

Kidman, Huppert to grace 70th Cannes filmfest

Cannes: Films in the running in 2017

From the tale of a mysterious giant beast to a family drama set against the European migrant crisis, here are the movies appearing in the main competition at next month's Cannes film festival:

'The Beguiled'

Among the titles causing the most buzz at Cannes this year is Sofia Coppola's American Civil War thriller, a remake of the 1971 version starring Clint Eastwood, featuring Colin Farrell as a wounded soldier who seduces the women around him, including Nicole Kidman and Kirsten Dunst.

'Okja' and 'The Meyerowitz Stories'

Netflix is premiering two movies at Cannes for the first time as the streaming giant makes increasing inroads to Hollywood alongside its rival Amazon. "Okja", starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Tilda Swinton, tells the tale of a girl who risks everything to protect a shy giant animal. Adam Sandler, Ben Stiller, Emma Thompson and Dustin Hoffman meanwhile star in "The Meyerowitz Stories", a comedy about siblings dealing with an ageing father.

'Wonderstruck' and 'You Were Never Really Here'

Two Amazon-backed movies have also made the cut for the main competition. Julianne Moore and Michelle Williams star in "Wonderstruck", the story of two deaf children living parallel lives in the 1920s and 1970s. "You Were Never Really Here", the latest feature by "We Need To Talk About Kevin" director Lynne Ramsay, stars Joaquin Phoenix as a war veteran who tries to save a sex-trafficking victim.

'Good Time'

"Twilight" heartthrob Robert Pattinson stars in this crime flick by indie director brothers Benny and Josh Safdie, about a bank robber struggling to evade the police.

'Happy End'

Fresh from winning a string of accolades for "Elle", Isabelle Huppert is back in Michael Haneke's new family drama, set in northern France against the backdrop of the European migrant crisis.

'The Killing of a Sacred Deer'

For the second time at this year's Cannes, Nicole Kidman and Colin Farrell team up for the tale of a boy attempting to bring a talented surgeon into his family, with disastrous consequences.

'Le Redoutable' and 'Rodin'

Two French biopics have made it into the main competition. "Rodin" stars Jacques Doillon as the famed sculptor. "Redoutable" (Redoubtable), about legendary movie director Jean-Luc Godard, is the latest offering from Michel Hazanavicius, the man behind five-times Oscar winner "The Artist".

'Les Fantomes de Ismael' (Ismael's Ghosts) - This drama about a filmmaker disturbed by the return of a former lover features A-list French talent in the form of Marion Cotillard, Charlotte Gainsbourg and Mathieu Amalric.

'In The Fade'

Fatih Akin presents a story of revenge in Germany's Turkish community.

'L'Amant Double' (The Double Lover)

French director Francois Ozon's thriller follows a young woman who falls in love with her therapist before realising he's not who she thought he was.

'120 battements par minute'

A film by French-Moroccan director Robin Campillo following the work of an AIDS charity in Paris in the 1990s.

'Radiance'

The latest film by Japan's Naomi Kawase follows a photographer whose eyesight is failing.

'The Day After'

South Korean director Hong Sang-Soo will be bringing two films to Cannes-his new feature "The Day After", and for a special screening, "Claire's Camera" featuring Isabelle Huppert, which was shot partly during last year's festival.

'Jupiter's Moon'

The latest offering from Hungarian director Kornel Mundruczo, whose movie "White God" won the Cannes newcomers' prize in 2014. — AFP

Nicole Kidman and Isabelle Huppert will top the bill at the Cannes Film Festival next month as the world's flagship movie showcase celebrates its 70th anniversary. The Australian megastar features in Sofia Coppola's Civil War thriller "The Beguiled", while France's Huppert headlines in Austrian filmmaker Michael Haneke's "Happy End", a family drama set against the backdrop of Europe's migrant crisis. Ben Stiller, Julianne Moore and French star Marion Cotillard will also do star turns at the May 17-28 festival on the French Riviera, organizers told a Paris news conference yesterday.

Other movies vying for the prestigious Palme d'Or include Todd Haynes' "Wonderstruck", one of two Amazon-backed films in the lineup. "Wonderstruck", starring Moore and Michelle Williams, tells the parallel stories of two deaf American children in the 1920s and the 1970s. "Redoubtable" by the director of the Oscar-crowned silent movie "The Artist", Michel Hazanavicius, focuses on the love affair between New Wave guru Jean-Luc Godard and actress Anne Wiazemsky.

Opening the extravaganza, out of competition, will be "Ismael's Ghosts" by French director Arnaud Desplechin, about a filmmaker disturbed by the return of his former love. It features A-list French talent in the form of Cotillard, Charlotte Gainsbourg and Mathieu Amalric.

Netflix incursion

Two Netflix-backed features made the cut in a first for Cannes. "Okja", a creature feature by South Korea's Bong Joon-ho, known for his black humor, stars Tilda Swinton as a corporate scientist whose company tries to kidnap a fantastical beast called Okja from a young girl. Jake Gyllenhaal, playing a zoologist, makes his Cannes debut with the film. The other contender from Netflix, which is making ever deeper inroads into Hollywood alongside rival Amazon, is "The Meyerowitz Stories" by independent US



This file photo taken on May 17, 2014 shows US director and member of the Feature films Jury Sofia Coppola posing as she arrives for the screening of the film "Saint-Laurent". — AFP

filmmaker Noah Baumbach. The family drama stars Adam Sandler, Stiller, Emma Thompson and Dustin Hoffman. Amazon, for its part, also proposes "You Were Never Really Here", by Scottish director Lynne Ramsay starring Joaquin Phoenix as a war veteran who tries to save women from the sex-trafficking trade. Variety reported last year that the online retailer bought the rights to the film for around \$3.5 million (3.3 million euros). Out-of-competition selections include a sequel to former US vice president Al Gore's 2006 Oscar-winning documentary "An Inconvenient Truth". A decade later, the stakes are arguably higher with Donald Trump in the White House.

The US leader has dismissed global warming as a fraud invented by the Chinese and nominated climate change sceptic Scott Pruitt to head the Environmental Protection Agency. Coppola, the daughter of Francis Ford Coppola, is a Cannes veteran who previously premiered "Marie Antoinette" (2006)

and her last feature film "The Bling Ring" (2013) at the festival.

Kidman-Farrell double duo

In "The Beguiled", Colin Farrell plays a young soldier who seduces all the women around him, who include Kidman as well as Kirsten Dunst and Elle Fanning. Kidman and Farrell team up again in "The Killing of a Sacred Deer" by Greek director Yorgos Lanthimos, a psychological drama about a charismatic surgeon and a sinister teenager. Coppola and Ramsay are among 12 women directors featured at the festival, compared with nine last year, Fremaux noted. A third woman in the main competition is Japan's Naomi Kawase with "Hikari" (Radiance) about a doctor whose eyesight begins to fail. Providing even more star power are the TV series in the spotlight this year, with the unveiling of the eagerly awaited third season of David Lynch's cult "Twin Peaks" and Jane Campion's "Top of the Lake" in its second episode rollout. Pedro Almodovar, Spain's most celebrated living movie director, will lead the jury at this year's festival. — AFP

General Delegate of the Cannes Film Festival Thierry Fremaux, left and Cannes Film Festival President Pierre Lescure pose during a press conference for the presentation of the 70th Cannes film festival, in Paris, yesterday. — AP/AFP photos

