

Venice Film Festival Selects Films by Roman Polanski, Woody Allen and Luc Besson Amid Sexual Assault Claims

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Italy



Controversial directors' films to screen at Venice Film Festival amidst sexual misconduct allegations, sparking social media debates.

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Venice Film Festival has picked three movies from directors steeped in controversy.

The upcoming Venice Film Festival has picked three movies from directors steeped in controversy. Roman Polanski's *The Palace* will play out-of-competition. Woody Allen's *Coup de Chance* and Luc Besson's *Dogman* will also be part in the 11-day cinematic event on the Lido, an island off mainland Venice. All three have been accused of sexual misconduct. This followed the #MeToo movement.

Admittedly, only Polanski has been formally charged. He was convicted of sexually molesting a teen girl and fled the US in 1978. Allen has never faced any and French courts have repeatedly dismissed abuse allegations against Besson in a case relating to an alleged assault of a Belgium actress.

However, their presence on the Lido is bound to spark debates especially on the social media. The Festival may not take notice of this.

In 2019, Venice premiered Polanski's *An Officer and A Spy* in competition and it clinched the Jury Prize. At that point, Alberto Barbera, who heads the Festival, defended his action. "The Polanski case [has been] debated for 50 years. I don't understand why one cannot distinguish between the responsibilities of the man and those of the artist," he said. "Polanski is 90 years old, he is one of the few working masters, he made an extraordinary film... It may be the last film of his career, although I hope he does like De Oliveira, who made films until he was 105. I stand firmly among those who in the debate distinguish [between] the responsibility of the man and that of the artist."

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Barbera said Besson and Allen were never found formally guilty of any the charges slapped against them.

On Tuesday, July 25, Barbera announced the line-up in Rome. And it seemed that except for the opening movie Challengers – which had to be pulled out because of the current strike in Hollywood — there were no other casualties. The strike prevents any promotional activity by American talent.

The competition looks impressive. Bradley Cooper's second directorial effort, Maestro will play at the Festival. David Fincher's The Killer – another Netflix title like Maestro — will also be seen. Ava DuVernay will become the first African American woman to compete on the Lido with her new feature, Origin, which follows the true-life journey of Pulitzer Prize-winning author Isabel Wilkerson in her quest to find the origins of injustice.

Also from Netflix, , El Conde from Chilean director Pablo Larraín (Spencer, Jackie), scored a competition slot. The genre-tinged title imagines Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet has survived as a vampire but, after 250 years living on evil he has decided to reform.

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Yorgos Lanthimos, the Greek king of disturbing surrealism, who scored his biggest crossover hit in Venice with 2018's The Favourite, returns to the Lido with Poor Things, a steampunk, rom-com period drama starring The Favourite's Emma Stone as a woman brought back to life by a 19th-century scientist. The film features an ensemble cast including Mark Ruffalo, Willem Dafoe, Ramy Youssef, Jerrod Carmichael and Margaret Qualley.

Also competing for the Golden Lion this year will be Sofia Coppola's Priscilla, a look at Priscilla Presley's one-of-a-kind relationship with the King of Rock and Roll, based on Presley's memoir Elvis and Me. Then there is Ferrari, a hot biopic of Italian race car driver legend Enzo Ferrari

Other competition titles include Michel Franco's Memory featuring Jessica Chastain and Peter Sarsgaard and Io Capitano, a coming-of-age adventure drama focused on the refugee crisis from Italian art house maestro Matteo Garrone (Gomorrah). The drama about two young men — played by Seydou Sarr and Moustapha Fall — who leave Dakar, Senegal in search of a better life in Europe, arrives just as Italy, and the rest of the EU, debate new laws to regulate asylum seekers, making the film particularly timely and appealing for a Venice bow. Fellow Italian, Stefano Sollima, also secured a Venice competition slot with Adagio, featuring Italian stars Favino and Toni Servillo.

The full line-up for the 2023 Venice International Film Festival is below.

Competition:

Comandante, dir: Edoardo de Angelis (opening night film)

Adagio, dir: Stefano Sollima

PHOTOGALLERY



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Shriya Pilgaonkar Set Th Ablaze With Her Stunnin

La Bête, dir: Bertrand Bonello

DogMan, dir: Luc Besson

El Conde, dir: Pablo Larrain

Enea, dir: Pietro Castellitto

Evil Does Not Exist, Ryusuke Hamaguchi

Ferrari, dir: Michael Mann

Finalmente L'Alba, dir: Saverio Costanzo

The Green Border, dir: Agnieszka Holland

Holly, dir: Fien Troch

Hors-Saison, dir: Stéphane Brizé

Io Capitano, dir: Matteo Garrone

The Killer, dir: David Fincher

Lubo, dir: Giorgio Diritti

Maestro, dir: Bradley Cooper

Memory, dir: Michel Franco

Origin, dir: Ava DuVernay

Poor Things, dir: Yorgos Lanthimos

Priscilla, dir: Sofia Coppola

The Promised Land, dir: Nikolaj Arcel

Die Theorie Von Allem, dir: Timm Kroger

Woman Of, dirs: Małgorzata Szumowska, Michał Englert

Out of Competition

Fiction:

Aggro Dr1ft, dir: Harmony Korine

The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial, dir: William Friedkin

Coup de Chance, dir: Woody Allen



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Daaaaal!, dir: Quentin Dupieux

Hit Man, dir: Richard Linklater

L'Ordine del Tempo, dir: Liliana Cavani

The Palace, dir: Roman Polanski

The Penitent, dir: Luca Barbareschi

Snow Leopard, dir: Pema Tseden

Vivants, dir: Alix Delaporte

The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar, dir: Wes Anderson (short)

Short:

Welcome to Paradise, dir: Leonardo Di Costanzo

Non-Fiction:

Amor, dir: Virginia Eleuteri Serpieri

Enzo Jannacci Vengo Anch'io, dir: Giorgio Verdelli

Frente a Guernica (Version Integrale), dirs: Yervant Gianikian, Angela Ricci Lucchi

Hollywoodgate, dir: Ibrahim Nash'at

Menus Plaisirs – Les Troisgros, dir: Frederick Wiseman

Ryuichi Sakamoto Opus, dir: Neo Sora

Series

D'Argent et de Sang (episodes 1-12), dirs: Xavier Giannoli, Frederic Planchon

I Know Your Soul (episodes 1-2), dirs: Alen Drljevic, Nermin Hamzagic

Special Screening:

La Parte del Leone: Una Storia della Mostra, dirs: Baptiste Etchegary, Giuseppe Bucchi

Horizons:

En Attendant la Nuit, dir: Céline Rouzet

Behind the Mountains, dir: Mohamed Ben Attia

A Cielo Abierto, dirs: Mariana Arriaga, Santiago Arriaga

City of Wind, dir: Lkhagyadulam Purev-Ochir

Dormitory, dir: Nehir Tuna

El Paraiso, dir: Enrico Maria Artale

Explanation for Everything, dir: Gabor Reisz

The Featherweight, dir: Robert Kolodny

Gasoline Rainbow, dirs: Bill Ross, Turner Ross

Heartless, dirs: Nara Normande, Tiao

Hesitation Wound, dir: Selman Nacar

Housekeeping for Beginners, dir: Goran Stolevski

Invelle, dir: Simone Massi

Paradise Is Burning, dir: Mika Gustafson
The Red Suitcase, dir: Fidel Devkota
Shadow of Fire, dir: Shinya Tsukamoto

Una Sterminata Domenica, dir: Alain Perroni

Tatami, dirs: Guy Nattiv, Zar Amir Ebrahimi

Horizons Extra:

Bota Jone, dir: Luana Bajrami

Day of the Fight, dir: Jack Huston

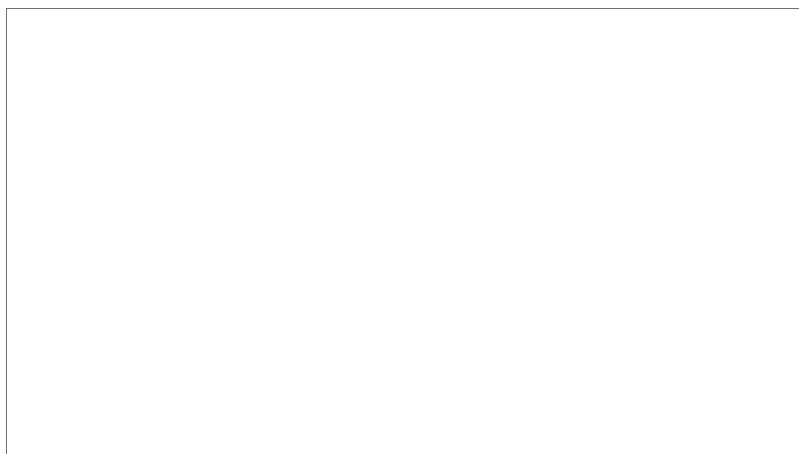
Felicita, dir: Micaela Ramazzotti

Forever Forever, dir: Anna Buryachkova

L'Homme d'Argile, dir: Anais Tellenne

In the Land of Saints and Sinners, dir: Robert Lorenz

Pet Shop Boys, dir: Olmo Schnabel

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The Rescue, dir: Daniela Goggi



About the Author

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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