

# CUT CINEMA

VOL. 1 | NO. 12 | MARCH 2026

**CINEMA AS RESISTANCE**  
**REZWAN SHAHRIAR**  
**SUMIT ON POLITICS,**  
**POWER, AND MASTER**

**YELLOW LETTERS**  
**POLITICS WITHOUT SLOGANS**

**THE END OF THE**  
**DUVALL ERA**

**THE WORLD OF**  
**LAV DIAZ**

**Human beings share  
the same common  
problems. A film can  
only be understood if it  
depicts these properly.**



**AKIRA KUROSAWA**

# EDITORIAL

The 76th Berlinale concluded just a few days ago, sparking political debate worldwide and amplifying strong political messages through its programming. We believe both the discussions it generated and the film awarded the Golden Bear deserve closer attention. That is why we have included several articles and news pieces on the festival. We hope our readers will find them engaging. We also have encouraging news for Bangladeshi cinema. Master received one of the top awards at the International Film Festival Rotterdam this year. We warmly congratulate the team, as well as Roid and Delupi, which were also selected for the same festival. Having three Bangladeshi films selected simultaneously at such an important international festival is a matter of pride for us. We hope this momentum continues and that our films bring even more good news in the months ahead.

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Cover: Yellow Letters. Photo: Ella  
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# BANGLADESHI FILM **MASTER** TRIUMPHS AT ROTTERDAM FILM FESTIVAL



After winning the award team Master with juries, and the poster of Master. Photo: IFFR and IMDB

# T

Bangladeshi cinema marked a major international achievement as Rezwan Shahriar Sumit's *Master* won the Big Screen Competition Award at the 2026 International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR), one of Europe's most influential film festivals.

The win stood out among a strong and diverse lineup of global titles showcased at the festival.

*Master* traces the moral and political transformation of a schoolteacher in Bangladesh who is drawn into local power structures, gradually moving from idealism to authoritarian impulses. Praising the film, the Big Screen Competition jury described it as "a universal story about a person striving to hold on to their moral compass, only to be reshaped by the persuasive and destructive forces of power and capitalism," noting the film's increasing complexity beneath its seemingly straightforward narrative.

The festival's highest honor, the Tiger Award, went to *Variations on a Theme*, a South African drama by Jason Jacobs and Devon Delmar. The film follows an elderly goat herder who becomes entangled in a fraudulent scheme promising long-overdue reparations for her father's unpaid wartime service. The Tiger Competition jury praised its poetic language and its reflection on colonial legacies, community, and familial bonds.

Alongside *Master*, two more Bangladeshi films were selected at this year's IFFR, marking a significant moment for the country's presence on the international festival circuit. Mejbaur Rahman Sumon's *Roid* received its world premiere in the Tiger Competition, making it the first Bangladeshi feature film to compete in IFFR's main competition. Meanwhile, Mohammad Tauqir Islam's debut feature *Delupi* was selected for the Bright Future section, which highlights first and second films by emerging filmmakers.

Several other films were recognized across different sections. Ana Urushadze's *Supporting Role* received a Special Jury Award in the Tiger Competition and also won the FIPRESCI Award. Angelica Ruffier's *La belle année*, a hybrid documentary exploring memory, grief, and desire, was also awarded a Special Jury Prize.

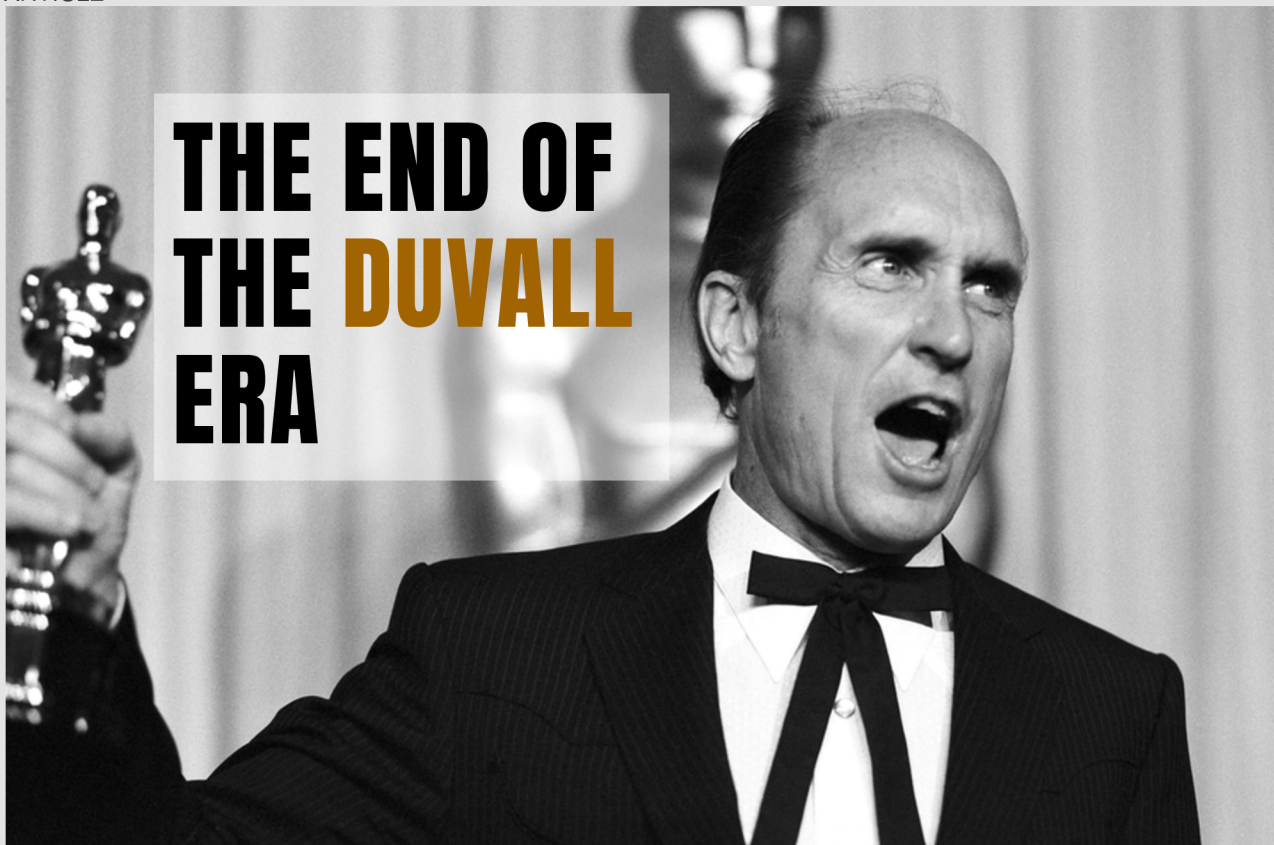
The NETPAC Award, dedicated to films from Asia and the Pacific region, went to *I grew an inch when my father died* by P. R. Monencillo Patindol, with the jury praising its emotional depth and inventive visual language. The *Seoul Guardians* received a NETPAC Special Mention.



*Variations on a Theme*. Photo: IFFR

The Youth Jury Award was presented to *Ah Girl* by Ang Geck Geck Priscilla, a film about a young girl caught between her separated parents.

With *Master*'s major win and the selection of *Roid* and *Delupi* across key competitive sections, Bangladesh's presence at Rotterdam this year signaled both growing international recognition and a widening creative range for its contemporary cinema. 🌍



Winner Robert Duvall backstage at the 56th Annual Academy Awards Show in Los Angeles, on April 9, 1984. Bob.  
Photo: Riha Jr / Getty Images

# THE END OF THE DUVALL ERA

*“I’ve always remembered something Sanford Meisner, my acting teacher, told us. When you create a character, it’s like making a chair, except instead of making something out of wood, you make it out of yourself. That’s the actor’s craft - using yourself to create a character.” -Robert Duvall*

**T**he death of Robert Duvall on February 15, 2026, at the age of 95, marks the final chapter for one of the most dedicated craftsmen in the history of film. He passed away peacefully at his home in Middleburg, Virginia, surrounded by his family. For those of us who study the art of the moving image, Duvall was more than a famous face; he was a living lesson in how to be human on screen.

