

FRIDAY, MAY 20, 2016



US director Jim Jarmusch (left) and US singer Iggy Pop pose yesterday during a photocall for the film 'Gimme Danger' at the 69th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP



French-Iranian actress Golshifteh Farahani (center) waves as she arrives with US actor Adam Driver (left) and US director Jim Jarmusch for the screening of the film 'Paterson' at the 69th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

Jarmusch's 'love letter' to Iggy Pop and the Stooges at Cannes

With plenty of writhing, stage-diving and drug-taking, American director Jim Jarmusch's new documentary "Gimme Danger" on the iconic punk rockers Iggy Pop and the Stooges premiered in Cannes yesterday. As if to prove that rock was not dead, both Iggy Pop and Jarmusch gave photographers the middle finger at a photocall before the premiere. The 69-year-old Iggy Pop, real name James Osterberg, then struck a series of bizarre poses before grabbing one of the photographer's cameras and entering the snappers' melee.

From the moment Iggy Pop decided to quit drums because he was "tired of looking at someone's butt" to his first stage dive and adoption of the dog collar as a fashion statement, "Gimme Danger" charts the numerous rises and falls of one of history's most influential bands.

"I have been calling it a love letter to the Stooges. Why the Stooges? To me they are basically the greatest rock band ever," Jarmusch said in Cannes. A series of interviews with the frontman

himself and the surviving members of the group is interspersed with archive footage of performances, animations, scenes from old films and historical clips played to accompany the dialogue.

In the film, Iggy Pop recalls his life growing up in a trailer park with his parents, whom he drove so mad with his incessant drumming that they gave him the master bedroom. He explains how he and his bandmates experimented with sounds, hitting oil drums with a mallet, using a blender or vacuum cleaner, while struggling to remain disciplined—largely a result of their drug use.

After an initial stint as "The Dirty Shames"—where he admits they spent more time telling people they were a band than actually playing music—the group settled on the Stooges. "Because we don't do anything wrong but everyone's picking on us."

He said the first time he adopted his unusual dance style, writhing and crawling around on stage, he was trying to imitate "chimps or baboons before a fight." "Gimme Danger" also looks at the group's implosion as a result of increased drug use, when Iggy

and his bandmates turn to heroin, which along with an avowed "lack of professionalism" saw them dropped by record companies twice. On one occasion his friend David Bowie encourages Iggy Pop to restart his career.

After finally calling it quits in 1974, the band's various members struck out on their own, finally reuniting 30 years later in 2003 and in 2010 the Stooges were inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. While several members of the Stooges have since passed away, Iggy Pop is still going strong and while he performed his final stage dive in 2010, he is currently touring with his latest album "Post Pop Depression". "Tell them to shout—I am half deaf," the singer told the moderator at a press conference. — AFP

The 'crazy ride from obscurity to Cannes' starry red carpet

British actress Hayley Squires is reveling in rave reviews for her breakout role in a Ken Loach film at Cannes, where she has been swept into a whirlwind of camera flashes, designer dresses and celebrity hobnobbing. But the glamour is a far cry from her life growing up in social housing in south London, and both she and her mum Teresa Faulks—who she brought along for the ride of her life—are overcome with emotion at their unlikely journey to the world's top film festival.

"I met Juliette Binoche last night and I was so uncool," said Squires, 28, whose performance as a single mother fighting poverty in Loach's tearjerker "I, Daniel Blake" has been regarded as one of the best of the festival so far. She is one of many young, unknown actors making waves at the festival who have been thrust into a relentless spotlight far removed from their ordinary upbringing.

The film follows carpenter Daniel Blake and Squires' character Katie as they suffer repeated humiliation at the hands of Britain's welfare system, hard hit by austerity. Producer Rebecca Hall said the filmmakers had deliberately cast people who, "if their lives took a different turn" could have ended up in the same boat.

Squires told AFP she at one point managed to move into private rental accommodation but a "change in family circumstances" pushed them back into the system where they were only able to score housing through "a sheer stroke of luck"

because they had someone to write them a reference. "My mum would always make sure that regardless how shitty the area that we were living in, the inside was warm and safe and a proper home," said a teary Squires. "I couldn't bring anyone else (to Cannes). She is the one person I need to pay back."

'Gut-wrenching realization'

Squires said she was surrounded by single mothers all her life, and didn't need to look far for inspiration for her performance. In one of the most striking scenes in the film, her character Katie is visiting a food bank with her children, after losing her benefits for being late to the welfare center. Katie, weakened by hunger, cannot stop herself from ripping open a tin of baked beans and scooping it into her mouth by hand. The Guardian's critic Peter Bradshaw told AFP the scene was unforgettable.

"The expression on her face, the sheer horror, the gut-wrenching realization that it has come to this, that she has fallen this far. Really impressed by her," he said. On the night after the movie premiered, Hayley and her mum woke up early to walk down Cannes' famous beach strip La Croisette and hunt down magazines carrying pictures and stories about the event. For Teresa, who started working aged 14, the Cannes experience has been "mind-blowing". —AFP



(From left) British screenwriter Paul Laverty, British actor Dave Johns, British actress Hayley Squires, British director Ken Loach and British producer Rebecca O'Brien pose as they arrive for the screening of the film 'I, Daniel Blake' at the 69th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP