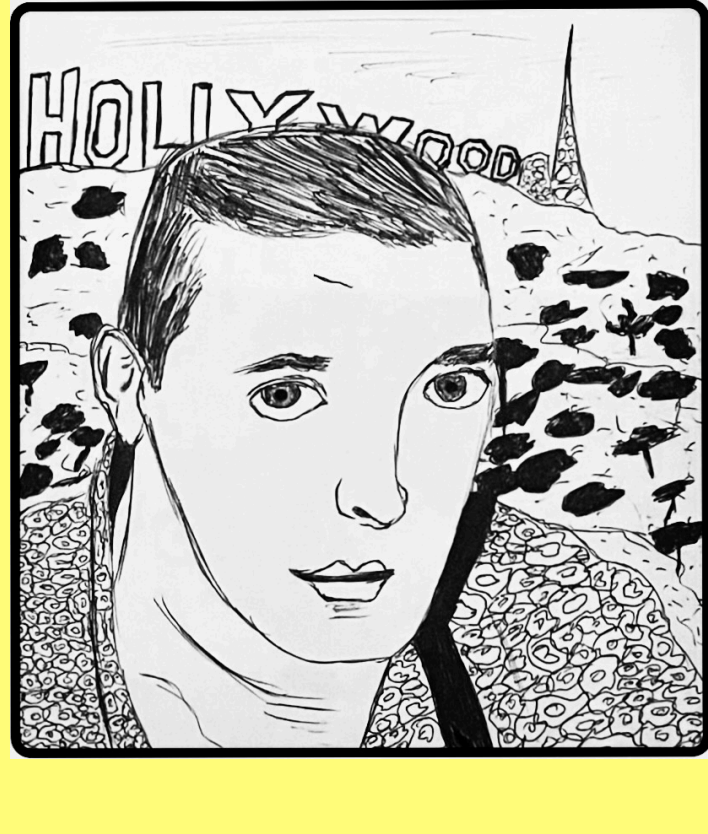


CANNES

Selections by Vince LePlay



Festival de Cannes (held every May in the south of France) is arguably the most reputed gathering of artists, critics and frenzied media the cinema zeitgeist has to offer. It's the ultimate testing ground for films that aim to make a major impact on audiences and ride that wave throughout the rest of the year. As seen with such diverse past winners (*Pulp Fiction*, *Blue Is The Warmest Color*, *Farewell My Concubine*), anything and everything is up for grabs as far as notoriety, praise and positive word of mouth go. With hot weather just around the corner, here are five films premiering at Cannes that offer a cool alternative to the usual summer slog of big-budget blockbusters.

Anora

With his first trio of astounding films (*Tangerine*, *The Florida Project*, *Red Rocket*) igniting his somewhat uncharacteristic rise to stardom, next-gen director Sean Baker has a lot to deliver in matching their authentic story and whiz-bang spirit. With *Anora*, he gives viewers a comedy about a sex worker shot on location in New York City and Las Vegas. Expect to see plenty of gritty underground-style camerawork and clever budget workarounds that Baker has become so signature at capitalizing on. Starring Mikey Madison (*Once Upon A Time... In Hollywood*) in her first leading role, this is sure to leave Cannes jurors talking. We can't wait.



Bird

This gripping character drama is Andrea Arnold's first film in eight years after 2016's underrated *American Honey* and marks a welcome return for the director. How can you go wrong with Barry Keoghan? The white-hot actor plays father figure to his younger brother when their dad neglects to be in the picture. With the London neighborhood of Kent as the backdrop of the siblings' journey, one can be sure that Arnold has captured another gutsy coming-of-age story told through her uniquely askew lens.



Megalopolis

Will this be THE MOVIE WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR? Legendary director Francis Ford Coppola caps off an extremely memorable career with what may be his most epic offering yet. Just the cast speaks volumes to what we're dealing with here: Adam Driver, Nathalie Emmanuel, Giancarlo Esposito, Jon Voight, Laurence Fishburne, Aubrey Plaza, Shia LaBeouf, Jason Schwartzman, Grace VanderWaal, Kathryn Hunter, Talia Shire, Dustin Hoffman, D.B. Sweeney, James Remar and Chloe Fineman amongst many others. The staggering star power is matched by Coppola's monumental script that's been redrafted and rewritten countless times since 1983 to get it to where it is today. And the fact that the man put up the entire \$120 million budget out of his own pocket? Fully-realized self-commitment to craft if I've ever seen it. With a wide release already slated for November, you may just be hearing about this one all year long.