He didn’t just act in movies, he anchored them with a steady, quiet honesty that made everything around him feel more real. To understand Robert Duvall, one must look at his beginnings. Born in San Diego in 1931, he was the son of a Navy Rear Admiral. While his father hoped he would attend the Naval Academy, Duvall admitted he was “terrible at everything but acting.” After serving in the U.S. Army during the Korean War era, he used his GI Bill benefits to move to New York City and enroll in the Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theatre. It was here, in the mid-1950s, that Duvall shared a cold Manhattan apartment with two other struggling actors: Dustin Hoffman and Gene Hackman. While they worked odd jobs, Duvall was a post office

clerk, they spent their nights arguing about film theory and performance. This period was crucial. Under the tutelage of Sanford Meisner, Duvall learned that acting is not about “showing” an emotion; it is about “living truthfully under imaginary circumstances.” This philosophy stayed with him for 70 years.

Duvall’s career was a masterclass in variety and restraint. He famously began in 1962 as Boo Radley in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. He had no lines, yet his pale, shaking presence told the audience everything they needed to know about fear and innocence. To prepare, he stayed out of the sun for six weeks to look as sickly and reclusive as possible. It was a declaration of his intent: to be essential without being loud. In the 1970s, he became the intellectual “anchor” for some of the greatest films ever made. In Francis Ford Coppola’s *The Godfather*, he played Tom Hagen, the lawyer for the Corleone family. In a world of volcanic tempers and violence, Duvall’s Hagen was the cool, logical center. He didn’t need to shout to be heard; his power came from his posture and his focused, attentive listening. Coppola later remarked that he held formal dinners where the actors had to remain in character, and Duvall’s quiet authority helped solidify the “family” dynamic of the cast. His range was truly staggering. In *Apocalypse Now*, he shifted gears to play Lieutenant Colonel Bill Kilgore. He made a madman feel terrifyingly normal by treating a beach invasion with the casualness of a Sunday picnic. Later, in the 1989 miniseries *Lonesome Dove*, he gave us Gus McCrae, a role he considered his personal favorite. He brought a weathered, lived-in dignity to the Western genre, proving that the cowboy was not just a myth, but a man with a heavy heart and a sharp wit.

Beyond acting, Duvall was a filmmaker who cared deeply about the details of life. He was a scholar of regionality, often traveling hundreds of miles to perfect an accent or a walk. This commitment to truth reached its peak in his self-funded masterpiece, *The Apostle* (1997). When no Hollywood studio would support a serious film about religion, Duvall spent \$5 million of his own money to produce it. He wrote, directed, and starred as a flawed Pentecostal preacher. The film remains one of the most honest depictions of faith in cinema history, refusing to mock or simplify its subject. Duvall's directorial eye was also present in smaller, more intimate works like *Angelo My Love* (1983), a "docudrama" about New York's Gypsy community. He was fascinated by real stories and non-professional actors, often blending them with stars to create a texture that felt like documentary footage. He didn't want to make movies that felt like "Hollywood"; he wanted to make movies that felt like neighbors.

In 1983, Duvall won the Academy Award for Best Actor for his role in *Tender Mercies*. He played Mac Sledge, a broken country singer seeking a quiet redemption. He wrote and performed his own songs for the role, once again proving his dedication to authenticity.

He didn't use special effects or loud music to show pain; he used his face and his voice. He showed us that every human being, no matter how flawed, has a dignity worth documenting. Even in his 80s and 90s, Duvall continued to work with a sharp mind. In 2014, he became the oldest person ever nominated for Best Supporting Actor for *The Judge*. He never "retired" because for Duvall, acting was a way of exploring the world. He remained a man of the earth, spending his final years on his farm in Virginia, often seen in the local community as a neighbor rather than a star. Robert Duvall leaves us with a profound legacy. He taught us that great art does not need to be loud to be heard. It only needs to be true. He proved that listening is the most active thing an actor can do, and that character is revealed through behavior rather than dialogue. As we say goodbye to the "last consigliere," we remember a man who made us believe in every character he played. He didn't just act; he made us see the world with more empathy and clarity. 🌍

*Writer: Md Rabbi Islam, Student of Film and Television department, Jagannath University*

BUZZ

## CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVALS SET TO LIGHT UP MARCH



*Photo: Los Angeles International Children's Film Festival*

**A** vibrant lineup of international children's film festivals is set to unfold this March, bringing stories from across the globe to young audiences and families. Among the highlights is the Los Angeles International Children's Film Festival, scheduled for March 27-29, 2026. Held alongside WonderCon in Anaheim, the festival will present a wide range of animated and live action films, including shorts, features and documentaries aimed at inspiring young viewers.

Earlier in the month, the Moscow International Children's Film Festival will run from March 19-22. The event traditionally showcases films made for children and teenagers, alongside works created by young filmmakers. Screenings, discussions and competitive sections are expected to draw families and aspiring artists.

Meanwhile, the New York International Children's Film Festival continues its multi week program through March 15. Widely regarded as North America's largest children's film event, it offers carefully curated selections for different age groups, as well as filmmaker talks and workshops.

Together, these festivals reflect a growing global interest in meaningful cinema for young audiences, creating spaces where imagination, culture and storytelling meet. 🌍



The political drama directed by Ilker Çatak won the top prize at the Berlin International Film Festival 2026. . Photo: The Associated Press.

**T**he 2026 edition of the Berlin International Film Festival concluded with a strong political note as German-Turkish director Ilker Çatak's "Yellow Letters" won the Golden Bear for Best Film. Jury president

Wim Wenders presented the award, praising the film for confronting the language of totalitarianism through the humane force of cinema.

Set in contemporary Turkey, "Yellow Letters" follows a married playwright and actress who come under state scrutiny because of their protest theatre. In a striking formal decision, Çatak shot the entire film in Germany, openly crediting German cities as stand-ins for Turkish locations. The approach adds another layer to a story already steeped in themes of exile, censorship and state control.

The win marks a major milestone for the 42-year-old filmmaker. Çatak previously drew international attention with "The Teachers' Lounge," which premiered in Berlin's Panorama section in 2023 and later earned an Oscar nomination. He becomes the first German filmmaker in over two decades to claim the Golden Bear, since Fatih Akin triumphed in 2004 with "Head-On."

Although he admitted to preparing a political speech, Çatak chose instead to highlight his collaborators. He suggested the film's political questions speak for themselves and credited his cast and crew as the true recipients of the honor.

The festival had opened under controversy after Wenders commented on the relationship between cinema and politics, amid criticism regarding Germany's stance on the war in Palestine. At the awards ceremony, he offered a more measured reflection, arguing that while activism and cinema may share concerns about human dignity, their languages and methods differ.

Politics continued to shape the awards. The Grand Jury Prize went to Emin Alper's "Salvation," another Turkish-set drama exploring violence and ethnic conflict. Alper described the film as globally relevant, linking its themes to contemporary crises, including Gaza and Iran. In an impassioned speech, he dedicated the award to oppressed communities, drawing loud applause.

The Jury Prize was awarded to American director Lance Hammer for "Queen at Sea," a moving portrait of an elderly London couple coping with dementia. The film also secured the gender-neutral Best Supporting Performance award for veterans Tom Courtenay and Anna Calder-Marshall.

German actor Sandra Hüller received the Best Leading Performance prize for her role in "Rose," directed by Austrian filmmaker Markus Schleinzer. Hüller plays a 17th-century woman living as a man in a stark historical drama. It marks her second acting award in Berlin, two decades after her breakthrough win for "Requiem."

