

Schumacher documentary headed to Cannes

Former Formula One world champion Michael Schumacher will be the subject of a new documentary featuring unseen archive footage and rare interviews, producers announced on Sunday before the Cannes Film Festival. The film, directed by German duo Michael Wech and Hanns-Bruno Kammertoens, was made with the blessing of the

driver's family and will include interviews with them as well as companions and competitors, the filmmakers said.

Schumacher turned 50 on Jan. 3 but has not been seen in public since a skiing accident in the French Alps five years ago which left him with severe head injuries and in a medically-induced coma. The film is in

post-production, with international rights sales to be launched at the Marche du Film, a business event held in parallel to the cinema showcase on the French Riviera that kicks off on May 14.

Other films set to be introduced to buyers include a documentary about rock band Led Zeppelin. As yet untitled, it will feature band members Jimmy Page,

Robert Plant and John Paul Jones. Schumacher remains motor racing's most successful driver, with a record 91 grand prix wins. He won his first two titles with Benetton in 1994 and 1995 before five in a row with Ferrari between 2000-2004. In January his family released a statement saying he was in "the very best of hands". —Reuters

'Angry Birds' fly to Cannes for movie sequel

The parade of glammed-up movie stars at the Cannes Film Festival got off to an unorthodox start on Monday with a crowd of enormous, fluffy birds hogging the limelight on the Croisette boulevard to mark the launch of the "Angry Birds" sequel. On the eve of the 72nd Cannes film fest - set to kick off officially with the premiere of Jim Jarmusch's zombie film "The Dead Don't Die" on Tuesday - producers of the animated movie celebrated its planned release in early August.

"The Angry Birds Movie 2", like the first installment in the franchise, is based on a Rovio video game where players use a slingshot to attack pigs who steal the birds' eggs. The first Angry Birds, released in 2016, earned about \$350million at the box office and gave a boost to Rovio's game sales, helping the company swing to an annual profit after years of falling earnings, job cuts and divestments.

The sequel - in which the birds join forces with their green pig rivals to defeat a common foe - features Jason Sudeik as lending his voice to Red, the main protagonist, with Bill Hader, Josh Gad and Danny McBride also voicing characters. "We have an amazing crew that we have been working with, and together, we played around, we experimented, we found really funny moments," said director Thurop Van Orman, as people wearing oversized Angry Bird costumes entertained onlookers. Producer John Cohen said he hoped there would be a third movie to follow. —Reuters

'Harry Potter' actor to star in new S Africa jailbreak drama

"Harry Potter" star Daniel Radcliffe has finished filming a new thriller where he plays a white anti-apartheid activist who escaped from one of South Africa's toughest jails, its distributor said yesterday. Based on a true story, the breakout tale "Escape From Pretoria" is drawn from Tim Jenkin's account of his dramatic escape from the notorious Pretoria Maximum Security Prison with his friend Stephen Lee in 1979.

Already in post-production after shooting was wrapped up in South Africa three weeks ago, fresh footage will be on show at the Cannes film festival which began yesterday, Arclight Films said. Jenkin, now 70, was sentenced to 12 years in prison for handing out leaflets supporting the then banned African

National Congress. But he managed to make a set of wooden keys for a series of doors inside the jail, which housed the country's death row.

Using a device made from a broom handle and a mirror he had hidden in his cell, Jenkin opened his cell door and then freed his neighbor and friend Lee. Both managed to slip out of the tightly guarded prison and eventually flee to London. The movie is directed by Francis Annan, a rising young black British director who also wrote the script. Radcliffe, 29, is also playing the lead in the action comedy "Guns Akimbo", which is now in post-production. —AFP



In this file photo British actor Daniel Radcliffe reacts after unveiling his dedicated beach locker room on the Promenade des Planches in the northwestern sea resort of Deauville, as part of the 42nd Deauville US Film Festival. — AFP

Who's who on the Cannes film festival jury

After a female-majority jury last year when the festival was dominated by the #MeToo movement, five men and four women will decide this year's winner of Cannes' top Palme d'Or prize.

Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu

He may now have five Oscars under his belt for the likes of "Birdman" and "The Revenant", but it all began for the Mexican director at Cannes way back in 2000 with "Amores Perros". A regular on the Croisette since that staggering debut - although he has never picked up the Palme — this year he returns as the head of the jury. Now 55, Inarritu is one of the "three amigos" of Mexican auteurs with Alfonso Cuarón of "Roma" fame and Guillermo del Toro ("The Shape of Water") who have been lording it over arthouse cinema lately. Like them, he is a director with a strong social conscience, bringing a virtual reality installation on the migrant crisis to Cannes in 2017 that went on to win a special Oscar.

