



THE FILM  
**VERDICT**  
CANNES REVIEW DAILY

25 MAY 2023

day  
10

## SPECIAL SCREENINGS



### PICTURES OF GHOSTS

**VERDICT:** Kleber Mendonça Filho's poetic docu-essay is a passkey to his previous films as well as a personal reflection on his relationship with Recife and cinephilia, but this terrifically edited meditation is also a more universal ode to the way memories become ghosts that inhabit the physical spaces of our lives.

Jay Weissberg, May 24, 2023

There's a memorable scene in Kleber Mendonça Filho's magnificent *Aquarius* where an older woman at a staid birthday party looks at a piece of furniture and recalls when she had passionate sex on top of this innocuous console. She smiles – only she knows the carnal connection. The brief sequence makes us see that every space and object hold within them associations that can be individual

or collective; they are ghostly presences in our lives, sometimes to embrace, at other times to recoil from. Their powerful hold on our memory is the key to his movingly elegiac docu-essay *Pictures of Ghosts*, a self-narrated journey through the director's hometown of Recife, from the apartment he grew up in that's played a major role in many of his films to the city's cinema houses. [Full Review](#)

## COMPETITION




### THE POT AU FEU

**VERDICT:** The pièce de résistance of unabashed culinary cinema, Tran Anh Hung's 'The Pot au Feu' serves up a French country idyll in romantic 19th century sauce for audiences whose tastes run to the fine wines and 12-course meals.

Deborah Young, May 24, 2023

The popularity of movies that revolve around the pleasures of the table is nothing new. It has long been consecrated in Culinary Cinema sidebars at festivals from Berlin to San Sebastian, where the genre has found a home. Now Cannes brings a whopper directly to competition with the agreeable gourmet fable *The Pot au Feu* (*La Passion de Dodin Bouffant*). But as to why, one can only speculate. Apart from being almost unbearably French (the cuisine, the wines, [Full Review](#)



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CIFF 44<sup>TH</sup> EDITION HIGHLIGHTS





## UN CERTAIN REGARD



### TERRESTRIAL VERSES

**VERDICT:** A fresh and angry look at Iran today approaches the country's malaise in a series of black comedy skits that pit ordinary citizens against a wide range of bureaucratic authorities.

Deborah Young, May 24, 2023

We all know the pain of a close encounter with a petty bureaucrat who has the power to make life difficult for some nonsensical

reason, based on White Rabbit logic guaranteed to drive the victim mad. Multiply that by a factor of ten and welcome to

contemporary Iran, where young co-directors Ali Asgari and Alireza Khatami describe the surreal moments of everyday life in Tehran with infallible humor and barely hidden outrage in *Terrestrial Verses* (*Ayeh Haye Zamini*). A must-see for Iran-watchers, these sardonic skits hit the bull's-eye of a repressive Big Brother society that tries to regulate the most private matters of its citizens, from religion to love for one's pet. After its bow in Un Certain Regard in Cannes, this short 77-minute comedy is bound to be a hot crossover date for Films Boutique.

Though it looks like it was made with more dash than cash, the film is cleverly lit by cinematographer Adib Sobhani to describe the numerous Kafkaesque situations in which ordinary Iranians are treated with scorn and arrogance.

[Full Review](#)

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## UN CERTAIN REGARD



### POWER ALLEY

**VERDICT:** Brazilian newcomer director Lillah Halla makes a film full of zest and empathy about a talented volleyball player that resonates in today's pro-choice panorama.

*Lucy Virgin, May 24, 2023*

"This is a new world," Brazilian director Lillah Halla announces joyfully in *Power Alley* (*Levante*),

her film debuting in Cannes' Critics Week. It's a world in which female volleyball players with the CE

Leste club make locker room jokes, dance naked in the shower, and challenge each other to make a "menstruation mask". You get the idea. The coach is revolutionary because she includes a transgender player. They are young, athletic, and independent. But then again, not completely.

The best player in the group, 17-year-old Sofia (Ayomi Domenica), is announced as the main contender for a sports scholarship, on the same day she discovers she's pregnant. The pregnancy is the product of a casual relationship, a notch above a one-night stand. "The boy with the motorbike" is how we know him. Keeping the baby doesn't even cross Sofia's mind, but abortion is illegal in Brazil.