British filmmaker Grant Gee earned Best Director for his narrative debut "Everybody Digs Bill Evans," a biopic of the late jazz pianist. The Best Screenplay award went to Canadian director Geneviève Dulude-De Celles for "Nina Roza," while a Special Jury Prize recognized the documentary "Yo (Love is a Rebellious Bird)" by Anna Fitch and Banker White.

In the festival's Perspectives section for first features, Palestinian-Syrian director Abdallah Alkhatib won for "Chronicles From the Siege," a drama set against life in a war zone clearly echoing Palestine. Taking the stage with a Palestinian flag, Alkhatib delivered one of the evening's most direct political statements.

Festival director Tricia Tuttle acknowledged the tense atmosphere in her closing remarks, framing debate and disagreement as essential to both democracy and cinema. As this year's Berlinale demonstrated, film remains deeply entwined with the urgent questions of its time. 🌍

# 76th Berlinale 2026 Winners List\*

## MAIN COMPETITION

Golden Bear for Best Film: "Yellow Letters," İlker Çatak

Silver Bear Grand Jury Prize: "Salvation," Emin Alper

Silver Bear Jury Prize: "Queen at Sea," Lance Hammer

Silver Bear for Best Director: "Everybody Digs Bill Evans," Grant Gee

Silver Bear for Best Lead Performance: "Rose," Sandra Hüller

Silver Bear for Best Supporting Performance: "Queen at Sea," Anna Calder-Marshall and Tom Courtenay

Silver Bear for Best Screenplay: "Nina Roza," Geneviève Dulude-De Celles

Silver Bear for Outstanding Artistic Contribution: "Yo (Love is a Rebellious Bird)," Anna Fitch and Banker White



*Yellow Letters. Photo: Ella Knorz\_ifProductions\_Alamode Film*

## PERSPECTIVES COMPETITION

GWFF Best First Feature Award: "Chronicles From the Siege," Abdallah Alkhatib

Special Mention (Coup de Coeur): "Forest High," Manon Coubia



*Everybody Digs Bill Evans. Photo: Shane O'Connor 2026  
Cowntown Pictures\_Hot Property*

## BERLINALE DOCUMENTARY AWARD

Best Documentary: "If Pigeons Turned to Gold," Pepa Lubojacki

Special Mentions: "Tutu," Sam Pollard;  
"Sometimes I Imagine Them All at a Party," Daniela Magnani Hüller

## FIPRESCI AWARDS

Competition: "Soumsoum, the Night of the Stars," Mahamat-Saleh Haroun

Perspectives: "Animol," Ashley Walters

Panorama: "Narciso," Marcelo Martinessi

Forum: "AnyMart," Yusuke Iwasaki



*If Pigeons Turned to Gold.  
Photo: CLAW films*

*\*This is not the full list*

## Yellow Letters

# Politics without slogans

*When ideology moves into the living room and care becomes control. The 76th Berlinale was a mix of moral exaggeration and poetic restraint. Just after the announcement of the 76th Berlinale awards, Munich-based German film critic Axel Timo Purr writes this review exclusively for C2C.*



'Yellow Letters' Photo: Ella Knorz/ifProductions/Alamode Film

It is one of the ritualised disappointments of a festival that, in the end, your own favourite rarely wins – and just as rarely does the objectively 'best' film. The award usually goes to the best compromise, the film that represents the strongest common denominator within the jury: aesthetically viable, politically relevant and discursively communicable. This year, the decision for the Golden Bear for Best Film fell on 'Yellow Letters' by German-Turkish director İlker Çatak. A choice that is less surprising than it is consistent in retrospect.

Çatak's most political film to date does not unfold its effect through spectacular images, but through a structural setting: Ankara is located in Berlin, Istanbul in Hamburg. This shift is not merely a production gimmick, but is seen as a deliberate aesthetic alienation. When 'Gott steh uns bei' (God help us) suddenly appears on old German buildings, the resonance chamber shifts. The supposedly national becomes universal. The political crisis becomes readable as an anthropological condition.

The focus is on the breakdown of relationships under ideological pressure. Çatak is less interested in programmatic statements than in micro-erosion: the gradual silencing, the unspoken, the shifting of loyalties. Particularly striking are the film-within-a-film and theatre scenes, in which art appears not as a promise of salvation, but as self-questioning. Does theatre save the world? The question is asked – but not answered affirmatively. In Çatak's work, cinema also eludes the pathos of self-aggrandisement. At best, it can open up spaces.

With all this 'familiarity,' the escalation surrounding the daughter becomes too obvious for a moment, breaking out of the fine script corset almost brutally, making Çatak almost didactic. The transformation of an intellectual towards patriarchal harshness seems abrupt, as if the script needed an unnecessarily exaggerated intensification. But this objection concerns the dramaturgy at best, not the diagnosis. Yellow Letters formulates a finding that points beyond Turkey. Political polarisation is not a local phenomenon. It pervades

societies worldwide – and it begins in the private sphere. In this respect, the Golden Bear is less an award than a confirmation of a thesis.

### The village as a state of the world

The Grand Jury Prize (Silver Bear) went to 'Kurtuluş' by Emin Alper. Alper remains true to his preferred setting: the remote village as a projection screen for social tensions. In 'Burning Days' (Kurak Günler), which ran in Cannes in 2022, he had already shown how local power structures mirror global mechanisms. In 'Salvation', too, the feud between two clans in a geographical microcosm becomes a magnifying glass for a present in which hate speech and resentment are no longer marginal but structuring.

In Alper's work, the village is not a place of folklore, but a political laboratory. The distance to the periphery is only apparent. What is being negotiated there is the erosion

of democratic discourse as a whole. The echoes of the hate speech chanted here are currently reverberating on the streets all over the world. In this respect, Alper's film fits seamlessly into a competition field that strikingly often addressed the intimacy of politics.

### Intimacy under state supervision

The Jury Prize (Silver Bear) was awarded to 'Queen at Sea' by Lance Hammer. Films about dementia tend to portray decline as an existential drama – think of Haneke's "Amour" or Zeller's 'The Father'. Hammer starts earlier and shifts the focus: the film centres not only on the loss of cognitive abilities, but also on the question of autonomy and consent.

The scene in which the police enter the bedroom because a mother with dementia is allegedly unable to consent to sex with her husband marks the aesthetic and moral core of the film. An intimate moment becomes an administrative act. Care is transformed into control. Hammer shows the incapacitation of old age as an act of moral self-assurance. At times, this takes on a certain didactic sharpness reminiscent of the social realist tradition of Ken Loach.

But it is precisely here that comparisons with Sarah Polley's 'Away from Her' come to mind, that quiet, masterful debut about dementia that worked with restraint and formal precision. Polley told a story of loss without stylising institutional apparatuses as antagonists. Hammer's film is more confrontational, more immediate, perhaps less subtle. And yet there is a remarkable tenderness underlying his indictment. The actors work with glances, pauses, touches – gestures that make love visible, especially at the moment when it is most vulnerable.

### The debate about politics

This politicisation was also evident at the festival itself, as the discussion about jury president Wim Wenders hung over everything. A German podcast journalist, previously uninvolved in the film world, believed he had proven the lack of politicisation of Wenders and the jury, particularly on the subject of the Middle East, by asking provocative questions – an escalation that quickly took on a life of its own. The wording seemed like a general suspicion being thrown into the room: as if one wanted to deny one of the defining auteur filmmakers of New German Cinema precisely that element that has always underpinned his work – the connection between poetry and politics.