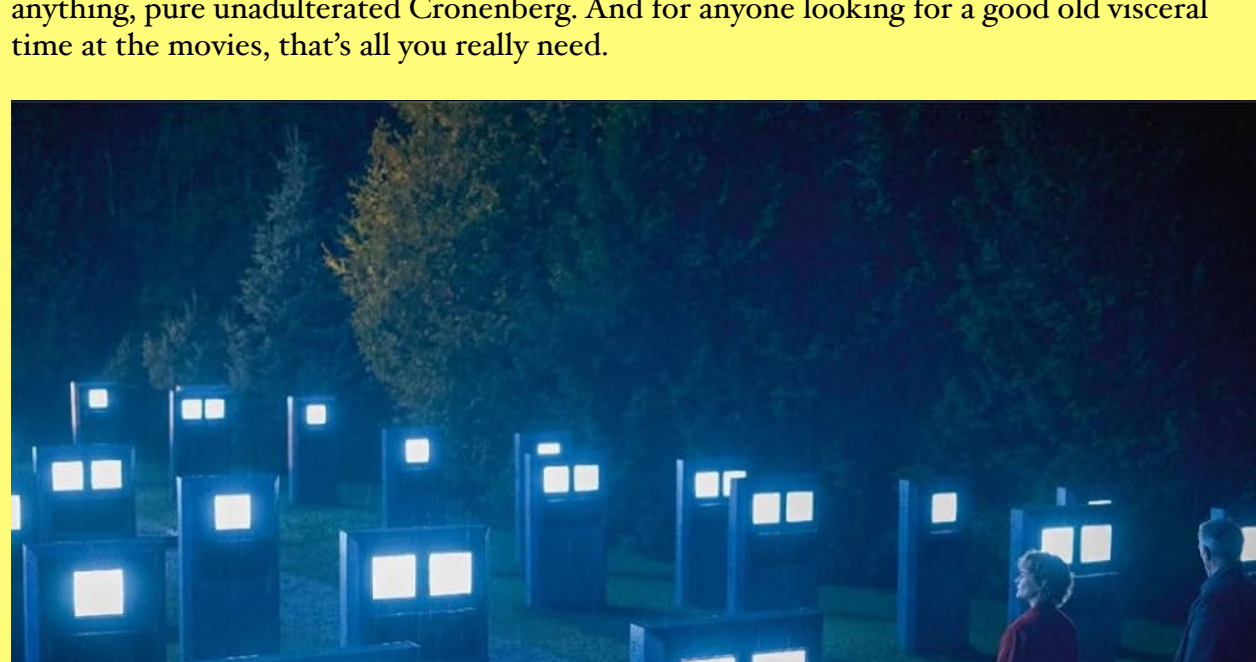
Oh Canada

Sticking to his tried-and-true "lonely hero" narrative, Paul Schrader churns out another refined work with this look into the life of a tortured writer and Vietnam draft dodger on the brink of death. Surely more details will make their way through the woodwork after its premiere but be on the lookout for praise to the screenplay. As far as writing goes, Schrader's got it mastered with a skill and grace rarely seen in younger generations. We'll be waiting with anticipation to see how this one plays out.



