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# Venice Film Festival: Parallel Mothers, Spencer Among Charmers On the Lido



Spencer. The Lost Daughter. Parallel Mothers are some of

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Kristen Stewart as Princess Diana in Spencer trailer.

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GAUTAMAN BHASKARAN

The 78th edition of the Venice Film Festival — the oldest in the world predating even Cannes by several years and which began as a propaganda platform for Fascist regimes — will kick off on September 1 with Spanish master Pedro Almodovar’s Parallel Mothers. With Almodovar’s long-time favourite, Penelope Cruz, starring opposite Tom Grater, the movie will focus on Janis and Ana, who meet in a hospital where they are going to give birth. Both are single and got pregnant by accident. While middle-aged Janis is ecstatic about the baby that is going to arrive soon, teenage Ana is scared, and repents that she ever got herself into this sticky situation. In fact, she is traumatised by what had happened to her.

Apart from Almodovar’s anticipated masterpiece, Venice (which takes place on the island of Lido) — like in recent times — will have a basket of movies that may go on to compete at the 2022 Academy Awards. Subjects such as family sagas, hair-raising slashers and historical epics will figure among the Festival’s selections. Here are a few charmers.

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Spanish Master Pedro Almodovar's Parallel Mothers to Open Venice Film Festival

Italian Title to Open Venice Film Festival, India Competition After



**Once Upon A Time In Calcutta:** Aditya Vikram Sengupta’s film is said to be a homage to a teeming metropolis that grew out of Job Charnock’s mid-day halt on August 24 1690 to eventually become the Second City of the British Empire , after London. For a long time, Calcutta – which has a striking resemblance to London – was the capital of British India. Some years ago, in the political craze to change names and perhaps destroy history by erasing all things British/foreign, Calcutta became Kolkata. (Bombay , Mumbai, Madras, Chennai...).

**Spencer:** Kristen Stewart is said to have transformed as Princess Diana in a remarkable way in Pablo Larrain’s narration of one Christmas vacation of the British royalty that saw her coming out with the decision to end her marriage to Prince Charles.

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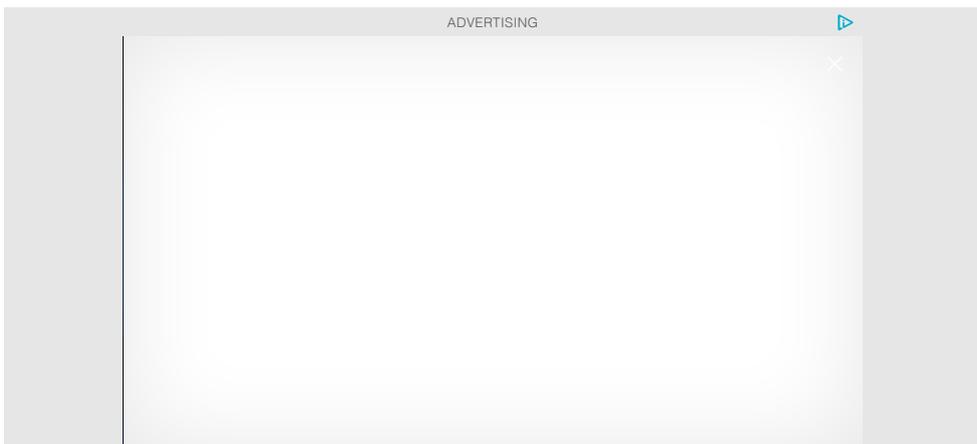


Spanish Master Pedro Almodovar’s Parallel Mothers to Open Venice Film Festival



Italian Title to Open Venice Film Festival, Indian Work in Competition After 19 Years

**The Last Duel:** Ridley Scott’s dramatic account of a duel in 14th-century France between a squire (Adam Driver) and a noblewoman’s (Jodie Comer) husband (Matt Damon) after she is raped resonates with contemporary events.



**The Lost Daughter:** Maggi Gyllenhaal’s debut is an ambitious retelling of Elena Ferrante’s novel about a mother on a life-altering trip starring Olivia Colman, Dakota Johnson and Paul Mescal. It promises to be a “piercing and painfully honest meditation on parenthood”.

**Last Night in Soho:** This is an Edgar Wright chiller revolving around an aspiring fashionista (Thomasin McKenzie), who finds herself mysteriously transported to the 1960s where she comes across an eerily beautiful singer (Anya Taylor-Joy). Scary and dressed up in gloriously gorgeous costumes, the film may be pulsating.

**The Power of the Dog:** Jane Campion, who took the international festival circuit by storm with her The Piano (at Cannes) sets this movie of her’s in remote Montana. A searing Western, it follows a volatile rancher (Benedict Cumberbatch) whose meeting with his brother (Jesse Plemons) turns into a terrible tragedy.

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**The Hand of God:** Renowned auteur Paolo Sorrentino presents a charming coming-of-age tale with a shy teenager (Filippo Scotti) experiencing emotional highs and lows in 1980s Naples. The work reflects just about every passion of the auteur – soccer to cinema.

The Festival runs till September 11.

*(Author-movie critic Gautaman Bhaskaran has covered the Venice Film Festival for two decades)*

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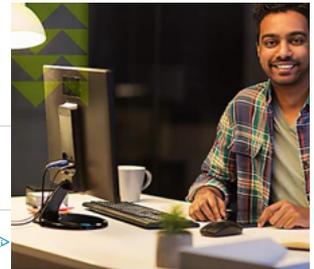


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