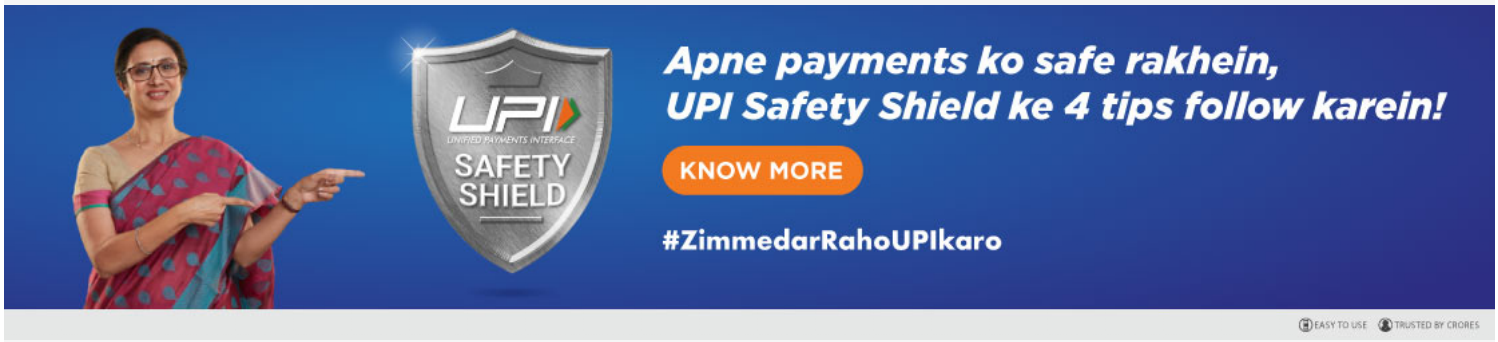

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Leo Carax's Annette starring Adam Driver and Marion Cotillard to open Cannes Film Festival 2021

The 74th edition of Cannes Film Festival will begin at the French Riviera on July 6. The films to look out for include Annette, Three Floors, Everything Went Fine and the Iranian film A Hero among others.

By HT Entertainment Desk
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Marion Cotillard and Adam Driver in a still from Annette.

The English-language work, Annette, will open the Cannes Film Festival on July 6. The 74th edition comes after two years, because the coronavirus pandemic stopped the 12-day event last May on the French Riviera. Even this time, the pandemic is not over, most parts of the globe are still reeling under it. Cannes appears bold enough to hold the festival, despite many European countries and even the UK seeing fresh surges.

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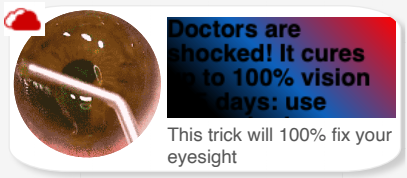
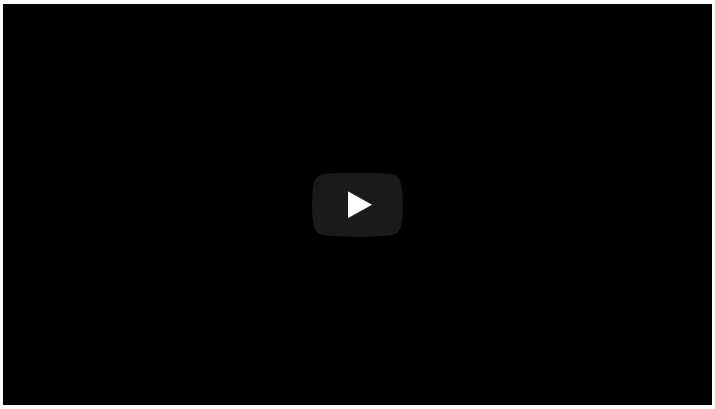


Annette is helmed by Leo Carax, whose Holy Motors nine years ago created a huge buzz at Cannes.



