

PRESS COVERAGE BOOK
January 31 to November 10, 2024



Prepared by



NEWS

American French Film Festival sets 2024 Los Angeles dates after strike-affected 2023 edition

BY JEREMY KAY 31 JANUARY 2024



SOURCE: NEON

'ANATOMY OF A FALL'

The Franco-American Cultural Fund (FACF) announced on Wednesday that the 28th annual edition of The American French Film Festival (TAFFF) will run October 29-November 3 at the Directors Guild of America Theater in Hollywood.

The premier annual event of the Franco American Cultural Fund is the largest French film festival in North America and claims to be the largest festival dedicated to French Films and TV programmes in the world.

Five-time Oscar-nominated *Anatomy Of A Fall* was among the 23 films, 10 series, four TV movies, and 17 short films announced in the 2023 event, which was cancelled due to the Hollywood strikes.

In 2022 films like *Final Cut* (Kino Lorber), *A Family For 1640 Days* (Distrib Films US) and *The Super 8 Years* (Kino Lorber) were picked up for distribution after the festival, while films from 43 filmmakers received US, international or world premieres at the festival.

“TAFFF has become an increasingly important international event for French filmmakers and talent to gain exposure in the Hollywood film community,” said Francois Truffart, executive producer and programmer, TAFFF.

“By providing opportunities for international sales companies and US distributors – including digital platforms – to convene and screen French-language films and series before the start of the Awards Season is pivotal to their overall sales and marketing strategies.”

This year, TAFFF will continue its educational programme which provides 3,000 high school students the opportunity to attend a screening and discussion with filmmakers at the DGA Theater.

“It is with great excitement that we can look forward to hosting The American French Film Festival this year,” said Cécile Rap-Veber, president of the Franco-American Cultural Fund and CEO of Sacem.

“2023 was a very challenging year for the film and television business because of the strikes, but now we can move forward and celebrate the talent and films that this Festival showcases every year.”

DEADLINE

The American French Film Festival In L.A. Sets 2024 Dates

By [Melanie Goodfellow](#)

Melanie Goodfellow

Senior International Film Correspondent

January 31, 2024 1:36am



High school students meet director Wilfried Meance (2nd L) and actor Bertrand Usclat at 2022 edition of TAFFF

Getty Images

The American French Film Festival (TAFFF), which was forced to cancel its 2023 edition due to the Hollywood strikes, has unveiled its 2024 dates.

The Franco-American Cultural Fund (FACF), which oversees the event (formerly known as Colcoa), said the festival would return to the Directors Guild Of America Theater from October 29 to November 3.

“It is with great excitement that we can look forward to hosting The American French Film Festival this year,” said Cécile Rap-Veber, President of the Franco-American Cultural Fund and CEO of partner body Sacem.

“2023 was a very challenging year for the film and television business because of the strikes, but now we can move forward and celebrate the talent and films that this festival showcases every year.”

The event, which is billed as the largest festival devoted to French cinema taking place in the U.S., was created in 1996.

Over the years, it has earned the reputation for being a launchpad for French films, filmmakers and actors in America.

In 2022, films like *Final Cut* (Kino Lorber), *A Family For 1640 Days* (Distrib Films US) and *The Super 8 Years* (Kino Lorber) were picked up for distribution after screening at the festival, while 43 filmmakers had their films' US, international or world premieres at the edition.

Five-time Oscar nominated film *Anatomy of a Fall* was among the 23 other films, 10 series, four TV movies, and 17 short films selected for the 2023 program prior to its cancellation.

“TAFFF has become an increasingly important international event for French filmmakers and talent to gain exposure in the Hollywood film community,” notes François Truffaut, Executive Producer and Programmer, TAFFF.

“By providing opportunities for international sales companies and US distributors – including digital platforms – to convene and screen French-language films and series before the start of the Awards Season is pivotal to their overall sales and marketing strategies.”

TAFFF will also continue its educational program which provides 3,000 high school students with the opportunity to attend a screening and discussion with filmmakers at the DGA Theater.

“At a time when everyone is on their phones and in-person interactions are declining, The American French Film Festival Education Program inspires students to truly engage,” said Anouchka van Riel, Deputy Director of TAFFF.

Through our screenings and Q&As with French actors and filmmakers at the DGA Theater, as well as the in-class materials we develop with educators, this effective annual program continues to encourage thoughtful discussion and nurture a new generation of French film enthusiasts.”

The American French Film Festival was created and is produced by the Franco-American Cultural Fund, a collaboration between the Directors Guild of America (DGA), the Motion Picture Association (MPA), France's Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers of Music (SACEM) and the Writers Guild of America West (WGAW).

The event is also supported by Unifrance, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France's Society of Authors, Directors and Producers (l'ARP), Air Tahiti Nui, ELMA, Champagne Fleur de Miraval, L'Oréal, TV5 Monde, and Variety. The American French Film Festival Education Program is supported by ELMA.



January 31, 2024 10:38am PT

Together Films Acquires Worldwide Rights to SXSW Documentary ‘An Army of Women– ’ Film News in Brief

By Jazz Tangcay, Jaden Thompson, Caroline Brew

American French Film Festival Sets Fall 2024 Dates

The American French Film Festival has set the dates for its 28th edition at DGA Theater in Hollywood. After last year’s festival was canceled due to the strikes, this year’s event will run Oct. 29-Nov. 3.

“It is with great excitement that we can look forward to hosting The American French Film Festival this year. 2023 was a very challenging year for the film and television business because of the strikes, but now we can move forward and celebrate the talent and films that this Festival showcases every year,” said Cécile Rap-Veber, President of the Franco-American Cultural Fund and CEO of Sacem.

The American French Film Festival is the premier annual event of the Franco American Cultural Fund, which created the Festival in 1996. It is the largest French film festival in North America and the largest festival dedicated to French Films and TV programs in the world.

“TAFFF has become an increasingly important international event for French filmmakers and talent to gain exposure in the Hollywood film community,” notes Francois Truffart, Executive Producer and Programmer, TAFFF. “By providing opportunities for international sales companies and US distributors – including digital platforms – to convene and screen French-language films and series before the start of the Awards Season is pivotal to their overall sales and marketing strategies.”



The American French Film Festival Announces Dates for 28th Edition



America's First and Largest French Film Festival will Return to the DGA Theater Complex in Los Angeles to Showcase Premieres of French Film and Television Series for US and International Distributors and the Public

LOS ANGELES The Franco-American Cultural Fund (FACF) announced today that *The American French Film Festival* (TAFFF) will hold its 28th annual edition and awards competition October 29-November 3 at the Directors Guild of America Theater on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood.

"It is with great excitement that we can look forward to hosting The American French Film Festival this year. 2023 was a very challenging year for the film and television business because of the strikes, but now we can move forward and celebrate the talent and films that this Festival showcases every year," said Cécile Rap-Veber, President of the Franco-American Cultural Fund and CEO of Sacem.

The American French Film Festival is the premier annual event of the Franco American Cultural Fund, which created the Festival in 1996. It is the largest French film festival in North America and the largest festival dedicated to French Films and TV programs in the world. Over the years, TAFFF has earned the reputation for being a launchpad for French films, filmmakers and actors in America. In 2022, films like *FINAL CUT* (Kino Lorber), *A FAMILY FOR 1640 DAYS* (Distrib Films US) and *THE SUPER 8 YEARS* (Kino Lorber) were picked up for distribution after the festival, while 43 filmmakers had their films' US, international or world premieres at the Festival.

Five-time Oscar nominated film *Anatomy of a Fall* was among the 23 other films, 10 series, four TV movies, and 17 short films that were part of the 2023 program. TAFFF announced the lineup in September despite the Festival's in-person event being cancelled.

"TAFFF has become an increasingly important international event for French filmmakers and talent to gain exposure in the Hollywood film community," notes Francois Truffart, Executive Producer and Programmer, TAFFF. "By providing opportunities for international sales companies and US distributors -

including digital platforms - to convene and screen French-language films and series before the start of the Awards Season is pivotal to their overall sales and marketing strategies.”

This year, TAFFF will also continue its highly successful educational program which provides 3,000 high school students with the opportunity to attend a screening and discussion with filmmakers at the DGA Theater.

“At a time when everyone is on their phones and in-person interactions are declining, The American French Film Festival Education Program inspires students to truly engage. Through our screenings and Q&As with French actors and filmmakers at the DGA Theater, as well as the in-class materials we develop with educators, this effective annual program continues to encourage thoughtful discussion and nurture a new generation of French film enthusiasts,” said Anouchka van Riel, Deputy Director of TAFFF.

The American French Film Festival

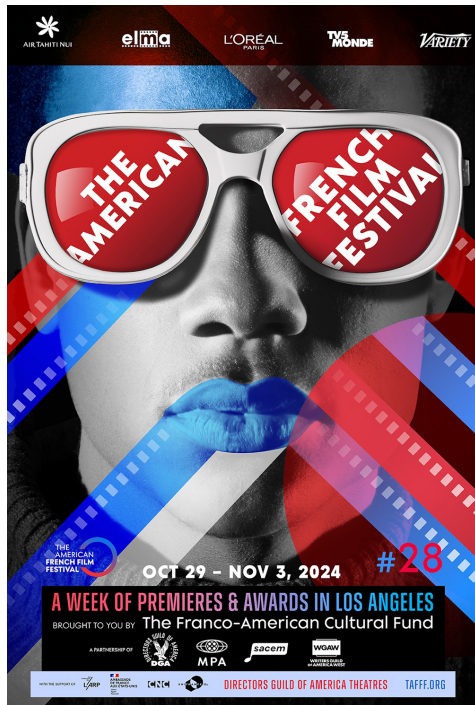
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For additional information visit : www.theamericanfrenchfilmfestival.org

MULDERVILLE

Festivals - The American French Film Festival Celebrates Its 28th Edition in Hollywood: October 29 – November 3, 2024

By Mulder, 03 september 2024



The vibrant city of Los Angeles will once again host one of the most anticipated cinematic events of the year, as the American French Film Festival (TAFFF) prepares for its 28th annual edition, scheduled to take place from October 29 to November 3, 2024, at the prestigious Directors Guild of America (DGA) Theater on Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood.

Presented by the Franco-American Cultural Fund (FACF), a collaborative effort involving the Directors Guild of America (DGA), the Motion Picture Association (MPA), France's Society of Authors, Composers, and Publishers of Music (SACEM), and the Writers Guild of America West (WGAW), TAFFF stands as North America's largest festival dedicated to French cinema and television series. It continues to serve as a vital platform for promoting French culture and fostering cross-cultural exchange between France and the U.S.

This year's edition promises to be a grand celebration of French storytelling, featuring an impressive array of U.S. premieres across different genres—drama, comedy, documentary, and animation. Festival-goers can immerse themselves in a carefully

curated lineup of films and TV series, many of which will be making their debut in North America. From gripping narratives to innovative visual storytelling, TAFFF showcases the diversity and creative depth of French cinema.

In true Hollywood style, the festival will open with a star-studded red-carpet event, featuring some of France's most celebrated actors, filmmakers, and industry professionals. The Opening Night film, yet to be announced, is expected to draw a full house as it sets the tone for the five-day celebration of French cinematic excellence. Attendees will also be treated to exclusive cocktail receptions, where they can sample French cuisine, wine, and specialty cocktails, offering a delightful blend of film and French culture.

For film enthusiasts eager to fully experience TAFFF, the festival is offering an exclusive week-long pass for only \$40. This pass provides access to all screenings and festival events, ensuring attendees don't miss a moment of the action. The passes will be available for purchase from September 12 to October 2, 2024, via the official festival website, www.TAFFF.org.

Moreover, the festival includes a unique incentive: audience members who attend screenings are automatically entered into a raffle to win a trip to Paris, courtesy of Air Tahiti Nui. The more films and series you watch, the greater your chances of securing the ultimate prize—an opportunity to experience the magic of Paris firsthand.

Beyond the screenings, TAFFF is renowned for its industry panels, masterclasses, and Q&A sessions. These events offer valuable insights from directors, writers, producers, and actors, providing a rare opportunity for attendees to engage with leading figures in the film industry. Whether you're a budding filmmaker, an industry insider, or simply a lover of cinema, TAFFF's professional events create a space for rich dialogue and creative collaboration.

TAFFF also takes pride in its robust educational program, which has become a cornerstone of the festival. Supported by ELMA (European Languages and Movies in America), the program reaches over 3,000 students from schools across Los Angeles each year, offering them an unparalleled introduction to French cinema. Through film screenings, educational workshops, and masterclasses with industry professionals, the festival encourages young American audiences to engage with foreign films, broadening their cultural perspectives.

Since its inception, the festival has aimed to bridge the cultural gap between France and the United States, fostering cross-cultural understanding through the medium of film. Over the years, more than 30,000 students and 160 high schools have participated in the festival's educational initiatives, furthering the festival's mission of inspiring future generations of filmmakers and storytellers.

While the complete program for TAFFF 2024 is still under wraps, the festival has announced that the Opening and Closing Night films will be revealed soon. On October

2, 2024, a press conference at the French Consulate Residence in Los Angeles will unveil the full schedule of films and special events. Journalists and media representatives interested in covering the festival are invited to register for press credentials on the festival's official website.

This press conference is expected to generate significant buzz, as industry professionals and film lovers alike await news of the films that will be showcased. With each edition of TAFFF presenting a lineup of premieres and exclusive screenings, the festival has become a critical platform for French films hoping to break into the U.S. market. In previous years, several films premiered at the festival have gone on to be nominated for prestigious awards, including the Academy Awards.

Formerly known as COLCOA (City of Light, City of Angels), the festival was founded in 1997 by the Franco-American Cultural Fund with the aim of promoting French cinema in the U.S. and celebrating the shared artistic heritage of the two nations. Over its 27-year history, the festival has grown to become one of the largest French film festivals in the world, drawing over 20,000 attendees annually and showcasing more than 1,000 French films and TV series.

In 2019, the festival transitioned from its traditional April date to September, aligning with the start of Hollywood's awards season. Since then, TAFFF has continued to serve as a key platform for French films vying for international recognition. Some of the festival's past highlights include the U.S. premieres of acclaimed films such as *Les Misérables* and *I Lost My Body*, both of which went on to receive Academy Award nominations.

As TAFFF prepares for its 28th edition, excitement is building among filmmakers, industry professionals, and fans of French cinema. The festival remains a must-attend event for those eager to discover the latest in French storytelling and to experience the vibrant cultural exchange that TAFFF fosters between France and the United States. With a rich program of premieres, exclusive events, and educational opportunities, the 2024 American French Film Festival promises to be an unforgettable celebration of cinema in the heart of Hollywood. For more details and to purchase passes, visit www.TAFFF.org. See you on the red carpet!
(Source : press release)

FRANCE 24 (via AFP)

Oscar hopefuls to bookend US French film festival

Los Angeles (United States) (AFP) – **The American French Film Festival, an annual Los Angeles jamboree of cinema from France, will bookend its run with two possible Oscar nominees, organizers announced Thursday.**



US singer and actress Selena Gomez attends the Canadian premiere of "Emilia Perez" at the Princess of Wales theatre in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, on September 9, 2024 © Geoff Robins / AFP

The festival will open on October 29 with the buzzy "Emilia Perez," a genre-defying musical about love and redemption by auteur director Jacques Audiard.

Critics at Cannes, where the film premiered, lapped it up, and the four stars -- Karla Sofia Gascon, Zoe Saldana, Selena Gomez, and Adriana Paz -- scooped a collective "Best Actress" award.

The festival closes on November 3 with the lavish "The Count of Monte Cristo," the most expensive French film this year, and one that has already proved a smash with French audiences.

Matthieu Delaporte and Alexandre de la Patelliere's film is a three-hour adventure based on the novel by Alexandre Dumas.

Both films are under consideration for France's official entry for the Academy Awards -- a choice that will come under close scrutiny after the country's Oscar committee last year passed on "Anatomy of a Fall."

That film ultimately won Best Screenplay, and was nominated for four other awards. The official French entry "The Taste of Things" failed to register with Academy voters.

"We are beyond excited to have 'Emilia Perez' as our curtain-raiser and 'The Count of Monte Cristo' wrap up the Festival this year -- two films that feature music in spectacular ways," said Cecile Rap-Veber, president of the Franco-American Cultural Fund, which produces TAFFF. "The American French Film Festival has become the place to shine for French films and series at the beginning of Awards season in Los Angeles."

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Cinémanique Films

Thursday, September 12, 2024

TAFFF 2024

**JACQUES AUDIARD'S OSCAR BUZZ-WORTHY FILM
EMILIA PÉREZ TO OPEN THE 28TH ANNUAL
AMERICAN FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL**

**Sweeping Cinematic Tour-de-Force The Count Of Monte
Cristo to Screen Closing Night of the Festival**



The American French Film Festival (TAFFF) will bookend its 28th annual edition with two of France's most-talked-about films this awards season: Emilia Pérez, the Opening Night film, and The Count of Monte Cristo, which will wrap up the six-day event that runs October 29 to November 3 at the Director's Guild of America Theatre Complex. The announcement was made today by The Franco-American Cultural Fund (FACF), the originator of The American French Film Festival.

Jacques Audiard's Emilia Pérez, a genre defying musical drama about love and redemption, will be celebrated at The American French Film Festival with a gala, red-carpet Opening Night screening on October 29, presented in association with Netflix.

Written and directed by Jacques Audiard, the film was the toast of this year's Cannes Film Festival, earning the four actresses - Karla Sofía Gascón, Zoe Saldaña, Selena Gomez, and Adriana Paz - a collective "Best Actress" award. The film will be rerun on October 30 at the Festival.



The period drama The Count of Monte Cristo, France's most-expensive film of 2024, will be the Closing Night film, November 3. Written and directed by Matthieu Delaporte and Alexandre de La Patellière, the film had its world premiere as part of the Official Selection of the 2024 Cannes Film Festival.

