress chronologically. The two timelines eventually meet, revealing how Leonard's condition makes him vulnerable to manipulation by others and by himself. The structure is not merely a storytelling trick. It places the audience inside Leonard's unstable perception, forcing viewers to experience uncertainty similar to his own. The film explores grief, guilt, memory, self-deception and the human tendency to construct comforting explanations. *Memento* demonstrated that Nolan's nonlinear methods are most effective when the formal complexity remains closely connected to character psychology.



Memento (2000). Photo: IMDB

2. The Dark Knight — 2008

Nolan's second Batman film expands the moral and criminal conflicts introduced in *Batman Begins*. Christian Bale returns as Bruce Wayne, while Aaron Eckhart plays district attorney Harvey Dent, a public figure who appears capable of fighting Gotham's corruption without wearing a mask. The defining addition is Heath Ledger's Joker, a criminal who seeks to prove that social order and morality can collapse under sufficient pressure. Ledger's casting initially faced scepticism, but his performance became one of the most celebrated in the superhero genre. He received a posthumous Academy Award for the role. Rather than functioning as a conventional comic-book villain, the Joker acts as an unpredictable force who repeatedly places the film's characters in impossible moral situations. The movie combines superhero spectacle with the atmosphere and structure of a crime thriller. Its major themes include order, chaos, surveillance, sacrifice and the compromises political institutions make in response to fear. The performances, practical action and moral uncertainty helped make *The Dark Knight* one of the most influential comic-book adaptations ever produced.



The Dark Knight (2008). Photo: IMDB

1. The Prestige — 2006

Adapted from Christopher Priest's novel, *The Prestige* follows two rival magicians in late-19th-century London. Hugh Jackman plays Robert Angier, while Christian Bale portrays Alfred Borden. What begins as professional competition gradually develops into a destructive obsession. Each man becomes determined to discover the other's secrets and create the greatest stage illusion, regardless of the personal cost. The narrative is organised around the three stages of a magic trick: the pledge, the turn and the prestige. This structure allows Nolan to explore deception not only within the story but also through the filmmaking itself. Information is concealed, perspectives are manipulated and earlier scenes acquire new meaning once the full truth is revealed. The supporting cast includes Michael Caine, Scarlett Johansson, Rebecca Hall and David Bowie as inventor Nikola Tesla.



The Prestige (2006). Photo: IMDB

The Depiction of an Implicit Love through Majid Majidi's *Baran*

Chaita Tridib Orchi



Baran (2001). Photo: IMDB

Iranian cinema has long been recognized for its subtle nature of storytelling, use of symbolism and reflection of social realities. Majid Majidi's *Baran* (2001) is a notable film of this tradition. It explores themes of

migration, sacrifice, gender and spiritual transformation through the experiences of Afghan refugees in Iran. The film is set mainly at a construction site in Tehran and centers on Lateef, a carefree and energetic teenage boy who works under Memar, the site manager. After an Afghan worker named Najaf is injured, Najaf's child, Rahmat, begins working in his place to support the family. When Lateef discovers Rahmat's true identity, the discovery serves as a catalyst for his inner transformation.

The film contains several notable creative tools and metaphors. The title *Baran* comes from the name of its central female character, and the Persian name "Baran" means "rain." Rain can symbolize renewal, purity and transformation, and these meanings are reflected in Lateef's gradual moral and spiritual development. Before discovering Baran's identity, Lateef is generally seen in shabby clothing and appears careless about his presentation.

After discovering that Rahmat is actually Baran, he begins to care more about his appearance and is seen wearing red clothing. This change may reflect how Baran's presence affects his state of mind and sense of self. The curtains shown in important scenes also symbolize Baran's concealed identity and the cultural and gender boundaries that separate her from Lateef.

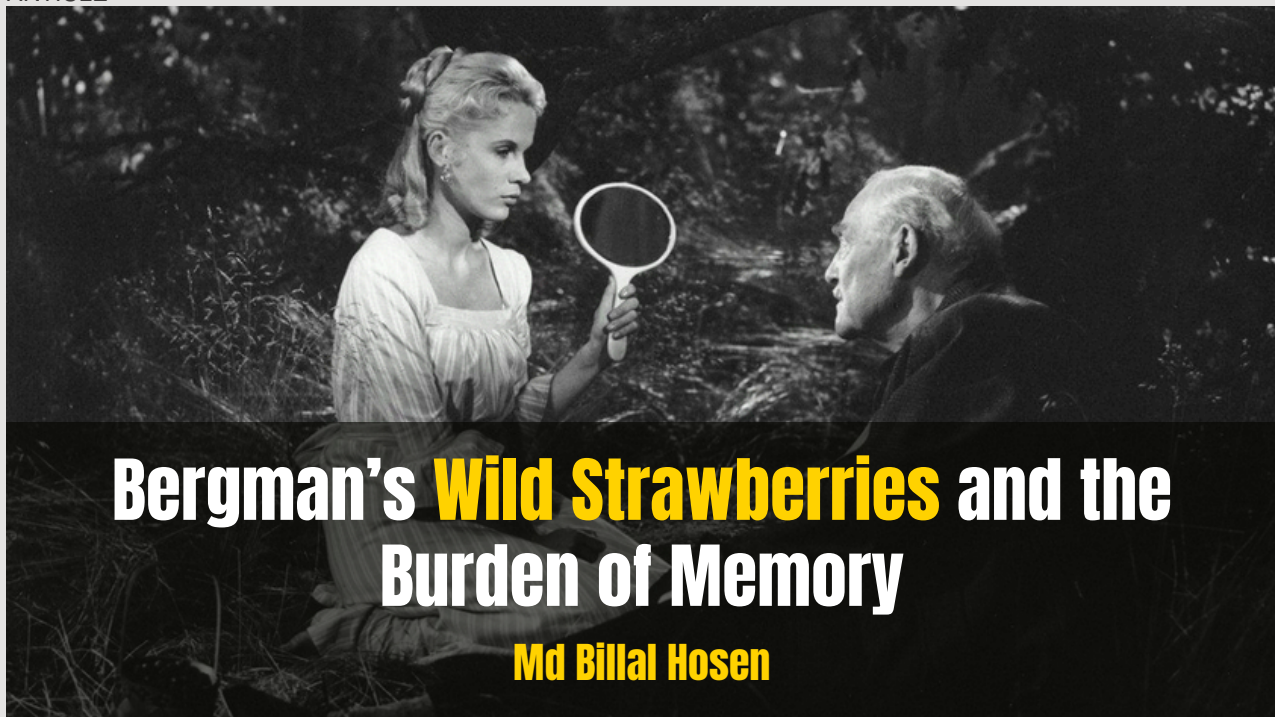
After her father's accident, Baran has to disguise herself as Rahmat so that she can work and provide for her family. Her disguise reveals how poverty, gender restrictions and undocumented refugee status limit her opportunities. She is compelled to conceal her identity in order to enter a male-dominated workplace and protect herself. This creates sympathy among the audience for her helplessness and vulnerability. The empty residence of Baran shown near the end of the film also acts as a metaphor for the fragile and temporary lives of Afghan refugees in Iran. Just as their presence in the

country is uncertain and unstable, the residence proves to be only a temporary shelter that can easily be abandoned. It also symbolizes the void caused by Baran's departure from Lateef's world.

While many conventional romantic films use direct dialogue, physical intimacy and open expressions of affection, *Baran* follows a contrasting and restrained approach. Majidi guides the audience through silence, observation and acts of sacrifice, yet still succeeds in depicting Lateef's love for Baran. Baran remains largely silent throughout the film, making it challenging for the audience to fully understand the depth of her emotions. Her silence may represent the helplessness and vulnerability of marginalized female refugees whose voices and choices are restricted by poverty, displacement and social circumstances. Lateef's feelings, however, become visible through his actions. After learning about Baran's financial distress, he sells his Iranian identity card to obtain money for her family. By giving up the document that proves his legal identity, he sacrifices one of the privileges that separates him from the undocumented Afghan refugees.

Towards the ending, Baran leaves for Afghanistan, and Lateef looks at the footprint she has left in the mud. As rain gradually fills the footprint, the image may symbolize both Baran's absence and Lateef's spiritual growth. As an audience member, I interpret this as Majidi's use of physical space and natural imagery to suggest a shift from earthly attachment to spiritual development. Lateef's feelings towards Baran evolve from jealousy and possessiveness into compassion and selflessness, and this transformation is one of the key moral developments in the film. Overall, although the film is slow-paced and its understated approach reduces the dramatic intensity of some scenes, it ultimately succeeds in leaving a strong impression on the audience. I would certainly recommend this film, as it can provide deeper insights into life, culture and society for students of communication, people interested in exploring social issues and anyone who genuinely appreciates good cinema. 🌧️

Writer: Contributor to C2C



Bergman's **Wild Strawberries** and the Burden of Memory

Md Billal Hosen

Bibi Andersson and Victor Sjöström in Ingmar Bergman's Wild Strawberries (1957). Photo: AB Svensk Filmindustri.

Ingmar Bergman's film *Wild Strawberries* is one of the finest classical examples of psychoanalytic cinema. Ingmar Bergman was deeply concerned with the human mind. He adorned the world of cinema with his oeuvre, almost like a psychologist. Although he was not one, in the book *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on the Films of Ingmar Bergman: From Freud to Lacan and Beyond*, edited by Vanessa Sinclair, Robert Samuels argues that "Bergman's works reveal an important insight derived from a combination of Freud and Shakespeare which concerns the ethical status of the unconscious."

In his works, the Freudian perspective suggests that humans are often delusional, suppress their dreams, and act according to traditional morals, ethics, and principles. Most of the time, humans pretend rather than being openly driven by their desires and dreams. This process of human action and the long usage of pseudo-human actions affects individuals differently. Some may face severe psychological problems, and some may face minor ones. When his cinema is perceived by the audience, one can assume that his film, *Wild Strawberries*, is an endeavour to represent how unspoken feelings and desires impact a highly successful man.

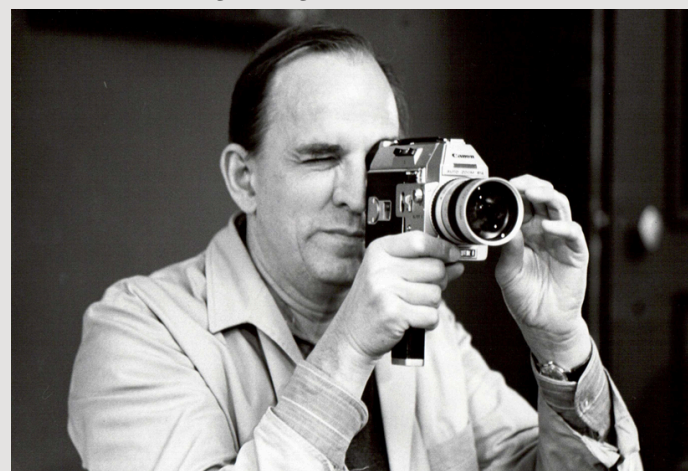
Isak Borg, the protagonist of *Wild Strawberries*, is a 78-year-old professor and physician travelling to Lund to receive an honorary degree. Throughout his whole life, he was a self-centred, principle-driven, egoistic, and isolated person. His education, society, and family acknowledged him as a good doctor, but beyond that, he is a sufferer of his own thoughts. His ideology and insights make him a vulnerable, disturbed, and isolated old man. Now he faces many things as a result of those fears, such as guilt, regret, and emotional emptiness.

These impulses repeatedly come to his dreams. They do not appear only in night dreams but also in daylight, in the midst of conversation and regular activities, immensely disturbing him. His regret and nostalgia come to him over and over. The film commences with the scene where he is terribly frightened by a weird, surreal dream. In the dream, he sees a corpse in a coffin that appears to be himself.

The dead body from the coffin comes to him and pulls his hand, as if asking him to go with it. This dream gives him an immeasurable amount of fright. He always avoids potential harm. Beyond his mental crisis, he protects himself from every unwanted situation if he can. But here is the irony: though he protects himself from harmful outward things and situations, he cannot save himself from his thoughts. Rather, he is perplexed by them.

After waking up, he remembers that he must attend an honorary ceremony at Lund University. He also remembers that he has a flight to go there. But due to the surreal, weird dream and fear, he decides to go there by car. He prepares himself; at that time, his daughter-in-law comes and wishes to go with him to the place he is going because there she lives with his son, Evald.

Ingmar Bergman. Photo: Collected



On the road, Isak stops at his childhood summer home where he spent his sunny days. He goes there. Ingmar Bergman, in interviews, said that Isak's visit to his childhood home and the strawberry patch was inspired by his own habit of visiting his grandmother's old flat in Uppsala to find emotional security when he felt unhappy or insecure. His lush childhood memories shaped the film as his own omnibus of life.

Isak encounters a vision there that is about his first love, Sara. He sees Sara picking strawberries. He recalls the memory that he could not marry Sara and the eternal quintessential regret of love. After the first love scene, he encounters many family get-together scenes that show how Isak and Ingmar Bergman are connected with their childhood. Bergman very frankly shows his vivid childhood dreams in a movie rather than making a documentary.

When Isak's vivid dreams bring him back to his long-lost realities, he sees a group of three young people, two of whom are boys in love with a girl named Sara. It should be remembered that his first love's name was also Sara. Isak is constantly confused between his dreams and reality. Bergman skillfully combines space and time, exposing the duality of life that results in overwhelming guilt at various points in time.

Bergman shows that reality often sabotages dreams. That is why he picks particularly vivid memories and places them in the dreams, and that is how he blends dreams and reality in cinema. His goal is to bring it to life as much as it can be rather than create a random cinema. The audience views these scenes as closely as possible rather than from a distance.

During their journey, Isak and Marianne visit his ninety-six-year-old mother, a meeting that reveals the complex layers of Isak's affection and reserve. The elderly mother, waiting in solitude, reveals her loneliness and emotional coldness, while Marianne quietly witnesses the emotional distance that defines his family. Afterwards, as they drive on, Marianne confides that Isak's son Evald mirrors his father: solitary, contemplative, and unwavering in his morals. She admits their relationship is strained.

Marianne longs for a child, feeling the weight of years spent together, but Evald refuses, haunted by the belief that life is filled with suffering and doubts. He questions the morality of bringing a child into such a world, believing it will bring

misery. Marianne, however, insists on her yearning for life and motherhood. Through these scenes, Ingmar Bergman highlights human suffering not as an anomaly, but as an essential part of existence, shaped by the passage of time and the realities we face.

In another dream, Isak Borg sees an examiner conducting his examination. He relentlessly tries to satisfy the examiner, but in every way he fails to do so. Bergman demonstrates the examiner as Isak Borg's judgmental conscience. The dream continues, and Borg gets disheartened by seeing his inability to cure patients. He sees that his ideologies and thoughts put him in a place where excessive sensibility, cynicism, and self-centeredness lead him to become an isolated man. After examining him, the examiner gives his verdict about Isak Borg, which is also made by his wife: that he is callous, selfish, and ruthless. He cites them as minor but serious offences.

Isak's subconscious mind is all about the past and nostalgia, with dreams and perplexing realities. But he cannot share these impulses, as he is lonely, and he moves with them, and the same dreams appear like a loop. After giving the verdict, the examiner also pronounces the punishment, and that is eternal loneliness. Borg tries to absorb the sentence strangely, as if he has known about the punishment for a very long time. The way he looks, it feels like he is within the punishment and suffering terribly. The moment the verdict is pronounced, he does not get any shock, which indicates that he is familiar with it and has accepted the inescapable reality as a member of human society. 🍓

Writer: Independent Filmmaker

Victor Sjöström in Ingmar Bergman's Wild Strawberries (1957). Photo: Collected



In the Mood for Wong Kar-wai

Love, Loneliness, and Memory

Kabbo Kabir

H

ong Kong's New Wave emerged from a complicated history shaped by colonization and changes in the local film and television industries. Influenced by Western and Asian

filmmaking, directors explored identity, society, and philosophy. One of its most famous filmmakers is Wong Kar-wai, an auteur associated more specifically with Hong Kong's Second Wave and known for films such as *In the Mood for Love* (2000), *Chungking Express* (1994), and *Fallen Angels* (1995).

