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Cannes Film Festival opens with Johnny Depp's comeback film, Jeanne du Barry

By Gautaman Bhaskaran

May 17, 2023 09:39 AM IST

Johnny Depp's French drama Jeanne du Barry opened the Cannes Film Festival on Tuesday. He plays King Louis XV in the movie.

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Johnny Depp poses for photographers upon arrival at the opening ceremony and the premiere of the film Jeanne du Barry.(Scott Garfitt/Invision/AP)

The 76th edition of the Cannes Film Festival opened with a French work, Jeanne Du Barry, with Johnny Depp playing King Louis XV. This is sort of a comeback for the actor after his messy legal cases with former wife, Amber Heard, and a newspaper. Helmed by Maiwenn – who co-wrote the screenplay and portrays the title character – the movie played out of competition. (Also read: Brie Larson may not see Johnny Depp's opening night film Jeanne du Barry at Cannes Film Festival)

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Jeanne is the illegitimate daughter of a monk and a cook, and she educates herself in sophistry and even a good education, thanks to the big aristocrats whom her single mother worked for. When the mother and daughter move to Paris, Jeanne meets King Louis, and it is lust at first sight.



A still from Jeanne du Barry.

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Maiwenn's fascination for Jeanne du Barry began after she watched Sofia Coppola's 2006 film, Marie Antoinette. She said at the start of the movie. "When I saw Asia Argento as Madame du Barry, I immediately felt a complicity with her," she says. "The more I read about her, the more it confirmed this and it hasn't stopped. I saw facets of my own personality in Jeanne du Barry," she adds. "I believe in freedom - I think it is what is most sexy, most seductive, most charismatic. And I've always loved marginal people."

As part of the opening night, American actor Michael Douglas received his honorary Palme d'Or. Actress Uma Thurman, who introduced Douglas called him a "titan" and "forever star" before he received a prolonged standing ovation as he took the stage. "There are hundreds of film festivals all over the world but there's only one Cannes," said Douglas.

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Earlier in the day at the jury press conference, Swedish director Ruben Ostlund, who has two Palme d'Ors for The Square in 2017 and Triangle of Sadness in 2022, said: "The Golden Palme is the greatest film prize in the world. For me, if I can choose between an Oscar or a Palme d'Or, it's an easy choice. I'd rather have another Palme than an Oscar."

He chairs this year's main Competition jury.

Ostlund, who received his first Oscar nominations earlier this year for best director and original screenplay for Triangle Of Sadness, said the Academy Awards come with a different "brand around increasing viewership for the nominated films".

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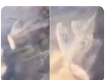
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"I started film school in the 1990s. A teacher at that school, their reference was always going back to Cannes," said the director. "I look at myself as a European film director; I'm part of a European tradition. The role of cinema we have in European culture is something I'm willing to fight for, he added.

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The festival runs till May 27.

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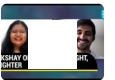
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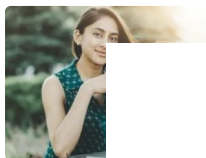
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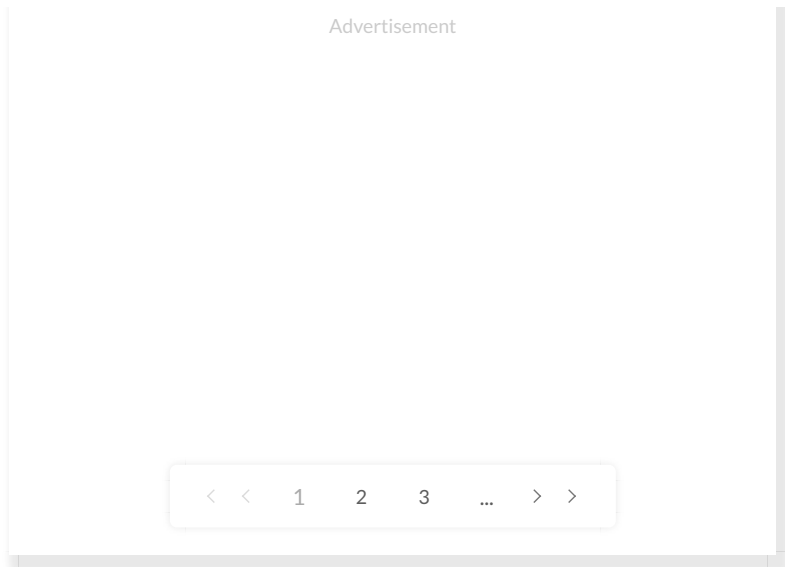
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