



# FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL AOTEAROA 2026



**27 MAY - 24 JUNE**  
FRENCHFILMFESTIVAL.CO.NZ

**2026 PROGRAMME**

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## KIA ORA KOUTOU AND BIENVENUE!



**FERGUS GRADY**  
Festival Director

Bienvenue to the French Film Festival Aotearoa 2026!

This year marks the 20th edition celebrating French film in Aotearoa, and it is truly fantastique to return to 24 towns and cities across the motu. Our 2026 line-up showcases stories that encompass a variety of perspectives and genres, and I hope you'll enjoy discovering them.

We're never short of a biopic, and this year we have *The Richest Woman in the World* about the billionaire heiress to the L'Oréal fortune, and *De Gaulle*, which charts Charles de Gaulle's rise

as a military leader and politician during World War II. Also on show is *The Money Maker*, which tells the fascinating story of a counterfeiter known as the "Cezanne of money" for his artistic skills in post-war Paris, and *Case 137*, a gripping police story, for which Léa Drucker was deservedly awarded the 2026 César and Lumière Best Actress awards. Literary themes are also well spotlighted this year: we have a stylish adaption of Albert Camus' famous 1942 novella *The Stranger*, and the much anticipated adaptation from Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* story: the dramatic *Jean Valjean*. Victor Hugo is again highlighted in the wonderful modern comedy *An Evening With Victor Hugo*.

Enjoy your journey through our selection of French cinema, we've certainly been looking forward to bringing it to you.

**Vive le cinemal**



**LAURENCE BEAU**  
Ambassador of France  
to New Zealand

Dear cinephile friends,

French cinema has long held a special place in the hearts of New Zealand audiences and 2025 marked the most successful year to date in the country for the Festival. From sold-out screenings to enthusiastic critical reception, the appetite for French film has never been stronger — confirming this programme as the unmissable rendezvous for lovers of bold, uncompromising cinema.

This year's selection shines a particular light on the extraordinary depth of French acting talent, and on the women who define it. Isabelle Huppert (*The Richest Woman in the World*), whose screen presence remains in a category of its own, is joined by Laure Calamy (*What is Love?*), one of the most captivating performers of her generation, and Léa Drucker (*Case 137*), recently honoured with a César Award in recognition of a career of rare and consistent brilliance. Together, they offer audiences a masterclass in the art of inhabiting a role with intelligence and truth. Running through this programme is also the rich and complex figure of motherhood — brought to life with remarkable subtlety and warmth by Leïla Bekhti (*Once Upon My Mother*), whose performance resonates long after the credits roll. It is this combination of artistic ambition and deeply human storytelling that makes French cinema so enduringly, and so powerfully, alive.

The staying power of the French Film Festival Aotearoa owes much to the passionate contribution of the New Zealand actors and institutions involved in its making, without whom none of this would be possible, and to the New Zealand audience's continued enthusiasm for rich and engaging cinema. Un grand merci de la part du cinéma français.

**Bons films à tous!**

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**FESTIVAL PATRON - KATE RODGER**

Bonjour à tous! I'm delighted to be returning as your Patron this year, and it's been my pleasure to immerse myself in this fantastic selection of French films.

It's always hard to pick favourites, but here are eight that, for me, have just that little bit extra *je ne sais quoi*.

**JUST AN ILLUSION** (Rating TBC)  
 (*Juste une illusion*)

If you loved *The Intouchables*, then you're going to love the directors' latest film. Set in the 80s with a fantastic soundtrack, the film features an incredible debut performance from Simon Bublil, who will no doubt be the next Jean-Pierre Léaud (boy from *The 400 Blows*). This warm-hearted comedy has definite laugh-out-loud moments!

**THE MUSICIANS** (PG)  
 (*Les musiciens*)

Featuring wonderful music and set in a lavish mansion in the picturesque Champagne region, this is not to be missed. If you liked Grégory Magne's debut film *Perfumes* then you're going to love this.

**SANTIAGO: THE CAMINO THERAPY**  
 (Rating TBC) (*Compostelle*)

I loved this delightful journey that unfolds on the Camino de Santiago walkway. The terrific Alexandra Lamy leads this touching and rewarding story, set against a backdrop of the most spectacular scenery.

**WHAT IS LOVE?** (M)  
 (*C'est quoi l'amour?*)

This marital muddle sees an ex-husband and wife on a roadie to Rome to annul their marriage. The pairing of Vincent Macaigne with the always-hilarious Laure Calamy delivers a wonderful family story.

**CASE 137** (M)  
 (*Dossier 137*)

Léa Drucker was rightly awarded the César and Lumière Best Actress awards for her stellar performance in this riveting police thriller. I really admire a great drama, and this one stayed with me well after the final scene.



**THE MONEY MAKER** (M)  
 (*L'affaire Bojarski*)

Reminiscent of Austrian-German film *The Counterfeiters* (one of my all time favs), Jan Bojarski is a brilliant engineer who falls in with the wrong crowd and becomes the "Cézanne of counterfeit money". Set in the tumultuous world of post-war Paris, this is not to be missed!

**ONCE UPON MY MOTHER** (G)  
 (*Ma mère, Dieu et Sylvie Vartan*)

A moving and life-affirming watch, I loved this story of a mother's determination to forge a fabulous life for her son. Vibrant visuals and joyous songs from Sylvie Vartan make this film the complete package!

**AN EVENING WITH VICTOR HUGO**  
 (Rating TBC) (*Victor comme tout le monde*)

I always enjoy watching the fabulous Fabrice Luchini, and he doesn't disappoint in this tongue-in-cheek comedy framing the writings of Victor Hugo against today's modern world.



FESTIVAL DE CANNES  
2025 OFFICIAL SELECTION  
OUT OF COMPETITION

# COLOURS OF TIME

LA VENUE DE L'AVENIR

**STARRING:** Suzanne Lindon, Abraham Wapler, Julia Piaton, Vincent Macaigne

**DIRECTED BY:** Cédric Klapisch

COMEDY, DRAMA | 126 MINUTES | *M Drug use, offensive language & nudity*

Director Cedric Klapisch has crafted a genuine crowd pleasing story that blends the excitement, wonder and art of Belle Epoque France with present day themes around identity, legacy and connection.

In 1895, young Adele (Suzanne Lindon) leaves Normandy for Paris, a city alive and buzzing with invention, photography and the rise of Impressionism.

In the present day, her descendants inherit an unexpected legacy: a country side house in Normandy, abandoned for decades and suspended in time. Four of Adele's descendants arrive to survey the Estate, and together end up piecing together the story of Adele's unexpected life.

**Colours of Time** is a charming and fascinating family saga, and is sure to be a hit at this year's Festival. Book your opening night tickets now!

You are invited to the Opening Night of French Film Festival Aotearoa 2026, and the New Zealand premiere of *Colours of Time*!

For more information on our Opening Night events, check with your local cinema or visit [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz)



# DE GAULLE

## TILTING IRON

LA BATAILLE DE GAULLE: L'ÂGE DE FER

**STARRING:** Simon Abkarian, Simon Russell Beale, Florian Lesieur, Benoît Magimel

**DIRECTED BY:** Antonin Baudry

BIOGRAPHY, DRAMA | 158 MINUTES | RATING TBC

Direct from the world premiere in France comes **De Gaulle: Tilting Iron**.

June 1940. France collapses and signs the Armistice. In the midst of the chaos, one man, Charles de Gaulle, refuses to give up.

Taking the ultimate gamble he flees to London and seeks to convince the world that the battle for France is neither over or lost. What follows next is a triumphant story of faith, audacity and an unshakeable quest for freedom.

Antonin Baudry has crafted a powerful and dramatic view of a man at the very centre of a turning point in history, on his path to becoming a 20th century leader and cultural icon. The reality of intense politics, family struggles and

the impact of war are deftly drawn in this geopolitical thriller, which has been more than five years in the making.

Simon Abkarian commands the screen as the titular General, leading a stand-out ensemble cast including Benoît Magimel, Mathieu Kassovitz, Francois Darlan, Niels Schneider and the César-winner Anamaria Vartolomei (*The Count of Monte Cristo*). The talented Simon Russell Beale (*The Choral*) rounds out the cast as Winston Churchill, with the film exploring the complex relationship between De Gaulle and the British Bulldog.

Sure to be a talking point of the Festival, don't miss out on seeing this keenly anticipated film.



FESTIVAL DE CANNES  
2025 OFFICIAL SELECTION  
OUT OF COMPETITION

CÉSAR  
AWARD WINNER



# THE RICHEST WOMAN IN THE WORLD

LA FEMME LA PLUS RICHE DU MONDE

**STARRING:** Isabelle Huppert, Marina Foïs, Laurent Lafitte, Raphaël Personnaz

**DIRECTED BY:** Thierry Klifa

COMEDY, DRAMA | 122 MINUTES | *M Offensive language, sexual references & nudity*

Few modern scandals have captivated France as the astonishing events surrounding Liliane Bettencourt, the billionaire heiress to the L'Oréal fortune and doyenne of Parisian society. Now writer/director Thierry Klifa has freely adapted the incredible story into a captivating dark comedy, featuring a jaw-dropping, tailor-made role for one of France's most iconic stars.

Marianne Farrère (Isabelle Huppert), the head of the Windler Group, is the richest woman in the world. Pierre-Alain Fantin (Laurent Lafitte, who won a César award for his performance) is a vivacious dandy, writer and photographer. After meeting on a photo shoot, the two quickly become inseparable. Their friendship surprises, amuses, intrigues, and

eventually unsettles the billionaire's entourage and family.

Most of all, Marianne's daughter (Marina Foïs) struggles with her mother's sudden complicity with this younger man, but her husband (André Marcon) and loyal butler (Raphaël Personnaz) share her concerns. Surreptitious queries soon transition into a private investigation, resulting in extraordinary ramifications for all involved...

With several twists too good to spoil, ***The Richest Woman in the World*** makes the most of its fabulous ensemble cast, but Huppert and Lafitte simply eat up the screen. This wildly entertaining film became an enormous box-office hit in France for good reason.

• Watch trailers and book tickets at [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz) •



FESTIVAL DE CANNES  
2025 OFFICIAL SELECTION  
COMPETITION

CÉSAR  
AWARD WINNER



# CASE 137

DOSSIER 137

**STARRING:** Léa Drucker, Guslagie Malanda, Stanislas Merhar, Jonathan Turnbull

**DIRECTED BY:** Dominik Moll

CRIME THRILLER, DRAMA | 116 MINUTES | *M Violence & offensive language*

Léa Drucker took home the Best Actress César award for her performance in this gripping thriller from Dominik Moll (*Only the Animals*), selected for official competition at Cannes International Film Festival 2025.

Drucker plays Stéphanie, an Internal Affairs police officer who is assigned the case of a young man severely wounded during a tense and chaotic demonstration in Paris. When she discovers that the victim hails from her hometown of Saint-Dizier, the case suddenly becomes far more personal.

While nothing initially points to police misconduct, Stéphanie soon finds herself isolated in a system hellbent on protecting its own. With officers refusing to talk, Sophie turns to housekeeper and

reluctant witness Alicia Mady (Guslagie Malanda, *Saint Omer*), whose testimony holds the key to the truth - but puts them both in danger.

This compelling crime drama highlights themes of loyalty and justice that resonate long after the final scene, anchored strongly by Léa Drucker's commanding role.

★★★★★

**"A CRIME DRAMA PERFORMED AND CRAFTED WITH THIS LEVEL OF CARE AND SOCIAL RESONANCE IS WELL WORTH INVESTIGATING."**

- *Time Out*

• Watch trailers and book tickets at [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz) •

82  
 MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE  
 D'ARTE CINEMATOGRAFICA  
 LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA 2025  
 Official Selection

CÉSAR  
 AWARD WINNER

# THE STRANGER

L'ÉTRANGER

**STARRING:** Benjamin Voisin, Rebecca Marder, Pierre Lottin, Denis Lavant

**DIRECTED BY:** François Ozon

DRAMA | 122 MINUTES | RATING TBC

The superb new drama from multi award-winning writer/director François Ozon (*Swimming Pool*, *8 Women*, *Under the Sand*), **The Stranger** is a gripping adaptation of Albert Camus' landmark novella about a detached young expatriate on trial for murder in French-colonised Algeria.

Summer, 1938. Meursault (Benjamin Voisin, *Lost Illusions*), a quiet and unassuming clerk in his early thirties, attends his mother's funeral. The next day he begins a casual affair with Marie (Rebecca Marder), a colleague randomly encountered at the local baths, and quickly slips back into routine. However, daily life is soon disrupted by his volatile neighbour (an excellent Pierre Lottin, who won a César award for his performance), who draws

Meursault into a dispute involving an ex-lover. And then, one blisteringly hot afternoon, an inexplicable event occurs on a beach, one that will see Meursault's very moral standing brought to question...

Visually resplendent with sensuous black-and-white imagery, Ozon's elegant and masterfully realised film shines a contemporary lens on Camus' classic tale of dissociation and morality, capturing the beauty and heat of a charged society on the boil. Both impactful and mysterious, **The Stranger** is one of the major highlights of this year's Festival and should not be missed.

• Watch trailers and book tickets at [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz) •

# JEAN VALJEAN

JEAN VALJEAN

**STARRING:** Grégory Gadebois, Bernard Campan, Isabelle Carré

**DIRECTED BY:** Eric Besnard

DRAMA | 99 MINUTES | M Violence

Victor Hugo's masterpiece *Les Misérables* is one of the most beloved novels of the 19th century, and now the superb Grégory Gadebois has re-teamed with his *Delicious* writer/director Éric Besnard for this authentic and emotionally affecting retelling that charts the origin story of the tale's legendary protagonist.

1815. Provence, France. In the peaceful village of Digne, rumour spreads that a dangerous man has entered the area; indeed, the hulking Valjean (Gadebois) has just been released from prison after nineteen years of hard labour.

Branded a criminal and ostracised, Jean is repeatedly turned away. Desperate for a bed, he knocks at the door of the house of Monseigneur Bienvenu

(Bernard Campan), who lives simply with his ailing sister (Isabelle Carré) and dedicated – but suspicious – servant (Alexandra Lamy). Without judgement, Bienvenu invites him in. And on this crucial night, Jean will face a choice that will define his future...

With this superbly filmed exploration of justice, empathy and moral redemption, Besnard's reflective and intimate drama – and Gadebois' towering performance – bring new depth to Hugo's hero, a spurned man transformed by kindness and compassion.

Admirers of the source text and rich historical drama will not be disappointed by **Jean Valjean**.

• Watch trailers and book tickets at [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz) •



# MAIGRET

## AND THE DEAD LOVER

### MAIGRET ET LE MORT AMOUREUX

**STARRING:** Denis Podalydès, Anne Alvaro, Manuel Guillot, Irène Jacob

**DIRECTED BY:** Pascal Bonitzer

CRIME | 79 MINUTES | PG

Following the break-out success of 2025 hit *The Stolen Painting*, acclaimed writer/director Pascal Bonitzer brings his unique perspective and panache to Simenon's cherished Parisian detective - a French counterpart to Agatha Christie's Poirot - as he attempts to solve the murder of a diplomat with a long-held secret.

Inspector Maigret (four-time César nominee Denis Podalydès, in a tremendous performance) is urgently summoned to the Quai d'Orsay: a former ambassador has been found shot dead by his long-serving housekeeper (Anne Alvaro, *Bolero*). But rather than contact the police, she has followed diplomatic protocols by first informing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Forewarned that he will find

a series of salacious letters - and cautioned to be discrete - Maigret heads to the victim's opulent apartment. He finds no forensic evidence at the crime scene, but certainly, the letters prove startling - secret, decades-spanning correspondence between the ambassador and the Princess of Vuynes, whose own husband, by strange coincidence, has also just died...

Bonitzer, renowned for an intuitive and empathetic focus, finds a perfect match with a protagonist who relies on quiet observation. He delivers an absorbing, wholly compelling mystery that also serves as a thoughtful examination of modern life's key concerns: hierarchy, aging, and the very different worlds that money creates. Best of all, the twist ending is... a killer.

• Watch trailers and book tickets at [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz) •



# THE

## MONEY MAKER

### L'AFFAIRE BOJARSKI

**STARRING:** Reda Kateb, Sara Giraudeau, Bastien Bouillon, Pierre Lottin

**DIRECTED BY:** Jean-Paul Salomé

DRAMA, THRILLER | 129 MINUTES | M Violence, offensive language, drug use, sex scenes & nudity

Based on an incredible true story, ***The Money Maker*** follows Jan Bojarski (Reda Kateb, *The Extraordinary*), a young Polish engineer taking refuge in France during World War II. Desperate to survive, he turns his talents to forging identity documents during the German occupation.

Once the war ends, Jan still finds himself struggling to make ends meet. Stuck in underpaid jobs and denied citizenship, he is unable to patent his many inventions. Jan's engineering expertise seems to be wasted, until a gangster recognises his skills and presents a risky opportunity - to produce counterfeit banknotes...

So begins a thrilling and nail-biting series of events, as Jan begins to lead a

double life. For over 15 years he runs a counterfeiting operation from his garden shed - unbeknownst to his family.

Jan's fakes are so precise he earns the moniker "the Cézanne of counterfeit money." - but this also draws attention. Jan soon finds himself in the crosshairs of Inspector Mattéi (Bastien Bouillon, also starring in *Leave One Day*), one of France's most determined detectives.

Director Jean-Paul Salomé (*The Godmother*, *The Sitting Duck*) brings this fascinating and gripping tale to life, with an unforgettable performance from Reda Kateb as the man who shook the Bank of France. The film was a certified hit in France, with over 1.1 million admissions. Make time for ***The Money Maker*** at this year's Festival!

• Watch trailers and book tickets at [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz) •



FESTIVAL DE CANNES  
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# 13 13

## DAYS, NIGHTS

13 JOURS, 13 NUITS

**STARRING:** Roschdy Zem, Lyna Khoudri, Sidse Babett Knudsen

**DIRECTED BY:** Martin Bourboulon

THRILLER, WAR | 112 MINUTES | RATING TBC

Based on the incredible true story and autobiography of Commander Mohamed Bida, **13 Days, 13 Nights** is an intense and profound thriller.

Kabul, August 15, 2021. As US troops prepare to withdraw from Afghanistan, the Taliban storm the capital and seize power, plunging the city into chaos.

Thousands of Afghans flock to the last safe haven: the French Embassy, where Commander Mohamed Bida (Roschdy Zem, *The Innocent*) and his elite crew ensure security.

Inside the compound, Bida and his team scramble to hold the line as the world outside descends into chaos. With the help of Eva (Lyna Khoudri, *The French Dispatch*) - a young

French-Afghan humanitarian worker - they must negotiate with the Taliban to organize a convoy in a last-ditch attempt to evacuate. Thus begins a race against time to reach the airport and flee the hell of Kabul before it's too late...

With **13 Days, 13 Nights**, director Martin Bourboulon (*The Three Musketeers*, *Eiffel*) has crafted a breathless, edge-of-your-seat experience that simply must be seen on the big screen.

**"THE SENSE OF JEOPARDY IS GENUINELY EFFECTIVE"**

- Screen International

• Watch trailers and book tickets at [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz) •

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# COUTURE

COUTURES

**STARRING:** Angelina Jolie, Anyier Anei, Ella Rumpf, Louis Garrel, Vincent Lindon

**DIRECTED BY:** Alice Winocour

DRAMA | 103 MINUTES | *M. Sex scenes, offensive language & nudity*

Angelina Jolie turns in a career-best performance in this immaculate drama set in the high stakes fashion world.

Taking place during the frenzy of Paris Fashion week, Jolie plays American filmmaker Maxine Walker, commissioned to direct a film for a prestigious label.

After receiving sudden, life-changing news, Maxine crosses paths with two other women: Ada (Anyier Anei), a young South Sudanese model who has escaped her predetermined destiny to make a name for herself, and makeup artist Angéle (Ella Rumpf, *Marguerite's Theorem*) who quietly dreams of a different life.

While their backgrounds couldn't be more different, the three women form a strong bond. Amid the glamorous scenes of haute couture, each must make choices small and significant, and confront major career decisions.

Anchored by Jolie's memorable portrayal, the intertwining journeys of these three women are supported by excellent turns from Louis Garrel (*The Three Musketeers*) and Vincent Lindon (*Another World*).

**"[ANGELINA JOLIE'S] MOST RAW AND VULNERABLE PERFORMANCE IN YEARS"**

- RogerEbert.com

• Watch trailers and book tickets at [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz) •



# The MUSICIANS

LES MUSICIENS

**STARRING:** Valérie Donzelli, Frédéric Pierrot, Mathieu Spinosi, Emma Ravier

**DIRECTED BY:** Grégory Magne

COMEDY, DRAMA | 102 MINUTES | PG Coarse language

The enchanting new comedy of manners from acclaimed writer/director Grégory Magne (whose debut *Perfumes* was a huge success in the 2021 Festival), **The Musicians** stars Valérie Donzelli as a wealthy heiress whose plan to stage a landmark concert is derailed by the clashing egos of the virtuosos recruited for the performance.

Astrid Thompson (Donzelli) is determined to honour her late industrialist father's final wish: unite four priceless Stradivarius-stringed instruments for the premiere recital of a new composition by his favourite artist, to be live-streamed for music lovers globally. With just six days to rehearse, a quartet is assembled, but the dream quickly unravels: the musicians are at odds, blinded by their differences and

prejudices, and seemingly incapable of working together. With the deadline fast approaching, Astrid tries to coax the reclusive composer of the score, Charlie Beaumont (Frédéric Pierrot), out from creative seclusion in the desperate hope of salvaging the event...

As the film crescendos to a tender, exhilarating finale where harmony is found not only in music but human connection, **The Musicians** celebrates both the chaos and beauty of collaboration. Set amidst the villas, vineyards and chapels of the stunning Champagne region, with an exquisite original score by Grégoire Hetzel, this is sparkling entertainment for the heart (and ears).

• Watch trailers and book tickets at [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz) •



# SANTIAGO

THE CAMINO THERAPY  
COMPOSTELLE

**STARRING:** Alexandra Lamy, Julien Le Berre, Mélanie Doutey, Eric Metayer

**DIRECTED BY:** Yann Samuel

DRAMA | 113 MINUTES | RATING TBC

Experience the breathtaking scenery of the Camino de Santiago in this life-affirming drama centred on an unforgettable pairing of characters.

Adam (a powerful performance from up-and-comer Julien Le Berre) is a teenager who's lost and heading in the wrong direction. After a run-in with the law, a judge hands over a surprising sentence: he must walk the 800 kilometre Camino de Santiago to think about his future.

Assigned to walk the path with Adam is Fred (an excellent-as-always Alexandra Lamy, *Miss Violet*), a tough and outspoken woman coming to terms with her own chequered history. The two begin a journey that could change their lives.

The pair make an unlikely team; Fred is looking to heal from her past, while Adam is struggling to channel his anger and feelings of abandonment. With every mile travelled, they inevitably endure exhaustion, clashes and arguments.

But among the points of tension are moments of peace. As the miles rack up, Fred and Adam begin to form a strong bond. Walking The Way, they each discover an inner strength they didn't know they had. Will it be enough to accomplish the goals they set out to achieve?

**Santiago: The Camino Therapy** is an uplifting and inspirational story with gorgeous vistas that deserve to be seen on the big screen.

• Watch trailers and book tickets at [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz) •



# GURU

GOUROU

**STARRING:** