

CUT CINEMA

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**A camera is a
camera, a shot is
a shot, how you
tell the story is
the main thing.**



CHRISTOPHER NOLAN

EDITORIAL

Bangladeshi cinema continues to earn recognition on the international stage. The latest feather in its cap comes from the 28th Shanghai International Film Festival, where a Bangladeshi film won an award. In this issue, you will find not only comprehensive coverage of this achievement but also an exclusive interview related to it. Beyond the festival circuit, we have published a review of Steven Spielberg's latest film, which was recently released. This issue also brings you a selection of other important news and developments from the world of cinema.

We encourage our readers not only to watch films but also to engage with cinema as a serious cultural practice. Read books, articles, and essays on film, and help foster a richer film culture.

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Cover: 'Atlantic Rhapsody'. Photo: SIFF.



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Director, illustrator and author Marjane Satrapi in 2012. Photo: Alessandra Tarantino / AP

French-Iranian filmmaker, graphic novelist and artist Marjane Satrapi, whose acclaimed animated feature *Persepolis* earned an Academy Award nomination and international recognition, has died at the age of 56.

According to a statement issued by close friends and family to Agence France-Presse (AFP), Satrapi died on June 3, more than a year after the death of her husband, producer, actor and screenwriter Mattias Ripa, who passed away on April 8, 2025.

French President Emmanuel Macron's office paid tribute to Satrapi, describing her as "a leading figure in French culture" and a champion of artistic freedom whose work resonated across borders.

Born into an upper middle-class family in Tehran, Satrapi was 10 years old when the 1979 Iranian Revolution transformed the country. An outspoken critic of Iran's ruling establishment, she moved to France in 1994 and became a French citizen in 2006.

Her breakthrough came with *Persepolis* (2007), co-directed with Vincent Paronnaud and adapted from her bestselling autobiographical graphic novel. Chronicling her childhood and adolescence during and after the Iranian Revolution, the film offered a poignant and satirical perspective on life under an authoritarian regime. *Persepolis* won the Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival and received an Oscar nomination for Best Animated Feature.

Satrapi and Paronnaud later collaborated on *Chicken with Plums*, which premiered in competition at the Venice Film Festival in 2011. Her subsequent directorial works included the crime comedy *Gang of the Jotas* (2012), the Marie Curie biopic *Radioactive* (2019), starring Rosamund Pike, and the dark comedy *Dear Paris* (2024).

Last year, Satrapi declined France's highest civilian honour, the Legion of Honour, criticising what she described as France's "hypocritical" approach towards Iran and its dissidents. 🇮🇷



Persepolis (2007): Animated film exploring identity, revolution, exile, resilience, memory and freedom. Photo: IMDB

Atlantic Rhapsody Tops Shanghai's Golden Goblet Awards



'Atlantic Rhapsody' bags best feature film at Shanghai International Film Festival. Photo: SIFF

C

hinese filmmaker Zhong Kaifeng's debut feature *Atlantic Rhapsody* secured the Best Feature Film prize at the 28th Golden Goblet Awards, the flagship competition of the Shanghai International Film Festival (SIFF), during the closing ceremony on June 20.

The Chinese production, which also earned Best Cinematography for Hao Jiayue, emerged as one of the evening's biggest winners in a ceremony that recognised filmmakers from across the globe and multiple competition strands.

Atlantic Rhapsody had its world premiere at this year's SIFF. During a festival press conference, Zhong explained that he relied on natural light and ambient sound to shape the film's distinctive atmosphere. Set in Northeast China, the film stars Yin Fang, who described his character as "a figure of that era, someone who wanted to make a big splash but ended up being toyed with by the times."

Accepting the award, Zhong said: "*Atlantic Rhapsody* is not a film that hands audiences ready answers, yet this award has given me my own answer: persistence, passion, hard work, and faith."

The Jury Grand Prix was awarded to Belgian entry *Illuminada*, directed by Nicolás Rincón Gille. Morocco's Yassine El Idrissi won Best Director for *Halima*, a social realist drama centred on the cannabis trade that marked Morocco's return to the Golden Goblet main competition after a 27-year absence.

El Idrissi, who drew upon his experience as a photojournalist while making the film, also saw lead performer Khadija Amari receive Best Actress. Although she had appeared in smaller roles previously, *Halima* marked her first leading role in a feature film.

Chinese actor Zhang Songwen took home the Best Actor award for *Secret in the Box*, a Chinese mainland-Hong Kong co-production directed by Frankie Tam Gong-Yuen and adapted from Au Yeung Ping Keung's murder mystery. Zhang previously starred opposite Xin Zhilei in Cai Shangjun's *The Sun Rises on Us All*, which premiered at Venice in 2025 before screening in Toronto and Busan.

Turkish filmmaker Reis Çelik won Best Screenplay for *Night of Blindness*, a Turkey-Germany co-production and the second instalment in his planned *Night Trilogy*, following *Night of Silence*, which won the Crystal Bear at the 62nd Berlin International Film Festival. Set during Turkey's 1980 military coup, the film explores both literal and political darkness. Speaking at SIFF, Çelik said he hoped the work would shed light on "certain aspects of reality that are being downplayed and ignored."

German director Susanne Heinrich received the Outstanding Artistic Achievement Award for *The Miserable Mother*, a Germany-France co-production that shared its world premiere between SIFF and the Munich International Film Festival.

In the Asian New Talent section, Gong Yiwen's *Her First Taste*, supported by the SIFF Project, won Best Film, while lead actor Ma Fufu received Best Actress. The coming-of-age story follows a young woman passionate about writing as she navigates identity and first love on a university campus.

At a festival press meeting, Gong said she encouraged her cast to internalise their dialogue before discarding it during filming to preserve spontaneity.

Accepting the award, Gong said: "I am overjoyed and thrilled to receive this award at SIFF. I was even more moved to see our leading actress take home best actress just now. I am incredibly proud of this project, which was far from easy to pull off. My deepest thanks go to every single member of my crew. This is the profession I love with all my heart."

Thailand's Sompot Chidgasornpongse won Best Director in the Asian New Talent competition for 9 Temples to

Heaven, his debut feature about a family's one-day pilgrimage to nine Buddhist temples. Chidgasornpongse previously worked for more than two decades as an assistant director to Apichatpong Weerasethakul on films including Memoria and Cemetery of Splendour. The film premiered at Cannes Directors' Fortnight, while Sompot Songkarnpol won Best Actor for his performance.

Indian filmmaker Ridham Janve received the Asian New Talent Best Screenplay award for Hunter's Moon, an India-Germany co-production. Janve, whose films frequently explore mountainous landscapes, described nature in the film as a mirror that both flatters and humbles its human characters.

Best Cinematography in the Asian New Talent section went to Samiul Karim Shuptak for The Blind Girl and an Elephant, directed by Ishtiyak Ahmad Zihad. The Bangladesh-Germany co-production was produced by Manoj Pramanik alongside German co-producer Christoph Thoke of Mogador Film and had its world premiere at SIFF.

Chinese director Gu Yun's Notes Unheard won Best Documentary. The film examines a father-son relationship over several years through recurring conversations and leaves its conclusion open-ended.

French filmmaker Olivier Clert's Lucy Lost won Best Animation from a five-film competition that also included two additional European co-productions and Indonesia's Garuda: Dare to Dream.

In the short film categories, Belgian director Ada Guvenir's If Only won Best Animated Short Film, while Canadian filmmaker Athena Han's Sitting Bird claimed Best Live Action Short Film.

The awards ceremony opened with musical performances by Zheng Yunlong, Chen Haoyu and Shi Pengyuan. The programme also featured a Wing Chun martial arts performance accompanied by footage from Wong Kar-wai's The Grandmaster, as well as a rendition of "Reflection" by Malaysian singer Shila Amzah.

The evening concluded with jury president Tony Leung presenting the Best Feature Film award ahead of the screening of closing film The Decisive Moment.

Reflecting on his experience leading the jury, Leung said: "We had countless heated discussions and held differing viewpoints during deliberations. Yet I could never have fulfilled this duty without their professional insights and perspectives." 🍷



'Atlantic Rhapsody'. Photo: SIFF

FULL LIST OF WINNERS 28TH GOLDEN GOBLET AWARDS

MAIN COMPETITION

Best Feature Film – "Atlantic Rhapsody" (China)
Jury Grand Prix – Nicolás Rincón Gille, "Iluminada" (Belgium)
Best Director – Yassine El Idrissi, "Halima" (Morocco)
Best Actor – Zhang Songwen, "Secret in the Box" (Chinese Mainland/Hong Kong)
Best Actress – Khadija Amari, "Halima" (Morocco)
Best Screenplay – Reis Çelik, "Night of Blindness" (Turkey/Germany)
Best Cinematography – Hao Jiayue, "Atlantic Rhapsody" (China)
Outstanding Artistic Achievement – Susanne Heinrich, "The Miserable Mother" (Germany/France)

ASIAN NEW TALENT

Best Film – "Her First Taste" (China)
Best Director – Sompot Chidgasornpongse, "9 Temples to Heaven" (Thailand)
Best Actress – Ma Fufu, "Her First Taste" (China)
Best Actor – Sompot Songkarnpol, "9 Temples to Heaven" (Thailand)
Best Screenplay – Ridham Janve, "Hunter's Moon" (India/Germany)
Best Cinematography – Samiul Karim Shuptak, "The Blind Girl and an Elephant" (Bangladesh/Germany)

OTHER CATEGORIES

Best Documentary Film – "Notes Unheard," Gu Jun (China)
Best Animation – "Lucy Lost," Olivier Clert (France)
Best Animated Short Film – "If Only," Ada Guvenir (Belgium)
Best Live Action Short Film – "Sitting Bird," Athena Han (Canada)

The Blind Girl and an Elephant Wins Best Cinematography at 28th SIFF



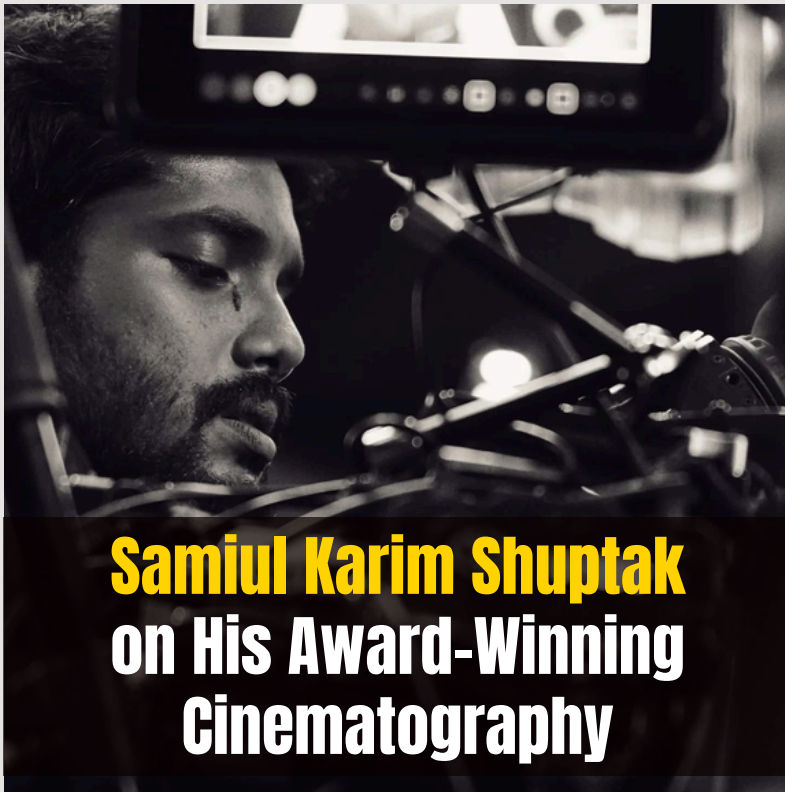
The Blind Girl and an Elephant. Photo: SIFF

In a historic victory for South Asian independent cinema, the Bangladeshi feature film “The Blind Girl and an Elephant” (Sankota Dulchhe) has won the prestigious Best Cinematography award in the Asian New Talent competition section at the 28th Shanghai International Film Festival (SIFF). The official announcement came during the star-studded Golden Goblet Awards Ceremony held at the Shanghai Grand Theatre, bringing the ten-day, FIAPF-accredited A-list festival to its competitive climax. The film’s cinematographer, Samiul Karim Shuptak, was awarded the top technical honor for his striking visual design. Because he could not attend the venue in person, director Ishtiyak Ahmad Zihad and producer Manoj Pramanik accepted the trophy on his behalf on the Shanghai stage.

The production marks the feature directorial debut of Ishtiyak Ahmad Zihad and stands as the first full-length feature production from actor and academic Manoj Pramanik’s production house, Manpachitra. The project was developed in close collaboration with the German production company Mogador Films, with veteran German producer Christoph Thoke serving as associate producer. Further strengthening its international credentials, the acclaimed film critic, producer, and programmer Darcy Paquet joined the team as a consulting producer, alongside filmmaker and producer Fazle Hasan Shishir, who served as a co-producer.

Shot entirely in black and white, Sankota Dulchhe relies on a poetic cinematic language deeply rooted in the socio-cultural realities of rural Bangladesh. The narrative follows the intertwined lives of three young women who harbor dreams of breaking free from the suffocating grip of local superstition, patriarchy, and systemic social oppression. Through a series of unexpected and deeply painful narrative turns, a blind young woman ultimately discovers the internal strength to continue pursuing her dreams, eventually coming face-to-face with a mysterious elephant. The film features a dedicated ensemble cast, including Sanzida Akter Swarna, Tahmida Rahman Touhida, Sumaiya Haque, Ashok Bepari, Sabiha Zaman, Pankaj Majumdar, Munsif Mim, and Nishat Tasnim.

The competitive arena at the 28th edition of the festival was exceptionally fierce, pulling in a record-breaking 4,100 submissions from 125 countries. Within the highly selective Asian New Talent category, chaired this year by the celebrated Singaporean filmmaker Anthony Chen, several top honors were distributed across the region. The Chinese feature *Her First Taste* claimed the coveted Best Film award, with its lead Ma Fufu securing the Best Actress title. Meanwhile, Thai cinema saw significant recognition as filmmaker Sompot Chidgasornpongse won Best Director for *Nine Temples to Heaven*, and Sompop Sangkhamphol walked away with the Best Actor accolade, placing the technical triumph of Bangladesh’s *The Blind Girl and an Elephant* alongside the very best of contemporary Asian independent cinema. 🌍



Samiul Karim Shuptak on His Award-Winning Cinematography

*Following his historic Best Cinematography win for **The Blind Girl and an Elephant in the** Asian New Talent Competition at the 28th Shanghai International Film Festival, Cut To Cinema exclusively spoke with Samiul Karim Shuptak about the milestone, his creative process, inspirations, challenges faced during production, and future aspirations in filmmaking.*

First of all, congratulations. On behalf of Cut to Cinema, congratulations on winning the award. How did it feel to receive this recognition?

Thank you, Cut to Cinema. Receiving this award for my very first feature film was something I never imagined. Having the film screened at a prestigious festival like the Shanghai International Film Festival was already a huge privilege. Then, when I learned that I had won the award for Best Cinematography, I was simply overwhelmed. It's difficult to put that feeling into words.

Sankota Dulchhe has no colour, which is a striking visual choice. Did shooting in black and white make composition easier, or do you think the film would have benefited from colour?

Choosing to shoot in black and white was a creative decision from the beginning. Interestingly, before this film, director Ishtiaq Jihad and I had already collaborated on two short films, both of which were also shot in monochrome.

I wouldn't say that the absence of colour made composition any easier. Most of the scenes were filmed in a single take, or at most two takes, so every composition was carefully planned and quite challenging. We had to pay close attention to everything, from the actors' blocking to maintaining the right lighting contrast ratio.

The night sequences and the storm scenes were particularly demanding. Since those scenes naturally contained a great deal of black, we focused primarily on exposing for the whites. One advantage of shooting in monochrome was that we didn't have to worry about colour temperature while lighting those scenes. That was probably the biggest technical advantage.

More importantly, I don't think we could have achieved the same mood and atmosphere if the film had been shot in colour.

Was your cinematography influenced by the works of Lav Diaz or Béla Tarr? Who are your biggest inspirations?

If we're talking specifically about Sankota Dulchhe, then yes, the cinematography in Lav Diaz's films was a major source of inspiration for me. But more broadly, I'm influenced much more by cinematographers such as Rodrigo Prieto, Emmanuel Lubezki, Robert Yeoman and Hoyte van Hoytema. Their work has had a significant impact on the way I think about cinematography.

Cinematography is becoming an increasingly popular profession in Bangladesh, and many young people now aspire to become cinematographers. What's your perspective on this trend?

Cinematography is undoubtedly one of the most fascinating professions in the film industry. Speaking for myself, I've always been deeply fascinated by cameras, and that passion is what motivated me to pursue this career.

What excites me most is the opportunity to explore different visual styles for different stories. Every project offers a new creative challenge.

It's encouraging to see that cinematography is being practised much more actively in Bangladesh than before, and more young people are choosing it as a career. That's definitely a positive development.

That said, the industry's overall working conditions are still far from ideal, not just for cinematographers but for technicians in general. Long working hours, inconsistent payment systems and the lack of proper professional standards continue to affect the quality of work.

Addressing these issues would create a much healthier environment and make it much easier for the next generation of cinematographers to build sustainable careers. 🌱

A Shanghai Story of Cinema and Friendship

Sifat Ahmed

T

here are some journeys that stay with us long after they end. My visit to China for the 28th Shanghai International Film Festival (SIFF) was one of those journeys.

Held from June 12 to June 21, 2026, the Shanghai International Film Festival is China's only FIAPF-accredited A-list film festival. Every year, it welcomes filmmakers, artists, producers, festival organizers, and cinema lovers from across the globe. For ten days, Shanghai becomes a meeting place where stories, ideas, and cultures come together through the universal language of cinema.

As a recent graduate of the Department of Film and Television at Jagannath University and an Official member of the Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF), attending one of the world's leading film festivals was something I had always dreamed about. What I did not know was that this trip would become much more than a film festival experience. It would be a journey of learning, cultural discovery, international friendship, and personal growth. I felt very fortunate to receive the opportunity to attend this prestigious event. I am grateful to DIFF Festival Director Ahmed Muztaba Zamal and the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Bangladesh, especially Cultural Counselor Mr. Li Shaopeng, for making this journey possible.



welcomed with warmth and kindness.

A particularly meaningful part of the festival was the Belt and Road Film Week. The program brought together filmmakers and cultural representatives from many countries under the theme "Shared Screens." The message was simple but powerful: cinema has the ability to connect people regardless of language, nationality, or cultural background. As a representative connected to the Dhaka International Film Festival, which is a member of the Belt and Road Film Festival Alliance, I felt proud to be part of these discussions and exchanges.

Sifat Ahmed, writer. Photo: C2C

When our delegation from Bangladesh arrived in Shanghai on June 15, I was immediately struck by the city's beauty and scale. Modern skyscrapers rose high into the sky, while large green parks and open spaces provided a refreshing balance to urban life. During the drive from Shanghai Pudong International Airport to our hotel, I spent most of my time looking out the window, taking in everything around me. What impressed me most was how Shanghai has managed to combine rapid development with environmental care. It showed me that modernization does not have to come at the expense of nature. As someone coming from Bangladesh, I could not help imagining how inspiring such a model could be for our own cities.

One of the highlights of the festival was our visit to the Shanghai Film Museum. For anyone passionate about cinema, the museum is a fascinating place. It tells the story of Chinese filmmaking from its earliest years to the present day through carefully preserved cameras, costumes, posters, film clips, and historical documents. As a film student, I had studied many aspects of film history in the classroom. Yet standing in

Throughout the event, I met people who shared the same passion for cinema despite coming from completely different parts of the world. Those conversations reminded me that storytelling is a universal human experience. No matter where we come from, films allow us to understand one another.

Among the many events we attended, the Charm Pudong Gala Night was one of the most enjoyable. The evening featured music, dance, and cultural performances that showcased China's rich artistic traditions. The performers combined traditional elements with modern creativity, creating a vibrant and engaging atmosphere. Equally important were the conversations that took place throughout the evening. Filmmakers, festival delegates, cultural professionals, and guests from different countries came together to share ideas and experiences. These moments of connection are often the most valuable part of any international film festival. Films may bring people together, but friendship keeps those connections alive.

The closing ceremony on June 20 was undoubtedly the emotional high point of the entire journey. Before entering the venue, we had the opportunity to walk on the festival's famous Red Carpet. For a young Bangladeshi film graduate attending his first international festival, it felt like a dream. The excitement in the air was impossible to describe. Filmmakers, actors, artists, and industry professionals from around the world gathered to celebrate cinema.

Then came a moment that made every member of our delegation proud. Bangladesh received the first award of the evening when *The Blind Girl and the Elephant*, directed by Ishtiaque Zihad, won the Golden Goblet Asian New Talent Award for Best Cinematography. Hearing Bangladesh's name announced on one of world cinema's most respected stages was a deeply emotional experience. It was a reminder that Bangladeshi filmmakers are making their mark internationally and that our cinema continues to gain recognition across the world.



Ahmed Muztaba Zamal, Director of DIFF, at a conference during SIFF. Photo: C2C



Dhaka International Film Festival, DIFF, Delegation at SIFF 2026: from left Shourob Ahammod, Bani Somadder, Jannatul Ferdous, Ahmed Muztaba Zamal, Rafiul Islam, Nagma Khanom, and Sifat Ahmed. Photo: C2C

As our flight departed Shanghai on June 21, I reflected on everything I had experienced over the previous days. I had traveled thousands of kilometers to attend a film festival, but I was returning home with much more than memories of screenings and events. I was bringing back new friendships, valuable knowledge, cultural experiences, and a renewed belief in the power of cinema. The 28th Shanghai International Film Festival was not simply a visit to another country. It was a journey through cinema, culture, and human connection—a journey that will continue to inspire me for many years to come. 🌍



Belt & Road Film Festival Alliance participants shining on the red carpet of the 28th Shanghai International Film Festival (SIFF). Photo: C2C

Writer: Member of DIFF.



Award giving ceremony at MIFF. Photo: Collected

Polish Documentary Wins Top Prize at MIFF 2026

The 19th Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) concluded on June 21 with a grand closing ceremony that celebrated outstanding achievements in documentary, short fiction and animation filmmaking. A total of 17 awards were presented, recognizing filmmakers from India and around the world.

The festival's top accolade, the Golden Conch for Best International Documentary Film, was awarded to the Polish documentary *Silver*. In the international competition, the Silver Conch for Best International Short Fiction Film went to the Iranian production *Under the Snow*, while Germany's *Maya's Song* received the Silver Conch for Best International Animation Film.

Indian films also made a strong impression in the national competition section. *Waai* was named Best Indian Documentary Film, *Small Clouds* won Best Indian Short Fiction Film, and *Armstrong* from Angaalamman Temple Street secured the Silver Conch for Best Animation Film.

Several special awards were also announced during the ceremony. The prestigious FIPRESCI International Critics Prize was presented to *The Hug of Emptiness*. *The Old Bull Knows*, or *Once Knew* received the IDPA Award for Best Student Film, while filmmaker Pooja Tolani earned the Dadasaheb Phalke Chitranagari Award for Best Debut Director for her film *Raaza*.

Speaking at the closing event, Maharashtra Governor Jishnu Dev Varma described MIFF as more than a film festival, calling it a global platform that promotes artistic excellence and meaningful storytelling. Referring to the World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES), he said India aims to strengthen its position as a global centre for the creative economy through the vision of "Create in India, Create for the World." He also emphasized the importance of safeguarding intellectual property rights and ensuring the responsible use of artificial intelligence in the creative sector.

Prabhat, Additional Secretary at India's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, noted that the enthusiastic audience response demonstrated the continuing relevance of documentaries, short films and animation.

NFDC Managing Director Prakash Magdum revealed that MIFF 2026 received 1,459 submissions from across the globe. Films from 46 countries were showcased in both competition and non-competition sections, with more than 83 hours of screenings presented across 24 curated programmes. As the festival came to a close, organizers said MIFF had once again highlighted powerful storytelling and diverse cinematic voices from around the world. 🌍

REVIEW

Disclosure Day

The Miracle of Listening

Axel Timo Purr

With Disclosure Day, Steven Spielberg transforms America's great UFO myths into a deeply humanistic late-career work about hope, communication and the possibility of reimagining the world.

T

here were good reasons to believe that Steven Spielberg had bid farewell with *The Fabelmans*, in 2022. Not to cinema, but perhaps to the quest that has shaped his work for more than five decades. Few films felt so conciliatory, so complete. Spielberg looked back on his childhood, his family, his wounds and passions. It was a film full of wisdom, melancholy and gratitude. A work that felt like a full stop.

Yet apparently it was not.

With *Disclosure Day*, Spielberg, now almost eighty, returns not merely to science fiction but to the form of the modern fairy tale that once made him one of the defining filmmakers of popular cinema. And perhaps it had to happen now. At a time when wars have returned, political systems are eroding, conspiracy theories are flourishing and the future increasingly appears as a threat, Spielberg responds not with cynicism but with hope.

That may sound naive. Yet Disclosure Day is no escapist spectacle. It is a film about why humanity can no longer listen to itself. Accordingly, the most important word in the film is simple: “Listen!”

It is an astonishing choice. While many contemporary science-fiction films search for answers in technology, artificial intelligence or apocalyptic scenarios, Spielberg is interested in something else entirely: the communication crisis of the present. The inability to listen. The growing speechlessness between nations, generations and political camps.

This becomes particularly visible in the film’s final act. Politicians, soldiers, journalists and ordinary families all stare at the same images on their screens. Yet they struggle to find words. Spielberg presents this collective speechlessness as something more disturbing than catastrophe itself. For Disclosure Day is ultimately the story of a humanity that has reached its own limits.

To tell that story, Spielberg reaches deep into the mythology that has accompanied his work for decades. From Roswell to E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial, from UFO sightings to the conspiracy narratives of post-war America.

Disclosure Day transforms that longing into a modern fairy tale. The aliens are neither invaders nor conquerors. They are not technologically superior rulers arriving to dominate humanity. Instead, they represent possibility: the possibility of seeing ourselves from another perspective.

One of the film’s most interesting lines is spoken by a nun. If humanity is God’s finest creation on Earth, she argues, then somewhere in the universe there must also exist the finest species of other worlds. It is an idea that is both simple and deeply spiritual.

We are not alone.

Interestingly, Spielberg is not alone in exploring this theme. Vince Gilligan’s recent television series *Pluribus* likewise imagines contact with a more advanced species. Yet where Gilligan questions humanity’s desire for external salvation, Spielberg follows a different path. For him, the visitors are not projections of human weakness but an alternative to the present state of the world. Where *Pluribus* asks why we seek redemption from elsewhere, *Disclosure Day* answers that an outside perspective might allow us to recognise who we ourselves could become. That is what makes Spielberg’s

film such a striking counterpoint to our current culture of mistrust. It seeks not exposure but understanding. And therein lies its real greatness.

Spielberg is not telling an alien story. He is telling a human story. The extraterrestrials function as a mirror. They show us what we have lost.

At times, the film recalls the late works of other American auteurs his age. Robert Zemeckis searched for the meaning of human existence in *Here*, while Francis Ford Coppola’s *Megalopolis* revolved around the question of whether the future can still be imagined at all. Yet nowhere does this mixture of uncertainty and vulnerability feel quite as open as it does here.



Emily Blunt and Josh O'Connor in 'Disclosure Day.'
Photo: Universal Pictures and Amblin Entertainment

Disclosure Day feels like the attempt of an ageing filmmaker to answer one final question: Why can't we live together? The answer Spielberg proposes is almost disarmingly simple: Because we have stopped listening.

The Roswell incident of 1947 serves as a particularly important point of reference. Debris discovered in New Mexico was first described as a “flying saucer” and shortly afterwards reclassified as a weather balloon. Out of this contradiction grew one of the most enduring conspiracy narratives of the twentieth century: the belief that governments are concealing the existence of extraterrestrial life.

Yet Spielberg is not interested in whether these stories are true. He is interested in why people tell them. And his answer is surprisingly simple: because they hope. Behind all UFO myths lies the same longing — the longing not to be alone.

Formally, the film is classic Spielbergian spectacle. The first act occasionally takes its time establishing characters and relationships, but the rough edges are largely smoothed over by an excellent ensemble led by a remarkable Emily Blunt. Once the narrative finds its rhythm, Spielberg directs with the precision that has distinguished his work for decades. Janusz Kamiński’s camera glides weightlessly through crowds. Light breaks across windows and cloud formations. And the sky once again becomes that magical space that already connected reality and wonder in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*. It also reminds us of something Bob Dylan already knew in 1965: “You don’t need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows.”



Emily Blunt, Steven Spielberg, and Wyatt Russell on the set of 'Disclosure Day'. Photo: Niko Tavernise/Universal Pictures and Amblin Entertainment

John Williams' score often sounds almost old-fashioned, as though the film had wandered out of another era. Yet that, too, feels appropriate. This is an old story. It did not begin with UFO reports or science-fiction cinema. It begins with humanity's oldest questions: Where do we come from? Are we alone? Is there something greater than ourselves?

That is precisely why *Disclosure Day* feels less like a contemporary blockbuster than one of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales. As in *Little Claus and Big Claus*, the story concerns power, goodness and the contradictions of human behaviour. And as in *The Snow Queen*, a force enters the world that rises above everyday reality and briefly transforms it.

Not as a miracle.
But as a possibility.

The finale ranks among the most moving moments of Spielberg's career. For decades, he told stories about beings trying to find their way home. E.T. wanted to return home. The visitors from *Close Encounters* came from far away. Even *Indiana Jones* was, in his own way, always searching for a path back to a more meaningful home. Distance between worlds was always central.

This time, however, something changes.

The creature that appears at the end resembles a weathered, grandfatherly version of E.T. Yet it has not arrived to disappear. It has come to stay. And above all, it has brought a message.

To us.
To humanity.
To a world increasingly trapped in wars, enemy images and mutual certainties.
The message could hardly be simpler: Listen.

Perhaps that is the film's greatest act of radicalism. In an age when everyone wants to speak, Spielberg makes a film about listening. In an age when conspiracy theories often function as an escape from reality, he transforms them into a narrative of hope. And in an era when the future is so often imagined only as catastrophe, he dares to believe in humanity.

Not blindly.
Not naively.
But resolutely.

That is why *Disclosure Day* is more than grand entertainment. It is the late work of a filmmaker who, after more than half a century of cinema, still asks the same question as the young boy in *The Fabelmans*: What if the world could be better?

And for two and a half breathtaking hours, Spielberg makes us believe that the answer might indeed be waiting somewhere in the sky.

That is magic.
The magic of cinema. 🍿

Writer: film critic, Germany



Josh O'Connor in Disclosure Day. Photo: Niko Tavernise/Universal Pictures and Amblin Entertainment



Chorus In a Car

Inner Life on the Road in Abbas Kiarostami's Cinema

Md Billal Hosen

Taste of Cherry. Photo: IMDB

Abbas Kiarostami, who was more than a storyteller, when we talk about him, scenarios come to mind. A man lies beneath the tree, watching nothing but the blowing winds, some sparrows chirping, and, with a camera, he is only observing details. No music, no complex dialogue, nor any tough thing that will unintentionally disrupt or divert the audience's perception about the scene. The scene is so full of elements that create ease and make it poetic. Besides being a director, he was also a good poet and a photographer. His experience of humans, society, class, and beliefs appears through an exceptionally realistic approach in his creation.

A car is moving slowly on the mountains. A wide frame is composed, but as the conversation grows in the car, the camera frame changes. Characters casually discuss existence, death, life, joy, and misery, as if these are not so complex human experiences. They engage with the conversation naturally. Kiarostami uses the car as a strong symbol of life, literally and metaphorically. His characters are almost constantly on a journey.

The car depicts human life as a middle ground between home and destination. From Kiarostami's belief, this earthly experience is not the final destination but a journey. It has a past from which humans came and the future to which all are going. It is moving in the winding mountains, as life moves in loops. That can be experienced but cannot be escaped. Still frames of a moving car become pleasing by the time characters are discussing their inner conflicts and beliefs.

The road encourages the characters to tell their life. They cannot liberate themselves as they might at home, workplace, or shop; rather, the car moves forward and they just adapt to it. The forced intimacy creates a confessional space. Because they are in a car and they look at the road, there is no chance of constant eye contact. Characters get free from communication through their eyes. This creates a psychological shield, allowing characters to speak with their most vulnerable and deepest thoughts without being judged by the eyes.

In *Taste of Cherry* (1997), this happens with the protagonist Mr. Badii and his three passengers who sit in the car at different times. Mr. Badii, who does not want to live anymore, decides to commit suicide. But he searches for someone to bury him after his intended suicide, or to help him if he survives. The first passengers do not agree to do that. Instead, everyone reacts differently from their perspective. The car becomes a chamber of many thoughts.

The car itself is a small world of Kiarostami's insights. Mr. Badii tastes the flavour of his decision against the admissions of the strangers and patiently drives through the winding mountains. What happens to Mr. Badii is always intriguing. At the end, his death is not clearly expressed in the film. Kiarostami ends the film in a place where the audience can opine. It is his strategy not to tell the audience the character's fate, but to release and see what fate does. In the open field of fate, characters endeavour to find the meaning of existence, and again lose and endeavour to find the meaning of existence.

In *Ten* (2002), the whole film was almost entirely shot in a car. Ten conversations happen among the protagonist Mania, played by Mania Akbari, and her passengers, while her son Amin and other distinctive characters engage in long conversations. Here, Kiarostami uses a car as a strong metaphor of life itself. The thought of existence gets meaningful through new experiences with an open heart, not biased or rooted in something. He mounted two cameras on the dashboard so that the scene feels much more real. The audience connects as an observing third passenger. Non-professional actors and real conversations without exaggerating reality make the audience invisible passengers. When the car is moving, the scenes outside the window change by the moment.

The city lights, strangers, vehicles, buildings, and many other things pass by. As the characters' thoughts, emotions, rage, regret, and faith, all just pass by without any strong breach of impulse. The car bears their stories, and over time, these stories fade when new passengers sit in the car, just like life. Characters come and go, but the protagonist must go on. Here, life and car are synced like a beautiful melody by Abbas Kiarostami, while the melody spreads the thought that life must go on like an eternal poem.

The juxtaposition of the car gets more interesting when the outer world is full of chaos, and the characters in their inner world are alone. In an interview with Geoff Andrew, Kiarostami spoke about his fascination with his car.

He said that his car is his best friend, his office, his home, and his place. If someone sits beside him, he feels intimidated, yet the seats become comfortable because people are not sitting face-to-face but side by side. They do not look at one another, but glance only when they wish to. Before them, a wide screen is always present, along with the views to either side. In that moment, the silence does not feel so heavy. They are not under anyone's possession, and this experience holds many further perspectives. Above all, the car moves them from one place to another.