Frequently appearing at international film festivals in his iconic sunglasses, Wong has become one of Hong Kong's most recognizable filmmakers. His films are crafted with nonlinear narratives, atmospheric music, and vivid cinematography with bold, saturated colours. Together, these elements create powerful emotions that people remember for a long time. Watching one of his films often feels like reading a beautiful poem or remembering an old dream.

Wong Kar-wai's influence on global cinema is difficult to overstate. By the late 1990s and early 2000s, he was no longer known only in Hong Kong. His fourth released feature film, *Chungking Express* (1994), brought him to the attention of wider Western and international audiences. At the 1995 Hong Kong Film Awards, the film won Best Film, while Wong won Best Director. He followed it with *Fallen Angels* (1995), which became a cult classic and a strong example of his unique style.

Wong further established his reputation with *Happy Together* (1997), winning Best Director at the Cannes Film Festival.



Wong Kar Wai. Photo: MUBI

Film festivals celebrated his work, critics praised his style, and audiences discovered that his films were different from mainstream cinema. In recent years, many people have first discovered Wong Kar-wai through still photographs and short clips shared online. Like Haruki Murakami in the literary scene, Wong Kar-wai became one of the most internationally recognized Hong Kong filmmakers of his generation. Along the way, Wong has won many awards and honours. However, the true measure of his achievement can be seen through the influence he has had on other artists. Critics, filmmakers, and viewers have identified aspects of his style in works as diverse as Sofia Coppola's *Lost in Translation*, Matthew Weiner's television series *Mad Men*, Barry Jenkins's *If Beale Street Could Talk*, and Bi Gan's *Long Day's Journey into Night*.

Today, his influence can be seen across many areas of visual culture. Many contemporary directors have acknowledged Wong Kar-wai's influence, whether directly or through similarities identified by critics. His work has inspired not only directors and cinematographers but also photographers, fashion designers, visual artists, music-video creators, and even social-media artists around the world.

People who have never watched one of his films may recognize his signature style through images shared online. He never attended a conventional film school, but he studied graphic design, entered a television drama-training programme, and began his film career as a scriptwriter. Instead of focusing only on traditional storytelling, he became interested in exploring feelings that are difficult to describe—longing, loneliness, regret, hope, desire, and the passing of time. His characters often struggle to express what they truly feel. They miss opportunities, remember lost relationships, and search for happiness in a busy world. These emotions are universal, which is why audiences from many different cultures connect with his films. His work helped bring greater international attention to Hong Kong art cinema.

Wong's filmmaking process is also very different from that of many directors. He often begins shooting with only a rough idea of the story or an unfinished screenplay. During production, he continues writing, changing scenes, and discovering new ideas together with his actors. Some of his films take much longer to complete because he believes that the best ideas often appear while making the movie rather than before it begins. Collaboration is a key feature of Wong's work. *Chungking Express*, shot through a fast and flexible process while its story was still being developed, exemplifies the extraordinary camerawork of his long-time collaborator, cinematographer Christopher Doyle. This relationship, along with Wong's collaboration with production designer and editor William Chang, has given his films an unforgettable visual identity. Slow motion, coloured lens filters, extreme wide-angle lenses, and creative lighting give his melancholic stories a sense of energy and beauty. Wong also frequently works with a recurring group of actors, including Tony Leung Chiu-wai, who has appeared in seven of his feature films, as well as other important figures in Chinese cinema such as Maggie Cheung and Leslie Cheung. They have all delivered some of the most memorable and acclaimed performances of their careers under Wong's direction.

In recent years, Wong Kar-wai has become surprisingly popular among younger audiences. Short clips from his films are widely shared online because of their beautiful visuals and emotional atmosphere. Modern life is fast, crowded, busy, and constantly connected through technology, yet many people still experience loneliness, uncertainty, and nostalgia. Wong's stories speak directly to these feelings. His characters often deal with missed opportunities, changing cities, fading memories, and the search for meaningful human connections. These experiences continue to feel relevant in the twenty-first century.

Although Wong's films are deeply personal, one theme appears again and again: love. However, his stories are not typical romantic stories with perfect endings. Instead, he explores the complicated and painful side of love. His characters often fall in love at the wrong time. They miss opportunities because of fear, pride, or simple bad luck. Sometimes they meet the right person only after it is too late. These small moments become powerful because they reflect real life. Wong's characters often hide their true feelings, making every glance, silence, and pause meaningful. By refusing to explain every emotion directly, Wong allows audiences to participate in the story.

Each viewer can interpret the characters' emotions in their own way. Another important theme in his films is loneliness. Ironically, Wong often places lonely characters in crowded cities filled with thousands of people. Even when surrounded by others, they still feel emotionally isolated. This idea of chance and fate in a busy city is at the heart of *Chungking Express* and many of Wong's other works. Memories shape who we are. Without them, we lose part of ourselves. Yet living entirely in the past prevents us from embracing the future. Many Wong Kar-wai characters also live between the present and the past. They remember old conversations, familiar songs, favourite places, and people they once loved.



Brigitte Lin and Takeshi Kaneshiro in *Chungking Express*.
Photo: Janus Films



Fallen Angels. Photo: IMDB

A major characteristic of Wong Kar-wai's work is his use of bold and contrasting colours. He uses dramatic dark-green shadows and bright, warm light to create emotional landscapes. His films are visually beautiful, but reducing them only to their appearance misses what makes them special. Every colour, camera movement, piece of music, and lighting choice works together to express human emotion. His approach to cinematography has influenced many filmmakers around the world. Wong shows that cinema is not only about telling stories; it is an art form capable of capturing feelings that words alone cannot describe. This approach encourages audiences and filmmakers around the world to pay attention to small details and understand how images can communicate emotions.

Decades after the release of his films, works such as *In the Mood for Love*, *Happy Together*, *2046*, *Chungking Express*, and *Fallen Angels* continue to be shown at film festivals, restored for new generations, and discussed by critics worldwide. For new viewers, some of his films may feel unusual at first because they use deliberate pacing, leave questions unanswered, and focus more on emotion than dramatic action. However, watching them with patience allows audiences to experience the beauty of his filmmaking. Wong Kar-wai is more than just a famous Hong Kong filmmaker. He is an artist who transformed cinema into a language of emotions, memories, and beautiful visuals through rich colours, poetic cinematography, unforgettable music, and emotionally complex human characters. He created films that feel both personal and universal. His films are meant to be felt, remembered, and experienced again and again. 🍷

Writer: Student and filmmaker



The official poster of the 83rd Venice International Film Festival, created by Manuele Fior

Bangladesh Reaches Venice Milestone with *The Difficult Bride*



The Difficult Bride. Photo: Khona Talkies

Bangladeshi cinema has achieved a historic milestone as writer, director and producer Rubaiyat Hossain's fourth feature film, *The Difficult Bride*, has been selected for the Horizons (Orizzonti) Competition at the 83rd Venice International Film Festival.

The selection marks the first time a Bangladeshi feature film has been included in an official competition section at the Venice Film Festival, one of the world's most prestigious cinematic events.

The festival's 83rd edition will take place in Venice, Italy, from September 2 to 12, where *The Difficult Bride* will have its world premiere.

Founded in 1932, the Venice International Film Festival is the world's oldest film festival. Its Horizons (Orizzonti) section is internationally recognised for showcasing innovative filmmaking, emerging cinematic languages and bold artistic visions.

Previously, Bangladeshi filmmaker Ishtiaq Zico's short film *720 Degrees* was selected for the Horizons (Orizzonti) section in 2010. However, *The Difficult Bride* is the first full-length Bangladeshi feature to earn a place in the section.

A psychological horror film, *The Difficult Bride* is set in Dhaka's historic Mayfair Beauty Parlour. The story follows Zaineen, a young woman who visits the salon to prepare for her wedding but gradually finds herself drawn into a disturbing and mysterious reality where beauty, the body, memory, faith and fear become deeply intertwined.

The film stars Zaineen Chowdhury Karim in the lead role, alongside Rikita Nandini Shimu, Sunerah Kamal, Shatabdi Wadud, Saberi Alam and Mohammad Bari. National Award-winning actress Azmeri Haque Badhon and Damir Khan make special appearances.

Filming was completed over 26 days between June and July 2025. Post-production took place in Paris and Lisbon, while the film's final sound mix is currently being completed in Paris under Rubaiyat Hossain's supervision.

French production company Les Films de l'Après-Midi serves as the lead producer, with co-producers from Bangladesh, Portugal, Norway and Germany. International sales are being handled by Films Boutique.

The project received support from several leading international funding bodies, including Eurimages, France's CNC, Portugal's ICA, Italy's Fondazione Prada Film Fund, Norway's Sørfond and Germany's World Cinema Fund.

Notably, *The Difficult Bride* was one of only 14 projects selected from more than 1,200 submissions to the Fondazione Prada Film Fund, and the only project to receive support during its post-production stage.

Another distinctive feature of the production is that women led almost every major creative department, with the exception of the composer. Four women associated with the film are recipients of Bangladesh's National Film Award: director Rubaiyat Hossain, actresses Azmeri Haque Badhon, Rikita Nandini Shimu and Sunerah Kamal. 🌟



Venice Film Festival Unveils 2026 Official Selection

Pietrangelo Buttafuoco (left) journalist, author, President of La Biennale di Venezia and Alberto Barbera (right) film critic, Artistic Director of the Cinema Department for the festival. Photo: Biennale Cinema 2026

The Venice International Film Festival has announced the official lineup for its 2026 edition, featuring a diverse mix of acclaimed auteurs, anticipated premieres and star-studded productions. The festival will run from September 2 to 12 on the Lido.

Artistic director Alberto Barbera unveiled a competition slate that is noticeably leaner on studio and streaming titles than in recent years, while the selection is overwhelmingly dominated by films directed by men.

Among the most anticipated world premieres is Martin McDonagh's black comedy *Wild Horse Nine*, a CIA drama set in the lead-up to Chile's 1973 coup. Backed by Searchlight Pictures, the film stars John Malkovich, Sam Rockwell and Steve Buscemi. McDonagh previously launched both *The Banshees of Inisherin* and *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri* at Venice.