The original title of the film *Levante* is not related to [Full Review](#)

## UN CERTAIN REGARD



### LEVANTE

**VERDICT:** La directora brasileña debutante Lillah Halla hace una película llena de entusiasmo y empatía sobre una talentosa jugadora de voleibol que resuena en el panorama actual de los derechos reproductivos.

*Lucy Virgin, May 24, 2023*

"Este es un nuevo mundo", anuncia gozosamente la directora brasileña Lillah Halla en *Levante*,

su película que debuta en la Semana de la Crítica de Cannes: Las jugadoras de voleibol del club

CE Leste hacen bromas en el vestuario, bailan desnudas en la ducha, una desafía a las otras a ponerse una "máscara de menstruación". a entrenadora es revolucionaria porque incluyó a una jugadora transgénero. Ya se lo imaginan. Son jóvenes, atléticas e independientes. Pero, pensándolo bien, no del todo.

A la mejor jugadora del grupo, Sofia (Ayomi Domenica) de diecisiete años le avisan que es la principal candidata a una beca deportiva el mismo día que descubre que está embarazada. El embarazo es producto de una relación casual, apenas un nivel encima de una aventura de una noche. "El chico de la moto" es como lo conocemos. Quedarse con el bebé ni siquiera pasa por la mente de Sofía, pero el aborto es ilegal en Brasil. [Full Review](#)

## CINE VERDICT



# Spanish Screenings XXL

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## CRITIC'S WEEK



THE LATEST  
FROM THE ITALIAN  
FILM INDUSTRY

Check out the magazine in Cannes!



## NO LOVE LOST

**VERDICT:** Erwan Le Duc conjures a stylish and swoony look at the quick flame of first love and the lingering, unresolved pain of heartbreak.

*Kevin Jagernauth, May 24, 2023*

*"At the beginning, Etienne is twenty. He suspects nothing."* Those narrated words kick off the dazzling five-minute opening sequence of Erwan Le Duc's heart-on-sleeve *No Love Lost* in which Etienne (Nahuel Pérez Biscayart) meets Valérie (Mercedes Dassy) in the middle of a protest, where together they slip out of the clutches of the cops, fall in love, have sex the same night, and nine months later welcome a child into the world. Then one day Valérie drives off without a word, leaving him and the baby, never to return. In this stylish and swoony Critics' Week Closing Film, Etienne is about to learn that life's unsuspecting surprises aren't just for the young.

If first love is a quickly struck flame, the search for closure is a door that never shuts. We jump ahead sixteen years and Etienne has seemingly put his past behind him. "You can't love someone absent...you give up on that love,

and it vanishes," he declares. It's a mantra that's set to be challenged as his daughter Rosa (Céleste Brunnquelle) is preparing for college, while Etienne looks ready to settle down with Hélene (Maud Wyler). But when a faint, wholly unexpected opportunity arises to reconnect with Valérie, the past comes racing back to the present forcing him to face feelings he's shelved but never fully reconciled with.

Whimsically directed by Le Duc, and recalling the playful work of Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Michel Gondry, *No Love Lost* is a film that never stays still. The filmmaker loves keeping the bodies of his cast in motion, particularly the lanky Biscayart, whose physical adroitness is just as light as the film's airy tone. The production design is equally sprightly, with rooms boasting primary colors and pastels that run in parallel with costume designer Élisabeth Ingrassia's tie dyes and patterns. [Full Review](#)



# EVERYTHING about the MOVIES

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# Market **news**

## NEON

**Neon** has acquired North American rights to director Justine Triet's *Anatomy of a Fall*. Triet, who is one of only seven female filmmakers at Cannes this year, directed and co-wrote *Anatomy of a Fall* with Arthur Harari. *Anatomy of a Fall* is a presentation of Les Films Pelleas and Les Films de Pierre and is produced by Marie-Ange Luciani and David Thion. The deal was made by NEON's President of Acquisitions Jeff Deutchman and was negotiated with Fionnuala Jamison, managing director and head of international sales at mk2 Films.