Annette will be Frenchman Leo's first English outing – an exceptional study in fantasy and magic realism. Unfolding in today's Los Angeles, Annette narrates the story of Henry, a stand-up comedian with a fierce sense of humour, and Ann, a singer of international repute. The couple are glamorous and happy, but the birth of their first child, Annette, a mysterious girl with exceptional destiny, will change their lives in an unbelievable sort of way.

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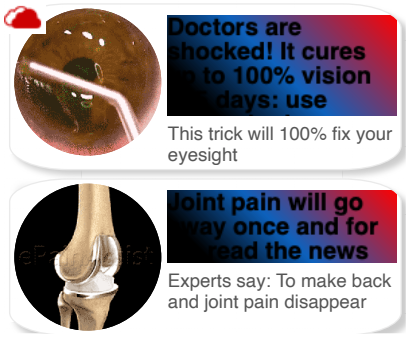

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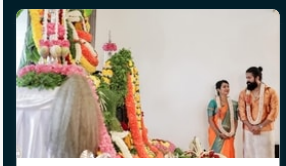

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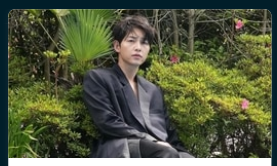

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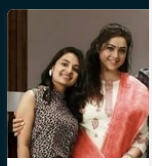

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A still from Francois Ozon's Everything Went Fine.

Annette will be the director's sixth work, starring Marion Cotillard (Rust and Bone) and Adam Driver (Marriage Story), supported by Simon Helberg. It will premiere in Cannes Competition, and will open simultaneously in French cinemas.

A festival press note avers: “Visionary and enigmatic, Leo Carax has authored some of the most beautiful moments of French cinema in the past 35 years, with a filmography that has never ceased to display his mastery over directing. A poetic genius with an overflowing imagination, the "enfant terrible" of French cinema has consistently transcended filmic codes and genres to create a world full of visions and ghosts.”

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A still from Nanni Moretti's Three Floors.

Leo was barely 24 when he stepped behind the camera for Boy Meets Girl, set in Paris. Shot in 1984 in stark black and white imagery, it seemed like a beautiful tribute to silent cinema and even Jean-Luc Godard. The French auteur's most ambitious project, The Lovers on the Bridge in 1991, was also set in the French capital, and it took him three years to shoot what was celebrated as an ode to passionate love.

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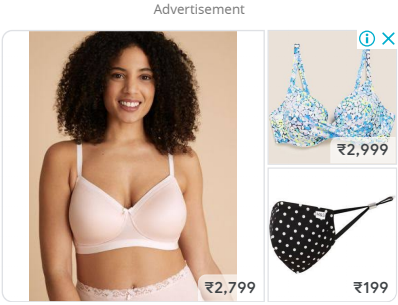

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Apart from Annette, this year's lineup will have 24 titles competing for the Palm dÓr and 12 in A Certain Regard. A new category, Cannes Premiere, will include seven movies.

As has been the norm, there are familiar faces in the official selections – which also include special screenings, midnight screenings and classics. Italian star auteur Nanni Moretti comes back to the festival with Three Floors, France's Francois Ozon with his Everything Went Fine and Iranian helmer (who gave us that lovely A Separation) offers A Hero, in Farsi. He had dabbled in French as well with his 2013 The Past. Cannes veterans like Jacques Audiard (Paris 13th District) and Sean Penn (Flag Day) will also enrich the Competition.

A scene from Iranian film, A Hero.

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Freshmen like Sean Baker (Red Rocket) and Ahed Knee (Bergman Island) will rub shoulders with the giants of cinema.

Thai auteur Apichatpong Weerasethakul, whose Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives won the Palme d'Or in 2010, has in competition Memoria, starring Tilda Swinton. Hungary's Ildikó Enyedi, who won the Golden Bear in Berlin for her 2017 feature On Body and Soul, returns to Cannes (she was last there with My Twentieth Century in 1999) with Completion title The Story of My Wife.

(Written by Gautaman Bhaskaran)

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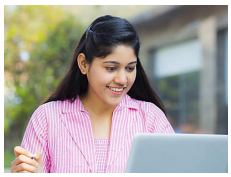

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