Also competing is Florian Zeller's psychological thriller *Bunker*, featuring Penélope Cruz, Javier Bardem, Stephen Graham, Paul Dano and Patrick Schwarzenegger. The story follows an architect whose marriage begins to unravel after he accepts a commission to build a survival bunker for a billionaire. Zeller won the Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay with *The Father* and last competed at Venice with *The Son*.

South Korean filmmaker Lee Chang-dong returns after an eight-year absence with *Possible Love*, his first feature since *Burning*.

Produced by Netflix, the drama explores the intertwined lives of two married couples and stars Jeon Do-yeon, Sul Kyung-gu, Zo In-sung and Cho Yeo-jeong.

Asian cinema is further represented by Japanese master Hirokazu Kore-eda, whose live-action adaptation of the bestselling manga *Look Back* joins the competition. Fellow Japanese director Shinya Tsukamoto will premiere *Mr. Nelson, Did You Kill People?*, inspired by the experiences of an African American Vietnam War veteran.

Veteran German filmmaker Werner Herzog returns to Venice with *Bucking Fastard*, based on the true story of inseparable twin sisters and starring real-life siblings Rooney Mara and Kate Mara. Herzog received the festival's Lifetime Achievement Award last year.

Among the 20 competition titles, May El-Toukhy's *Woman Unknown* is the only film directed by a woman, marking a significant decline from last year's lineup, which featured six female-directed films.

Italian cinema well represented

Italy has five films in competition, including Nanni Moretti's romantic comedy *It Will Happen Tonight*, starring Louis Garrel and Jasmine Trinca. Edoardo De Angelis returns with *Il Fuoco Che Ti Porti Dentro*, while Andrea Pallaoro presents *The Echo Chamber*, featuring Alicia Vikander, Luca Marinelli and Susan Sarandon.

Barbera also noted the unusually long running times of several entries. The most extensive is Ilya Khrzhanovsky's *Dau*, running 210 minutes as the latest chapter in his ambitious *Dau* project.

Other competition highlights include Casey Affleck's directorial effort *Company*, Iranian filmmaker Ali Asgari's political drama *A Bit of Light*, Stéphane Brizé's *A Good Little Soldier*, and Cédric Kahn's *A Place to Heal*, set in a French adolescent psychiatric unit.

Strong documentary slate

The out-of-competition programme features an extensive documentary lineup, including Russell Crowe's music documentary *What Love Builds*, Alex Gibney's *Musk*, Sergei Loznitsa's *Imperium*, Oasis: *Don't Look Back in Anger* by Dylan Southern and Will Lovelace, Takashi Miike's *Shumei – The Living Legacy of Kabuki*, *Everest: The Other Side* by Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi and Jimmy Chin, and Wim Wenders' architectural portrait *From Inside Out – The Architecture of Peter Zumthor*.

The documentary selection also includes two films addressing the Israel-Gaza conflict: Amos Gitai's *The Road to Jericho* and Ahmed Hassouna's *Citizen Osama*.

Beyond competition

Among the out-of-competition fiction titles are Paul Schrader's *The Basics of Philosophy*, starring Jack Huston, Bill Pullman and Sofia Boutella, and Kornél Mundruczó's *Place to Be*, featuring Ellen Burstyn, Taika Waititi and Pamela Anderson.

The Horizons (Orizzonti) section will open with Alina Marazzi's period drama *La Ragazza Con La Leica*, one of four Italian films in the sidebar.

As previously announced, Danny Boyle's *Ink*, starring Jack O'Connell, Guy Pearce and Claire Foy, will open the festival and screen in competition.

The main competition jury will be chaired by Maggie Gyllenhaal, joined by Kaouther Ben Hania and Daniel Blumberg, among others. Gyllenhaal will also present her short film *Flesh Impact* out of competition. 🎬