About the car, the anonymity of the road is particularly memorable because the characters are some kind of lost or trying to find something. But those things are not the kinds of things we randomly find in ordinary cinemas. His characters are always charged with some philosophical insights. As we look through Mr. Badii or Mania, we see the inner miseries, conflicts, and strivings to get free from sufferings. But what is common to the characters is that they are all true, persistent, tolerating the chaos, and somehow they are surviving.

If we look through *Taste of Cherry*, it becomes explicitly understandable when the last passenger, Mr. Bagheri, tells Mr. Badii that he also once wanted to commit suicide. He climbed a mulberry tree to hang himself, but

after tasting the mulberries, he found himself wanting to live rather than die. And he asks Mr. Badii if he truly wants to give up on simple pleasures like the joy of living. But the film ends there and raises many questions about life, existence, and death. These cardinal questions make the audience think based on their experiences, and in a poetic manner these questions do not irritate them but console them, as a good poem does to any reader. 🍷

Writer: Independent Filmmaker, Bangladesh

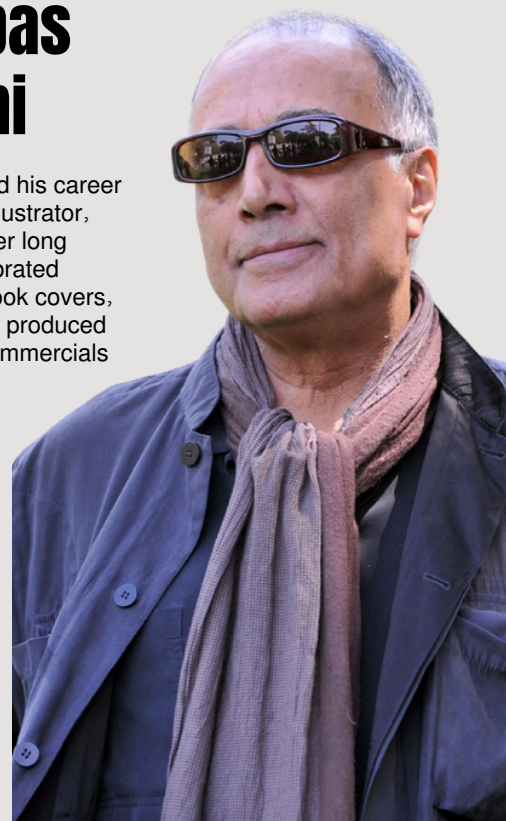


Abbas Kiarostami's Ten (2002). Photo: IMDB

Fascinating Facts About Abbas Kiarostami

Abbas Kiarostami started his career as a graphic designer, illustrator, and advertising filmmaker long before becoming a celebrated director. He designed book covers, film title sequences, and produced around 150 television commercials in the 1960s.

Beyond filmmaking, Kiarostami was also a poet, photographer, painter, and illustrator. He held photography exhibitions worldwide and published volumes of poetry.



The Last Light of Camerashram

Rashed Zaman's Sacrifice for Bangladeshi Cinema

For nearly two decades, Camerashram trained Bangladeshi filmmakers; Md Rabbi Islam examines its rise, closure, and lasting impact on cinematography, education, and culture.



Rashed Zaman, cinematographer, at his office. Photo: C2C

In 2009, a small group of film industry professionals: Golam H. Kisloo, TW Sainik, Nehal Quaraisy, Piplu R. Khan, Kamrul H. Khosru, and Rashed Zaman—came together with a shared dream to improve the overall standard of cinema in Bangladesh. They founded Sandbag, a camera rental house designed to be far more than a commercial facility. Also known as Camerashram, it functioned as a school, a workshop, and a stubborn act of belief where students spent hours experimenting with lighting setups, camera movements, and visual storytelling techniques in a controlled, patient, and deliberate atmosphere.

Under the direct supervision of Rashed Zaman, the National Award-winning cinematographer behind *Aynabaji* and *Dub Satar*, Sandbag welcomed passionate individuals from all backgrounds, regardless of religion, education, gender, or race, to use the residential facilities and learn the art of cinematography completely free of charge firsthand. To maintain this ecosystem, the rental proceeds from the house were used entirely to cover the living costs and salaries of its apprentices. For nearly two decades, the space stood as a vital institution for building international-standard crews, but now, after sustaining it with his own money and labor, Zaman is shutting it down.

“This month, I am shutting it down,” Zaman says, his voice calm but heavy with finality. “I cannot sustain it anymore. This year alone, my financial loss has crossed eleven lakh taka.”

The closure of Camerashram is not just the end of a physical address. It marks the end of an experiment that changed how Bangladeshi films are imagined, lit, shot, and taught. It brought discipline to passion and gave young people from different regions and classes a chance to learn cinema through work.

To understand why Zaman built such a place, one has to return to the years before he became a cinematographer. In 1993, he left Bangladesh for Turkey to study architecture at Middle East Technical University in Ankara. Architecture taught him how space works, how light moves, and how a frame can be built before a camera is placed. Still, film kept pulling him from underneath.

“Deep down, I knew I wanted to be a filmmaker,” Zaman recalls. “But the historical baggage was heavy. My maternal grandfather, an absolute pioneer in early Bangladeshi cinema, had left the industry deeply disillusioned by its toxic politics. He explicitly warned my mother: Do not let him go into film.”

The turning point came in Los Angeles. Zaman had gone to the United States to pursue architecture at UCLA, but life there became a mix of survival jobs, architecture work, and film classes through UCLA Extension. In a class taught by Italian cinematographer Charlie Rose, he watched Mikhail Kalatozov’s *Soy Cuba*. The film’s moving camera and impossible long takes broke something open inside him.

“I walked out of that screening crying,” Zaman confesses. “I knew right then that it was impossible for me to remain an architect. I had to switch to film.”

But switching to film was not easy. In 2001, the UCLA MFA program required thesis films to be shot on 35mm, which cost around \$60,000 to \$70,000 per project. For an immigrant from Bangladesh, that money was out of reach. “Years later, when filmmakers like Bijon Imtiaz arrived, the rules had shifted to accommodate digital formats. But in my time, you could not drop below 35mm.”

Instead of stopping, Zaman chose another path. He joined an intensive diploma program through UCLA Extension and threw himself into real set work. He worked as a lighting technician, grip, production assistant, and anything else that kept him close to the process. “On one particular production, my sole responsibility was walking, feeding, and cleaning up after the Director of Photography’s dog,” Zaman laughs. “But I didn’t care. I was watching exactly how the set operated, how the lights were rigged, how the crew moved. I was absorbing the machinery.”

When Zaman returned to Bangladesh in 2007, he carried responsibility. “People might find it cliché or overly nationalistic, but my cadet college education drilled in the idea of state debt,” he explains. “The state provided me with resources. I had established myself in LA, working on independent films and collaborating with entities connected to Pixar and National Geographic. But I had a profound commitment to pay that debt back.”

The industry he returned to was full of ideas but short on technical confidence. Intellectual film circles had strong political language, yet many productions lacked visual discipline. Television dramas had stories, but the lighting was often flat and careless. “I visited sets and felt like I had walked into a circus,” he says. “Everyone had

watched Iranian cinema, everyone was analyzing European masterworks, everyone was overflowing with high-minded film appreciation. But when you looked at the screen, the technical execution was astonishingly poor. The presentation was flat, under-realized, and structurally dead.”

At the commercial level, large companies often brought foreign cinematographers for major television commercials because they assumed local crews could not handle high-end work. Zaman entered advertising not as a final destination, but as a training ground. Commercials had budgets for 35mm stock, better lenses, advanced lights, and proper preparation. Through that space, he pushed local crews toward a higher standard.

He also pushed against the habit of hiding knowledge. “The reigning tendency in Bangladesh has always been the hoarding of knowledge and experience,” Zaman asserts. “Senior professionals would conduct workshops merely to signal to the youth: Look how brilliant I am, but you can never achieve this. The only major exception was Tareque Masud. Tareque bhai was a man who wanted to share, who wanted to build collective capacity. He pulled me close, and his generosity crystallized my intent: I needed to consciously create my own competitors.”

That idea led to Camerashram. Founded in 2009 with a small group of visual practitioners, the institution later grew into a residential training space. It offered housing, food, stipends, equipment access, and a way into the industry. Some came from cities. Others came from remote rural districts and the hill tracts. Zaman wanted to break the class barrier around filmmaking.

The training was strict. It was modeled on professional Hollywood crews. Students had to give up ego before touching the tools. “Our universities give students ego



(From left) Rashed Zaman, cinematographer, Bidhan Rebeiro, editor of *Cut To Cinema*, and writer. Photo: C2C

rather than education,” Zaman notes. “They graduate believing they are auteurs before they even know how to level a tripod. Film is a collective, military art. You are not a solitary painter; you are part of a crew.”

At Camerashram, discipline was physical as well as mental. Students cut their hair short, removed unnecessary accessories, wore proper shoes, and followed set protocols. Morning runs, push-ups, and football were part of the routine because cinema demanded stamina. A cinematographer had to carry stands, move fast, think clearly, and survive long shooting days.

Inside the dorms, he created an unusual social mix. University graduates lived with young men from villages. Theory met instinct. “I told the university graduate: His education is your responsibility. If he fails, I will hold you accountable,” Zaman explains. “But conversely, the urban scholar needed the rural boy’s practical knowledge. The boy from the village doesn’t need a GPS to navigate a river. He can look at the wind and tell you if a storm is brewing; he can judge the quality of sunlight by the drift of a cloud. That instinctual literacy is vital for

a filmmaker. We brought them to the same ground to exchange realities.”

Camerashram's philosophy can be seen clearly in Aynabaji. In that film, light does not simply show faces. It builds mood, pressure, and psychology. Zaman avoided the flat look common in local productions. He used bounce, diffusion, and spatial planning to turn Old Dhaka into a living maze. His architectural background shaped his process. He drew frames in sketchbooks and built small models to study shadows before shooting. The result was planned emotion.

He also invested in tools most students could never dream of using. He bought ARRI Ultra Prime lenses worth nearly 1.5 crore taka so trainees could learn on world-class optics. Camerashram did not only talk about democratizing cinema. It placed elite tools in the hands of people usually kept away from them.

But the cost was enormous. As Camerashram grew, Zaman spent more time maintaining equipment, training students, managing logistics, and carrying the financial burden. Somewhere in the middle of building a generation, his own creative life narrowed. His most painful admission is also the most revealing: “My dream was to be an artist. But I have invested so much time and labor here that I could never truly become an artist.”

That sentence changes how one sees Camerashram. It was built with a man's unfinished artistic life. Zaman gave his years so others could grow. He became the teacher, organizer, lender of tools, and guardian of standards. The artist inside him paid the price.

The closing of Camerashram also exposes a painful weakness in local creative culture. The students succeeded. Many became cinematographers, Steadicam operators, lighting experts, and respected crew members. Yet the institution did not receive the same care in return. “There is a deep national insecurity and jealousy embedded within our creative collective,” Zaman reflects with a quiet, analytical sadness. “The original vision was that the disciples who trained here, grew here, and went on to become successful, high-earning professionals would eventually return to take ownership of the ashram. They would step up to teach the next generation, to run classes, to maintain the ecosystem. That never happened. Once people make it out, they choose the absolute business angle. The sense of social and artistic responsibility is entirely absent.”

The market also turned his standards against him. Some producers branded him too expensive because he demanded proper time and preparation. “It became a very effective political tool in a city built on clever politics,” he notes. “They used my commitment to craft to isolate me, all while the camera rental houses that sprung up after us operated purely as capitalistic ventures, completely detached from any educational or communal vision.”

Zaman could have taken funding or turned the space into an NGO. He refused. “I could have turned it into an NGO, taken foreign or corporate funding,” he says. “But those things come with a package of trouble and agendas. I chose to keep this space clean, independent, and free of dirty politics, even if it meant paying for it out of my own pocket until I could pay no more.”

Now the equipment is being packed away. The rooms that once held students, lights, lenses, sweat, and ambition are becoming quiet. Yet the defeat is financial, not spiritual. The Bangladeshi film set has changed.



A Collection of Rashed Zaman. Photo: C2C

Foreign technicians no longer hold the same unquestioned authority. Camerashram lives on through the hands it trained.

“I can see my students out there in the market, shooting films and commercials, often executing work that is far superior to mine,” Zaman

says, looking out into the shifting light of the city.

“Spiritually, that makes me feel at peace. I didn't teach them to sit in a room and talk about cinema. I built the technical support system that allowed their ideas to survive the battlefield. The ashram as a building is gone, but the force we engineered is already inside the walls of the cinema they are making.”

Rashed Zaman may feel that Camerashram kept him from becoming the artist he once dreamed of being. But the institution itself became his largest work of art. He did not simply compose images. He shaped people, habits, tools, and professional imagination. Camerashram may close its doors, but the light it taught others to control will keep moving through Bangladeshi cinema. 🇬🇧

Writer: Sub-editor, Cut To Cinema



A poster in Camerashram. Photo: C2C

BUZZ

Woody Allen's Next Film to Turn Madrid Into a Leading Character

Veteran filmmaker Woody Allen is set to return to Spain for his next feature, with the Spanish capital of Madrid taking centre stage in what is being described as an ensemble romantic comedy. Production is scheduled to begin on October 5, marking the first time the acclaimed director has based an entire film in Madrid.

Although the story and cast remain undisclosed, the project has already generated interest because of its unusual creative approach. Rather than serving as a simple backdrop, Madrid will play a defining role in the narrative, continuing Allen's long-standing tradition of transforming cities into memorable cinematic characters. Throughout his career, New York, Paris, Rome and Barcelona have become inseparable from many of his films, and the director now hopes to add Madrid to that distinguished list.

The film will be Allen's third production in Spain. He previously shot *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* in Barcelona and later directed *Rifkin's Festival*, which was set in San Sebastián. However, despite his affection for the country, he has never before filmed a story in Madrid. When the project was first announced last year, Allen expressed his enthusiasm about returning to Spain, describing the opportunity to shoot in Madrid as something he had long hoped to do.

The production is also expected to serve as an international showcase for the Spanish capital. Madrid City Council has backed the initiative as part of its campaign to promote the city as a global tourist, cultural and creative destination. Under the agreement, the film's official title must include the name "Madrid", reinforcing the city's prominence in the project.

Currently operating under the working title *WASP 2026* (Woody Allen Summer Project 2026), the film is being produced by Wanda Visión, Gravier Productions and 3Six9 Studios. The agreement also requires the production to highlight Madrid's landmarks, architecture, history and cultural identity throughout the film. At least 15 percent of all scenes will be filmed outdoors, allowing audiences to easily recognise the city's streets and iconic locations.

Plans extend well beyond production. The film is expected to receive an international theatrical release, compete at major film festivals and be supported by promotional events and preview screenings in several countries. Key target markets include the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy and Canada.

The project forms part of Madrid's broader strategy to strengthen its reputation as an international audiovisual hub by capitalising on the growing influence of screen tourism. City officials hope that Allen's latest film will introduce Madrid to millions of viewers worldwide and keep the Spanish capital in the global spotlight long after filming concludes. 🇪🇸



Woody Allen. Photo: Luca Carlino/
NurPhoto/ Shutterstock

BUZZ

Timotheé Chalamet and Selena Gomez are set to lend their voices to *Not Alone*, a new animated science fiction comedy from Illumination, the studio behind blockbuster franchises including *Despicable Me*, *Minions* and *The Super Mario Bros. Movie*. The project was officially unveiled during the Annecy International Animation Film Festival.

The film marks Chalamet's first venture into voice acting for an animated feature. He will play Joe, a reserved rocket mechanic who prefers a solitary life. Gomez voices Fran, a gifted astro-botanist developing the world's first rocket powered entirely by plants.

According to the film's synopsis, Joe and Fran are brought together to prepare for the maiden launch of Fran's groundbreaking spacecraft. Although they quickly develop feelings for one another, both struggle to express their emotions, making romance anything but straightforward. Their lives become even more chaotic when three mischievous yet lovable alien fugitives seek shelter in Joe's home while fleeing an overzealous but incompetent intergalactic law officer. Hoping to return safely to their home planet, the aliens see Fran's revolutionary rocket as their only chance of escape.

The alien trio, Dunk, Welly and Shirm, will be voiced by Rob Brydon, Diane Morgan and Jamie Demetriou, respectively. Brett Goldstein, best known for *Ted Lasso*, voices the determined space officer Zandro. The supporting cast also includes Allison Janney and Lamorne Morris.

Selena Gomez. Photo: britannica



Timothée Chalamet .
Photo: Amy Martin
Photography



Chalamet, Gomez Join Illumination's *Not Alone*



Not Alone will be co-directed by Illumination veterans Eric Guillon, Claire Dodgson and Jonathan Del Val, all of whom have played key creative roles on several of the studio's biggest animated successes. The film is produced by Illumination founder and CEO Chris Meledandri, with Joy Poirel, Richard Curtis and David Distenfeld serving as executive producers.

Universal Pictures has scheduled *Not Alone* for theatrical release on April 16, 2027.

The announcement comes as Illumination enjoys strong momentum following the premiere of its latest feature, *Minions & Monsters*, at the Annecy festival, where the film has received an enthusiastic critical response, further strengthening the studio's position as one of the world's leading animation producers. 🌍

Venice Unveils 2026 Competition Jury



83rd Venice International Film Festival Unveils Its Jury. Photo: VIFF

F The 83rd Venice International Film Festival has announced the full lineup of its international competition jury, led by acclaimed American filmmaker, actress and screenwriter Maggie Gyllenhaal, whose appointment as jury president was revealed in April.

Joining Gyllenhaal on the seven-member panel are Hong Kong filmmaker Johnnie To, Tunisian director Kaouther Ben Hania, Afghan filmmaker Shahrbano Sadat, French director and screenwriter Xavier Giannoli, British composer Daniel Blumberg and Yale University film scholar Francesco Casetti.

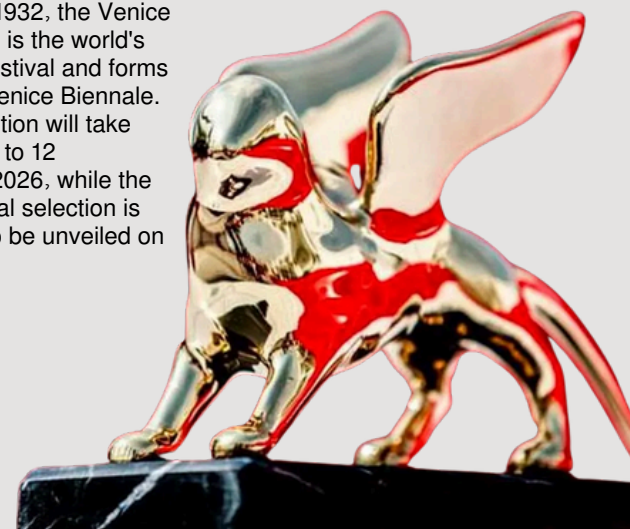
While not the most star-studded lineup in the festival's history, the jury reflects a diverse mix of filmmakers, artists and academics from around the world.

Several members have strong ties to Venice. Johnnie To has premiered four films on the Lido, including *Throw Down*, *Exiled*, *Mad Detective* and *Life Without Principle*. Xavier Giannoli has competed for the Golden Lion three times with *Superstar*, *Marguerite* and *Lost Illusions*. Kaouther Ben Hania returns after her film *The Voice of Hind Rajab* premiered last year to a standing ovation and won the Silver Lion.

The jury will decide this year's major awards, including the Golden Lion for Best Film, Silver Lion Grand Jury Prize, Silver Lion for Best Director, Coppa Volpi awards for Best Actress and Actor, the Special Jury Prize, Best Screenplay and the Marcello Mastroianni Award for Best Young Actor or Actress.

Gyllenhaal becomes the third woman to preside over the Venice competition jury in the past five years, following Isabelle Huppert (2024), Julianne Moore (2022) and Cate Blanchett (2020). Following her appointment, she said she was honoured to continue Venice's tradition of championing "truthful, singular voices," adding that she would approach the role with "curiosity, admiration and excitement" rather than judgment.

Founded in 1932, the Venice Film Festival is the world's oldest film festival and forms part of the Venice Biennale. The 83rd edition will take place from 2 to 12 September 2026, while the official festival selection is scheduled to be unveiled on 23 July. 🦁



Tell the name of the

FILM

GUESSING
GAME



**TEST YOUR
KNOWLEDGE OF
CHAPLIN!**

1. What was the name of Chaplin's most famous screen character? (1 Point)
2. In which city was Charles Chaplin born? (2 Point)
3. Which 1936 Chaplin film satirized industrialization and factory work? (3 Point)
4. Which 1940 Chaplin film mocked Adolf Hitler? (4 Point)
5. What honorary award did Chaplin receive from the Academy in 1972? (5 Point)



11-15

Gold Medal



06-10

Silver Medal



01-05

Bronze Medal



00

Wooden Spoon

Test Your Knowledge Answers

1. The Tramp
2. London
3. Modern Times
4. The Great Dictator
5. Honorary Oscar (Academy Honorary Award)

Guessing Game Answer
Matt Damon is Odysseus and Zendaya is Athena
in 'The Odyssey'. Photo: Melinda Sue
Gordon/Universal Pictures



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