The Shrouds

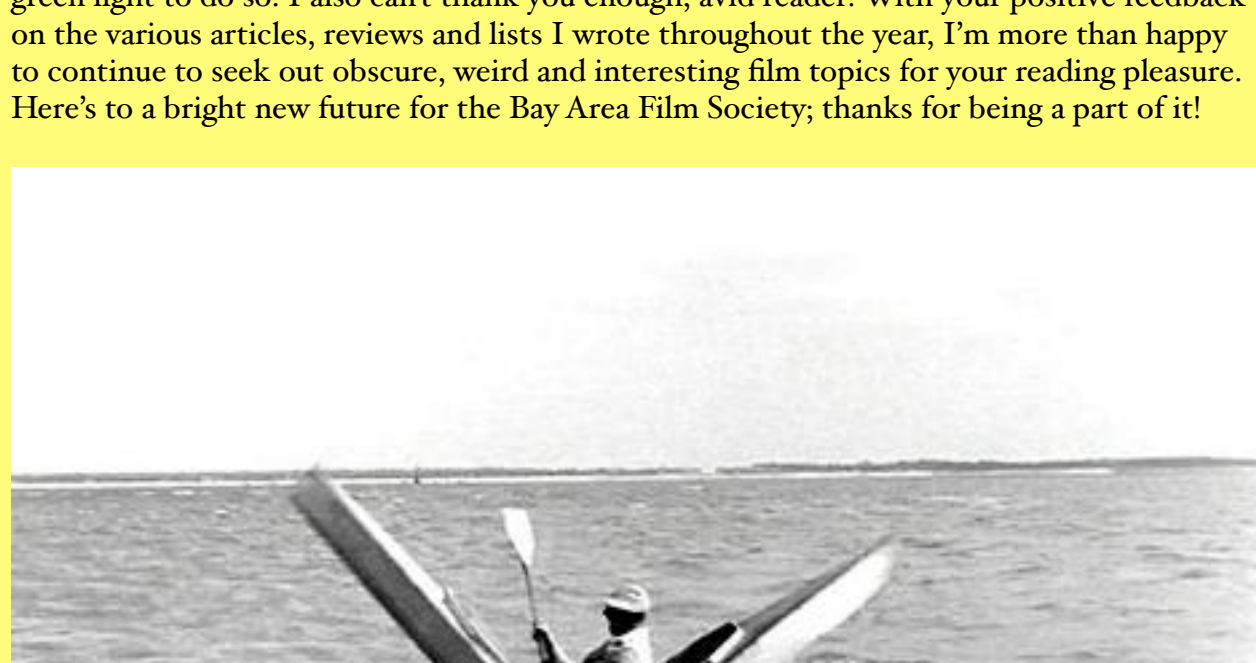
Canadian horror master David Cronenberg continues his late-period streak here with what is said to be his most personal film to date. Financed crowd-pleaser Vincent Cassel plays a widower named Karsh who finds himself deep within the throgs of the grieving process. Out of this suffering and darkness he comes up with the idea to build a machine that has the potential to connect the living with the dead. This semi-autobiographical outing will be, if anything, pure unadulterated Cronenberg. And for anyone looking for a good old visceral time at the movies, that's all you really need.



And to end on that note...

Spring is here and with it comes the end of yet another successful BAFS season! I'd like to take the time to thank the organization for all it's done for the local community and the exposure it's given to all the amazing films shown throughout the season. *Past Lives*, *Anatomy of a Fall*, *The Boy & The Heron*, *The Zone of Interest* & *Perfect Days* all received some Oscar love while *How To Blow Up A Pipeline*, *Róise & Frank*, *The Persian Days* & our annual retro double feature (*The Exorcist* followed by *Night of the Living Dead*) brought in droves of moviegoers seasoned and new. It's vital that we continue to bring these important and entertaining movies to the Bay Area and give the public the chance to see something new and exciting. Shout out to the Bay Area Theater for being a hub of cultural relevance in the downtown district and providing a historic venue for BAFS to show films. I'd also like to recognize Northlake Capital, Honest Dog Books and Black Cat Coffeehouse as our main season sponsors. Thank you so much for supporting your local arts; your partnership is much appreciated! And finally a massive thanks to YOU! Without your support and love of cinema, BAFS wouldn't be what it is so thank you for coming out and catching some truly awesome movies!

Since relocating to the west coast in the past year, it's been an honor to contribute to the society as a field columnist for the newly minted BAFS website. Thanks to the board for wanting to give viewers more material and info via a digital medium and giving me that green light to do so. I also can't thank you enough, avid reader! With your positive feedback on the various articles, reviews and lists I wrote throughout the year, I'm more than happy to continue to seek out obscure, weird and interesting film topics for your reading pleasure. Here's to a bright new future for the Bay Area Film Society; thanks for being a part of it!



Enjoy your summer and see you in September!