### Anatomy of a Fall



**VERDICT:** German actress Sandra Hüller plays a woman accused of murdering her French husband in Justine Triet's latest, an unconvincing and overlong drama.

Full Review, [click here](#)

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DOMAIN JUNE 15 TO  
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## MUBI

**MUBI** has picked up the North American, UK, Italy, Latin America, Turkey, India and Benelux to Un Certain Regard movie to *The Delinquents*, a Spanish-language comedy and drama from director Rodrigo Moreno that premiered in the Un Certain Regard section.

**MUBI** will theatrically release the Spanish-language comedy-drama in North America, UK, Latin America, and some of their other markets.

### The Delinquents



**VERDICT:** A delicious reverie on escaping capitalism's numbing daily drudge and finding the true meaning of freedom, *The Delinquents* is a rare three-hour charmer sure to be scooped up in multiple territories.

Full Review, [click here](#)

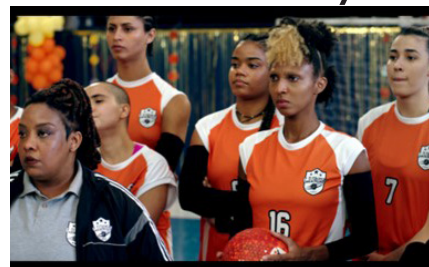
**CINEVERDICT:** Una deliciosa ensañación sobre cómo escapar de la adormecedora esclavitud diaria del capitalismo y encontrar el verdadero significado de la libertad. Los delincuentes es increíble hechizo de tres horas que seguramente será captado por múltiples territorios.

Full Review, [click here](#)



**AXI Entertainment** (formerly Axiom Fims) has secured UK and Ireland distribution rights to *Power Alley*, the debut feature of Brazilian director Lillah Halla, in a deal with Berlin-based **M-Appeal**.

### Power Alley



**VERDICT:** Brazilian newcomer director Lillah Halla makes a film full of zest and empathy about a talented volleyball player that resonates in today's pro-choice panorama.

Full Review, [click here](#)

**CINEVERDICT:** Cine Verdict: La directora brasileña debutante Lillah Halla hace una película llena de entusiasmo y empatía sobre una talentosa jugadora de voleibol que resuena en el panorama actual de los derechos reproductivos.

Full Review, [click here](#)

### Strange Way of Life

Directed by  
Pedro Almodóvar  
Sony Pictures Classics, Mubi



# Market **news**

## More Cannes Film Sales

### *May December*

Directed by Todd Haynes  
Netflix



**VERDICT:** The combined talents of Natalie Portman, Julianne Moore and veteran indie auteur Todd Haynes are largely wasted on this humdrum Cannes competition contender.

Full Review, [click here](#)



Berlin-based distributor DCM has landed the Wim Wenders' Cannes double pack, securing rights in Germany for both *Perfect Days* and the 3D documentary *Anselm*

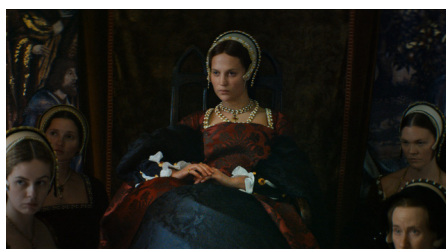


**VERDICT:** Wim Wenders' new film is a visually arresting study of Anselm Kiefer, evoking the artist's preoccupations with history and mythology to craft a suitably elegant portrait.

Full Review, [click here](#)

### *Firebrand*

Directed by Karim Aïnouz  
Sony Pictures, STX International

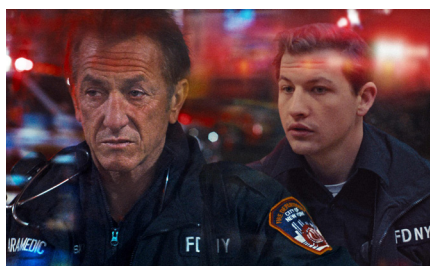


**VERDICT:** Alicia Vikander steps into the robes of Henry VIII's last queen in a drama more concerned with turning Katherine Parr into feminist icon than is historically believable, yet bold visuals and a fine cast raise the appeal of Brazilian auteur Karim Aïnouz's first time in Cannes competition.