Above all, however, the provocation did not do justice to this year's competition. Rarely has a programme been so clearly permeated by political issues: from Çatak's

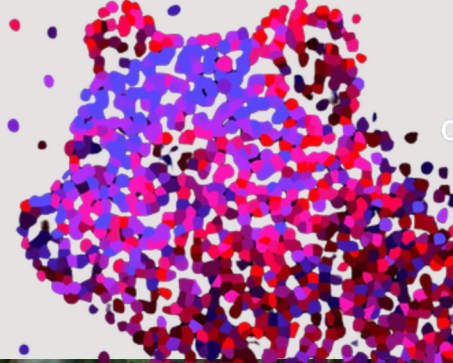


Tansu Biçer in 'Yellow Letters' Photo: Ella Knorz/ifProductions/Alamode Film

analysis of ideological polarisation to Alper's study of collective hardening to Hammer's examination of state welfare and individual autonomy. Added to this were numerous contributions from and about the Middle East that dealt with the relationship between power, memory and identity. The debate therefore seemed like a sideshow – loud but thin on content, grotesquely reminiscent of Emerald Fennell's recent cinematic adaptation of the literary classic Wuthering Heights, nothing more than a storm in an Instagram glass.

And perhaps this is precisely where the real outcome of this Berlinale lies: politics did not appear here as a slogan, not as a decorative commitment, but as a structure – as a fine crack in the private sphere, as a barely noticeable but persistent tension in the intimate sphere. The Golden Bear for Yellow Letters sends a clear signal about this attitude. Not as a final judgement on a year's output, but as an expression of a moment in which clarity seemed more important than any calculated, algorithmically optimised sophistication. 🌍

# Gemstones Dazzles Visually but Lacks Dramatic Tension



Sofía Jaramillo in *Piedras preciosas (Gemstones)* by Simón Vélez. Photo: Triángulo

**Aina Randrianatoandro** writes this review for C2C. He is a film critic from Madagascar and a recipient of an international mobility grant provided by Goethe-Zentrum Antananarivo.

GOETHE-ZENTRUM  
KOOPERATIONSPARTNER



# S

lected in the Forum section of the 76th Berlinale, *Piedras Preciosas (Gemstones)*, the first feature by Colombian filmmaker Simón Vélez is a work that deliberately steps away from the clichés often

associated with Colombia (drug trafficking, cartels, armed violence, guerrilla activity, poverty, etc.). A commendable ambition, unfortunately undermined by glaring narrative weaknesses.

The film tells the story of Machado (Juan Luogo), a young Colombian immigrant harvesting grapes in the French countryside, where he lives with his girlfriend (Laura Torines). One day, he receives a call: Tom and Chiara, an elderly couple, hire him to steal and return a precious emerald set in the crown of the Virgin Mary statue in a church in Manrique, Colombia. The couple has already prepared his passport and provided the money for the trip.

Machado's initial hesitation suggests he might have a troubled past in Colombia, but once he arrives, this proves to be irrelevant. On paper, the mission appears perilous and promises interesting conflicts. In practice, however, the plot seems designed so that the protagonist succeeds effortlessly. No real obstacles stand in his way, except for the task of killing the church priest, an easy challenge given that he has no bodyguard and is largely disliked in his community.

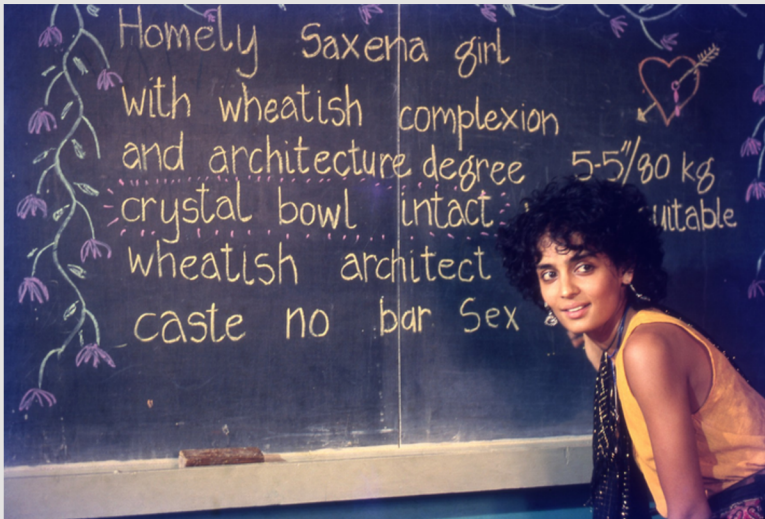
Once this stage of his mission is accomplished, the film shifts into a string of increasingly improbable episodes.

Disguised as a priest, Machado must hear the confession of a woman who has killed her husband and even help her dispose of the body, an event which has no impact on the outcome of his mission. In another scene, he takes the emerald to a jeweler for polishing, the man realizes it has been stolen but does not alert the authorities, once again removing any real threat.

In a particularly surreal moment, two women who have been watching Machado practice Tai Chi invite him for a picnic. Satiated, he falls asleep on the grass. When he wakes up alone and panicked, he checks his pocket and discovers, to his immense relief, that the emerald remains untouched by the two women, a moment that should generate suspense but instead leaves the audience frustrated, craving the dramatic tension that never comes. Characterizations of the protagonist, such as Machado lifting weights in the room he shares with his girlfriend or practicing Tai Chi in a public park, feel irrelevant, as the plot never subjects him to physical confrontation. Likewise, his girlfriend contributes nothing meaningful to the narrative.

These obvious narrative shortcomings are not compensated by the quality of the sound design or the film's music. That said, the visual splendor is undeniable: scenes highlighting semi-precious and precious stones, as well as vividly colored tropical birds, are captivating. Yet all this beauty cannot console the viewer frustrated by a story lacking real stakes, conflict, or message. 🌍

# BERLINALE 2026 HIT BY RIFT AS ARUNDHATI ROY BOYCOTTS AFTER WIM WENDERS' GAZA REMARKS



Arundhati Roy was expected at Berlinale 2026 for the 4K restored screening of *In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones*, the cult 1970s campus satire she wrote as her debut screenplay. Photo: Berlinale



Shah Rukh Khan in *In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones*, his character's name was 'senior student'. Photo: rediff

# A

t the 2026 edition of the Berlin International Film Festival, politics has once again stepped into the spotlight, this time around comments made by German filmmaker Wim Wenders and the subsequent

decision of Indian writer and activist Arundhati Roy to decline her invitation to attend the festival.

The controversy began when Wenders, speaking at a press interaction ahead of the festival's opening, addressed questions about the ongoing crisis in Gaza and the role of filmmakers in times of political conflict. While expressing concern over the humanitarian situation, Wenders argued that cinema's primary task is not direct political intervention but shaping human perception. Films, he suggested, can influence how people think and feel, but they should resist becoming instruments of immediate political agendas.

His remarks quickly circulated across international media and social platforms, sparking debate about whether such a position distances artists from urgent global realities. Critics accused Wenders of advocating a retreat from political responsibility, particularly at a festival long considered more politically engaged than many of its European counterparts.

In response, Arundhati Roy, who had been scheduled to participate in a panel discussion on art and resistance, announced that she would not attend the festival. In a public statement, Roy said that moments of profound humanitarian crisis demand clarity and moral positioning from cultural institutions and artists alike. She noted that silence or aesthetic neutrality, in such contexts, can appear as complicity.

Roy's decision has intensified conversations around the Berlinale's identity. Over the decades, the festival has cultivated a reputation for foregrounding politically charged cinema and providing a platform for dissenting voices. The current debate raises questions about whether global festivals can remain spaces for artistic reflection while also responding to real time geopolitical conflicts.