Danny Boyle's *'Ink'*. Photo: Netflix

Full Lineup

Competition

Ink
Dir. Danny Boyle

Company
Dir. Casey Affleck

A Bit Of Light
Dir. Ali Asgari

Ritorno A Buenos Aires
Dir. Marco Bechis

Un Bon Petit Soldat
Dir. Stephane Brize

Il Fuoco Che Ti Porti Dentro
Dir. Edoardo De Angelis

Woman Unknown
Dir. May el-Toukhy

Bucking Fastard
Dir. Werner Herzog

15/18 (A Place To Heal)
Dir. Cedric Kahn

Dau
Dir. Ilya Khrzhanovsky

Look Back
Dir. Hirokazu Koreeda

Possible Love
Dir. Lee Chang-dong

Wild Horse Nine
Dir. Martin McDonagh

Succedera Questa Notte
Dir. Nanni Moretti

Primetime
Dir. Lance Oppenheim

The Echo Chamber
Dir. Andrea Pallaoro

Un Peu Avant Minuit
Dir. Nicolas Pariser

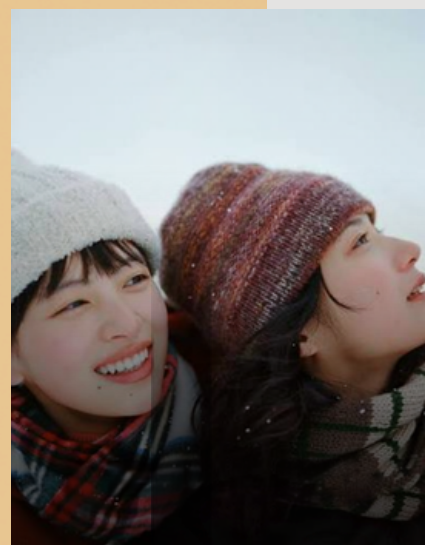
L'Estranea
Dir. Paolo Strippoli

Mr. Nelson, Did You Kill People?
Dir. Shinya Tsukamoto

Bunker
Dir. Florian Zeller



Bucking Fastard
Dir. Werner Herzog.
Photo: Biennale



Look Back
Dir. Hirokazu Koreeda
Photo: Biennale



Let Us Through, Dear Ancestors
Dir. Lav Diaz
Photo: Biennale

Venice Open - film on films

Juso Per Ferie
Dir. Karen Di Porto

Nino - Un Film Su Nino Rota
Dir. Walter Fasano

The Pervert's Guide To Utopias
Dir. Sophie Fiennes

Joie De Vivre
Dir. Luca Guadagnino

Twist And Shoot Mister Suzuki
Dir. Yves Montmayeur

Intermission
Dir. Yonfan

Venice Open - shorts

Flesh Impact
Dir. Maggie Gyllenhaal

Wild Asparagus
Dir. Avi Mograbi

They're Here
Dir. Laura Poitras, Rachel Mueller

Venice Open - special screening

Dai Nostra inviati. La Rai Racconta La Mostra Del Cinema Di Venezia 2001-2012
Dir. Guiseppe Giannotti, Enrico Salvatori, Nicoletta Berardi

Venice Open - non-fiction

Be Brave
Dir. Francesco Carrozzini

What Love Builds
Dir. Russell Crowe

Burgundy
Dir. Michael Dweck, Gregory

Kershaw
Musk
Dir. Alex Gibney

The Road To Jericho
Dir. Amos Gitai

Citizen Osama
Dir. Ahmed Hassouna

Union Town
Dir. Barbara Kopple

Holy Wood Dust
Dir. Victor Kossakovsky

Letters From The Silenced Country
Dir. Andrei Kutsila

Biografia De Jorge Luis Borges
Dir. Mariano Llinas

My Undesirable Friends: Part II - Exile
Dir. Julia Loktev

Boatbuilders
Dir. Luke Lorentzen

Imperium
Dir. Sergei Loznitsa

Shumei - The Living Legacy Of Kabuki
Dir. Takashi Miike

Queer Edward II
Dir. Theo Rollason

Oasis: Don't Look Back In Anger
Dir. Dylan Southern, Will Lovelace

Dust
Dir. Tsai Ming-Liang

Everest: The Other Side
Dir. Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi, Jimmy Chin

From Inside Out - The Architecture Of Peter Zumthor
Dir. Wim Wenders

Venice Open - fiction

Dio Ride
Dir. Giovanni Veronesi

Nessun Dolore
Dir. Gianni Amelio

Let Us Through, Dear Ancestors
Dir. Lav Diaz

Father Joe
Dir. Barthelemy Grossmann

Scherzetto
Dir. Mario Martone

Place To Be
Dir. Kornel Mundruczo

No Paradise If You Are Killed By A Woman
Dir. Halkawt Mustafa

Arrested Memory
Dir. Sabu

The Basics Of Philosophy
Dir. Paul Schrader

Un Bon Avocat
Dir. Tristan Seguela

Jupiter
Dir. Alexandre Smia



From Inside Out - The Architecture Of Peter Zumthor
Dir. Wim Wenders
Photo: Biennale

Horizons

La Ragazza Con Le Leica
Dir. Alina Marazzi

The Burning Giants
Dir. Phutti Phong Aroonpheng

What Belongs To Others
Dir. Grzegorz Debowski

Una Storia
Dir. Anna Foglietta

La Citta Dei Vivi
Dir. Edoardo Gabbriellini

Falling House
Dir. Mohsen Gharaei

Too Much Sugar
Dir. Robert Greene

The Difficult Bride
Dir. Rubaiyat Hossain

La Maison Du Vent
Dir. Auguste Bernard Kouemo

Yanghu
I Figli Della Scimmia
Dir. Tommaso Landucci

A Day In The Life Of Jo: Chapter
Phaedra
Dir. Jacqueline Lentzou

Oasis
Dir. Jannis Lenz

Until The Day Ends
Dir. Jelena Maksimovic

La Moula
Dir. Jerome Pierrat

Lovers In The Blue Night
Dir. Anuparna Roy

Un Detour Par Diane
Dir. Ann Sirot, Raphael Balboni

The Colour Of The Sun
Dir. Xavier Tera

Eclipse
Dir. Manuel Wetscher

Big Little Things
Dir. Michelle Zhou

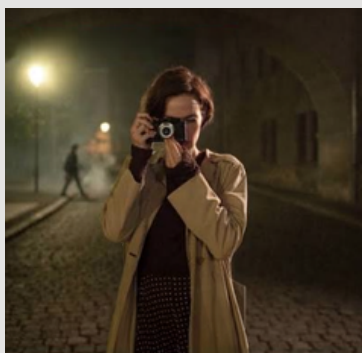
The Colour Of The Sun
Dir. Xavier Tera. Photo: Biennale



Lovers In The Blue Night. Dir. Anuparna Roy. Photo: Biennale



Big Little Things Dir. Michelle Zhou. Photo: Biennale



La Ragazza Con Le Leica. Dir. Alina Marazzi. Photo: Biennale



Spotlight

Sumo: Spirit Weighs Nothing
Dir. Erik Shirai

Conversation With The Sea
Dir. Muayad Alayan

Hombre Al Agua
Dir. Gael Garcia Bernal

Serpenti
Dir. Roberto De Paolis Maino

Furies
Dir. Rami Kodeih

Guria
Dir. Levan Koguashvili

Ground Floor
Dir. Gabor Reisz

I Matter
Dir. Alina Serban



Sameer Ahmed. Photo: collected from Facebook

From Movieola to Digital

Sameer Ahmed's Journey

Sameer Ahmed is one of Bangladesh's most accomplished filmmakers and editors, with a career spanning cinema, television, and advertising. A graduate of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune, where he specialized in Film Editing, he has directed and edited numerous feature films, television dramas, and commercials for leading organizations such as Airtel, Unilever, and BBC World Service Trust. His acclaimed work on Guerrilla (2011) earned him the Bangladesh National Film Award for Best Editing. He founded Gao Productions in 2006 and now teaches at Jagannath University, mentoring future filmmakers. In this interview, Md Rabbi Islam speaks with him for Cut To Cinema.

How did your journey in film editing begin, and what inspired you to choose editing as a profession?

My journey into cinema began when I was a teenager. I was completely obsessed with films. My grand-aunt, the celebrated actress Shabnam, noticed my fascination and gave me an Indian documentary on filmmaking. It opened my eyes. Suddenly I realised that ordinary people created those extraordinary worlds, and I knew I wanted to become one of them.

When I told my grandfather that I wanted to work in films, he compared an editor to a master tailor. Every cut, he said, must be as precise and meaningful as every stitch. That simple comparison stayed with me. Before joining the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), I never thought of editing as separate from filmmaking. I loved every department equally. But when I had to choose between direction and editing at FTII, I chose editing because I believed a film is truly completed in the editing room.

I also feel fortunate that my career has spanned almost every era of modern editing. I started on the Movieola, moved to the Steenbeck, and later embraced digital editing. I've worked with 8mm, 16mm, and 35mm film, Beta tapes, DV, and now digital formats. The technology has changed dramatically, but the purpose has remained the same—to tell a story in the best possible way.

Which films or projects have played the most important role in shaping you as an editor?

Every project has shaped me in some way. Since graduating from FTII, I've worked on everything from television dramas and documentaries to feature films. Editing is an art that keeps evolving because life itself

keeps changing the way you see rhythm, emotion, and storytelling. I've been fortunate to collaborate with directors such as Nurul Alam Atique, Amitabh Reza, Akram Khan, Zahidur Rahim Anjan, Nasiruddin Yusuf Bacchu, Animesh Aich, and Tokon Thakur. Each of them challenged me to think differently. Among the works closest to my heart are Payer Tolar Mati Nai, Guerrilla, Meghmallar, Saba, Phulkumar, and Choturtho Matra. Looking back, I realise each film represents a different stage of my growth. One thing has never changed, though—I rarely enjoy watching my own work. I'm always looking for what could have been better, and perhaps that's what keeps me learning.

What projects are you currently working on, and what are you exploring creatively at this stage of your career?

At the moment I'm working on Moving Bangladesh, directed by Nuhash Humayun, and Kurkab, directed by Noor Imran Mithu. I feel grateful whenever filmmakers I admire invite me to collaborate with them.

Every new project reminds me that editing is an art that never stops teaching you. Even after all these years, I still feel like a student. Besides editing, I've been directing, producing, and working as a cinematographer since 2004, and I hope to continue exploring cinema from every possible angle. One of my biggest dreams is to build a production company where I can create meaningful films and support the next generation of filmmakers.

How would you compare the standard and practice of film editing in Bangladesh with international cinema?

The language of editing is universal, but the working environment is often very different. Around the world, editors are recognised as creative collaborators. In Bangladesh, editing is still one of the least understood professions in filmmaking. A feature film needs time to discover its rhythm. Editing is not simply joining shots together; it's shaping emotion, time, and meaning. That process requires patience, trust, and creative freedom. Unfortunately, deadlines and commercial pressures often leave very little room for experimentation. If we want our cinema to grow, we must value editors not just as technicians but as storytellers.

How do you see the current state of Bangladeshi cinema, and what changes are needed for the industry to move forward?

Despite the challenges, I'm hopeful. I think Bangladeshi cinema is slowly finding its confidence again. Audiences are returning to theatres, OTT platforms have opened doors for new filmmakers, and Bangla content is reaching wider audiences than ever before. 🌱

Tell the name of the

FILM

GUESSING GAME

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF NOLAN



1. Which Christopher Nolan film won the Academy Award for Best Picture? (1 Point)
2. What is the name of Nolan's famous Batman trilogy? (2 Point)
3. Which Nolan film explores dreams within dreams? (3 Point)
4. Who is Christopher Nolan's younger brother and frequent co-writer? (4 Point)
5. Who wrote the ancient Greek epic that inspired Christopher Nolan's The Odyssey? (5 Point)



Test Your Knowledge Answers
1. Oppenheimer
2. The Dark Knight
3. Inception
4. Jonathan Nolan
5. Homer

Guessing Game Answer
Moana is a 2016 American musical adventure film and a live-action adaptation of Disney, directed by Thomas Kail.

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- Complimentary anniversary dinner coupon at 5-star hotels
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- Exclusive Welcome Pack with vouchers



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