Full Review, [click here](#)

### *Black Flies*

Directed by  
Jean-Stéphane Sauvaire  
Signature Entertainment,  
FilmNation Entertainment



**VERDICT:** A punishing, loud plunge into the brutality of EMT work in Brooklyn's grittiest hoods that banks on Sean Penn's stardom but is tone-deaf to its problematic treatment of immigrant communities and women.

Full Review, [click here](#)

### FILM BRIDGE INTERNATIONAL

Mongolian distributor Filmbridge picks up multiple titles including Kim Jee-woon's *Out of Competition* drama *Cobweb* from South Korea's **Barunson E&A**; Titles *Bucha*, *The Witch of Kono-top*; *Maksym Osa*, *Myrnyi - 21: On The Frontline* from Ukrainian Film UA and *200% Wolf*, *Being Betty Flood*, *Giants Of La Mancha*, and *Ella Bella Bingo* from Germany's Studio 100.



**Briarcliff Entertainment** acquired the U.S. distribution rights to *Den of Thieves 2: Pan-tera*, the sequel to the Gerard Butler action thriller *Den of Thieves* from 2018, The distributor plans to release it theatrically in the fourth quarter of 2024. The film is in production now.

Once again. Christian Gude-gast is directing and writing the sequel along with stars Butler and O'Shea Jackson Jr. The original *Den of Thieves* grossed \$80 million worldwide.

The new film is financed by **eOne** and **Tucker Tooley Entertainment**. **Briarcliff** acquired the film from **eOne**.

### *Robot Dreams*

Directed by Pablo Berger  
Neon





# FEST clips

## European Film Promotion Elects New Board of Directors



From left to right: Rastislav Steranka, Markéta Santrochová, Simone Baumann, Christian De Schutter, Eda Koppel and Stine Oppegaard. Kurt Krieger/EFP. Not pictured Daniela Elstner.

The 37 national film institutes of European Film Promotion (EFP) elected a new Board of Directors at today's General Assembly during the Festival de Cannes. The Board consists of seven members, with their term of office lasting for two years.

Five of the current members remain on the Board, including Simone Baumann, Managing Director German Films, as new Vice President, Daniela Elstner, Executive Director UniFrance, Eda Koppel, Head of Marketing Estonian Film Institute, Stine Oppegaard, Manager International Relations Feature Films, Norwegian Film Institute, Markéta Santrochová, Head of Czech Film Center, who has been re-elected as EFP President. Newly elected to the Board are Christian De Schutter, Managing Director of Flanders Image and Rastislav Steranka, Director of the National Cinematographic Centre of the Slovak Film Institute.

"As member of such a great European network, I am delighted to serve another term on the EFP Board and am very honoured to have been re-elected EFP President", says Markéta Santrochová "It is a privilege to continue our many constructive debates on the Board with colleagues representing such diverse and rich experiences. I am very proud indeed of this network. We have realized that we can initiate and make a lot of things happen together. It is even more gratifying to being able to exchange ideas again on site at festivals after the pandemic which has bonded and united us even more. With our targeted programmes such as PRODUCERS ON THE MOVE in Cannes, EUROPEAN SHOOTING STARS in Berlin as well as the Film Sales Support funding programme for world sales companies, EFP promotes European films and talent outside of Europe with a highly motivated team under Managing Director Sonja Heinen."

## KVIFF OPENING CONCERT



This year the opening concert of the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, traditionally held for the public on a stage in front of the Hotel Thermal, will feature a very special guest. Besides the previously announced performance by Russell Crowe with his band **Indoor Garden Party**, the concert will also feature legendary British band **Morcheeba**.

*Karlovy Vary IFF takes place  
June 30 - July 8*

**Javier Bardem on the poster for the 71st edition of the San Sebastian Festival and will receive a Donostia Award**



**Sundance Film Festival** now open for entries. Deadlines, entry fees and regulations  
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