Elle Fanning

At 21 the American actress may be the baby of the jury, but the sometime model has a long career behind her. She made her Cannes debut at just eight in Inarritu's "Babel", six years after making her screen debut as a toddler in the Oscar-nominated "I Am Sam" alongside Sean Penn and her older sister, Dakota Fanning.

A regular for Cannes favourite Sofia Coppola, appearing in "Somewhere" and "The Beguiled" in 2017, she turned up on the Riviera again the following year in Nicolas Winding Refn's "The Neon Demon" as a teenage model whose beauty sparks not just jealousy among her peers but a veritable bloodbath. Despite her status as a screen and catwalk queen, the young star has been spotted queuing up with the hoi-polloi for an ice cream at Cannes when not on red carpet duty.



Mexican director and President of the Jury of the Cannes Film Festival Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu poses during a photocall at the 72nd edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP photos

Maimouna N'Diaye

Best known to millions of children as the voice of the mother of the heroic little boy from the animated classic "Kirikou and the Sorceress", N'Diaye is one of west Africa's biggest stars. A documentary maker and activist as well as actress, she grew up in Guinea, but her parents hail from Senegal and Nigeria. She has also spent large parts of her life working in neighboring Ivory Coast and in Burkina Faso after studying in France. She first came to notice in Georgian Otar Iosseliani's "Chasing Butterflies" in 1992 and won the African Academy best actress award in 2015 for "Eye of the Storm", where she played a lawyer defending a former child soldier on war crimes charges.

Kelly Reichardt

The queen of US indie "slow cinema" made a big critical splash - ever so quietly - with her last film, "Certain



Elle Fanning

Women", a restrained but heartfelt portrait of women in small-town Montana with Michelle Williams, Laura Dern and Kristen Stewart. It won the top prize at the London film festival with The Guardian's Peter Bradshaw marveling at how even an opening hostage drama never ruffled its quiet force. "It's directed so calmly it feels as if we're watching a mild disagreement at a church coffee morning," he wrote.

Williams was also the lead in Reichardt's first film at Cannes, "Wendy and Lucy", which was also widely acclaimed, and her next movies, "Meek's Cutoff" and "Night Moves" were both premiered at the rival Venice film festival. Many had predicted that her latest film, "First Cow", might make the Cannes' line-up this year, but it is still in post-production.

Yorgos Lanthimos

The Greek director who scored a huge hit this year with his Oscar winning "The Favourite", scored his first big international success with "Dogtooth" at Cannes in 2009. He was back to win the jury prize in 2015 with another original off-kilter look at the world in "The Lobster", his



Maimouna N'Diaye

first film with Rachel Weisz and Colin Farrell. He teamed the Irish actor with Nicole Kidman in his even freakier "The Killing of a Sacred Deer", which also made its bow at the festival, where he explored family and power relationships with an unforgettable twist.

Pawel Pawlikowski

The passionate Polish director, who won best director last year for his black-and-white love story "Cold War" which went on to get three Oscar nominations, made his name with a string of brilliant documentaries for the BBC about post-Soviet Russia and the war in the former Yugoslavia. He switched to fiction in 2001 with the acclaimed "Last Resort" which he followed up with "My Summer of Love".

He made his dark masterpiece "Ida" after moving back from Britain to his native Poland. His story of a nun who discovers she was born Jewish during World War II won him the best foreign language film Oscar but the wrath of some conservative Catholics at home. But few - even hardened hearts - could resist the romantic force of "Cold War", which was based on his own parent's stormy relationship, and which made a star of actress Joanna Kulig.

Alice Rohrwacher

The great female hope of the Italian arthouse cinema won best screenplay at Cannes last year for "Happy as Lazzaro" having won the grand prix (second prize) three years earlier for "The Wonders" starring her sister Alba Rohrwacher and Monica Bellucci. The 36-year-old philosophy graduate made her Cannes debut in 2011 with "Heavenly Body" about a teenage girl going through a religious crisis.

Robin Campillo

The writer of the Oscar-nominated "The Class", which also won the Palme d'Or in 2008, created something of a sensation at the festival two years ago with "120 BPM (Beats per Minute)", his sweeping portrayal of AIDS activism during the darkest years of the crisis in Paris. It was a huge hit and France and proved a big international break-out for the screenwriter, who came to directing rather late. Campillo, 56, also wrote and directed "Les Revenants" which was later turned into an acclaimed television series, "The Returned".

Enki Bilal

The Belgrade-born author of futuristic and apocalyptic graphic novels is something of a legend in his adopted home of France, where his books are often instant bestsellers. At 67, he has also directed three feature films including "Bunker Palace Hotel" (1989) with Jean-Louis Trintignant and Carole Bouquet and "Tykko Moon" (1996). —AFP



Jury members pose during a photocall at the 72nd edition of the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France.