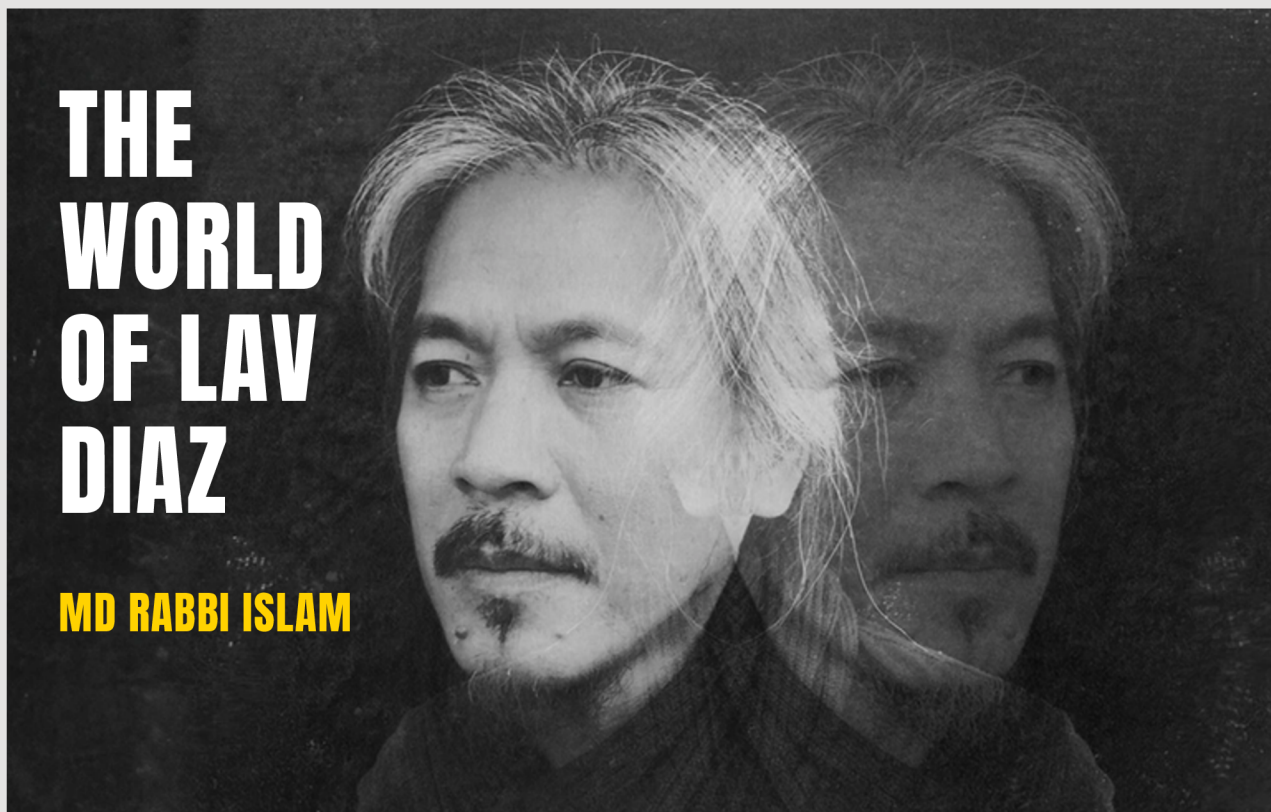
Arundhati Roy and Wim Wenders. Photo: picture alliance / NTB / Jonas Been Henriksen and Reuters/Axel Schmidt

Festival organizers have refrained from directly intervening in the exchange, reiterating their commitment to freedom of expression and open dialogue. Several filmmakers attending this year's edition have expressed differing views, some echoing Wenders' call for cinema to preserve its artistic autonomy, others aligning with Roy's insistence on explicit political engagement.

As screenings and red carpet events unfold in Berlin, the discussion continues to ripple through press conferences and informal gatherings alike. In many ways, the situation reflects a deeper tension at the heart of contemporary cultural production: whether art should stand apart from politics, or whether, in times like these, that distance is no longer possible. 🌍

# THE WORLD OF LAV DIAZ

MD RABBI ISLAM



Lav Diaz. Photo: MUBI

*“We Malays, we Filipinos, are not governed by the concept of time. We are governed by the concept of space. We don’t believe in time. If you live in the country, you see Filipinos hang out. They are not very productive. That is very Malay. It is all about space and nature. [...] In the Philippine archipelago, nature provided everything, until the concept of property came with the Spanish colonizers. Then the capitalist order took control. [...] The concept of time was introduced to us when the Spaniards came. We had to do oracion [pray] at six o’clock, and start work at seven. Before it was free, it was Malay.”*

*-Lavrente Indico Diaz*

**F**

To enter the world of Lavrente Indico Diaz is to step outside the frantic, commodified pulse of the modern multiplex and into a landscape where time is not a resource to be managed, but a site of profound

decolonial resistance. Diaz, who often describes himself as a ‘cultural worker’ rather than a mere filmmaker, has spent decades dismantling the rigid architecture of global cinema. His films—majestic, monochromatic frescoes that often run between four and eleven hours, are not merely cinematic exercises; they are grueling acts of historical reclamation designed to pierce through the ‘historical amnesia’ that plagues the Philippine psyche. For Diaz, cinema must hold a mirror up to a society scarred by ‘four major cataclysms’: centuries of

Spanish and American colonization, a brutal Japanese occupation, and the enduring, traumatic shadow of the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship. By systematically breaking every traditional rule of the industry, he seeks a ‘cleansing process’ that allows the Filipino soul to finally confront its unexamined traumas and move forward.

The most visible rule that Lavrente Indico Diaz shatters is the ‘industry-standard’ ninety-minute runtime. To him, the traditional length of a feature film is a Western industrial imposition, a byproduct of capitalist efficiency that treats the spectator’s attention as a product to be turned over quickly for profit. Diaz argues that this ‘industrial chronometry’ is a continuation of the colonial project that began when the Spanish imposed the clock and the calendar to discipline the indigenous population into a productive labor force. In response, he embraces ‘Malay Time’, a temporal philosophy rooted in the pre-colonial rhythms of the Philippine archipelago, where life was governed by the patterns of nature and space rather than the linear progression of the Western clock. By allowing his films to breathe for epic durations, he reclaims an ancestral identity that values existence and ‘hanging out’ over neoliberal productivity. This is not a formalist indulgence; it is an ‘affirmation of importance,’ declaring that the suffering of the subaltern cannot be reduced to a consumable ninety-minute entertainment product.

*Lav Diaz is a Filipino auteur known for his epic-length, slow cinema exploring Philippine history, trauma, and dictatorship, and winner of the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival.*

This radical reclamation of time was made possible by what Diaz calls 'liberation theology', his transition to digital filmmaking. In the 1990s, Diaz worked within the 'pito-pito' (seven-seven) system of the Filipino film industry, an exploitative scheme where movies were produced in just seven days to maximize studio profits. Diaz describes this period as a 'disastrous working experience' that saw crew members collapsing from fatigue. Digital technology became his tool for survival and creative autonomy. By owning his own 'cheap but high-quality' cameras and lenses, Diaz bypassed the 'feudal setup' of equipment rentals and the gatekeeping of major studios. This 'Filipino farmer' model of production, where he digs with his own 'bare hands' rather than waiting for a 'tractor from the US or Europe', allows him to work with a small, dedicated group of friends and flexible schedules. As he famously noted, 'We can destroy governments now because of digital,' highlighting his belief that the democratization of the means of production is a political weapon against both industrial and governmental authoritarianism.

The visual language of the Diaz world is defined by the static long take and high-contrast black-and-white cinematography. These are not merely aesthetic choices; they are tools of 'physical realism' that emphasize the moving image's indexical connection to the physical world. Influenced by André Bazin's theories, Diaz uses duration to capture the 'materiality of the physical environment' and the 'hard yet purposive labor' of the underclass. A typical Diaz shot may begin with a panoramic view of a rain-soaked field that seems depopulated until a tiny figure appears in the distance, slowly traversing the landscape in real-time. This act of walking becomes an analogue for how history is born from a specific place. His choice of a monochromatic palette further tethers his films to the past, simulating the weight of a 'historical document' to bridge the gap between fictional narrative and the actual history of the country.

This 'archival' function of his cinema is a direct response to what scholar Bliss Cua Lim identifies as the 'anarchival condition' of the Philippines. Lim argues that the Marcos regime bequeathed an 'anarchival temporality', a state of affairs where cultural policies led to the decay and loss of the nation's cinematic and historical records, fostering a 'collective amnesia' regarding the atrocities of the Martial Law era. Diaz's films step into this void, acting as a surrogate archive for a people whose history has been 'stolen' or revised. By simulating archival material through high-contrast chiaroscuro, Diaz resists 'state monstrosity' and ensures that the darkest chapters of Filipino history remain visible. His work forces a 'radical interaction' with time, making it impossible for the viewer to remain detached from the historical context or consume the trauma as mere melodrama.