Both films will compete for the 2024 TAFFF Awards, which will be awarded during a ceremony held in Paris on November 8.

"We are beyond excited to have Emilia Pérez as our curtain-raiser and The Count of Monte Cristo wrap up the Festival this year - two films that feature music in spectacular ways," said Cécile Rap-Weber, President of The Franco-American Cultural Fund and CEO of SACEM. "The American French Film Festival has become the place to shine for French films and series at the beginning of Awards season in Los Angeles. There is so much excitement and awards chatter around these two films. We are thrilled to have this mutual support between us and distributors Netflix and Samuel Goldwyn Films, as well as the filmmakers, stars, writers, and composers to celebrate with all of them the cooperation between the American and French film communities and to bring the very best of French filmmaking to Hollywood."

Emilia Pérez is an odyssey of four remarkable women in Mexico, each pursuing their own happiness. The fearsome cartel leader Emilia (Karla Sofía Gascón) enlists Rita (Zoe Saldaña), an unappreciated lawyer stuck in a dead-end job, to help fake her death so that Emilia can finally live authentically as her true self. The result is as rapturous as it is breathtaking and a testament to Jacques Audiard's fearless filmmaking in the face of the most-daring of artistic risks. The film features 16 original songs and its affecting score composed by acclaimed musical duo Camille and Clément Ducol.

Emilia Pérez is produced by Why Not Productions, Page 114, Saint Laurent Productions, France 2 Cinema, and Pathé Films. The film is distributed in the United States by Netflix. It will premiere in select theaters in the US on November 1 and on Netflix in the US, Canada and the UK on November 13.



For The Count of Monte Cristo (Le Comte de Monte-Cristo) directors Matthieu Delaporte and Alexandre de La Patellière, the dynamic screenwriting duo behind last year's Three Musketeers blockbuster, now take on Alexandre Dumas's swashbuckling 19th century epic of lost love and single-minded vengeance and bring it to the big screen with a stellar ensemble cast and lavish production values. The tale begins with a heroic young first mate Edmond Dantès (Pierre Niney), freshly promoted to ship's captain and finally in a position to marry his secret love. However, on the very morning of their wedding day, Edmond is wrongfully arrested for a crime he knows nothing of — a plot hatched by three of the most ruthless of rivals— and shipped off to the formidable Château d'If prison off the coast of Marseille. But the story certainly doesn't end there, as filmmakers and author alike delve into an intimate examination of the nature of revenge, justice,

mercy, and forgiveness. The moving story is accompanied by an all-encompassing original score from composer Jérôme Rebotier.

The Count of Monte Cristo is produced by Chapter 2, Pathé Films, Fargo Films, Logical Content Venture, Umedia, and M6. The Count of Monte Cristo is distributed in the US by Samuel Goldwyn Films and will have a US theatrical release in Q4 2024.

The festival will release the series and documentary selections after September 15. The full line up including all Feature films will be announced on October 2.



THE EXPONENT

Oscar hopefuls to bookend US French film festival

AFP Sep 12, 2024



US singer and actress Selena Gomez wore basic black to a screening of 'Emilia Perez' in Toronto
Geoff Robins

The American French Film Festival, an annual Los Angeles jamboree of cinema from France, will bookend its run with two possible Oscar nominees, organizers announced Thursday.

The festival will open on October 29 with the buzzy "Emilia Perez," a genre-defying musical about love and redemption by auteur director Jacques Audiard.

Critics at Cannes, where the film premiered, lapped it up, and the four stars -- Karla Sofia Gascon, Zoe Saldana, Selena Gomez, and Adriana Paz -- scooped a collective "Best Actress" award.

The festival closes on November 3 with the lavish "The Count of Monte Cristo," the most expensive French film this year, and one that has already proved a smash with French audiences.

Matthieu Delaporte and Alexandre de la Patelliere's film is a three-hour adventure based on the novel by Alexandre Dumas.

Both films are under consideration for France's official entry for the Academy Awards -- a choice that will come under close scrutiny after the country's Oscar committee last year passed on "Anatomy of a Fall."

That film ultimately won Best Screenplay, and was nominated for four other awards. The official French entry "The Taste of Things" failed to register with Academy voters.

"We are beyond excited to have 'Emilia Perez' as our curtain-raiser and 'The Count of Monte Cristo' wrap up the Festival this year -- two films that feature music in spectacular ways," said Cecile Rap-Veber, president of the Franco-American Cultural Fund, which produces TAFFF.

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‘Emilia Perez,’ ‘The Count of Monte Cristo’ to Be Showcased at the American French Film Festival’s Comeback Edition in Los Angeles

By Elskes

Sep 12, 2024 | 10:00 AM

The American French Film Festival (previously called COLCOA) is back with a bang after being canceled last year due to the WGA and SAG/AFTRA strikes. The 28th edition of the festival will play two of the year’s most buzzed-about French movies, Jacques Audiard’s redemption thriller “Emilia Pérez” and epic adventure film “The Count of Monte [...]”

NONSTOP LOCAL Tri-Cities NBC Yakima & Billings

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DEADLINE

The American French Film Festival In L.A. Returns After Strikes Hiatus, Unveils Opening & Closing Films

By [Melanie Goodfellow](#)

September 12, 2024 7:58am



Selena Gomez in 'Emilia Pérez'

France 2 Cinéma

[The American French Film Festival](#) (TAFFF) is returning after last year's Hollywood strikes hiatus and has unveiled its opening and closing films.

The 28th edition, running October 29 to November 3 in the Director's Guild of America Theatre Complex, will open with Jacques Audiard's *Emilia Pérez* and close with *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

Both films are on the [shortlist to be France's submission](#) for the Best International Feature Film, and could be in the running in other categories.

Jacques Audiard's genre defying musical drama *Emilia Pérez*, about love and redemption, will be celebrated at The American French Film Festival with a gala, red-carpet Opening Night screening on October 29, presented in association with [Netflix](#).

Written and directed by Jacques Audiard, the film world premiered at Cannes, where it earned the four actresses – Karla Sofia Gascón, Zoe Saldaña, Selena Gomez, and Adriana Paz – a collective “Best Actress” award, and also clinched the jury prize.

The film will be rerun on October 30 at the festival.

Period drama *The Count of Monte Cristo*, France’s most-expensive film of 2024, will be the Closing Night film on November 3.

Written and directed by Matthieu Delaporte and Alexandre de La Patellière, the film had its world premiere as part of the Official Selection of the 2024 Cannes Film Festival.

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“The American French Film Festival has become the place to shine for French films and series at the beginning of Awards season in Los Angeles. There is so much excitement and awards chatter around these two films,” she said. “We are thrilled to have this mutual support between us and distributors Netflix and [Samuel Goldwyn Films](#), as well as the filmmakers, stars, writers, and composers to celebrate with all of them the cooperation between the American and French film communities and to bring the very best of French filmmaking to Hollywood.”

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Yahoo! News & IMDb

DEADLINE

The American French Film Festival In L.A. Returns After Strikes Hiatus, Unveils Opening & Closing Films

Melanie Goodfellow

September 12, 2024 · 3 min read



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The 28th edition, running October 29 to November 3 in the Director's Guild of America Theatre Complex, will open with Jacques Audiard's *Emilia Pérez* and close with *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

VARIETY

‘Emilia Perez,’ ‘The Count of Monte Cristo’ to Be Showcased at the American French Film Festival’s Comeback Edition in Los Angeles

By [Elsa Keslassy](#)



Netflix

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The 28th edition of the festival will play two of the year’s most buzzed-about French movies, Jacques Audiard’s redemption thriller “Emilia Pérez” and epic adventure film “[The Count of Monte Cristo](#).” They’re also two of the four films submitted by France’s Oscars committee for the international feature film race.

“Emilia Pérez,” which won two prizes at Cannes and played at both Telluride and Toronto, will kick off festivities on opening night, as part of a red-carpet event presented in association with [Netflix](#) on Oct. 29; and “The Count of Monte Cristo,” a sweeping three-hour period film starring Pierre Niney in the titular role, be play on closing night on Nov. 3.

A genre-defying musical thriller, “[Emilia Perez](#)” won the jury prize at Cannes (from a jury presided over by Greta Gerwig), on top of a best actress nod for its female ensemble cast, including Karla Sofía Gascón, Zoe Saldaña, Selena Gomez, and Adriana Paz. “Emilia Perez” will have a second screening at the festival on Oct. 30.

“The Count of Monte Cristo,” meanwhile, was penned and directed by Matthieu Delaporte and Alexandre de La Patellière, based on Alexandre Dumas’ literary masterpiece. The movie world premiered out of competition at Cannes and has smashed the French box office, selling more than 8 million tickets since being released by Pathé in late June. Samuel Goldwyn Films picked up U.S. rights.

Both films will play in competition at the American French Film Festival whose awards ceremony will be held in Paris on Nov. 8.

“We are beyond excited to have Emilia Pérez as our curtain-raiser and The Count of Monte Cristo wrap up the Festival this year – two films that feature music in spectacular ways,” said Cécile Rap-Weber, President of The Franco-American Cultural Fund and CEO of SACEM.

“The American French Film Festival has become the place to shine for French films and series at the beginning of Awards season in Los Angeles. There is so much excitement and awards chatter around these two films,” Rap-Weber continued.

“Emilia Pérez” stars Emilia (Karla Sofía Gascón) as a fearsome cartel leader who enlists Rita (Zoe Saldaña), an unappreciated lawyer stuck in a dead-end job, to help fake her death so that Emilia can finally live authentically as her true self. “Emilia Perez” boasts 16 original songs as part of a score composed by a musical duo formed by Camille and Clément Ducol. Producers are Why Not Productions, Page 114, Saint Laurent Productions, France 2 Cinema, and Pathé Films. Netflix will premiere the film in select theaters in the U.S. on Nov. 1 and will launch it on its service in the U.S., Canada and the U.K. on Nov. 13.

“The Count of Monte Cristo” is a swashbuckling 19th-century-set film starring Niney as Edmond Dantès, who was freshly promoted to ship’s captain and finally in a position to marry his secret love. However, on the very morning of their wedding day, Edmond is wrongfully arrested for a crime he knows nothing of — a plot hatched by three of the most ruthless of rivals— and shipped off to the formidable Château d’If prison off the coast of Marseille. The movie, scored by Jérôme Rebotier, brings together a starry ensemble cast, including Anamaria Vartolomei, Anaïs Demoustier, Laurent Lafitte, Bastien Bouillon, Patrick Mille, Vassili Schneider and Pierfrancesco Favino, along with Niney.

“The Count of Monte Cristo” is produced by Chapter 2, Pathé Films, Fargo Films, Logical Content Venture, Umedia, and M6. The Count of Monte Cristo is distributed in the US by Samuel Goldwyn Films and will have a US theatrical release in Q4 2024.

The American French Film Festival will unveil its lineup of series and documentary selections after Sept. 15. The full roster including all feature films will be announced on Oct. 2.

FRENCH DISTRICT

Le meilleur de la **Californie du Sud** par ceux qui y vivent

Le 7ème art français mis à l'honneur à Los Angeles

Le (The) American French Film Festival (anciennement COLCOA) revient dans la capitale du cinéma. Découvrez leur sélection et réservez vos places, du 29 octobre au 3 novembre 2024. Créé en 1996, ce festival reste un des plus grand consacré au cinéma français des Etats-Unis. Depuis sa création, le festival a diffusé plus de 300 nouveaux films, 200 courts métrages et sélectionné depuis 2004 une belle série d'avant-premières, qui sont alors diffusés au festival un an avant leur sortie officielle aux Etats-Unis.

[French District] - Cet article a été diffusé dans la newsletter du French District.

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Créé en 1996 sous le nom de COLCOA, The American French Film Festival reste un des plus gros festivals consacrés au cinéma français des Etats-Unis. Depuis sa création, le festival a diffusé plus de 300 nouveaux films, 200 courts métrages et sélectionné depuis 2004 une belle série d'avant-premières, qui sont alors diffusés au festival un an avant leur sortie officielle aux Etats-Unis.

Le film d'ouverture est **Emilia Pérez**, le très beau film de Jacques Audiard.

Cette année, quatre documentaires seront projetés du 29 octobre au 3 novembre 2024 au DGA Theatre à Hollywood et concourront pour le prix du #documentaire 2024.

Des droits des femmes aux moyens de lutter contre la maladie mentale des adultes, une affaire historique traitant des droits et de l'éthique de l'euthanasie, et le profil d'une figure puissante mais oubliée de l'histoire afro-américaine, le festival promet un autre mélange éclectique dans sa sélection de l'année.

The American French Film Festival (TAFF pour les connaisseurs) est présenté par le **Franco-American Cultural Fund**, un partenariat unique entre la **Directors Guild of America**, la **Motion Picture Association**, la **Sacem**, et la **Writers Guild of America West**.

Si vous avez lu trop vite: L'édition 2024 aura lieu du 29 octobre au 3 novembre.

[Cliquez ici pour réserver vos places](#)

Le Figaro (via AFP)

Le Festival du film français d'Hollywood projette deux films présélectionnés pour les Oscars

Par Le Figaro avec AFP

Publié le 15 septembre 2024 à 09h00



Karla Sofía Gascón dans *Emilia Pérez* et Pierre Niney dans *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo*. Copyright PAGE 114 – WHY NOT PRODUCTIONS – PATHÉ FILMS - FRANCE 2 CINÉMA - SAINT LAURENT PRODUCTIONS - Shanna Besson/ 2024 CHAPTER 2-PATHE FILMS-M6 FILMS-FARGO FILMS

La manifestation, attirant de nombreux professionnels d'Hollywood, s'ouvrira à Los Angeles le 29 octobre avec une projection d'*Emilia Pérez* et se clôturera le 3 novembre avec *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo*.

Le festival américain du film français (TAFFF) accueillera cette année *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo* et *Emilia Pérez*, deux films qui font partie des prétendants pour représenter la France aux Oscars en 2025, ont annoncé jeudi les organisateurs. Tenu chaque année à Los Angeles, cet événement peut aider les productions hexagonales dans la saison des prix américains, car ses projections attirent de nombreux professionnels d'Hollywood.

Le festival s'ouvrira le 29 octobre avec une projection d'*Emilia Pérez*. Cette comédie musicale de Jacques Audiard a reçu le prix du Jury au dernier Festival de Cannes et le prix

d'interprétation collectif pour Selena Gomez, Zoe Saldaña, ainsi que pour l'actrice principale transgenre Karla Sofía Gascón.

Il se clôturera le 3 novembre par la projection du *Comte de Monte-Cristo*. L'adaptation du roman d'Alexandre Dumas, avec Pierre Niney dans le rôle d'Edmond Dantès, fait actuellement un tabac en France, où elle dépasse les 8 millions d'entrées.

Ces deux poids lourds font partie des films présélectionnés pour représenter la France aux Oscars. Un choix qui sera scruté de près cette année, après la polémique suscitée l'an dernier: la commission chargée de faire ce choix avait proposé aux Oscars *La passion de Dodin Bouffant*, de Tran Anh Hung, au détriment de la Palme d'or cannoise *Anatomie d'une chute*.

Empêché de concourir dans la catégorie «*meilleur film international*», le chef-d'œuvre de Justine Triet avait néanmoins été nommé dans cinq catégories et avait remporté l'Oscar du meilleur scénario. Un camouflet pour la commission, alors que *La passion de Dodin Bouffant* n'avait finalement même pas été retenu dans la catégorie «*meilleur film international*».

«*Nous sommes très heureux d'avoir Emilia Perez en lever de rideau et Le Comte de Monte Cristo en clôture du Festival cette année*», a déclaré dans un communiqué Cécile Rap-Weber, présidente du Fonds culturel franco-américain, qui supervise le festival. «*Le festival américain du film français est devenu le lieu de prédilection pour les films et les séries françaises au début de la saison des prix à Los Angeles.*»

The American French Film Festival in Los Angeles

First published: September 24, 2024 by [Barbara Gerber](#)



By [Barbara Gerber](#)

The American French Film Festival (TAFFF) will take place October 29-November 3 2024 at the Directors Guild of America Theater in Hollywood. The event is the largest French film festival dedicated to French Films and TV programs in the world.

The yearly event (formerly known as COCOA), overseen by the Franco-American Cultural Fund (FACF), was shelved after the Board of Directors arrived at the difficult decision to cancel due to the Hollywood strikes, stating, "The FACF Board of Directors determined that it was not possible to continue with business as usual". Five-time Oscar-nominated *Anatomy of a Fall* was among the 23 films, 10 series, four TV movies, and 17 short films that had been announced in the [2023 event](#).

Stating that, "the FACF is keenly aware of the impact of this decision on the filmmakers, actors, producers and distributors of the films and series that were due to be featured, many of them for the first time in the United States", the FACF thanked all the French cinema professionals for their understanding "during these difficult times".



“It is with great excitement that we can look forward to hosting The American French Film Festival this year,” stated Cécile Rap-Veber, President of the FACF and CEO of partner body SACEM (France’s Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers of Music), “2023 was a very challenging year for the film and television business because of the strikes, but now we can move forward and celebrate the talent and films that this festival showcases every year.”

François Truffart, Executive Producer and Programmer, TAFFF, noted that “TAFFF has become an increasingly important event for French filmmakers and talent to gain exposure in the Hollywood film community.” He added that the opportunities for international sales companies and US distributors to “convene and screen French-language films and series before the start of the Awards Season is pivotal to their overall sales and marketing strategies.”

Be sure to mark your calendars to celebrate the 28th Anniversary of the **American French Film Festival** at the Director’s Guild of America and share in the success of this very visible event in Hollywood.

For more information, visit theamericanfrenchfilmfestival.org



média+

The American French Film Festival dévoile les documentaires et séries français en sélection

Par [ioan niculai](#) -
26/09/2024



OCT 29 – NOV 3, 2024

Couvrant chaque année un large éventail de sujets et de genres, The American French Film Festival (TAFFF) produit par le Fond Culturel Franco-Américain, dévoile une sélection de 5 documentaires et de 11 séries télévisées français qui seront projetés pendant le Festival à Los Angeles, du 29 octobre au 3 novembre. Tous seront également en compétition pour le TAFFF Documentary Award et les TAFFF Series Awards 2024.

Les 5 documentaires en compétition pour le TAFFF Documentary Award sont :

- «Une famille» (A Family), écrit et réalisé par Christine Angot.
- «L’Homme aux mille visages» («The Man with a Thousand Faces»), écrit et réalisé par Sonia Kronlund. Présenté en première nord-américaine.
- «Il était une fois Michel Legrand» («Once Upon a Time Michel Legrand»), écrit et réalisé par David Herzog-Dessites.
- «My Way», écrit et réalisé par Thierry Teston et Liza Azuelos.
- «Tehachapi» écrit et réalisé par JR.

Le programme documentaire est présenté en association avec Le Bureau, Mediawan, MK2 Films, Pyramide International, AmaWaterways et Titra Films.

Les 11 séries télévisées en compétition pour le TAFFF Audience Award 2024 et le TAFFF Jury Award 2024 sont:

- «Une amie dévouée» (The Confidante), drame/thriller réalisé par Just Philippot avec Laure Calamy et Ariele Worthalter.
- «Une amitié dangereuse» (A Dangerous Friendship), drame historique écrit et réalisé par Alain Tasma, adapté de la saga historique de Juliette Benzoni, «Marie des intrigues» et «Marie des passions» (Plon 2013-2005).
- «Becoming Karl Lagerfeld», biopic réalisé par Audrey Estrougo et Jérôme Salle et inspirée de la biographie de la journaliste du «Monde» Raphaëlle Bacqué, Kaiser Karl.
- «Ça c'est Paris», comédie réalisée par Marc Fitoussi.
- «Dans l'ombre» (In the Shadows), thriller politique réalisé par Pierre Schoeller, avec Swann Arlaud, Melvin Poupaud et Karin Viard, basé sur le livre d'Edouard Philippe.
- «Les Enfants sont rois» (The Disappearance of Kimmy Diore), drame/thriller d'après le livre de Delphine de Vigan.
- «Extra», comédie réalisée par Jonathan Hazan et Matthieu Bernard.
- «La Fièvre» (The Trigger), thriller réalisé par Ziad Doueiri, avec Ana Girardot.
- «Sambre» (Samber), drame policier réalisé par Jean-Xavier de Lestrade.
- «Sentinelles-Ukraine» (Day One Escaping Ukraine), drame/guerre réalisé par Jean-Philippe Amar.
- «Zorro», comédie/aventures réalisée par Jean-Baptiste Saurel et Émilie Noblet, avec Jean Dujardin et Audrey Dana.

La compétition des séries télévisées est présentée en association avec Disney+, Fédération Studios, Les Films du Cygne, France TV Distribution, Max, Mediawan, Newen Connect, Paramount+ StudioCanal, Titra Films et AmaWaterways.

Les TAFFF Awards 2024 seront annoncés lors de la soirée de clôture à Los Angeles et les prix remis lors d'une cérémonie qui se tiendra à Paris le 8 novembre. The American French Film Festival a été créé et est produit par le Fonds Culturel Franco-Américain, une collaboration entre la Members Guild of America (DGA), la Motion Picture Association (MPA), la Société des auteurs, compositeurs et éditeurs de musique (SACEM) et la Writers Guild of America West (WGAW). Le festival bénéficie également du soutien d'Unifrance, du ministère français des Affaires étrangères, de l'ARP, Air Tahiti Nui, ELMA, Champagne Louis Roederer, L'Oréal et Variety.

Le programme éducatif de l'American French Film Festival est présenté en partenariat avec ELMA.

ACTUAL NEWS

Le Festival du film français américain définit sa programmation 2024 Plus de variétés Les plus populaires À lire absolument Abonnez-vous aux newsletters de variétés Plus de nos marques

octobre 3, 2024



Le Festival du Film Français Américain revient pour sa 28e édition annuelle au Complexe Théâtral DGA du 29 octobre au 3 novembre. Le festival présentera 60 films et séries, dont 14 courts métrages et 14 séries ou téléfilms. Il s'ouvrira avec la sélection officielle française pour les Oscars, « Emilia Pérez », et se clôturera avec la nouvelle interprétation du roman classique d'Alexandre Dumas « Le Comte de Monte-Cristo » de Matthieu Delaporte et Alexandre de La Petellière.

C'est la première fois que 16 de ces longs métrages seront présentés au public à Hollywood après leur première aux dernières éditions des Festivals internationaux du film de Berlin, Cannes et Venise. De plus, 59 des œuvres sélectionnées seront en lice pour les TAFFF Awards.

La sélection de films comprend la comédie « Un gentil garçon juif » du réalisateur Noé Debré, écrite par Michael Zindel, Agnès Jaoui et Solar Bouloudnine ; le thriller politique « Mort d'un homme corrompu », réalisé par Georges Lautner et écrit par Lautner, Michel Audiard et Claude Sautet ; le drame « Rabia », écrit et réalisé par Mareike Engelhardt ; le drame sur le passage à l'âge adulte « Wild Diamond », écrit et réalisé par Agathe Riedinger ; et bien d'autres encore.

La sélection de courts métrages comprend le drame d'animation « A Stand Still Journey » écrit et réalisé par Izù Troin ; le drame de passage à l'âge adulte « Changing Room » écrit et réalisé par Violette Vuitton, la comédie « à bientôt » écrite et réalisée par Julia Renault, l'horreur « Cult » écrite et réalisée par David Padilla, entre autres.

Pour plus d'informations sur le festival et une liste complète des longs métrages, visitez www.theamericanfrenchfilmfestival.org. Les billets sont disponibles en ligne à partir du 2 octobre.



- **Le Festival du Film Franco-Américain dévoile sa programmation cinématographique 2024**

[Liane Lefurgey](#) octobre 3, 2024 2 min read

Le Festival du Film Franco-Américain revient pour sa 28e édition annuelle au Complexe Théâtral DGA du 29 octobre au 3 novembre. Le festival projetera 60 films et séries, dont 14 courts métrages et 14 séries ou téléfilms. Le film s'ouvrira avec la sélection officielle française des Oscars, Emilia Pérez, et se clôturera avec la nouvelle interprétation du roman classique d'Alexandre Dumas Le Comte de Monte-Cristo de Mathieu Delaporte et Alexandre de la Petillière.

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Au programme : la comédie « Nice Jewish Boy », réalisée par Noy Debré, écrite par Michael Zendel, Agnès Jaoui et Solar Polodnin ; Le thriller politique « Mort d'un homme pourri », réalisé par Georges Lautner et écrit par Lautner, Michel Audiard et Claude Sauté ; Le drame « Rabia » a été écrit et réalisé par Marieke Engelhardt. Le prochain drame « Wild Diamond », écrit et réalisé par Agatha Redinger ; Et bien d'autres encore.

La programmation de courts métrages comprend le drame d'animation « A Stand Still Journey », écrit et réalisé par Iso Truen ; Le prochain drame « The Changing Room » est écrit et réalisé par Violet Vuitton, la comédie « See You Soon » est écrite et réalisée par Julia Reno, le film d'horreur « Cult » est écrit et réalisé par David Padilla, entre autres.

Pour plus d'informations sur le festival et une liste complète des fonctionnalités, visitez www.theamericanfrenchfilmfestival.org. Les billets sont disponibles en ligne à partir du 2 octobre.

FRENCH MORNING Los Angeles

La 28e édition de The American French Film Festival révèle sa programmation

par

[Alexis Chenu](#)

2 octobre 2024

Un après l'annulation de son édition en raison de la grève des auteurs à Los Angeles, The American French Film Festival révélait ce mercredi, à la Résidence de France du Consulat de Los Angeles, la programmation de sa 28e édition prévue du 29 octobre au 3 novembre au Director's Guild of America (DGA) theater complex.

Introduite par la Consule générale de France, Julie Duhaut-Debos, qui terminera son mandat dans quelques jours, la conférence de presse accueillait le réalisateur américain Michael Mann, membre du DGA et du comité du Fonds Culturel Franco-américain, pour quelques mots de présentation, avant la révélation attendue du programme par François Truffart, le Directeur du festival TAFF.

Aol.

American French Film Festival Sets 2024 Lineup

VARIETY

EMILIANA BETANCOURT
October 2, 2024 at 11:39 AM



The American French Film Festival returns for its 28th annual event at the DGA Theater Complex from Oct. 29 to Nov. 3. The festival will showcase 60 films and series, including 14 shorts and 14 series or TV movies. It will open with France's official selection for Oscar consideration, "Emilia Pérez," and close with the new rendition of the classic Alexandre Dumas novel "The Count of Monte Cristo" by Matthieu Delaporte and Alexandre de La Petellière.

This marks the first time 16 of these features will be presented to an audience in Hollywood after premiering at the latest editions of the Berlin, Cannes, and Venice International Film Festivals. Additionally, 59 of the selected works will be up for the TAFFF Awards.

The selection of films includes the comedy "A Nice Jewish Boy" by director Noé Debré, written by Michael Zindel, Agnès Jaoui, and Solar Bouloudnine; the political thriller "Death of a Corrupt Man," directed by Georges Lautner and written by Lautner, Michel Audiard, and Claude Sautet; the drama "Rabia," written and directed by Mareike Engelhardt; the coming-of-age drama "Wild Diamond," written and directed by Agathe Riedinger; and many more.

The short film selection includes the animated drama "A Stand Still Journey" written and directed by Izù Troin; the coming of age drama "Changing Room" written and directed by Violette Vuitton, the comedy "See You Soon" written and directed by Julia Renault, the horror "Cult" written and directed by David Padilla among many others.

For more information on the festival and a complete list of the features visit www.theamericanfrenchfilmfestival.org. Tickets are available online starting Oct. 2.



American French Film Festival Sets 2024 Lineup

EMILIANA BETANCOURT

October 2, 2024 at 11:39 AM



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IMDb

[The American French Film Fest Posts Line-Up With Alain Delon Tribute; ‘Saint-Exupéry’, ‘The Balconettes’ & “A Nice Jewish Boy’ Among N. American Premieres](#)



The American French Film Festival unveiled the full-line up of its upcoming edition at a press conference at the Résidence de France in Beverly Hills on Wednesday, as the event returns after a one-year hiatus due to the Hollywood strikes.

The 28th edition, running October 29 to November 3 in the Director’s Guild of America Theatre Complex, will showcase 60 films and series, with 14 shorts, 14 Series and TV movies, and 32 feature films and documentaries, many of which are International, North American and U.S. premiere presentations.

As previously announced the event will be book-ended by [Jacques Audiard](#)’s Emilia [Pérez](#) as the opening film and [The Count of Monte Cristo](#), which will close the event.

The American French Film Festival was created and is produced by the Franco-American Cultural Fund, a collaboration between the Directors Guild of America ([DGA](#)), the Motion Picture Association ([MPA](#)), France’s Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers...

[See full article at Deadline Film + TV](#)

DEADLINE

The American French Film Fest Posts Line-Up With Alain Delon Tribute; ‘Saint-Exupéry’, ‘The Balconettes’ & “A Nice Jewish Boy’ Among N. American Premieres

By [Melanie Goodfellow](#)

October 2, 2024 10:35am



Nord-Ouest Films

[The American French Film Festival](#) unveiled the full-line up of its upcoming edition at a press conference at the Résidence de France in Beverly Hills on Wednesday, as the event returns after a one-year hiatus due to the Hollywood strikes.

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FESTIVALS

[Festival In Focus: The American French Film Festival Chiefs Talk Comeback Edition & Ambitions To Be "A Gateway To The Oscars Race For French Films"](#)

The American French Film Festival was created and is produced by the Franco-American Cultural Fund, a collaboration between the Directors Guild of America (DGA), the Motion Picture Association (MPA), France's Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers of Music (SACEM) and the Writers Guild of America West (WGAW).

The Theatrical Feature Film Selection:

A Nice Jewish Boy (North American Premiere)
Directed by Noé Debré
U.S. distributor: Film Movement

Auction (Los Angeles Premiere)
Written and directed by Pascal Bonitze
U.S. distributor: Menemsha Films

Being Maria (North American Premiere)
Directed by Jessica Palud

Boléro (US Premiere)
Directed by Anne Fontaine

Death of a Corrupt Man (Special Screening – Tribute to Alain Delon)
Directed by George Lautner

Dog on Trial (North American Premiere)
Written and directed by Laetitia Dosch.
U.S. distributor: Quiver

Emilia Pérez
Written and directed by Jacques Audiard
U.S. distributor: Netflix

Holy Cow
Written and directed by Louise Courvoisier.
U.S. distributor: Zeitgeist Films

In The Sub For Love (North American Premiere)
Written and directed by Lucas Bernard

Jim's Story (North American Premiere)
Written and directed by Arnaud and Jean-Marie Larrieu

Maybe More (US Premiere)
Directed by Oliver Ducray and Wilfried Méance

Rabia (International Premiere)
Written and directed by Mareike Engelhardt

Saint-Exupéry (North American Premiere)
Written and directed by Pablo Agüero

Somewhere in Love (International Premiere)
Written and directed by Morgan Simon

Souleymane's Story (U.S. Premiere)
Written and directed by Boris Lojkin

Survive (North American Premiere)
Written and directed by Frédéric Jardin
U.S. distributor: Samuel Goldwyn Films

The Balconettes (North American Premiere)
Written and directed by Noémie Merlant
U.S. distributor: The Forge Entertainment)

The Count of Monte-Cristo I (West Coast Premiere)
Written and directed by Matthieu Delaporte and Alexandre De La Patellière
U.S. distributor: Samuel Goldwyn Films

The Empire (North American Premiere)
Written and directed by Bruno Dumont.
U.S. distributor: Kino Lorber

The Kingdom

Written and directed by Julien Colonna.

U.S. distributor: Metrograph

The Marching Band (North American Premiere)

Written and directed by Emmanuel Courcol

The Most Precious of Cargoes

Written and directed by Michel Hazanavicius

The Second Act (West Coast Premiere)

Written and directed by Quentin Dupieux

The Ties That Bind Us (North American Premiere)

Written and directed by Carine Tardieu

Three Friends (North American Premiere)

Written and directed by Emmanuel Mouret

Through The Night (West Coast Premiere)

Written and directed by Delphine Girard.

Wild Diamond (Los Angeles Premiere)

Written and directed by Agathe Riedinger

U.S. distributor: Strand Releasing



Box of sixty bon-bons: The American French Film Festival (TAFFF) starts Oct 29

OCT
7
2024



In the run-up to [The American French Film Festival \(TAFFF\)](#) at the end of October, we picked through a box of “chocolat” to select a few of the yummiest-looking titles of the sixty films that will be on offer at the Director’s Guild of America, October 29 thru November 3, 2024.

This Festival is among our favorite of annual events. It’s in its 28th annual outing, and friends and fans of TAFFF know it’s so much more than movies. It’s about cultural exchange. It’s about current events but from a differing perspective. It’s about, especially in its opening night festivities, fashion and food. But hey, we love it just for its core offering, le cinéma français, the latest and best movies to come out of France. Of the sixty, many are North American or West Coast premieres — including full length features, short films, documentaries, television programming, replete with Q/As and in-person appearances by stars and directors. It’s French, so that there is a daily wine and cheese reception for attendees of professional panels called the [Happy Hour Talks](#).

Here's **arts•meme**'s "chocolat" box of picks amongst the 60 films. Bear in mind, this is my taste, I like hazelnuts, you may like that gooey cream filling, or coconut. You can pick your favorites [here](#).



Zoe Saldana and Karla Sofia Gascón in 'Emilia Pérez'. PHOTO: PATHE

EMILIA PÉREZ (Special Screening – OPENING NIGHT FILM, October 29) – MUSICAL/ DRAMA/THRILLER. Written and directed by Jacques Audiard. (US distributor: Netflix) It is an opera, a redemption narrative, a cartel thriller, a story of trans identity, a soapy melodrama, and about a dozen other things combined. The film, being released by Netflix, follows Rita (Zoe Saldana), a lawyer living in Mexico City who works defending criminals from the consequences of their actions. When Rita is taken to meet cartel leader, she is shocked by his request: He wants her to find a doctor who can discreetly perform gender confirmation surgery and help complete his transition to becoming the woman he has always known he is. (Thank you, [Entertainment Weekly](#), for the text.)



SAINT-EXUPÉRY (North American Premiere) – BIOPIC/DRAMA/ADVENTURE. Written and directed by Pablo Agüero. Argentina, 1930. Free-spirited Antoine de Saint-Exupéry is a pilot for the French airmail service Aéropostale, flying alongside legendary aviator Henri Guillaumet. The future of their company threatened by more efficient means of transportation, Saint-Exupéry and his partner seek out dangerous shortcuts over the mountains. But when Guillaumet vanishes in the Andes, Saint-Exupéry embarks on a perilous journey to rescue him. Thirteen years after that extraordinary adventure, Saint-Exupéry published one of the world's most beloved children's books, *The Little Prince*.

ONCE UPON A TIME MICHEL LEGRAND – DOCUMENTARY. Written and directed by David Hertzog Dessites. From *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* to *The Thomas Crown Affair* to *Yentl*, from French New Wave composer to the toast of Hollywood with three Oscars to his name, the film charts the course of a brilliant career and of an extraordinary artist, right up to and including his exceptionally moving final performance.



BOLÉRO (US Premiere) – BIOPIC/DRAMA. Directed by Anne Fontaine. Paris in the 1920s. Russian choreographer Ida Rubenstein commissions Maurice Ravel — already considered France's greatest living composer — to write the score for her next ballet — “something carnal, something bewitching, something erotic.” The phlegmatic Ravel comes up empty... and is thrust into a protracted creative limbo. A tribute to the timelessness of the composer's haunting masterpiece, *Bolero*, writer-director **Anne Fontaine** takes us on a deconstructed, elliptical journey through the idiosyncratic life of Maurice Ravel, in his struggle to complete that 17-minute piece of music.

DEATH OF A CORRUPT MAN (Special Screening – Tribute to Alain Delon) – POLITICAL THRILLER. Directed by George Lautner. Written by Georges Lautner, Michel Audiard, and Claude Sautet. Xavier Maréchal's doorbell suddenly rings at 5 a.m. It's his old friend, Senator Philippe Dubaye, with disturbing news. He's just killed Serrano, a mobster with big-time political connections. Xavier instantly offers to serve as his pal's alibi. However, the plot thickens. The magnificent **Alain Delon** earned his second César Award nomination for his depiction of Maréchal, apparently the only honest man in a Paris teeming with corruption, in **George Lautner's** moody 1977 film noir. The sultry jazz score by Philippe Sarde, featuring the lyrical tenor sax of the great Stan Getz, weaves its way through the film.



THE COUNT OF MONTE-CRISTO CLOSING NIGHT FILM – DRAMA/ADVENTURE. Written and directed by Matthieu Delaporte and Alexandre De La Patellière. A heroic young first mate, Edmond Dantès (Pierre Niney), freshly promoted to ship's captain and finally in a position to marry his secret love. However, on the very morning of their wedding day, Edmond is wrongfully arrested for a crime he knows nothing of — a plot hatched by three of the most ruthless of rivals — and shipped off to the formidable Château d'If prison, off the coast of Marseille. A story examining the nature of revenge, justice, mercy and forgiveness.

We'll see you at TAFFF! Et bon appetit!

Festival In Focus: How The American French Film Festival Is Developing Younger Audiences & Shining A Spotlight On "Cultural Exchange"

Story by Diana Lodderhose • 3w • [4 min read](#)

One of the key initiatives of the American French Film Festival is its long-running education program, which provides 3,000 high school students each year with the opportunity to attend a screening and discussion with filmmakers at the DGA Theatre. For the festival, it's a rare opportunity to help actively develop younger audiences and expose them to French cinema.

"At a time when everyone is on their phones and in-person interactions are declining, the American French Film Festival Education Program inspires students to truly engage," says Anouchka van Riel, Deputy Director of TAFFF. "Through our screenings and Q&As with French actors and filmmakers at the DGA Theatre, as well as in-class materials we develop with educators, this effective annual program continues to encourage thoughtful discussion and nurture a new generation of French film enthusiasts."

This year will mark the 17th year of its High School Screenings Program, and the festival is set to screen *The Count of Monte Cristo*, a 2024 period drama based on the 1844 novel of the same name by Alexander Dumas, to students across a five-day period from October 28. Students from more than 60 different schools – largely from Southern California but, this year, some as far as Park City, Utah – will descend each day at the DGA Theatre to watch the Matthieu Delaporte and Alexandre de la Patellière directed epic, which world premiered at the Cannes Film Festival earlier this year followed by a Q&A with talent. Samuel Goldwyn is releasing the title in the U.S. on December 20.

For the festival, which is produced by the Franco-American Cultural Fund, a collaboration between the Directors Guild of America (DGA), the Motion Picture Association (MPA), France's Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers of Music (SACEM) and the Writers Guild of America (WGAW), this initiative has long been considered one of the crown jewels of the event.

At the core of this partnership, says French native van Riel, is "cultural exchange."

"I grew up with screenings like this," she says. "The French ecosystem is very different with a subsidized economy towards culture. At the American French Film Festival, we are deeply passionate about cultural exchanges and how you can create bridges between people all around the world through art and stories and this is one way we can do this for younger audiences."

The initiative was originally the idea of festival director François Truffaut, who wanted to invite students to participate in the French film offerings the festival produced each year. Pascal Ladreyt, who runs the nonprofit foundation European Languages and Movies in American (ELMA), came aboard to help make the idea a reality.

"What we do at ELMA is try to help smaller, independent festivals boost their offerings," he says. "When we launched these high school screenings with the American French Film Festival, it was amazingly successful from the beginning. Most programs you usually have to wait a couple of years, so people hear about it and get interested, but this wasn't the case here. Our first screenings were immediately full, and we had a waiting list."



He adds: "Foreign movies tend to be for edging cinephiles, and we all do the best we can to attract the younger audience, but this was hitting them from the get-go."

In the last 16 years, more than 35,000 students have attended the festival's High School Screenings program, a figure that van Riel is proud of. "It's called an educational program for a reason – because we really wanted to open young people's minds in this city and make it available for everyone."

The program is open to more than 300 teachers and schools in Los Angeles and beyond – both public and private schools with different geographical locations and from different economic backgrounds. "We have people coming from as far as Santa Barbara where they leave early and take the bus down," says van Riel.

While she notes that foreign language offerings available on streaming platforms has been a "game changer" for the foreign language content game, it's important for the festival to continue to offer a film on the big screen to younger audiences.

"At the core of what we are trying to do is bring French content to a younger audience and, of course, with subtitles now not being as much of a hinderance as we thought before, it's been a

game changer," she says. "But it's important to us that this program remains a commitment to the big screen experience for us and a bring a renewal of audiences for foreign films."

Howard Rodman, a former president of the Writers Guild of America West and Franco-American Cultural Fund board member, says the program is a great way to pay homage to the influence French cinema has had on American cinema.

"I think there's a real cultural debt American cinema owes to French filmmaking whether it be Agnès Varda in the French New Wave or going further back to Louis Feuillade or Alice Guy-Blaché, it's more and more apparent," he says. "With this program, we wanted to find a way to make French films – in particular the cross-cultural conversation that has enriched the cinema culture of both nations – vital for a new generation, who are digital natives and for whom seeing movies in a theatre may be an exception rather than the rule."

The American French Film Festival takes place October 29-November 4, 2024.

DEADLINE

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DEADLINE



Festival In Focus: The American French Film Festival Chiefs Talk Comeback Edition & Ambitions To Be “A Gateway To The Oscars Race For French Films”

By [Diana Lodderhose](#)

October 23, 2024 8:13am

• [The American French Film Festival](#) has long been considered the premiere U.S. event for launching French film and television content to American audiences and while last year's edition was forced to cancel due to Hollywood's dual strikes, this year the L.A.-based event is back and gearing up for what it expects to be one of its best editions yet.

The six-day festival, which kicks off its 28th edition on October 29 at the DGA Theater Complex, is bookended by two of the year's buzziest French titles with Jacques Audiard's Spanish-language musical-crime film *Emilia Pérez* set for opening night while Pathé's French box office hit *The Count of Monte Cristo* set to close the event on November 3.

Both films, say festival organizers, are reflective of the kinds of projects that TAFFF wants to unveil to Hollywood audiences: Audiard's Cannes-winning title *Emilia Pérez* is France's official submission for the Best International Oscar category this year, while Pathé's *The Count of Monte Cristo* was a huge local box office hit in the country, taking \$72M in France and becoming the third highest-grossing film of 2024 in the territory.

"Foreign films, particularly French films, have a very limited access to the American market," says François Truffart, TAFFF Executive Producer and Artistic Director. "So, we try to be useful for professionals such as French sales companies as well as American distributors and platforms."

Emilia Pérez is getting a big awards push in the U.S. with its distributor Netflix and *Monte Cristo* is slated for a December 20 domestic release via Samuel Goldwyn but as TAFFF has earned the reputation for being the U.S. festival launchpad for French films, filmmakers and actors in America, it was a natural fit for the festival to launch the title to its attendees, many of whom are DGA, WGA, Academy and Golden Globe members.

Each year around 50 filmmaking talents – ranging from directors to actors to writers to producers – attend the festival and this year is no different with Audiard expected to be in attendance with his *Emilia Pérez* cast Selena Gomez, Zoe Saldana and Karla Sofia Gascón. *Monte Cristo* directors Alexandre de la Patellière and Matthieu Delaporte will also be in attendance along with actor Patrick Mille and composer Jérôme Rebotier.

This year the festival, which is expected to have 15,000 attendees, will showcase 60 films and series, including 14 shorts and 11 series or TV movies. The festival will mark the first time 16 of these features will be presented to an audience in Hollywood after premiering at the latest editions of Berlin, Cannes and Venice International Film Festivals. Additionally, 59 of the selected works will be up for the TAFFF Awards.

The lineup this year includes: Noé Debré's comedy *A Nice Jewish Boy*, written by Michael Zindell, Agnès Jaoui and Solar Bouloudnine; political thriller *Death of a Corrupt Man*, directed by Georges Lautner, which he penned with Michel Audiard and Claude Sautet; Mareike Engelhardt's drama *Rabia*; and Agathe Riedinger's coming-of-age drama *Wild Diamond*.

Christine Angot's *A Family* and Thierry Teston and Liza Azuelos' *My Way* are among the five docs competing for Best Documentary at the festival while 11 TV series will compete for its TAFFF Audience Award and TAFFF Jury Award, including Alain Tasma's *A Dangerous Friendship* and Gaumont's biopic *Becoming Karl Lagerfeld*.

"We have a big focus on promoting films directed by women," says Truffart. "Every year we have a lot of films to show that France is a good place to discover female voices."

He adds that "new talent is also key", pointing to the festival's short film lineup, which includes films like animated drama *A Stand Still Journey* from Izù Troin and coming-of-age drama *Changing Room* from writer-director Violette Vuitton. "We are proud when someone is introduced to an audience in Hollywood for the first time and then go on to grow their career. We continue to have a competition dedicated to short films for this reason."

TAFFF's educational program, which provides 3,000 high school students with the opportunity to attend a screening and discussion with filmmakers, also remains a hugely important piece of the festival puzzle (read more [here](#)).



François Truffart, Anouchka van Riel

Humble beginnings

The American French Film Festival (formerly known as COLCOA) was created in 1997 and is produced by the Franco-American Cultural Fund, a collaboration between the Directors Guild of America (DGA), the Motion Picture Association (MPA), France's Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers of Music (SACEM) and the Writers Guild of America (WGAW). It is also supported by Unifrance, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and France's Society of Authors, Directors and Producers (l'ARP).

Truffart notes that it is, and has always been, a “very industry-focused event”, with 75% of attendees being industry guests while 25% are members of the public. “We want to provide opportunities for international sales companies and U.S. distributors – including digital platforms – to get together and watch French-language films and series before the awards season kicks off,” he says. “We know this season is pivotal to their overall sales and marketing strategies.”

In 2022, films like *Final Cut* (Kino Lorber), *A Family For 1640 Days* (Distrib Films US) and *The Super 8 Years* (Kino Lorber) were picked up for distribution after screening at the festival while 43 filmmakers had their films' U.S. or international or world premieres at that edition.

While Truffaut stresses that the festival “is not a market”, he says it has naturally “played a role in the process during the year.” With 30% of the program consisting of films already with a U.S. distributor, he says these distributors look to TAFFF as “a launchpad to create buzz before a domestic release.”

In 2019, the festival moved its dates from spring to fall, thereby positioning itself right at the beginning of the awards season in Hollywood and before the annual American Film Market (which has now moved from Santa Monica to Las Vegas). “We are aware that we can play a role in awards season,” says Truffart. “It's important in a sense that we are the only competition where French people from the industry can see how their films test with a Hollywood audience.

It's very specific and unique, and this is the reason why some distributors want to be in competition at the festival."

Cecile Rap-Veber, President of the Franco-American Cultural Fund and CEO of SACEM, says that over the years, TAFFF has increasingly become "a gateway to the Oscars race for French films."

"During the last Cannes Film Festival, someone referred to TAFFF as the place 'where awards season begins for French films in Hollywood,'" she says. "This is a perfect summary. With our partners CNC, Unifrance and the French Consulate – to name a few – we created the first French film and series festival abroad. It is seen today by the French producers, international sellers, filmmakers, actors and publicists as the most important event for the promotion and sale of French audiovisual content in the U.S."

Rap-Veber adds that the event provides a good opportunity also to promote shooting in France, with Film France CNC organizing an event to promote this during the festival. This year, the festival is also presenting the TAFFF Impact Award to Kino Lorber CEO Richard Lorber, for his role in promoting French cinema in the U.S.

"We have a unique partnership at our organization," says Deputy Director Anouchka van Riel. "Our board is made up not of individuals but of organizations, which allows us to build something year after year that is far reaching in terms of scope, and to nurture cultural exchanges at an artistic and professional level for filmmaking communities in the U.S. and France."

She admits it's not without its challenges though. "We've seen, throughout the years, that it is very hard to keep a festival – or any type of event with this scope – relevant and fresh but I think we have succeeded. It can be especially difficult during awards season in L.A. because there are so many events."

She points to a range of sponsors ranging from high end champagne brands to French cheese sponsors as being integral to offering up "a real French experience" for attendees. "You need a lot of goodwill and a lot of willingness and passion, and this festival is the fruit of that at all levels. We know that it's very special and it's not something that is a given – it's something that we need to reconstruct every year."

The American French Film Festival takes place October 29-November 4, 2024.

IMDb

[Festival In Focus: The American French Film Festival Chiefs Talk Comeback Edition & Ambitions To Be “A Gateway To The Oscars Race For French Films”](#)



The American French Film Festival has long been considered the premiere U.S. event for launching French film and television content to American audiences and while last year's edition was forced to cancel due to Hollywood's dual strikes, this year the L.A.-based event is back and gearing up for what it expects to be one of its best editions yet.

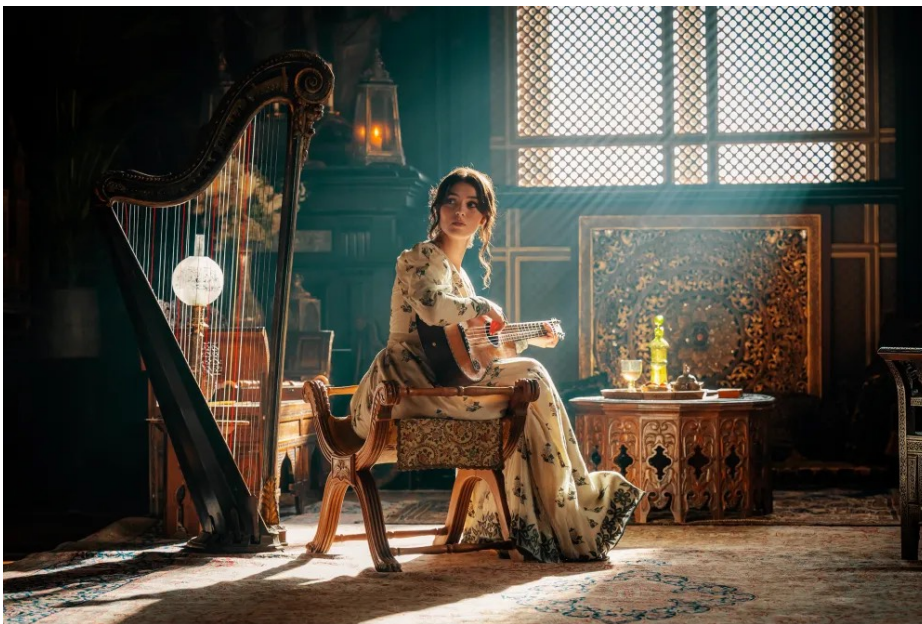
The six-day festival, which kicks off its 28th edition on October 29 at the DGA Theater Complex, is bookended by two of the year's buzziest French titles with [Jacques Audiard](#)'s Spanish-language musical-crime film [Emilia Pérez](#) set for opening night while [Pathé](#)'s French box office hit [The Count of Monte Cristo](#) set to close the event on November 3.

Both films, say festival organizers, are reflective of the kinds of projects that Taffy wants to unveil to Hollywood audiences: Audiard's Cannes-winning title Emilia [Pérez](#) is... [See full article at Deadline Film + TV](#)

VARIETY

How the American French Film Festival Move to Fall Gives It Awards Season Energy

By Steven Gaydos



Los Angeles has long had a passionate love affair with French cinema, dating back more than 60 years ago when there were lines around the block to get into theaters showing the latest works from cinema masters such as François Truffaut, Jean-Luc Godard and others.

Local cineastes later got their French film fixes every year starting in 1997 thanks to a popular film festival called COLCOA, an acronym for the evocative, but not so helpful City of Lights, City of Angels moniker. Then came COVID, then the industry strikes of 2023, and those “Lights” were temporarily dimmed.

So good news arrived when François Truffaut, the longtime director of COLCOA, announced that the newly rechristened American French Film Festival would begin in 2024, with myriad improvements, including moving from the spring into a fall (Oct. 29-Nov. 3) slot designed to catch the strong breezes and heightened interest of Hollywood’s annual awards season.

[TAFFF](#) (its new chosen acronym) bows again on the Directors Guild of America screens in Hollywood, and its awards-friendly date is boosted by opening with one of the most highly regarded awards contenders in multiple categories, Jacques Audiard’s Cannes Jury Prize winner, “Emilia Pérez.”

Truffart, an ardent film lover and one of the French cinema industry's most important advocates, calls the shift from spring to fall "a dramatic change," citing the newly renamed fest's longtime "strong ties to the industry, especially voters in the Directors Guild and the Writers Guild," and its new "connection to awards season."

Amazingly, Truffart reports that nearly half of the fest's approximately 40 films and TV series "will be shown in Los Angeles before they're premiering in France. We're just before AFM, and international sales companies now have the perfect platform to show films to engaged audiences. It's a great place for them test the appeal of the films."

Truffart feels that the shift to fall is especially important as a showcase of French wares, emphasizing the fest's longtime connectivity to the Hollywood entertainment industry. To that end, he touts the newly created TAFF Awards as "a unique opportunity for distributors. It's a chance for Hollywood to give their opinions on films and series."

Keenly aware of the business challenges facing foreign fare presented on big screens, Truffart also stresses new pricing policies that will appeal to anyone from students to seniors to perhaps still struggling industryites, noting a "\$58 weekly pass to make this an affordable way to discover some of the most important and exciting new filmmakers in the world."

Special guests of the fest include helmers such Audiard, attending for the first time, as well as Oscar-winner (for "The Artist") Michel Hazanavicius, presenting his new film, "The Most Precious of Cargoes." Alexandre de La Patellière and Matthieu Delaporte, who directed closing night film, "The Count of Monte-Cristo," will also be in attendance.

Tipsheet

WHAT [The American French Film Festival](#)

WHEN Oct. 29-Nov. 3

WHERE DGA Theater Complex, 7920 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles

WEB taff.org

WORLD SCREEN

TAFFF 2024 To Spotlight Music

[Alexa Alfano](#)

The American French Film Festival (TAFFF), supported by Sacem, is set to return from October 29 to November 3, with music taking center stage this year.

Sacem has supported the original music in the films selected this year through its cultural action program. As a founding member of the Fonds Culturel Franco-Américain (FCFA), alongside the Directors Guild of America (DGA), the Motion Picture Association (MPA) and the Writers Guild of America West (WGAW), Sacem contributed to the creation of the event, which for 28 editions has served as a springboard for films, filmmakers, actors and composers.

Cécile Rap-Veber, president of the AFFF and CEO of Sacem, said: “The American French Film Festival offers French creative talent a platform to connect with the international market, while strengthening collaboration between composers, directors, screenwriters and producers. Just like fashion or gastronomy, French-language audiovisual creativity has become an effective instrument of soft power. Aware of this wealth, Sacem will continue to support and accompany its talented creators throughout their careers, through its cultural action, its presence at major audiovisual events, and by negotiating the best pay rates with video streaming platforms. We are also very proud to honour works where the music transcends the images and adds a unique emotional dimension to the cinematic experience.”



FESTIVALS / AWARDS USA / France

French production is showcased in Hollywood

by [Fabien Lemercier](#)

29/10/2024 - The 28th edition of the American French Film Festival will screen 60 films and series, including many North-American premieres, between 29 October and 3 November



The Most Precious of Cargoes by Michel Hazanavicius

Emilia Perez [\[+\]](#) by **Jacques Audiard**, doubly awarded in Cannes, the French candidate at the upcoming Oscars and distributed in the United-States by Netflix, which opens the 29th edition of the [American French Film Festival](#) today, Tuesday 29 October. The event, organised by the [Franco-American Cultural Fund](#) (which brings together the DGA, the MPA, the SACEM and the WGAW) will unfold until 3 November in the screening rooms of the Director's Guild of America in Hollywood, and will close with *The Count of Monte-Cristo* [\[+\]](#) by **Matthieu Delaporte** and **Alexandre de La Patellière** (distributed in the United-States by Samuel Goldwyn Films).

Standing out amongst the 27 fiction feature films in the programme are the international premieres of *Rabia* by **Mareike Engelhard** and *Somewhere In Love* by **Morgan Simon**, as well as the 13 North-American premieres for Cannes titles *The Most Precious of Cargoes* [\[+\]](#)

by **Michel Hazanavicius**, *Jim's Story* [+] by **Arnaud and Jean-Marie Larrieu**, *Dog on Trial* [+] by **Laetitia Dosch** (distributed in the US by Quiver), *The Marching Band* [+] by **Emmanuel Courcol**, *Being Maria* [+] by **Jessica Palud** and *The Balconettes* [+] by **Noémie Merlant** (distributed by Forge Entertainment), and for Venice titles *Three Friends* [+] by **Emmanuel Mouret** and *The Ties that Bind Us* [+] by **Carine Tardieu**, for Berlin winner *The Empire* [+] by **Bruno Dumont** (US distribution by Kino Lorber), but also for *Saint-Ex* [+] by **Pablo Agüero**, *A Good Jewish Boy* [+] by **Noé Debré** (US distribution by Film Movement), *Survive* by **Frédéric Jardin** (Samuel Goldwyn Films) and *In The Sub For Love* by **Lucas Bernard**.

Having their American premieres are Cannes winner *The Story of Souleymane* [+] by **Boris Lojkine** and *Boléro* [+] by **Anne Fontaine**, while West side premieres are planned for *The Second Act* [+] by **Quentin Dupieux**, *Through the Night* [+] by **Delphine Girard** and the comedy *Maybe More* by **Oliver Ducray** and **Wilfred Méance**. Also premiering in Los Angeles are *Auction* by **Pascal Bonitzer** (US distribution by Menemsha Films) and Cannes discoveries *Wild Diamond* [+] by **Agathe Riedinger** (Strand Releasing) and *Holy Cow* [+] by **Louise Courvoisier** (Zeitgeist Films). Finally, a special screening will be dedicated to *Le Royaume* [+] by **Julien Colonna** (Metrograph).

Five documentaries are also screening, including Cannes-selected titles *Once Upon a Time Michel Legrand* by **David Herzog-Dessistes** and *My Way* by **Thierry Teston** and **Liza Azuelos** and Berlin title *A Family* [+] by **Christine Angot**, but also *The Man with a Thousand Faces* by **Sonia Kronlund** and *Tehachapi* by **JR**.

The very vast programme (which will give rise to audience, critics and youth jury awards) also includes 14 short-films, 3 television films and 11 series. The latter are *In the Shadows* by **Pierre Schoeller**, *The Trigger* by **Ziad Doueiri**, *The Confidante* by **Just Philippot**, *Samber* by **Jean-Xavier de Lestrade**, *Ça c'est Paris* by **Marc Fitoussi**, *The Disappearance of Kimmy Diore* by **Sébastien Marnier**, *Becoming Karl Lagerfeld* by **Audrey Estrougo** and **Jérôme Salle**, *Zorro* de **Jean-Baptiste Saurel** and **Émilie Noblet**, *Extra*. [+] by **Jonathan Hazan** and **Matthieu Bernard**, *A Dangerous Friendship* by **Alain Tasma** and *Day One Escaping Ukraine* by **Jean-Philippe Amar**.

Finally, it is also worth noting that the American French Film Festival will, for the first time, give the TAFFF Impact Award (a prize recognising an American professional for their contribution to French cinema), to distributor **Richard Lorber** (Kino Lorber) and that *The Count of Monte-Cristo* will be at the heart of the High School Screenings Program (which will reach 3,000 students in 60 schools).

Yahoo! news UK



'I'm terrified': French auteur Audiard hits Oscars trail for 'Emilia Perez'

Romain FONSEGRIVES

29 October 2024 · 4-min read



French director and writer Jacques Audiard's film 'Emilia Perez' won multiple prizes at Cannes (VALERIE MACON) (VALERIE MACON/AFP/AFP)

His film "Emilia Perez" won multiple prizes at Cannes, and was snapped up by Netflix. Now French director Jacques Audiard is steeling himself for the next, arduous stage -- a glitzy yet grueling campaign as an Oscars frontrunner.

"I'm terrified," Audiard told AFP in an interview in Los Angeles, before the surreal musical about a transgender Mexican drug lord hits limited US theaters this Friday, before streaming on November 13.

"Mass success is something very unsettling -- it's not real life."

With his movie a favorite for the best picture Academy Award, and tipped for nods in categories from best actress to best director, the 72-year-old Audiard will be shuttling back and forth from France to the United States for the next several months.

Modern Oscars campaigns involve a swirl of galas, press conferences, screenings and smaller awards shows, each offering chances to press the flesh with mercurial Hollywood voters in an expensive and crowded marketplace.

Netflix, which has come to dominate Hollywood's vital streaming sector but has yet to win the coveted best picture Oscar, intends to use all its considerable heft in promoting Audiard's 10th feature.

Following North American festival appearances in Telluride in August and Toronto in September, "Emilia Perez" opens The American French Film Festival (TAFFF) in Los Angeles this week.

The campaign promises to be much more intense than in 2010, when Audiard's film "A Prophet" was nominated for an Oscar in the lower profile though still highly prestigious best international film category.

"It's like going from a provincial competition to the Olympics," said Audiard, a Parisian dandy, who wore a leopard-print shirt and a scarf around his neck under his blue suit.

- 'A revelation' -

Audiard's genre-hopping film -- winner of the Jury Prize at Cannes -- is the story of the repentance of Manitas, a powerful Mexican drug lord.

Trapped in a violent, macho world, Manitas employs a lawyer (Zoe Saldana) to arrange a deep, lifelong aspiration -- to become a woman, named Emilia.

Finally free to be herself, Emilia begins a crusade to help victims of the narco gangs. She also reconnects with her former wife (Selena Gomez) and children, who believe she is dead, by posing as a distant relative.

Playing both Manitas and Emilia, Karla Sofia Gascon is heavily tipped to become the first openly transgender actress ever nominated for an Oscar.

Indeed, Gascon heavily shaped the role. Audiard had originally envisioned a younger heroine, but upon meeting the Spanish star who transitioned at 46, he quickly reworked the script.

A younger character would not have suffered enough to be credible, he told AFP.

"I tried hard to make it work, but it didn't add up," said Audiard.

"When Karla Sofia appeared, it was a revelation. It was like the Virgin appeared before me -- it was so clear."

"When you transition at 46, I can't even dare to imagine what her experience was like before... what was her life and her pain?"

This epiphany helped Audiard give more substance to his transgender heroine, who was first inspired by the Boris Razon novel "Ecoute."

- 'Kitsch' -

Borrowing stylings from opera, "Emilia Perez" is billed as a musical drama but stands at the crossroads of multiple genres -- narco-thriller, Latin American telenovela, and LGBTQ drama, among others.

That unique combination was, for Audiard, the "obvious" way to embrace his heroine's transition and the many contradictory facets of her personality.

The film's "kitsch" trappings insolently address social issues, such as when choirs sing the refrain "Rhinoplasty! Vaginoplasty" in a hospital-set dance sequence, he said.

"It had to absorb everything. It's a film that has to be embarrassing," Audiard said. "We are singing about things that are improbable."

Those unlikely ingredients have combined to make a work hailed in the American press as one of the leading Oscars contenders, with nominations set to be revealed in January. The ceremony takes place on March 2.

Success would be a crowning achievement for Audiard's award-winning career, in which he has repeatedly put diverse outsiders at the center of his films.

"Dheepan", which won the Cannes top prize Palme d'Or in 2015, followed the lives of Tamil refugees in a Paris suburb. "Rust and Bone" chronicled an orca trainer who lost her legs in a horrific accident. "A Prophet" delved into the world of prison violence.

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Via AFP

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VARIETY

Oct 30, 2024 3:47pm PT

‘Emilia Perez’ Stars Talk Push to Vote After Racist Jokes at Trump Rally: ‘I Definitely Want to Stand by My People’

Zoe Saldaña, Selena Gomez, Karla Sofía Gascón spoke about the importance of voting at the premiere of 'Emilia Perez' at the opening of The American French Film Festival in Hollywood

By Elsa Keslassy



River Callaway

Following in the footsteps of [Selena Gomez](#), who dropped her ballot off on the way to the premiere of “Wizards Beyond Waverly Place,” fellow “[Emilia Perez](#)” star Zoe Saldaña also cast her vote this week, the star shares while attending the Netflix co-hosted premiere of Jacques Audiard’s new musical at the opening night of the 28th [American French Film Festival](#) at the DGA in Hollywood on Tuesday night.

“Emilia Perez,” an exhilarating Mexico-set musical crime drama, made history after its premiere at the Cannes Film Festival, winning a collective prize for its ensemble cast of Saldaña, Gomez, Adriana Paz and Karla Sofía Gascón. The latter, who stars as a fearsome cartel leader who

embraces her true self as a woman and embarks on a redemptive path, became the first openly trans actor to win a major award at Cannes. While “Emilia Perez” has been submitted as France’s Oscar candidate, Netflix, which bought the movie for the U.K. and the U.S., is splurging to campaign for it in major categories, including best actress for Gascón, who could become the first openly trans actress recognized by the Oscars.

The movie opens in limited theaters before its Netflix premiere on Nov. 13, shortly after the end of U.S. election season, which has seen Donald Trump and his Republican allies pushing violent rhetoric towards trans people and Latinos.

“I voted today so I’m definitely exercising my responsibility as an American citizen to care for the well-being of my nation, because it’s also my son’s country and it has to be worthy of my children,” says Saldaña, who is campaigning for a best supporting actress Oscar nomination for her part in “Emilia Perez.”

Saldaña, whose mother is Puerto Rican, also reacted to the racist remarks made by Tony Hinchcliffe about Puerto Rico and Latinos during a campaign rally at Madison Square Garden over the weekend.

“It’s sad that today, 2024, there’s just so much poverty in character on so many people that we misname as leaders,” Saldaña says. “We have to pick leaders that really represent who we are as human beings.”

Gomez, meanwhile, also reacted to Hinchcliffe’s remarks, saying she “strongly disagreed with any comments that were made recently. I definitely want to stand by my people.” Gomez explained she posted a video of her submitting her ballot because “people can sometimes forget that the one vote can change everything.”

Sofía Gascón reflected on the recent election of Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo, who became Mexico’s first ever woman president and said she hoped “people will do things reasonably and think rationally.”

“We would not want to go back to what we had a few years ago in the world, which I think was not the best it could be. I have hope in human beings and I understand that they are going to choose what is best for their country and for the society in which they live,” she says.

The packed screening of “Emilia Perez” on the opening night of TAFFF gathered a large contingent of Netflix executives, including co-CEO Ted Sarandos, who delivered a speech about the service’s big investment in French movies for the last 10 years, and its track record with international movies at the Oscars, after taking home prizes with “Roma” and “All Quiet on the Western Front.”

Audiard, who received the Franco-American Cultural Fund Award from the hands of Michael Mann, spoke about the movie’s progressive message, especially when it comes to “representation” for openly trans performers. “The acting prize at Cannes meant a lot in terms of representation, and although I don’t wake up every morning thinking about opening up people’s minds, I think cinema has an identifying power and I always strive to make use of it in my films,” Audiard said.

Audiard also spoke about hitting the Oscar trail 14 years after “A Prophet,” which was nominated as a foreign-language feature. He said the campaign for “Emilia Perez” has been “much larger and more intense” than he ever experienced. While the French director is known to

be press-shy, he turned up on stage after the screening with Saldaña, Gomez, Paz and Gascón to participate in a Q&A hosted by former DGA president Taylor Hackford.

Truffart, the longtime director of TAFFF (previously called COLCOA), said the festival's move from the spring to the fall has allowed it to play a strategic role in the annual awards season, bringing together French talent, Academy voters and Hollywood players such as Hackford. Truffart has high hopes for this edition, which marks the festival's comeback after back-to-back cancelations due to the pandemic and the double SAG-AFTRA and WGA strikes.

"We moved the festival to the fall in 2019, the year of 'Les Miserables' and it brought us luck," said Truffart, citing that drama's Oscar nomination for international feature. "Last year, we would have had 'Anatomy of a Fall' if we hadn't canceled. Now with 'Emilia Perez,' we feel that there's a tremendous momentum. We haven't seen Netflix so excited about an international movie since 'Roma.'"

"'Emilia Perez' is such a unique artistic proposition. You can imagine it wouldn't get made in the United States, where there's a crisis in independent cinema. Netflix believes in the film too, because it's so special and so new to Academy members," Truffart continued.

Cécile Rap-Veber, president of the Franco-American Cultural Fund and CEO of SACEM, also spoke at the opening night gala, highlighting this edition's emphasis on music through movies such as "Emilia Perez" whose score was created by songwriters [Camille Dalmais](#) and [Clément Ducol](#), as well as "The Count of Monte Cristo" scored by Jérôme Rebotier; and "Bolero," about the life of musical composer Maurice Ravel.

Besides Audiard, this milestone edition of TAFFF is also gathering Oscar-winner Michel Hazanavicius with "The Most Precious of Cargoes;" directors Alexandre de La Patellière and Matthieu Delaporte and producer Dimitri Rassam with their French box office sensation "The Count of Monte-Cristo" on closing night; "Wild Diamond" director Agathe Riedinger and star Malou Khebi; Anne Fontaine with "Bolero;" and Julien Colonna with "The Kingdom," among others.

In total, the festival will showcase 60 films and series, including 14 shorts and 14 series or TV movies. As many as 16 of these features will premiere in L.A. after playing at the Berlin, Cannes, and Venice International Film Festivals.

IMDb

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[See full article at Variety - Film News](#)

Selena Gomez Goes Asymmetrical in Black Carolina Herrera Dress for 'Emilia Perez' Premiere at American French Film Festival

Gomez's latest film is available to stream on Netflix starting Nov. 13.

By
[HANNAH MALACH](#)
Plus Icon

OCTOBER 30, 2024, 9:36AM



Selena Gomez went minimalist at the premiere of “**Emilia Perez**” during the American French Film Festival on Tuesday. The Spanish-language musical, which costars **Zoë Saldaña**, debuts on Netflix on Nov. 13.

On the **red carpet**, Gomez wore a black long-sleeve Carolina Herrera midi dress featuring an asymmetrical neckline and a slit skirt. Black patent leather slingback pumps and diamond drop earrings completed her look.



Selena Gomez at the premiere of “Emilia Perez” during the American French Film Festival on Oct. 29 in Los Angeles. RIVER CALLAWAY

Stylist Erin Walsh, who also counts **Anne Hathaway** and Elizabeth Banks as clients, curated Gomez’s ensemble.

Hairdresser Renato Campora styled Gomez’s dark tresses in natural waves, while makeup artist Jenna Nicole gave her a pop of pink blush and a glossy nude lip.



Selena Gomez at the premiere of “Emilia Perez” during the American French Film Festival on Oct. 29 in Los Angeles. RIVER CALLAWAY

Earlier this month, the actress and singer brought the peekaboo bralette trend to the 2024 Academy Museum Gala, sporting a navy suede Alaïa halter gown featuring an exposed leather bustier. Gomez added on statement chrome bracelets and earrings by Tiffany & Co.

Several celebrities have tried out the peekaboo bralette layering trend this year, including Natalie Portman, Sydney Sweeney and Kristen Stewart, who revived the style after it had a major moment in 2023. Lingerie-inspired looks have dominated the catwalks of Miu Miu, Fendi and Elie Saab in recent seasons, leading to a proliferation of bra tops on the **red carpet**.

Gomez's makeup brand, Rare Beauty, partnered with Sephora for Mental Health Day to raise money for its Rare Impact Fund, a charity that supports mental health services for young people. All of the proceeds from Rare Beauty sales at Sephora on Oct. 10 were donated to the Rare Impact Fund.

"The mental health crisis continues to impact young people disproportionately and partners like Sephora are instrumental, not only by believing in this mission, but by contributing crucial funds to expand mental health resources for the young people who need them," Gomez said in a statement.



Selena Gomez at the premiere of "Emilia Perez" during the American French Film Festival on Oct. 29 in Los Angeles. **RIVER CALLAWAY**

Zoe Saldaña Embraces Dark Romantic Style With Playful Ruffles in Sheer Maxi Set at 'Emilia Pérez' Premiere at the American French Film Festival

The film hits Netflix Nov. 13.

By
[JULIA TETI](#)

OCTOBER 30, 2024, 10:31AM



Zoe Saldaña put a layered twist on the sheer trend at **the “Emilia Pérez” premiere** during the American French Film Festival in Los Angeles on Tuesday. The actress was joined by fellow cast members from the film, including Selena Gomez, among others.

For the occasion, Saldaña chose a sheer black blouse with a plunging neckline and ruched bodice, paired with a black maxiskirt featuring tiered ruffles. The blouse’s long sleeves and bodice panels featured sheer detailing.



Zoe Saldaña attends the “Emilia Pérez” screening at the The American French Film Festival on Oct. 29 in Los Angeles. RIVER CALLAWAY

For her accessories, Saldaña chose delicate pieces, including two string necklaces layered in contrasting metallics. She also wore bold statement earrings and various rings.

For her glam, Saldaña styled her hair in a tight chignon with softly curled wisps framing her face. Her makeup featured bold brows, a subtle smokey eye and a pop of color with a red lip to contrast her subdued look.



Zoe Saldaña attends the “Emilia Pérez” screening at The American French Film Festival on Oct. 29 in Los Angeles. RIVER CALLAWAY

Sheer dressing on the red carpet has been one of the most popular style trends of the year. Stars like Quinta Brunson, Dakota Johnson and Halle Berry have embraced this style for events such as the ESPY Awards, Tribeca Film Festival and film premieres.

The sheer trend also dominated 2024 runways, influencing the **spring 2025 season**. Designers like Tory Burch, Ralph Lauren and LaQuan Smith incorporated sheer elements into their spring collections.



Zoe Saldaña attends the “Emilia Pérez” screening at The American French Film Festival on Oct. 29 in Los Angeles. [RIVER CALLAWAY](#)

“Emilia Pérez” follows Rita (Saldaña), a lawyer who receives an unexpected offer to help a cartel boss (Karla Sofía Gascón) leave the business completely to become a woman. The film hits Netflix Nov. 13.

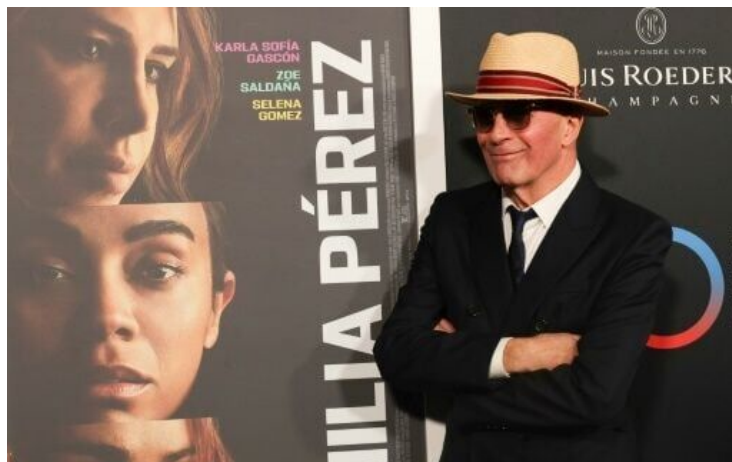
'I'm terrified': French auteur Audiard hits Oscars trail for 'Emilia Perez'

• Romain FONSEGRIVES Oct 30, 2024 Updated Oct 31, 2024



French director and writer Jacques Audiard's film 'Emilia Perez' won multiple prizes at Cannes

• VALERIE MACON



French director Jacques Audiard is steeling himself for a glitzy yet grueling campaign as an Oscars frontrunner

• AUDE GUERRUCCI

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REUTERS

'Emilia Perez' movie melds Mexican culture with musical melodies

By Rollo Ross and Danielle Broadway
October 31, 2024 3:03 AM PDT



[1/5]Cast member Zoe Saldana attends a screening of the film Emilia Perez on the opening night of the 28th Annual American French Film Festival in Los Angeles, California, U.S., October 29, 2024. REUTERS/Mario Anzuoni

LOS ANGELES, Oct 31 (Reuters) - For Zoe Saldana, whose parents were Spanish-speaking immigrants to the U.S., getting the opportunity to finally play a Spanish-speaking Latina role makes her latest movie, "Emilia Perez," rather special.

"The moment I embarked on this career in cinema, I rarely ever got the opportunity to play a full-on Latina that could speak fluently in Spanish consistently in a story," she said.
"And I was yearning for that."

"Emilia Perez" is a musical crime and comedy film written and directed by French director Jacques Audiard that mostly takes place in Mexico City.

Based on Audiard's opera libretto of the same name, "Emilia Perez" was released in the UK and Ireland last week and arrives in U.S. and Canadian theaters on Friday. It will stream on Netflix on Nov. 13.

In the film, Saldana portrays a jaded lawyer stuck in a dead-end job who helps drug cartel leader Juan "Manitas" Del Monte, played by Karla Sofia Gascon, to fake his death and transition from a man to a woman named Emilia Perez.

The cast also includes singer Selena Gomez as Jessi Del Monte, the wife of the cartel leader. For Gomez, playing Jessi enabled her to connect her culture and her career in a new way. "That's a huge part of my life that I didn't feel connected to for a while, just because I started to work when I was 7, and most of my jobs were in English," Gomez said. "So, I really felt like this was important."

Similarly, as a transgender woman, Gascon felt that portraying Emilia required an authentic approach.

She recalled that Audiard said Emilia needed to be her own person, different from Juan. "I told him if we work these characters so separately, distinct, people won't believe this is real. So, what we did was work Manitas as Manitas, work Emilia as Emilia," she said. "Think of it as a cook adding ingredients, ingredients of Manitas and Emilia." Understanding the cultural richness of Mexico City and leaning into the talent of the Latina actors, Audiard found himself on what he called a "collective adventure" with everyone working on the film.

"It was completely new, we'd never made a musical," he said.

"We had singing, we had dancing, we had dialogue, we had sets, and it was all at the same time, and that was exhilarating," he added.

Selena Gomez Says She'll 'Stand by My People' After Puerto Rico Garbage Joke: 'One Vote Can Change Everything'

Gomez, 32, said she "strongly disagreed with any comments that were made" about Puerto Rico by a comedian at Trump's recent New York City rally

By **Brian Brant** Updated on October 31, 2024 03:15PM EDT



Selena Gomez at "Emilia Perez" during the Opening Night of The American French Film Festival at DGA Theater Complex on October 29, 2024 in Los Angeles, California. PHOTO: RIVER CALLAWAY/VARIETY VIA GETTY

[Selena Gomez](#) is speaking up after a comedian at [Donald Trump](#)'s Madison Square Garden rally called Puerto Rico a "floating island of garbage" over the weekend.

Speaking with [Variety](#) at the opening night of the 28th American French Film Festival on Tuesday, Oct. 29, while promoting her movie *Emilia Perez*, Gomez said she "strongly disagreed with any comments that were made recently," referring to the disparaging remarks against the island by comedian [Tony Hinchcliffe](#) on Sunday, Oct. 27.

"I definitely want to stand by my people," said the *Only Murders in the Building* star, 32, who is Mexican-American.

She told *Variety* that she [posted herself](#) dropping her mail-in ballot this week because "people can sometimes forget that the one vote can change everything."

Gomez is one of many celebrities to rebuke Hinchcliffe and the Trump campaign in recent days after the comedian said, "There's a lot going on. I don't know if you know this, but there's literally a floating island of garbage in the middle of the ocean right now. I think it's called Puerto Rico."

Separately, Hinchcliffe said that Latinos "love making babies," following it with a crude remark: "There's no pulling out. They don't do that. They come inside, just like they did to our country."

He also made racist jokes about Black people, Jewish people and Palestinians during the set.

A month after appearing at a Trump rally to back the presidential hopeful, reggaeton superstar [Nicky Jam](#) rescinded his endorsement on Wednesday, Oct. 30.

"Never in my life did I think that one month later there would be a comedian who would criticize my country and speak poorly of my country," the 43-year-old said. "And for that I withdraw my support of Donald Trump. Puerto Rico should be respected."

[Aubrey Plaza](#) similarly [denounced](#) the offensive remarks. At *Wall Street Journal Magazine's* 2024 Innovator Awards, the actress said, "As a Puerto Rican woman, I just wanted to very quickly respond to the racist joke that was made at that Trump rally about Puerto Rico, where most of my family is from. Thankfully, my sweet abuelita wasn't here to hear that disgusting remark, but if she was alive today, I think she would say, 'Tony Hinchcliffe, go f--- yourself.'"

And one of Puerto Rico's biggest stars, [Bad Bunny](#), made a bold statement with an eight-minute [Instagram Reel](#) simply captioned "garbage." The video is the introduction played at the beginning of the 30-year-old reggaeton superstar's San Juan concerts in 2021 and is full of footage that captures the island's beauty and culture.

Meanwhile, in an interview with Fox News' Sean Hannity, Trump said he had "no idea" who Hinchcliffe was and alleged he had "done more for Puerto Rico than any president, I think, that's ever, that's ever been president," [Newsweek](#) reported.

"I have no idea, they put a comedian in, which everybody does," the former president added. "You throw comedians in. You don't vet them and go crazy. It's nobody's fault. But somebody said some bad things."

VARIETY

Oct 31, 2024 8:31pm PT

‘Being Maria,’ Starring Matt Dillon as Marlon Brando During Controversial ‘Last Tango in Paris’ Shoot, Secures U.S. Deal With Kino Lorber (EXCLUSIVE)

By Elsa Keslassy



Courtesy of Kino Lorber

[Kino Lorber](#) has acquired North American distribution rights to “[Being Maria](#),” a French movie revolving around the controversial production of Bernardo Bertolucci’s 1972 film “Last Tango in Paris.”

Directed by Jessica Palud, the movie stars “Happening” breakout Anamaria Vartolomei as Maria Schneider and Matt Dillon as Marlon Brando.

“Being Maria” had its world premiered at the [Cannes Film Festival](#) where it was the only female-directed film selected for the Premieres section. It’s now playing at [the American French Film Festival](#) at the DGA. where Kino Lorber’s boss Richard Lorber will be receiving an honorary tribute over the weekend.

The movie charts the turbulent life and career of the late French actress Maria Schneider, who was a promising young actress struggling to break into film when she was cast by Bertolucci, then still rising as a face of Italian cinema, to star in “Last Tango in Paris” alongside an American

superstar, Brando. The experience turned into a nightmare for Schneider, who felt sexually exploited during the filming of a crude scene that she claimed was added to Bertolucci during the shoot. After surviving this trauma, Schneider became an outspoken feminist advocate and spent the rest of her career fighting against the objectification of actresses in movies.

Unfolding through Maria's perspective, the movie has been described as a cautionary tale about the damages caused by sexual violence in cinema.

"Jessica Palud has crafted a moving, deeply resonant biopic of Maria Schneider," said Kino Lorber's Lisa Schwartz. "By centering the 'Last Tango in Paris' star's perspective, the film tells a story that feels more timely and relevant than ever. Anamaria Vartolomei is a true breakout performer, bringing Maria to life with nuance and complexity, and Matt Dillon delivers a compelling and fully embodied performance as Marlon Brando."

Kino Lorber will release the movie in 2025, followed by a digital, educational and home video release.

"Being Maria" was penned by Palud and Laurette Polmanss, and is loosely adapted from Vanessa Schneider's memoir "My Cousin Maria Schneider." The cast is completed by Giuseppe Maggio, Yvan Attal, Céleste Brunnquell and Marie Gillain. Vanessa Schneider is attending the American French Film Festival this week.

The deal for "Being Maria" was negotiated by Schwarz, Kino Lorber's head of theatrical acquisitions and distribution, and Studiocanal.

"We're delighted to partner with Kino Lorber's fantastic team to bring Jessica Palud's 'Being Maria' and Maria Schneider's journey to American audience after the amazing responses to the film we received from both critics and industry at the Cannes Film Festival," said Chloé Marquet, Studiocanal's head of international sales for films and TV series. "Kino Lorber has demonstrated over the years a unique ability to not only curate the best of contemporary world cinema from major international film festivals, but also to identify and highlight many new voices of French cinema."

"I am very proud that 'Being Maria' is being released in the United States, a pioneering country where actresses' voices have been freed, and I am very happy to be supported by the teams at Kino Lorber, a talented distributor and great lover of French cinema," Palud said.

"Being Maria" is produced by Marielle Duigou, co-produced by Kristina Zimmerman and Christie Molia, and executive produced by Alex C. Lo.

The film is a Les Films de Mina, Studiocanal, Moteur S'il Vous Plait production in co-production with Cinema Inutile with the participation of OCS – Ciné +, with the support of région Bretagne in partnership with CNC, Procirep, Angoa and Creative Europe – Media Programme of European Union in association with Cofimage 34.

The American French Film Festival Strengthens the Bond Between Hollywood and Le Cinema Francais

With a splashy opening-night screening of Jacques Audiard's buzzy Oscar hopeful 'Emilia Perez' and the inaugural TAFFF Achievement Award, the event is attempting something of a reboot following the pandemic and dual strikes.

BY SHANNON L. BOWEN

NOVEMBER 1, 2024 8:00AM



Zoe Saldana and Karla Sofia Gascón in 'Emilia Pérez,' the opening-night film at the American French Film Festival. COURTESY OF NETFLIX

Sometimes the best way to get what you want is to just pick up the phone and ask. At least, that's true if you're legendary Hollywood player and two-time former Directors Guild of America president Taylor Hackford.

"I called Ted Sarandos," recalls Hackford, who, for the purpose of that phone call, was wearing yet another hat: board member of the Franco-American Cultural Fund (FACF), which produces the American French Film Festival (TAFFF). "And I just said, 'Ted, I'm going to propose to you that we premiere *Emilia Pérez* at the American French Film Festival. That'll be our opening-night film.'"

It wasn't a small ask, seeing as TAFFF, the only American festival dedicated to French films and series, takes place at the DGA on Sunset Boulevard — while Netflix has its own iconic location for a Hollywood premiere, the historic and newly renovated Egyptian Theatre. But Hackford had more to offer the Netflix boss than just a warm *bienvenue* for the streamer's buzzy Festival de Cannes purchase, directed by *Jacques Audiard*.

"It's great, because [FACF and TAFFF stakeholders are] members of the Directors Guild, the Writers Guild and the MPA — all Oscar voters. This is to me a better way to frame this great film in its Hollywood premiere. Then take it to the Egyptian," Hackford told Sarandos. "You're going to make your own decision, but this, I think, will give it a big cross-cultural [push]."

Happily, Sarandos said yes ("I owe him a great debt," Hackford says). Then last month France chose *Emilia Pérez* as its best *international* feature Oscar submission. And on Tuesday during a red-carpet opening-night screening presented in association with Netflix, TAFFF showed an Audiard film for the first time.

Before the curtains rose, Audiard was honored with the festival's inaugural FACF Achievement Award, presented by the CEO of the Society of Authors, Composers, and Publishers of Music (SACEM) and FACF president Cécile Rap-Weber and FACF board member Michael Mann, who called *Emilia Pérez* a "contemporary masterpiece."

In a heartfelt acceptance speech, Audiard quoted renowned British child psychologist Donald Winnicott. "It is a joy to be hidden but a disaster not to be found," Audiard said. "If I quote Winnicott tonight it's because I think that if you, my dear Michael, and I have anything in common, it's this: the desire and the pleasure of hiding in our films, this pleasure of hiding, but with this terror of never being found, of being forever sentenced to the darkness of the hidden place. This award is the proof that you found me, and I thank you for that from the bottom of my heart."

Following the screening, Hackford moderated a Q&A with Audiard, cast members *Karla Sofía Gascón, Zoe Saldaña and Selena Gomez*, costume designer and artistic director Virginie Montel, and composers and songwriters Clément Ducol and Camille, who capped off the evening with a surprise performance of the song "Mi Camino," sung in the film by Gomez.

Emilia Pérez defies description. A musical crime drama written directed by French auteur Audiard, shot almost entirely in Paris, set almost entirely in Mexico against a backdrop of narco-culture, with dialogue and musical numbers in Mexican Spanish, the film couldn't be a better fit for TAFFF, whose *raison d'être* is cross-cultural exchange.

