

# Cannes 2022: Elvis Created By Baz Luhrmann Is Dream Come True

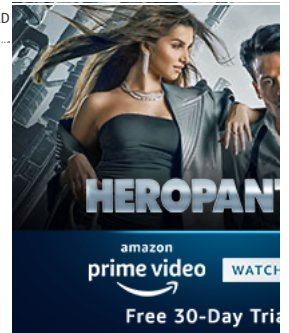


Austin Butler in Baz Luhrmann's 'Elvis'.

Elvis was screened out of competition at the Cannes Film Festival, which winds up today (May 28).

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GAUTAMAN BHASKARAN

**C**ould anybody other than the Australian director, Baz Luhrmann, give us something as dazzling as Elvis, the fictionalised story of the legendary pop star whose pelvic-thrusting gyrations made a whole generation fall in love with him? His mannerisms were copied by [Bollywood](#) heartthrob Shammi Kapoor and this is most obvious in Teesri Manzil in which he plays a drummer at Muskie's Park Hotel.

Elvis was screened out of competition at the Cannes Film Festival, which winds up today (May 28). With Austin Butler playing Elvis Presley, and Tom Hanks (yes Tom Hanks) as his clever manager, the movie, coming from the man who gave us Strictly Ballroom, Romeo and Juliet and Moulin Rouge is an overwhelming look at the life of a singer who attracted millions to his guitar-strumming, foot-tapping numbers.

Well, Elvis may sing his way to next year's Oscars, and Butler could well be in the Best Actor race. He brims with unbelievable energy, and the film is a pulse-pounding string of musical numbers, each better than the other.

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The story is narrated by Elvis' manager, Colonel Tom Parker (Hanks), whose mysterious ways paved the way for Presley to travel from Memphis in the U.S. to fascinating heights. The movie begins with a dying Parker in a Las Vegas hospital bed declaring: "Without me, there would be no Elvis Presley". Indeed.

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Parker even invents the idea of merchandise that would send girls wild. He even had “I Hate Elvis” pin-badges. “The haters will always hate, so better to profit from them than not”. And there were them. His lewd gyrations were seen as “crimes of lust and perversions”. At one point, the Press ripped him apart, and he even faced a possible prison time.

But haters were a mere minority; most revered him as god. “Priscilla (wife of Elvis) had fear about seeing it,” Luhrmann told a Press conference soon after Elvis was shown. “So much has been said about the icon Elvis – he’s wallpaper, he’s a god – so many things that are just not true.”

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“Critical people have their job – some do it well, some not so,” he continued. “No critique, no review was ever going to mean more to us than that of the woman who was married to Elvis Presley. I can’t tell you how our stomachs felt when she went in to see that film.”

Her response was positive, and Luhrmann was so relieved. “She said ‘I just wasn’t ready for that’” related Luhrmann. “If my husband was here today, he would look at Austin Butler, who plays Elvis, in the eye and say ‘hot damn, you are me!’”

Butler said he worked very hard to be like the icon, to capture his life and spirit. “I thought if I worked hard enough, I could make my face exactly like Elvis’ face,” said Butler. “At a certain point, it’s like going to a wax museum”

Finally, Hanks spoke his words of wisdom. And he was modest. “There would have been no Colonel Tom Parker without Elvis; no Elvis without Colonel Tom Parker”.

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After the film premiered, a glittering party followed with Elvis’ tracks playing full blast. Jailhouse Rock was the most endearing with its hip-hop beat that brought the great singer’s memory flooding back.

But yes, Elvis could not have been Elvis had it not been for Luhrmann, Hanks and Butler. The trio made an almost impossible dream come true. Following a private screening of the movie in April, Pricilla (76) wrote on social media that Elvis is a “true story told brilliantly and creatively that only Baz, in his unique artistic way, could have delivered.”

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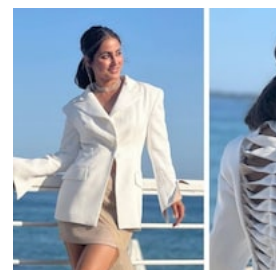


**GAUTAMAN BHASKARAN** *Gautaman Bhaskaran is a movie critic, commentator and an author, who penned the first ever biography of Adoor Gopalakrishnan, and has been covering ma...* [Read More](#)



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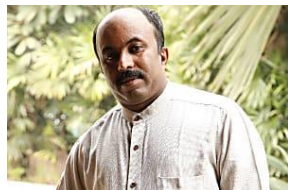
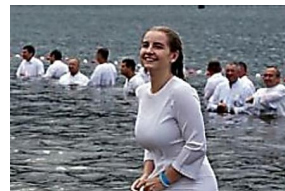
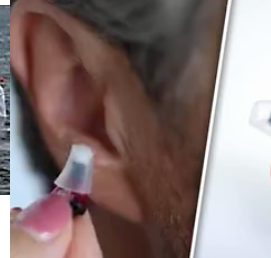
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