

# After break, Katy Perry announces new album and tour



This file photo shows Australian actress Nicole Kidman posing during a photocall for the film "Grace of Monaco" at the 67th edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France.

## Daring Kidman is the queen of Cannes

Nicole Kidman is the undisputed queen of the Cannes film festival which opens tomorrow in the French Riviera resort, starring in three of its most eagerly awaited films. The Australian actress is in two in the running for its top prize, the Palme d'Or, and plays a fashion and music maven in "How to Talk to Girls at Parties" in the official selection. The film, adapted from a Neil Gaiman short story, has Kidman adopting Elle Fanning's alien as her protegee.

Kidman also shows her trademark mix of hauteur and vulnerability as a pent-up governess of a Mississippi girls school in Sofia Coppola's highly touted remake of "The Beguiled". The film, set against the backdrop of the American Civil War, has Colin Farrell as an injured Union soldier who seduces Kidman's charges and drives her wild with desire. She teams up with the Irish actor again in Greek maestro Yorgos Lanthimos's "The Killing of a Sacred Deer", this time as his wife in the story of a surgeon who gets disastrously drawn into the life of a dysfunctional family. While the 49-year-old has never won a prize at Cannes, she has long been a festival favorite,



This file photo taken in Hollywood shows actress Nicole Kidman attending the 89th Annual Academy Awards. — AFP photos

Tom Cruise. It was one of many reinventions that have taken the high-school dropout from Australian teen movies like "BMX Bandits" to the top of her profession. Kidman has never lacked daring, risking working with the notorious Danish auteur Lars Von Trier, who was later banned from Cannes after saying he was a Nazi. "One day it would be a fairy tale, the next it a nightmare," she said of working with him on "Dogville". Others told how she had to grin and bear humiliations and mind games on the set.

### Whip-smart

Even when she was headlining big-budget blockbusters like "Batman Forever" in 1995, Kidman made time for whip-smart roles in indie films like Gus Van Sant's satire on fame, "To Die For", which confirmed her as a major talent. But she had to wait until 2003 for a best actress Oscar for her depiction of tortured novelist Virginia Woolf in Stephen Daldry's "The Hours". Two more nominations have followed, the latest for "Lion" last year. Its storyline, of a young man from India adopted by an Australian family who searches for his long-lost relatives on Google Earth, resonated with Kidman.

She adopted two children-Isabella and Connor-with Tom Cruise, and has had two others since with New Zealand-born country singer Keith Urban. She said she felt an immediate connection with the woman she portrayed, Sue Brierley. "I told her a lot about myself, and it was almost like she already knew," Kidman said. "I just felt ever since I was young that I was going to adopt a child," she added.

### School dropout

Kidman was born in Honolulu where her psychologist father was working at the time, and her family returned to Australia when she was four, where she took to drama from a young age, eventually quitting school to study acting. She first caught the eye as a 14-year-old in the 1983 Australian television film "Bush Christmas" and won plaudits internationally for the thriller "Dead Calm" in 1989. Her life was transformed the following year when she met "Top Gun" star Cruise on the set of the racetrack romance "Days of Thunder". The two married in 1991 only to split a decade later in one of Hollywood's most famous divorces.

Once one of the highest-paid stars in Hollywood, she took a step back from acting after falling for Urban. They married in 2006 and have two daughters. But not even an unfortunate brush with Botox could stop her coming back. "I did try Botox, unfortunately, but I got out of it. Now I can finally move my face again," she confessed. She was back to her best in the low-budget drama "Rabbit Hole" in 2011, which won her another Oscar nod.

Like many top actors and directors, Kidman has been drawn by the lure of top-drawer television series, winning plaudits for her roles in "Hemingway and Gellhorn" and most recently with "Big Little Lies". Indeed, she will also be on the red carpet for the fourth time at Cannes for a special screening of her friend Jane Campion's second season of "Top of the Lake" in which Kidman is almost unrecognizable as a foil to Elisabeth Moss's small-town detective. — AFP



This file photo shows Katy Perry arriving at the Costume Institute Benefit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. — AFP photos

Pop superstar Katy Perry yesterday announced a new album and tour, promising a more mature and reflective side after taking time off. The 32-year-old singer said that "Witness," her first album since 2013's mega-hit "Prism," would come out on June 9. She also announced an extensive tour, for now just in North America, to begin on September 7 in Columbus, Ohio. Perry, who will close the North American tour on February 5 in Vancouver, separately will perform next month at the Glastonbury festival in England.

The singer announced the album news on Twitter where she has more followers than anyone else at more than 98 million. Perry has already released two tracks from "Witness." The first, "Chained to the Rhythm," has echoes of the disco era along with a reggae off-beat and an appearance by Bob Marley's grandson Skip Marley. Perry's follow-up track, "Bon Appetit," also has a dance feel but heads in a trap direction with a collaboration by Atlanta hip-hop trio Migos. "Bon Appetit" was also startling for its open sexuality, Perry and Migos



This file photo shows Katy Perry as she attends 102.7 KIIS FM's 2017 Wango Tango at StubHub Center in Carson, California.

singing about reaching orgasm. Perry, a favorite among young girls, rose to fame with songs of first-time experiences such as "Teenage Dream" and "I Kissed a Girl."

In an interview published last week, Perry-born as Katheryn Hudson to a conservative Christian family in California-said the album reflected her life in her 30s after closing out her 20s. "I've embraced. I've surrendered. I've healed some of my issues with my family, with my relationships," she told Entertainment Weekly. "I built up Katy Perry and she was so fun. And I still am Katy

Perry and I love her so much but, at the core, I'm Katheryn Hudson and I think that's being revealed as I embrace who I really am," she said.

Perry also told the magazine that one song on the album would explore her feelings after Hillary Clinton's ill-fated presidential campaign, of which she was one of the most prominent celebrity backers. The Clinton campaign was one of the few public appearances in 2016 for Perry, who said she needed time off after her 151-date tour for "Prism." — AFP



In this file photo, Beyonce performs at the 59th annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles.

## Beyonce, Bruno Mars lead BET Awards nominations

Beyonce dominated last year's BET Awards with "Lemonade," but there's more juice in her cup. The pop star is nominated for seven awards at the 2017 BET Awards, the network told The Associated Press yesterday. The show will take place June 25 at the Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles. Bruno Mars follows Beyonce with five nominations. Beyonce, who won video of the year with "Formation" last year, is nominated for the top prize again with "Sorry." Her competition includes her sister Solange ("Cranes In the Sky"); Mars' playful "24K Magic"; Migos' No. 1 hit "Bad and Boujee"; and Big Sean's anthem "Bounce Back."

Beyonce and Solange - will go head-to-head for best female R&B/pop artist, along with Rihanna, Mary J. Blige and Kehlani. Beyonce's other nominations include album of the year for "Lemonade," the viewer's choice award and video director of the year. She's nominated twice for best collaboration with the songs "Freedom" (with Kendrick Lamar) and "Shining" (shared with Jay Z and DJ Khaled).

The winners in the 19 categories,

including film and sports awards, will be selected by BET's Voting Academy, comprised of entertainment professionals and fans. Mars, whose latest album was inspired by '90s R&B, is also nominated for best male R&B/pop artist, album of the year, the viewer's choice award and video director of the year. Chance the Rapper, who

scored four nominations and won three Grammys this year, will battle Lamar, Drake, J. Cole, Future and Big Sean for best male hip-hop artist. Nicki Minaj will compete with rival Remy Ma for best female hip-hop artist, an award Minaj has won since 2010. Hip-hop trio Migos also scored four nominations. — AP



In this file photo, Bruno Mars performs at the 59th annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles. — AP photos

## U2 scans new political landscape at US 'Joshua Tree' tour debut

With evocative montages of American west scrolling on screens behind them, Irish rockers U2 kicked off the US leg of their "Joshua Tree" tour on Sunday with a few jabs at the new political landscape. The tour was billed as a look back at the band's 1987 breakthrough album "The Joshua Tree" with its globe-spanning hits "With Or Without You" and "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For." U2 started with one of their even earlier songs, "Sunday Bloody Sunday" and its opening lines "I can't believe the news today", before roaring through "New Year's Day", "Pride," and the whole Joshua Tree LP played in the order of its tracklist.

Bono largely steered clear of the overt references to President Donald Trump that had peppered his performances during the election campaign. But more guarded references to modern-day events kept breaking through. "Some of you think that the dream is dead. Maybe that dream is just telling you to wake up," Bono said during "Pride," as the words of Martin Luther King were projected behind

him. The screen switched to images of models in front of a faded American flag and vast desert landscapes. Other scenes showed the destruction in Syria and a girl there appealing

for help. Speaking about the band's charitable organization One, which fights poverty, Bono urged the crowd to "organize" for change. "Nothing scares ... politicians like



Members of U2 perform during the opening concert of their "Joshua Tree" tour in Vancouver, Friday. — AP

people getting organized. That's how it should be, the government scared of the people, not the other way around," he said. The lead singer gave a shout out to Bill and Melinda Gates, who were both in the sold-out audience at Seattle's CenturyLink Field venue, hailing them as "luminary figures" for their charitable work.

Pearl Jam frontman Eddie Vedder, joined the band on stage for "Mothers of the Disappeared", the last track on The Joshua Tree's flipside. The band saved more recent hits for the encore, belting out "It's a Beautiful Day" and "Elevation" as Bono called on women to "unite to rewrite history as her-story". Bono also acknowledged US Mother's Day on Sunday, dedicating the song "Ultraviolet" to "women who stood up or sat down for their rights, who insisted, resisted, persisted for their rights." U2 will play 33 shows to 1.7 million people during the "Joshua Tree" tour. The tour is also the top-selling concert in the US this summer, according to ticket seller StubHub, with most shows already sold out. — Reuters

## Ukraine prankster 'doesn't regret' mooning Eurovision final



Vitaliy Sediuk

A Ukrainian prankster told a court yesterday that he didn't regret mooning the audience during the live broadcast of the Eurovision Song Contest final in Kiev. Vitaliy Sediuk, 28, jumped onto the stage with an Australian flag wrapped around his shoulders, dropped his trousers and wiggled his bare bottom at the audience during Saturday night's performance by last year's winner of the contest, Ukrainian singer Jamala. "I don't regret it," said Sediuk, who has been known to ambush celebrities. "I don't have anything against Eurovision. This time I just wanted to do something that would be remembered."

The Kiev court yesterday ordered the confiscation of Sediuk's travel documents and imposed restrictions on his movements as an investigation into the incident continues. A security guard tackled Sediuk off the stage in Saturday night's incident, and the prankster later resisted arrest by police and was placed in detention for 72 hours, interior minister Arsen Avakov said Sunday. Avakov said Sediuk's offence fell under legislation against hooliganism, which in Ukraine can carry up to five years in prison.

"The country's embarrassment can practice his 'hobby' in a prison cell at a temporary detention center," Avakov wrote Sunday on his Facebook page. The contest's organizing committee in Ukraine slammed Sediuk's behavior as "inadmissible" and assured that the "highest level of security" had been observed during the final. "We are outraged and in no way support such provocations," Pavlo Grytsak, the executive producer of this year's contest, said in a statement. "The offender should be held responsible for what he did."

In September, Sediuk tried to kiss the bottom of US reality TV star Kim Kardashian as she was walking into a Paris restaurant. Her bodyguard pinned him to the ground before he managed to do so. Portuguese crooner Salvador Sobral, who suffers from a serious heart condition, triumphed in this year's edition of Eurovision with the melancholy ballad "Amar Pelos Dois". Ukraine was hosting Eurovision amid an ongoing armed conflict with pro-Russian rebels in the country's industrial east that has now killed more than 10,000. — AFP