"I'm very touched and flattered that my film is opening the festival," Audiard says, "and I've always thought — and I really mean always — that films are vectors of communication between

cinematographies, between bodies of film. Cinema informs about something. It identifies something. And so if you look at the history of cinema, in the 1950s, American cinema influenced European and French cinema, and in the 1970s, European, French, also Asian cinema, influenced American cinema. I really think it's this perpetual exchange that is a great source of vitality."

Opening with *Emilia Pérez* was also a shrewd way to reintroduce TAFFF, running through Nov. 3 and now in its 28th edition, to the industry and to Los Angeles moviegoers. This year is something of a fresh start for the fest, whose parent organization, the FACF, is a partnership among the DGA, the WGA West, SACEM and the Motion Picture Association (MPA). Its goal is to promote French cinema in the US and encourage connections between the French and American entertainment industries.

In 2019, the festival, then known as City of Lights, City of Angels (COLCOA), moved from spring to fall. Its new place on the calendar, at the start of award season, made it relevant to the industry in a way it hadn't been before.



Karla Sofía Gascón, Zoe Saldana, and Selena Gomez, the stars of *Emilia Pérez*, which opened the American French Film Festival. PHILIP GUERRETTE

Prior to its move, the fest was where LA audiences first glimpsed such French talent as Marion Cotillard, in 2006's *La Vie en Rose*, eight months before she won the Oscar for Best Actress, and Omar Sy, in 2015's *Samba* — but it didn't offer the same timely exposure to industry decisionmakers. Now TAFFF is "where award season begins for French cinema in Hollywood," Mann said during a press conference announcing this year's program. Thanks to its fall berth, he explained, the festival has been able to screen some awards contenders for the first time after their premieres at the Berlinale, Cannes or the Venice International Film Festival — like with Ladj Ly's *Lés Misérables*, which had its US premiere at TAFFF in 2019 and went on to receive a best international feature Oscar nomination and to win a César for best film.

But then came 2020, when the pandemic forced the festival to go on hiatus. In 2022 it rebranded as TAFFF, only to stop down again in 2023 because of the writers and actors strikes.

“As a producer, I totally understand why we had to do it, but as a programmer, it was very frustrating because the program was ready,” says the fest’s executive producer and programmer François Truffart. (Indeed, the 2023 program was set to include Justine Triet’s *Anatomy of a Fall*, which went on to receive five Oscar nominations and one win, for best original screenplay.)

“But it’s interesting to see how people didn’t forget us,” Truffart says. “They were waiting for the festival to be back, so it’s very encouraging.”

The TAFFF program is a testament to that enthusiasm. Forty-five of the fest’s 60 films and series are international, North American and US premieres. Sixteen of the films are Hollywood premieres fresh from their showings in Berlin, Cannes and Venice. And eighteen films and series are showing at TAFFF before their releases in France.

Awards are one reason for the fest’s appeal. Of the fest’s 60 films and TV series — which include 32 feature films and documentaries, 14 series and TV movies, and 14 shorts — 59 of the 60 are in competition for the TAFFF Awards, which are handed out in Paris a week after the festival.

“They are becoming important in France,” Truffart says. “The interest from professionals for our awards is the fact that we have American juries and an audience which is majority from the film industry here. So the awards are very important now, because this is really the opinion of Hollywood about French cinema and this is the only moment for that.”

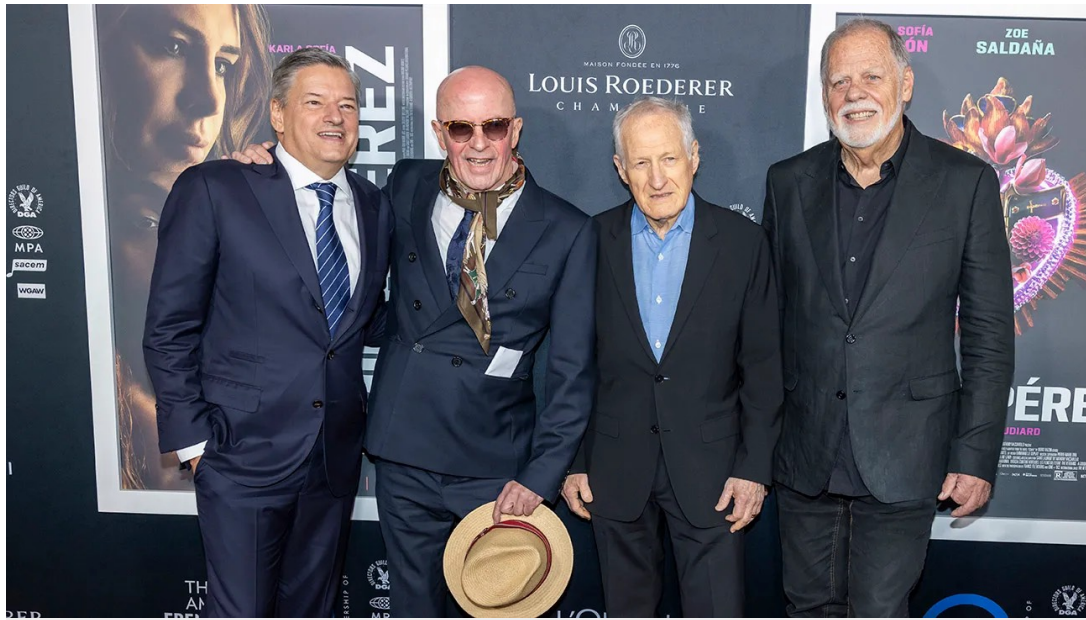
Additionally, this year will see the presentation of the inaugural TAFFF Impact Award. Celebrating an American industry professional who has championed French cinema and series in the US, the award will go to Kino Lorber Media Group chairman and CEO *Richard Lorber*.

“I think it’s really fascinating the way Lorber’s company has moved, and the way he was able to adapt the company to the market, to create new ways for films to enter the digital world,” Truffart says. “And his choices are always very exciting. ... He’s very open-minded, and he knows that the audience is very much more eclectic than people may think.”

But TAFFF offers more than statuettes. Professional programs are part of the week’s events as well, including workshops led by high-profile DGA and WGAW members.

Hackford took an active role in organizing this year’s DGA workshop, where a French delegation will meet with directors Lesli Linka Glatter and Steven Zaillian to discuss “their experience in conceiving and molding a directorial vision for (an) entire series, which is somewhat new,” Hackford says — and something Zaillian did with *Ripley* and Glatter did with the upcoming *Zero Day*, both Netflix series. “Then the delegation — because there’s going to be several directors of French streaming series — they’ll start batting ideas back and forth about how they do it, how we do it, what ideas we can exchange. And I think that’s part of the joy of what this film festival is really all about, is that kind of filmmaker-to filmmaker-exchange. It’s not for a general public to sit out there and watch. It’s for a workshop of real members from both sides, real filmmakers [from France] and America.”

Similarly, WGAW and FACF board member Howard Rodman will join producer Ted Hope in presenting a three-session workshop about adapting literary works for the screen — a trend that shows no sign of fading.



Ted Sarandos, Jacques Audiard, Michael Mann and Taylor Hackford at the opening night of the American French Film Festival in L.A. PHILIP GUERRETTE

Adaptations feature heavily at this year's TAFFF. Audiard based *Emilia Pérez* on a character from Boris Razon's novel *Écoute*. Then there's Jessica Palud's *Being Maria*, adapted from Vanessa Schneider's 2018 memoir *My Cousin Maria Schneider*; writer-director Anne Fontaine's *Boléro*, which draws on Marcel Marnat's 1986 biography of composer Maurice Ravel; and from co-creators Benjamin Charbit and Noé Debré, the TV series *Zorro*, whose titular character was created by American pulp writer Johnston McCulley more than 100 years ago. And there's the festival's closing-night film, the French box office smash *The Count of Monte Cristo* from writers-directors Matthieu Delaporte and Alexandre de la Patellière and based on the classic novel by Alexandre Dumas.

The festival opens other important doors for filmmakers as well. "We see the festival not only as a showcase that happens inside the cinemas at the DGA, but also as an opportunity for real connections and exchanges between that big visiting French delegation and the different aspects of the creative and business community," says Stan McCoy, FACF board member and president and managing director of the MPA for Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA). "The visiting delegation of French filmmakers will often have sit-down meetings with different people in the Los Angeles creative community. That often includes visiting one of the MPA member studios."

TAFFF parent organization FACF is playing the long game too, cultivating future generations of filmmakers and audiences through an educational program that's been running for 17 years. In partnership with the nonprofit European Languages and Movies in America (ELMA), TAFFF hosts five free screenings with Q&As at the DGA for a total of 3,000 schoolchildren from around the LA area.

ELMA surveys have shown that sadly "so many kids [in Los Angeles] — and we live in the world capital of cinema — have never seen a screening with a Q&A," says TAFFF deputy director

Anouchka van Riel, who took over the program in 2015 and sees it as key to the mission of cultural exchange. “It’s opening minds, and it’s young minds. It’s also at the stage where they get absolutely dazzled by some things they never would have thought about, which is the point of being exposed to different cultures and arts, and we have here the dual effect of being exposed to art in a foreign language.”

For those who can’t make it to TAFFF, the festival provides another resource: the TAFFF library. Started during the pandemic, the library offers a free search engine where anyone can look up a French title and see what it’s about, whether it’s streaming in the US, and if so, where. “You can do your own festival at home,” Truffart says.

Currently, the library lists 600 titles, and that number is sure to swell as French programming gains yet more of a foothold in the global market.

“There is more and more French content [being] produced. Why? Because now that there are all these [streaming platforms] — Netflix, Disney, Amazon Prime, HBO, Hulu — that form in France, they participate to produce new French content to be available on their platform,” says SACEM’s and FACF’s Cécile Rap-Veber. “It’s not only French cinema in French theaters or French movies on French broadcasters. It’s French series and French movies on global platforms that are available throughout the world.”

The best example, Rap-Veber says, is *Emilia Pérez*. It’s a French film that will have theatrical distribution; however, what size audience will it reach in theaters? “But it will be available on Netflix so it will be available in all the US consumer houses. And thanks to TAFFF and the highlight that [we’re doing] on *Emilia Pérez*, it’s an amazing window of promotion that benefits both the local services in the United States and the French cinema or audiovisual. It’s a balance of interest and now everybody benefits from that.”

Forbes

Netflix Puts Awards Stake In The Ground With U.S. Debut Of ‘Emilia Perez’

By **David Bloom** Senior Contributor I'm an LA-based columnist & consultant focused on tech & entertainment

Nov 01, 2024 at 02:59pm EDT



(PHOTO BY PHILIP GUERRETTE)

Want to demonstrate your streaming company's awards-season commitment to a recently acquired and wildly unique international film? Send the co-CEO to tell an industry insider crowd how great and special the movie is. While you're at it, have an Oscar-nominated director introduce your film's director for a special award, and enlist an Oscar-winning director to moderate the Q&A afterward. That should do it.



Michael Mann (l.) hands 'Emilia Perez' director Jacques Audiard The Franco-American Cultural Fund ... [+] (PHOTO BY PHILIP GUERRETTE)

All that pomp accompanied this week's opening night of [The American French Film Festival](#), which featured Jacques Audiard's Cannes Jury Prize winner *Emilia Perez* — followed by a panel that included stars Zoe Saldana, Selena Gomez and Karla Sofia Gascon, moderated by Taylor Hackford (*Ray*, *Against All Odds*, *An Officer and Gentleman*). Michael Mann (*Heat*, *Thief*, *Miami Vice*) gave a chapeau-twirling Audiard a special award on behalf of the festival.

Netflix Co-CEO Ted Sarandos made the rugged rush-hour ride down Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood to the Directors Guild of America headquarters, where he told the TAFFF opening-night crowd they were about to see a “brilliant and audacious film” that is “bold, moving and transcendent.”

Hackford, a board member of the Franco-American Cultural Fund, told the crowd, “What you're about to see I think isn't a good film, or a great film; it's a contemporary masterpiece.”

Later, introducing the panel that featured three of the four actresses (along with Adriana Paz) who collectively shared the Cannes festival's best actress award, Hackford said, “This is called cinema, and AI will never be able to duplicate it.”

It's also France's official entry in the Academy Awards' International Feature Film bakeoff this year — though Netflix reportedly has much bigger ambitions, such as best actress for Gascon's transformation from drug kingpin to someone very different and supporting actress for Saldana, playing the Mexico City lawyer who ends up becoming Emilia Perez's right-hand person on her road to redemption.

Gascon called the film “a gift from life. It's a wonderful journey to play both of these roles.”

Playing the murderous, thuggish drug kingpin required careful thought and training on what vocal register to use, how to move and carry the body in ways that noticeably differentiated him from Emilia's character, Gascon said.

Saldana has been in many of the most popular films of all time, including the *Avatar*, *The Avengers*, *Star Trek* and *Guardians of the Galaxy* franchises. *Emilia Perez* exercised some very different performance muscles. She used her own partial upbringing in the Dominican Republic and early loss of a family member to inform the background of her lawyer character. She also tapped nine years of dance training for her strong, highly choreographed musical performances in the movie.

"Later in life, I was feeling stuck," Saldana said. "What is my next challenge? (That led to) the evolution of this Jiminy Cricket character" advising Emilia Perez on the need for redemption after her years as a drug lord.

The panel's funniest moment came from Gomez, a former Disney child performer with a Grammy-nominated singing career, when she found out that the "audition" she was doing for Audiard in New York wasn't actually a test of her abilities.

"It wasn't an audition," Audiard interjected. "It was for the musicians. I already loved you."

A gape-jawed Gomez comically nearly dropped her microphone before recovering: "I wish I would have known that."

Gomez, who's been nominated for four Primetime Emmys for her role in Hulu's hit series *Only Murders in the Building*, said she was "hoping for a role like" Jessi, the drug lord's wife. "I was really down to do it. This is really the principle of having a second life, and then having a price to pay for it."

There's a good chance the operatic movie's many songs get consideration for Oscar music awards. At the end of the night, composer partners Clément Ducol and Camille performed one of the film's songs, further highlighting their music to a crowd that likely included plenty of Academy voters.

Audiard said he set out to "organically" create a modern-day opera with *Emilia Perez*, though he confessed he's no *aficionado* of the form. But the story tumbled out over 28 pages of what was effectively the libretto for a cinematic opera as he was creating the project.

"As we say in France, it was bound to become a musical," Audiard said.

Hackford pointed out that, though the film is set and appears to be shot in Mexico, it was instead mostly filmed on sound stages in the Paris suburbs. Audiard and the performers credited that in part to the vision of production designer Emmanuelle Duplay, who Audiard said was really the film's "artistic director," beyond her usual on-set duties.

The American French Film Festival wraps up this weekend with a closing-night screening of [the latest version of *The Count of Monte Cristo*](#), another contender for France's official Oscar submission.

For what little it's worth, the teen daughter of a good friend saw a mid-week festival screening with hundreds of other Los Angeles students in French programs and gave *The Count* an enthusiastic thumb's up, despite its three-hour length. She didn't pull out her phone once, she said. That's saying something.



Tax Incentives Aren't the Only Reason Why 'The Substance,' 'Emilia Pérez' and 'The Count of Monte Cristo' Shot in France

By [Elsa Keslassy](#)



Courtesy of Mubi

Jacques Audiard's musical thriller "Emilia Pérez," Coralie Fargeat's body horror "[The Substance](#)" and Matthieu Delaporte and Alexandre de La Patellière's epic adventure "[The Count of Monte Cristo](#)" have more in common than the fact that they're directed by French filmmakers.

Despite being set in Mexico and Los Angeles, respectively, "Emilia Pérez" and "The Substance" [both shot entirely in France](#), for the most part in studios in Paris.

France has been able to attract, host and retain a wide range of local and international productions, primarily thanks to its locations and crews, even if its [tax incentives](#) aren't as competitive as in other popular filming destinations in Europe, such as London and Prague.

At a panel discussion at [the American French Film Festival](#) in Los Angeles, “The Count of Monte Cristo” producer Dimitri Rassam; Jay Roewe, SVP of production planning and incentives at HBO Max and WBD; L.A.-based producer and filmmaker Jon Avnet; and Laurent Kleindienst, VP of strategy and development at Paris TSF Studios discussed the cost-effectiveness and creative advantages of filming in France.

“The Count of Monte Cristo,” a sprawling period movie adapted from Alexandre Dumas’ literary masterpiece, has been compared to “golden-era Hollywood epics” by [Variety](#), but it was produced with a budget of roughly \$50 million — about a third of what a U.S. blockbuster of a similar scale would cost.

“We made a movie for a fraction of what it would have cost elsewhere,” said Rassam, who previously produced the two-part saga “The Three Musketeers.” But the cost isn’t what determined the location of the shoot, Rassam said, because it would have been cheaper to film somewhere in Eastern Europe.

“We made that decision not because it was more cost effective, but because it was what was warranted to make those movies right, and we just felt like for a shoot of these lengths, we needed the actors to be immersed and to be as close as possible to the story,” said Rassam, who presented “Monte Cristo” on the closing night of the American French Film Festival on Sunday.

Ultimately, “The Count of Monte Cristo” shot in France for 70 days and the remaining seven days in Malta and Belgium at Lites Studios, which is believed to have the world’s most advanced water stage.

Rassam said this was an “illustration of the fact that when you look at France, you should look at it as a center of gravity of European cinema because whatever you don’t have in France, you can find close by in Europe.”

Meanwhile, Audiard opted to shoot “Emilia Pérez” entirely at the Bry-Sur-Marne Studios in France, where an authentic Mexican backdrop was built. In an [interview with Variety](#) in January 2023, Audiard said his decision was a creative one because he wanted to work with his regular crew and have more control over the space and light. The movie, which stars Zoe Saldaña, Selena Gomez and Karla Sofia Gascón, is being pushed into the awards season by Netflix, which is campaigning for it in major categories, and will represent France in the international feature race.