The definitive realization of Diaz's mission is *Evolution of a Filipino Family* (2004). Shot over an eleven-year period with minimal resources, the film's production reflects the 'endurance' and 'weathering' that Diaz identifies as the central Filipino experience. As the actors aged naturally on screen over its 624-minute runtime, the film became a 'physical database' of national memory. It follows the Gallardo clan of poor farmers from 1971 to 1987, integrating actual archival newsreels of the People's Power Revolution and the assassination of Benigno Aquino. In a pivotal twenty-one-minute sequence, the character Kadyo bleeds to death in a Manila alley—a scene Diaz intended as a 'death scene of the Filipinos,' forcing the audience to experience the long-suffering agony of a people who have been 'agonizing for so long.'

Critically, Diaz's work has been championed by voices like Noel Vera, who argues that the filmmaker 'illuminates recent Philippine history with the lightning bolt of his imagination.' In epics like *Death in the Land of Encantos* (2007) and *Melancholia* (2008), Diaz investigates the persistence of military persecution and the 'anarchival temporality' of the post-Marcos state.



*History of Ha.* Photo: Vienna International Film Festival

Vera's analysis highlights how Diaz's 'clinical observation' and the use of 'parenthetical cutting', allowing a shot to run longer than the principal action, prevents the spectator from being a passive observer. Instead, the viewer is invited into a 'dynamic of interaction,' where the act of watching becomes a form of 'active mining for meaning.' This struggle for understanding is, for Diaz, the very struggle that leads to the evolution of the national psyche.

The meaning of his films altogether lies in the search for redemption and humanism. Diaz frequently draws from the 'temporal spaciousness' of Russian novelists like Dostoevsky and Tolstoy to explore the 'fundamentals of existence.' In *The Woman Who Left* (2016), he transforms Tolstoy's Christian ode to forgiveness into a political manifesto about refusing to 'turn the other cheek' in the face of systemic injustice. His films are 'lullabies, sorrowful and mysterious,' that attune us to the resilient spirit of a people who have survived centuries of cataclysm. He avoids 'manipulative cinema' by

eschewing close-ups and background music, instead trusting the audience to roam autonomously through a 'vast field of ideas.' Watching a Diaz film is a physical and mental confrontation, a commitment to bear witness to the 'daily grind' of struggle.

Ultimately, we should watch and know about the films of Lavrente Indico Diaz because they offer a 'Free Cinema' that prioritizes cultural truth over industrial efficiency. In a world of 'tunnel vision' and 'anaesthetic' entertainment, Diaz provides a necessary struggle—a way to 'fathom the mystery of humankind's existence' through the lens of a specific national trauma. He has proven that the most radical act a filmmaker can perform is to give history the time it requires to be truly seen. His work stands as a monument to the power of the moving image to serve as a site of political resistance, historical preservation, and spiritual redemption, reclaiming a cinema that is as pure and uncompromising as the truth it seeks to uncover. 🌱



*Melancholia. Photo: MUBI*

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# HAMNET

## INSIDE VIEWS OF A FAREWELL

AXEL TIMO PURR

Hamnet. Photo: IMDb

C

hloé Zhao's *Hamnet* rejects biography and seeks the inner logic of loss. Her film shows how art arises not from inspiration, but from experience.

A film about William Shakespeare's early years naturally runs the risk of getting lost in myths: in the narrative of the precocious genius, in the fetishisation of inspiration, in the cheap mystery surrounding the creation of a world-famous work. *Hamnet* – now highly nominated for both Oscars and BAFTAs and awarded Best Drama at the Golden Globes – rejects all of this with remarkable consistency. Director Chloé Zhao is not interested in the birth of the poet, but in the conditions of a life from which literature emerges only as a late, painful necessity. The fact that Maggie O'Farrell, author of the novel *Hamnet*, was herself involved in the screenplay is likely to be more than just a production note: it explains the film's close proximity to its literary source material – not in terms of historical accuracy, but in tone, perspective and emotional logic.

In Zhao's film, Stratford-upon-Avon in the 1580s does not appear as the picturesque birthplace of a national poet, but as a socially and physically demanding living environment. Birth, illness, superstition and death are not dramatic accents, but a constantly pulsating background noise. In this world, William Shakespeare and Agnes Hathaway do not meet as a romantic couple, but as two people who, in their unbridled passion, promise each other support without realising how fragile that support will be.

Paul Mescal plays William with a restraint that is immediately recognisable after his intense roles in *Aftersun*, *Aftersun* and *All of Us Strangers* – and which is all the more soothing after his rather alienating performance in the large-scale *Gladiator II*, where he had little room for ambivalence. Here, Mescal is back to his old self: he plays a young man who perceives more than he speaks, whose artistic ambition is initially expressed not as self-expression but as escape. London is both a promise and an imposition, while Stratford becomes a place of guilt.

The real centre of the film, however, is Agnes. Jessie Buckley eludes any folkloric interpretation of the 'enigmatic healer'. After her sharply contoured, almost burlesque performance in *Wicked Little Letters*, she is hardly recognisable here: quieter, darker, with an earthiness that seems not acted but carried. Only her crooked smile, which for a moment recalls Ellen Barkin's laugh in Harold Baker's *Sea of Love*, hints at the ambivalence of her role: Agnes is a mother, an outsider, a projection screen for superstition – and at the same time the most emotionally stable character in the film. Buckley lends her a dignity that is neither heroic nor explanatory.

Zhao stages this world with a density that at first seems almost overwhelming. The first two-thirds of the film are dominated by suffering, foreboding and loss. Difficult births, the omnipresent threat of the plague, the mistrust of the community – all this comes together to form a tableau that aims less at narrative climax than at atmospheric saturation. In this respect, *Hamnet* is reminiscent of the novels of the German realist author Theodor Fontane, in which disaster is palpable long before it strikes: as a quiet pressure, as social constriction, as a barely articulable premonition. Zhao pursues these motifs so consistently that, as a viewer, one almost retreats into emotional defensiveness from the very beginning – a possible overload calculated by Zhao.

Chloé Zhao's approach becomes particularly clear when compared to Richard Linklater's *Nouvelle Vague*, which premiered at Cannes in 2025. Linklater focuses on the surface of the artists shown there, i.e. the filmmakers: we observe production conditions, gestures, discourses, the technical and organisational creation of a masterpiece. But behind Godard's mask of sunglasses, awkward genius and pose, there is hardly any psychological space. What drives him, what shapes or damages him internally, remains largely unexplored.

The viewer is present for the 'external view' of *Breathless*, but not for the inner necessity from which such a work emerges. With Zhao, it is exactly the opposite. Her *Hamnet* is a radical counter-model to this form of artist portraiture. Her 'making of' a masterpiece – ultimately Hamlet – refuses to provide technical, biographical or discursive explanations. Instead, it is a consistent inside view: a narrative of loss, guilt and emotional emptiness, from which art emerges not as the result of intellect or theory, but as a form of survival. We learn almost nothing about Shakespeare's literary coming of age; only at the very end does Zhao show us a result. And even that is done with caution, though not always free of simplification – for example, in the hinted-at 'to be or not to be' scene, which comes across as somewhat flat, almost grotesque.

The fact that *Hamnet* turns out so decidedly different can perhaps be explained by Chloé Zhao's previous work, which is characterised by remarkable heterogeneity. After *The Rider* (2017), an almost documentary-like portrait of masculinity, the body and vulnerability in the American West, and *Nomadland* (2020), which translated existential precariousness into an open, almost essayistic road movie form, *Eternals* (2021) seemed like a foreign body: a superhero film in which Zhao's interest in landscape, bodies and the passage of time only shone through sporadically. *Hamnet* does not

mark a retreat, but rather a renewed shift – away from social space, away from genre, towards a historical yet radically internal narrative. It is precisely this difference that makes it clear that Zhao does not pursue a signature style in the narrow sense, but rather constantly rebalances themes and forms. Her films are not similar to each other, they contradict each other – and therein lies their fragile consistency.

But then, in the last twenty minutes, *Hamnet* takes a remarkable turn. The death of Hamnet – the son to whom William was particularly close – is not staged as a melodramatic climax, but as a void. And from this void, Zhao succeeds in taking a double step: she leads the film out of darkness without negating it, and makes it possible to experience what art can achieve at its core. Not consolation, not explanation, but catharsis.



Director Chloé Zhao at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah. Photo: Taylor Jewell / Invision/AP

Here, and only here, after a long, somewhat excessive 'prelude', does the film begin to breathe and touch the viewer. The previously almost overstretched motifs of suffering find their justification in an ending that does not force empathy, but makes it possible. One understands – quietly, almost physically – how personal loss can give rise to something greater than a biography. And therein lies the real strength of *Hamnet*: in the sober, literarily grounded insight that art is not born of inspiration, but of the attempt to live with the inevitable. 🌱

Writer: Film critic, Germany

BRIEF



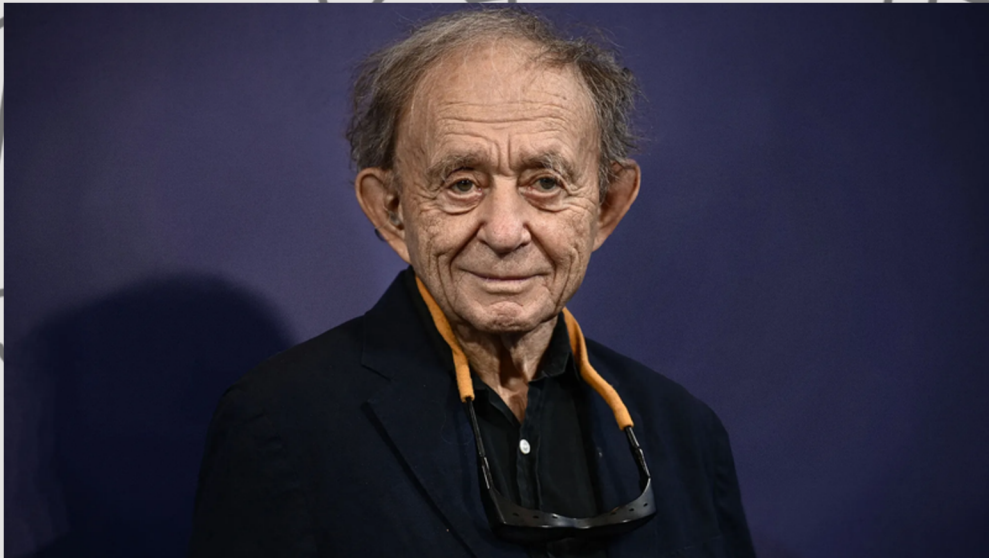
'One Battle After Another,' 'Sinners,' 'I Swear'.  
Photo: Warner Bros.; Studiocanal

At the 79th edition of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Film Awards, Paul Thomas Anderson's *One Battle After Another* dominated with six wins, including best film and director. Ryan Coogler's *Sinners* secured three awards, setting a record for a Black filmmaker. *I Swear* claimed three prizes, with Robert Aramayo winning best actor and Rising Star.

At the Annie Awards, presented by the L.A. branch of the International Animated Film Association, Netflix's *KPop Demon Hunters* swept 10 prizes, including best feature. The film, directed by Maggie Kang and Chris Appelhans, became the streamer's most-watched movie. Ugo Bienvenu's *Arco* won best independent feature.



'KPop Demon Hunters' Photo: Netflix



Frederick Wiseman (January 1, 1930 - February 16, 2026). Photo: MARCO BERTORELLO/AFP via Getty Images

Frederick Wiseman, one of the most influential figures in documentary cinema, has died at 96. Over six decades, he chronicled American institutions with rare depth and patience, from *Titicut Follies* to *Menus-Plaisirs – Les Troisgrors*. His death was confirmed by his family and Zipporah Films.



China's box office soared to \$647.4 million during the Lunar New Year holiday, making it 2026's top global market. *Pegasus 3*, directed by Han Han and starring Shen Teng, led with \$369.3 million, while Zhang Yimou's *Scare Out* earned \$110.7 million. In third, martial arts epic "Blades of the Guardians" took in \$97.3 million.

From left: 'Scare Out,' 'Pegasus 3' and 'Blades of the Guardians'. Photo: Collected



Filmmaker Rezwan Shahriar Sumit and the team Master. Photo: Production office of Master

## Cinema as Resistance

# Rezwan Shahriar Sumit on Politics, Power, and Master

*C2C recently spoke with award winning filmmaker Rezwan Shahriar Sumit, director of the political thriller Master. The film won the Big Screen Competition Award at the International Film Festival Rotterdam 2026, marking a significant achievement for Bangladeshi cinema. The interview was exclusively arranged for C2C by Md Rabbi Islam, and Sumit shares his thoughts on the film's journey, its political undercurrents, and the response it has received internationally.*

**What was the biggest challenge you faced during the production, especially considering the safety risks and political pressure your crew had to manage?**

Master is a big-canvas political thriller that asks difficult questions. It is an independent film, though not necessarily by choice; our lives would have been much simpler had we been backed by a major studio. I exhausted almost every traditional avenue in Bangladesh—OTT platforms, production houses, and private financiers—but no one was willing to risk being associated with a project of this nature.

The film critiques the bureaucracy, the political landscape, and the law enforcement mechanisms of Bangladesh. We live within systems that lack necessary fail-safes, managed by those who often lack the fundamental empathy the roles require. These systemic issues aren't hidden; they are the "part and parcel" of our daily lives. Yet, the studios decided it was neither wise nor safe to project these stories onto the silver screen. I don't entirely blame them—I'm sure they have their reasons—but it made financing an immense challenge.

When developing Master, I made a conscious effort not to point fingers at a specific individual or political party. Instead, I wanted to interrogate the system that protects the status quo—the same system that feeds massive corporations. In Bangladesh, seismic events like the July-August uprising are not uncommon. Yet, almost invariably, we see the portraits on the wall change and new faces occupy the seats of power, while the underlying machinery remains intact. The cycle of injustice continues; only the victims change. The aftermath of the recent uprising has only validated my

worldview. That is why I set out to render a world that is grey, fluid, and uncompromising—centered in the imaginary Upazila of Mohoganj, a place that feels eerily familiar to us all, yet exists nowhere on a map.

By nature, a political drama requires a massive arrangement. Our story opens with an Upazila election; to truly capture the 'theatre' of this event, the set pieces had to feel visceral and grounded. This demanded extensive world-building through realistic characters, sets, locations, costumes, and props. Casting secondary roles and managing the sheer volume of background actors was an extremely challenging task; every person within the frame had to look the part. Furthermore, our production spanned three seasons—the tail end of winter, the peak of summer, and the first hints of monsoon. We had to contend with fog, scorching sun, and sudden rain—elements that proved to be both a logistical curse and a cinematic blessing.

**Winning the Big Screen Award at the Rotterdam Film Festival is a historic achievement for Bangladesh; how did it feel to see your work recognized on such a prestigious global stage?**

I spent a magical two weeks in Rotterdam, soaking it all up: world premieres, talks, workshops, and networking—the whole nine yards. My debut feature, *The Salt in Our Waters* (Nonajoler Kabbo), had previously competed at BFI London, Göteborg, São Paulo, Seattle, and screened at Busan and Torino, but COVID-19 kept me from attending any of those screenings in person. My first live presentation was actually at UN COP26 in Glasgow, which draws a very different crowd—primarily

climate policymakers. So, when *Master* premiered, it felt incredible to finally be in a theater filled with true cinephiles. The Dutch audience is exceptionally engaged and curious; the Q&A sessions were remarkably lively. By the time the festival drew to a close, I already felt a deep sense of satisfaction from the interactions I'd had, including intimate moments with filmmakers like Mohammad Rasoulof and Kleber Mendonça Filho.