Fargeat wanted “[The Substance](#)” to have a different aesthetic than a typical L.A.-set movie and looked to create an alternative vision, so she shot it at TSF’s Epinay Studio outside of Paris with exteriors filmed on the French Riviera. The Mubi film stars Demi Moore as a recently fired TV star who uses a black market drug to create a younger version of herself, with dangerous side effects.

In terms of tax incentives, France offers a 30% tax rebate on qualifying expenses incurred in France, and up to 40% if visual effects are done locally and exceed €2 million (\$2.18 million). The country has also been building more studios and sound stages as part of a government-backed investment plan called France 2030.

“Something like 50 sound stages are being built at the moment, including 12 at our facility, [TSF Studios Paris](#), which spreads out over 120 acres,” Kleindienst said. The recently-inaugurated five-acre backlot reproduces the streets of Paris, it was budgeted at \$15 million out of a total investment of \$110 million which is part of the French government’s investment plan called France 2030, created to beef up production infrastructure.

“Just like L.A., it has become increasingly difficult for production to shoot inside the major capitals,” Kleindienst explained, “so backlots have become more and more important in terms of controlling your environment while still having a lot of freedom to shoot.”

France has also been at the forefront of creating a sustainable production infrastructure. “On a regular production, there’s between 10 and 15 tons of waste, and in our studios in France we’re going to recycle 98% of that. So every piece of wood, every piece of metal, is recycled,” Kleindienst said.

Roewe, whose team has shot several shows in France — including Olivier Assayas’ miniseries “Irma Vep” (for 100 days), as well as Daniel Goldfarb’s “Julia” (for 21 days) — said that “there are more options available than ever before with 120 incentives sitting out there, and as a result of those incentives, there’s infrastructure that have built up like never before.” Roewe and his teams can make “two, three or four different budgets” to determine where to shoot. And in the end, “it’s not about finding where it’s the cheapest to make something,” he said, “it’s where it’s most cost effective.”

The takeaway was the crew size, he said, because it was “probably a half to a third of what we would be doing on the film here.”

“On a project here, we would need a crew of 150 at a minimum, and we did the same thing with 50 to 75 people and we didn’t need the bigger machine. And also that’s how you do it in France,” Roewe explained, adding that “there’s also an incredible history of filmmaking in France which gives extra value to crews and artists working on productions.”

Avnet, a member of the DGA and WGA whose best known credits include “Fried Green Tomatoes” and “Three Christs” starring Richard Gere and Peter Dinklage, said he’s heard studio execs compliment the shooting process in France. “We had a great experience. We had half the size of the crew, and we moved faster. Everybody loves it,” he said. Although he hasn’t himself shot movies in France, Avnet said many core members of his regular crew are French.

A larger number of indie movies are now shooting in studios as they aspire to create event films, and Avnet argued that since “there’s a little bit more idealism and artistic freedom” in the independent film world than in the studio system,” filmmakers and producers like himself are “looking for excitement, more than just the best financial situation.”

“If the crew cares about the film, that creates an environment where everybody feels it, enjoys it and I believe it comes up on screen,” he said.

IMDb

[Tax Incentives Aren't the Only Reason Why 'The Substance,' 'Emilia Pérez' and 'The Count of Monte Cristo' Shot in France](#)



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Elsa Keslassy

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At a panel discussion at the American French Film Festival in Los Angeles, “The Count of Monte Cristo” producer Dimitri Rassam; Jay Roewe, SVP of production planning and incentives at HBO Max and WBD; L.A.-based producer and filmmaker Jon Avnet; and Laurent Kleindienst, VP of strategy and development at Paris TSF Studios discussed the cost-effectiveness and creative advantages of filming in France.

“The Count of Monte Cristo,” a sprawling period movie adapted from Alexandre Dumas’ literary masterpiece, has been compared to “golden-era Hollywood epics” by [Variety](#), but it was produced with a budget of roughly \$50 million — about a third of what a U.S. blockbuster of a similar scale would cost.

“We made a movie for a fraction of what it would have cost elsewhere,” said Rassam, who previously produced the two-part saga “The Three Musketeers.” But the cost isn’t what determined the location of the shoot, Rassam said, because it would have been cheaper to film somewhere in Eastern Europe.

“We made that decision not because it was more cost effective, but because it was what was warranted to make those movies bright, and we just felt like for a shoot of these lengths, we needed the actors to be immersed and to be as close as possible to the story,” said Rassam, who presented “Monte Cristo” on the closing night of the American French Film Festival on Sunday.

Ultimately, “The Count of Monte Cristo” shot in France for 70 days and the remaining seven days in Malta and Belgium at Lites Studios, which is believed to have the world’s most advanced water stage.

Rassam said this was an “illustration of the fact that when you look at France, you should look at it as a center of gravity of European cinema because whatever you don’t have in France, you can find close by in Europe.”

Meanwhile, Audiard opted to shoot “Emilia Pérez” entirely at the Bry-Sur-Marne Studios in France, where an authentic Mexican backdrop was built. In an [interview with Variety](#) in January 2023, Audiard said his decision was a creative one because he wanted to work with his regular crew and have more control over the space and light. The movie, which stars Zoe Saldaña, Selena Gomez and Karla Sofia Gascón, is being pushed into the awards season by Netflix, which is campaigning for it in major categories, and will represent France in the international feature race.

Fargeat wanted “[The Substance](#)” to have a different aesthetic than a typical L.A.-set movie and looked to create an alternative vision, so she shot it at TSF’s Epinay Studio outside of Paris with exteriors filmed in the French Riviera. The Mubi film stars Demi Moore as a recently fired TV star who uses a black market drug to create a younger version of herself, with dangerous side effects.

In terms of tax incentives, France offers a 30% tax rebate on qualifying expenses incurred in France, and up to 40% if visual effects are done locally and exceed €2 million (\$2.18 million). The country has also been building more studios and sound stages as part of a government-backed investment plan called France 2030.

“Something like 50 sound stages are being built at the moment, including our facility, [TSF Paris Backlot](#), which spreads out over 3.7 acres and reproduces the streets of Paris,” Kleindienst said. The recently-inaugurated backlot was budgeted at \$107.6 million and has benefited from \$15.8 million in public support as part of France 2030, which boasts a global envelop of \$218 million to beef up production infrastructure.

“Just like L.A., it has become increasingly difficult for production to shoot inside the major capitals,” Kleindienst explained, “so backlots have become more and more important in terms of controlling your environment while still having a lot of freedom to shoot.”

France has also been at the forefront of creating a sustainable production infrastructure. “On a regular production, there’s between 10 and 15 tons of waste, and in our studios in France we’re going to recycle 98% of that. So every piece of wood, every piece of metal, is recycled,” Kleindienst said.

Roewe, whose team has shot several shows in France — including Olivier Assayas’ miniseries “Irma Vep” (for 100 days), as well as Daniel Goldfarb’s “Julia” (for 21 days) — said that “there are more options available than ever before with 120 incentives sitting out there, and as a result of those incentives, there’s infrastructure that have built up like never before.” Roewe and his teams can make “two, three or four different budgets” to determine where to shoot. And in the end, “it’s not about finding where it’s the cheapest to make something,” he said, “it’s where it’s most cost effective.”

The takeaway was the crew size, he said, because it was “probably a half to a third of what we would be doing on the film here.”

“On a project here, we would need a crew of 150 at a minimum, and we did the same thing with 50 to 75 people and we didn’t need the bigger machine. And also that’s how you do it in France,” Roewe explained, adding that “there’s also an incredible history of filmmaking in France which gives extra value to crews and artists working on productions.”

Avnet, a member of the DGA and WGA whose best known credits include “Fried Green Tomatoes” and “Three Christs” starring Richard Gere and Peter Dinklage, said he’s heard studio execs compliment the shooting process in France. “We had a great experience. We had half the size of the crew, and we moved faster. Everybody loves it,” he said. Although he hasn’t himself shot movies in France, Avnet said many core members of his regular crew are French.

A larger number of indie movies are now shooting in studios as they aspire to create event films, and Avnet argued that since “there’s a little bit more idealism and artistic freedom” in the independent film world than in the studio system,” filmmakers and producers like himself are “looking for excitement, more than just the best financial situation.”

“If the crew cares about the film, that creates an environment where everybody feels it, enjoys it and I believe it comes up on screen,” he said.

VARIETY

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‘The Marching Band,’ ‘Souleyman’s Story’ Top Winners at American French Film Festival – Film News in Brief

By Jazz Tangcay, Andrés Buenahora



The Franco-American Cultural Fund has unveiled the nine award winners from the [American French Film Festival](#), which took place in Hollywood from Oct. 29- Nov. 3.

Taking home top prize for the audience award was “The Marching Band,” directed by Emmanuel Courcol. Boris Lojkine’s “Souleyman’s Story” took home the critics award while Louise Courvoisier’s “Holy Cow” nabbed the first film award. Taking home the American students award was “The Count of Monte Cristo” written and directed by Matthieu Delaporte and Alexandre De La Patellière. David Hertzog Dessites’ doc “Once Upon a Time Michel Legrand” won the documentary film award.

PARISLA



CHRISTINE ANGOT — A FAMILY

The American French Film Festival

UCLA Department of European Languages and Transcultural Studies Conference

October and November 2024, Los Angeles

By Yann Perreau

In one of the most poignant scenes from her debut documentary **A FAMILY**, writer **Christine Angot** looks at a black and white photograph of herself as a teenager. “I remember this photo, this moment in my life. I wasn’t in good shape,” she confesses. One can see in her eyes how she is going back in time, remembering. This was the time when her father started raping her. Pierre Angot, an elegant and intelligent upper-class man, had divorced her working-class mother when she was pregnant. Years later, when Christine was barely a teenager, he had suddenly expressed an interest in seeing his daughter, with whom he had barely met. As Christine will discover, this reunion was clearly sexually motivated.

Angot has told this unbearable story in many of her books. To date, she has published twenty-three autobiographical works. As she told the audience at a recent **UCLA Department of European Languages and Transcultural Studies** conference—held on the occasion of the Los Angeles premiere of **A FAMILY** at the **American French Film Festival**—she defines these works as “novels, because they are about life and characters.” Angot is a straightforward, unapologetic, sharp, flamboyant, truth-seeking, and ultimately compelling person. Her books are like her—they have the multifaceted literary qualities of Marguerite Duras, Maggie Nelson, Toni Morrison, and Karl Ove Knausgård. Her autofictions explore her childhood as well as her contemporary adult life, going in different directions (love stories, and so on) but ultimately returning to the same topic, the drama of her life: incest and its metastasis—how it affects, directly or indirectly, everyone around it.

Her first book, **L’Inceste/Incest** (published in 1999 in France, and in the United States in 2017 by Archipelago Books, translated by Tess Lewis), describes, in graphic detail, a girl’s incestuous relationship with her father, from when she was fourteen years old until she was nearly twenty. “I can’t stand writing about it,” she tells me when I question her at the UCLA conference. “I wish I could write about something else. But I don’t have the choice.” Things could have been different for Angot, who had the courage and tenacity it took her to write and publish her devastating life story. When she was twenty-eight, she decided to file charges against her father. The officer at the police station told her that too much time had passed since the crime was committed. In France at the time, a law prohibited victims of sexual abuse from filing charges against their perpetrators if twenty years had passed since the act. “The only thing worthwhile is literature,” she told a French journalist at the time. “Justice, the police, it’s nothing.”

For six years, Angot's manuscript was returned by the publishers she sent it to, one after the other. She had to wait until she was almost forty to see her first book published. *L'Inceste* sold seventy thousand copies in the first three months of its release—a considerable number in France. But it remains despised by the literary establishment. Angot remembers “ten years of silence from the press,” and the harsh words of many literary critics who, finally paying attention to her books, would slam them as “obscene” or “voyeuristic.” The critics have reflected the discomfort and the hypocrisies of our society when anybody addresses this issue—especially the victims themselves. Things have progressed since the 1990s, and we should thank Angot for this. She has opened our eyes and provoked a national debate on the topic, inspiring a new generation of authors such as Camille Kouchner and Neige Sinno to write about incest in France. Since Angot, we can think about the topic differently—not with the easy pity for the victims typical of people who'd rather not deal with it, but by addressing our collective responsibility. Indeed, from the clichés and stereotypes sexualizing girls from a young age (and boys too, in a different way), to the patriarchal mindset, still prevalent, of which incest is ultimately an expression, we live in a culture of incest that nobody dares addressing or even recognizing for what it is.

“Incest is, of course, a sexual act, but it is ultimately an expression of someone's power toward others,” Angot tells the students at UCLA. When someone is sexually abusing you, he/she is saying: I have power over you. Claude Lévi-Strauss famously stated that the universal incest taboo is the way human societies resolve the opposing dangers of excessive love and hatred. For Angot, the taboo seems to exist not against the act itself as much as against speaking about it. Many complex and fundamental reasons explain the reluctance, fear, and hatred sometimes expressed by most people when confronted with incest in their midst—especially by the direct entourage of an “incested” person such as Angot. The film addresses this complexity when Christine confronts, as she does in some of her books, the various protagonists of her story. At first her stepmother Elisabeth, who married her abusive father and remained with him even after knowing what had happened, would rather deny it. “I am on your side,” she tells Angot. She is trying to be sympathetic because the camera is there. But you can see she is not honest. Her hypocrisy, her cowardice, sweats from every part of her skin.

The writer, accompanied by a film crew, had to block the old woman's door with her foot get into her house. She is back in the east of France, Nancy, the same city where she was raped. That's how the film came along, she explains: “In late June 2021, in the final stages of editing the book *Le Voyage dans l'Est*, I received a call from the person who handles travel arrangements at my publishing company. I needed to confirm invitations in Nancy, Strasbourg, and Mulhouse. I thought I needed a camera to be there with me. A camera is something that accompanies, supports, and sees the same thing as oneself.” So Angot called a friend, renowned cinematographer Caroline Champetier, who agreed to accompany her on the trip and record her traumatic memories. Angot also describes her “naïve hope” of seeing her half-brother and half-sister there. “They would come to my book signing, and we would fall into each other's arms, as in a Hollywood movie.” It did not happen.

Elisabeth is someone who chose not to listen to her stepdaughter, someone who stayed with the man who did this and continued to love him. Someone who separated the two kids she had with that man from their half-sister, who kept Christine far away from her as if she were dangerous. How much did she know or not know? The questions are too complex to answer here. Read Angot books to find out. “The drama of your life is that you never encountered the love of your dad,” Elisabeth tells Angot in the film. After telling her goodbye with a big smile,

Elisabeth filled a complaint against Christine for privacy intrusion. Preparation for a trial is in process.

With her real mother, it's also painfully difficult. "I realize something changed in your life when you were thirteen," she tells Christine in the film, mentioning the distance between them but never mentioning the horror that her daughter was going through that she is partly responsible for. "Are you sure this is the problem, the 'distance between you and me'?" asks Christine. "I am unable to speak about it," admits her mother. Rather than addressing her daughter's pain, she analyzes her own. "Writing became vital not to lose my mind," Angot told the audience. "Psychoanalyses also saved my life." In *L'Inceste*, the narrator suffers a manic-depressive breakdown. But it's not as if you could "turn the page," it's not as if writing was some magical cure. Most of the time, Angot feels misunderstood. Alone. She jokes about people constantly asking her, "when will you write about something else?"

Nobody likes to read or hear about incest. Yet, we all should. "Nobody truly understood what happened to me," she said. "And me neither!" Even after twenty-three books, it can still bear further explanation. Incest remains one of the biggest mysteries of human nature.

Philip K. Dick once wrote, "Reality is that which, when you stop believing in it, doesn't go away." In that respect, incest is the realest of all things. Truth is ultimately what Angot is seeking, what she calls "clarity" or to be "awake." "It has to be a purpose, a passion, because it is painful to write about it. To live it again and again. This kind of truth will also damage your relationship with your family and people close to you." And as she summarizes yet another tragic aspect of her life: "You cannot have at the same time a love for truth and a love of the people around you." Like other memoir and autofiction writers before her, she has accepted the social cost of this truth. Ultimately, though, it's not her books that have alienated her from her family. It is what her father has done to her.

Her books and this film are also an attempt to understand, a bet on a possible reconciliation. There are magical moments of family reunion in her film that only cinema can provoke. In a beautiful scene, she asks her ex-husband, Claude, what he felt when she finally got a prestigious literary prize for a book. "I felt that I had been right," he answers, deeply moved. Claude was there for her twenty years ago, encouraging her and recomforting her when her manuscripts were returned by publishers. He has always admired and believed in her talent as a writer. You can see it in how he looks at her. They take each other's hand. "We haven't touched each other like this for twenty years," Angot recalls. With the camera there, they say things to one another that they wouldn't have said in other circumstances. She also tells her ex-husband the main reason why they split. Twenty years ago, after marrying Claude, Christine had contacted her father to tell him the big news. She hadn't been speaking with him for a while, still traumatized by his sexual abuses. Still, she finds the courage to write him: "We should have normal relations." He agrees and travels to meet the couple at their house. In the night, he goes to rape her daughter once again, an adult now, in the little room where she sleeps separately from Claude. Her then-husband hears the bed in another room making noises, yet he doesn't do anything. "Why didn't you react?" she asks him in the film. "I heard it, but I couldn't do anything," he admits. "You know what I did? I went to look at myself in a mirror." Christine knows what Claude is talking about: he was also raped by a man, when he was 11 years old. "That's the little boy you saw there, in that mirror," she tells him. He nods in silence, then says he feels terrible, ashamed of his cowardice. "Claude, you shouldn't be ashamed of yourself," she reassures him. They are both incest survivors. Ultimately, Angot was right to do this film. It brings her—and us—hope, reconciliation, and forgiveness.



Christine Angot, *Une famille / A Family* (2024), images (5)—including the third from top photograph, which depicts Angot (left) and her daughter, **Léonore Chastagner—courtesy and © the filmmaker, **Le Bureau**, and **Rectangle Productions**.**