When the awards were announced, we were over the moon. The video of our reaction went viral, and it's as genuine as it gets. The Big Screen Competition was incredibly formidable; we were up against established directors like Ivo M. Ferreira, Isabel Sandoval, and Malek Bensmail. The category even featured A-list talent like Claes Bang (*The Square*), Peter Mullan (*The Magdalene Sisters*), and the currently Oscar-nominated Renate Reinsve (*Sentimental Value*). Unlike our peers, who were backed by major studios, financiers, and global PR agencies, we were as "indie" as it gets—an emerging voice from Bangladesh with almost no institutional backing.

That context makes this win feel truly special. My hope is that it opens new doors for my future projects, but more importantly, I believe it solidifies Bangladesh's place on the global festival circuit. In a moment of pure adrenaline, I told the crowd: "Bangladesh is in the house, and we are here to stay!" The roar of the applause that followed is something I'll never forget.



Rezwan Shahriar Sumit directing *Master* on set.  
Photo: Production office of *Master*

**Audiences at home are very excited to see the film, when do you expect *Master* to be officially released in theaters across Bangladesh?**

*Master* is centered on the intricate world of Upazila politics. The narrative revolves around the Upazila Chairman, the Upazila Nirbahi Officer or UNO, the local MP, the Commissioner, and the OC. These are deeply familiar roles in our society—positions whose actions, or lack thereof, directly shape or break the lives of so many. Because of this, I believe the film will resonate on a much deeper level with Bangladeshi audiences. They will grasp the stakes immediately and engage with the story emotionally, allowing the film perhaps to create a genuine, lasting impact. I am eager to see the dialogue it sparks. Currently, we are navigating the remaining bureaucratic, censorship, and logistical hurdles. Our goal is to bring this story to the local theaters as soon as possible, with an ideal release window targeted for mid-2026.

**What is the core philosophy of the film, and what made you want to explore whether power corrupts the individual or if the system itself is the problem?**

I set out to create a film that interrogates the inherent nature of politics and the paradox of authority: while one needs power to enact meaningful change on a grand

scale, that very same power often erodes the person who wields it. The tragic arc of a leader who promises to dismantle the status quo, only to eventually be consumed by it, is a universal theme. It happens everywhere. I believe this is why the jury in Rotterdam was so moved; they felt the urgency of the topic as global power axes shift before our eyes. In the West, we see leaders preoccupied with consolidating power to serve their corporate overlords' interests. Rather than painting on a global canvas though, I chose to limit the scale to the Upazila—or sub-district—level. Mohoganj, the fictional setting of the story, serves as a microcosm of both Bangladesh and the world at large. I chose to focus on local textures: the rhythmic chaos of the bazaars, the tea stalls that become hotbeds of debate, and the domestic courtyards that transform into informal courtrooms. These are inherently Bengali scenarios, and by portraying them with honesty and authenticity, the film gained its strength. Ultimately, I offer no easy answers. There is no clear demarcation between good and evil. In that sense, *Master* shares a thematic kinship with *The Salt in Our Waters* (Nonajoler Kabbo).

**Why was it important for you to show the leader's "moral drift" through his private life and dinner table conversations rather than just his public speeches?**

I grew up in a politically inclined household; my father is a politician and my mother is a professor of political science. Both have been incredible supporters of my cinematic pursuits. You can imagine the

atmosphere at our dinner table while I was growing up—it was a space for rigorous debate on the complex nature of politics in Bangladesh. I have always found the vulnerable, private reality of a leader far more fascinating than the carefully curated facade they present in public life. That was a perspective I decided to incorporate from day one of scriptwriting.

My writing process is generally backed by considerable primary research. This was especially true during the production of my third feature, *Tide Is Rising* (currently in post-production), where I spent significant time interacting with various Upazila Chairmen and UNOs. I witnessed firsthand how promises often went unfulfilled and how local fisherfolks remained voiceless in the face of authority. Yet, when you look at the hierarchy, an Upazila Chairman or a UNO is not a particularly senior official—they are essentially mid-level positions. This realization of how much power is concentrated even at that level was striking. My co-writer also comes from a political background, which allowed him to contribute deep, lived-in insights to our research.

As a filmmaker, how do you perceive cinema as an art form that can start necessary conversations about systemic injustice in society?

I believe cinema is a vital medium for addressing the uncomfortable truths we are often encouraged to sweep under the rug. I look to filmmakers like Ken Loach, Spike Lee, Hirokazu Kore-eda, and Ava DuVernay; the majority of their oeuvre is dedicated to stories with justice and human rights at their core. They don't always spell it out or force a political agenda upon the viewer, but they are profoundly aware of their surroundings. They operate with their eyes wide open.

In many ways, all three of my feature films—including the one currently in post-production—speak to the circularity of injustice and the way power inevitably asserts itself. Yet, there are always sparks of hope; moments where people unite and ensure their voices are heard. I don't view the worlds my characters inhabit as bleak. On the contrary, there is a great deal of "color" in these films. I want to capture the vibrancy of life that exists even within these rigid systems. 🌍



Azmeri Haque Badhon and Nasir Uddin Khan on the set of Master. Both play pivotal roles in the film.. Photo: Production office of Master

PRESS RELEASE

## Call Sign Bukhanka Draws Engaged Crowd at Russian House Dhaka Screening



Screening of Call Sign "Bukhanka" at the Russian House in Dhaka. Photo: Russian House in Dhaka

**O**n February 23, 2026, the Russian House in Dhaka successfully hosted a special screening of the documentary film Call Sign 'Bukhanka' at its cinema hall in Dhanmondi. The event was organized as part of the 4th International Film Festival RT.Doc: Time of Our Heroes, in cooperation with RT Documentary Channel.

The screening brought together film enthusiasts, students, representatives of cultural and academic communities, and friends of Russian culture in Dhaka. The event created a vibrant platform for audiences to experience contemporary documentary storytelling that reflects real human experiences and moral choices shaped by challenging times.

The film offered a sincere and compelling portrayal of courage, duty, and personal responsibility, presenting stories that transcend national borders. Throughout the screening, the audience demonstrated deep engagement and thoughtful reflection, highlighting the growing appreciation for documentary cinema among local viewers.

The full cinema hall and the active participation of guests emphasized the universal nature of values such as bravery, loyalty, and humanity — principles that resonate strongly with both the Russian and Bangladeshi people. The event also reaffirmed the important role of cultural initiatives in strengthening mutual understanding through art and cinema.

The Russian House in Dhaka expresses its sincere gratitude to all guests, partners and participants for their presence and support. The organization looks forward to welcoming audiences to future cultural programs and film events aimed at fostering dialogue and cultural exchange. 🌍

# Tell the name of the **FILM**

## GUESSING GAME



## Test your knowledge

1. Who directed Pather Panchali? (1 Point)
2. Which country is considered the birthplace of cinema? (2 Point)
3. Who created the character Charlie Chaplin's "Tramp"? (3 Point)
4. What was the first full-length animated feature film by Disney? (4 Point)
5. Which movement is associated with Italian postwar realist films? (5 Point)

11-15	06-10	01-05	00
Gold Medal	Silver Medal	Bronze Medal	Wooden Spoon

- Test Your Knowledge Answers
1. Satyajit Ray
  2. France
  3. Charlie Chaplin
  4. Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs
  5. Neorealism

Guessing Game Answer  
Sinners (2025) Directed by Ryan Coogler

# ভকণদের ব্রাশাঙ্কর ও অনুশ্রবণামূলক ট্রাভেল শো

## TRIP & TWIST

দেখতে চাখ রাখুন

DOEL OTT

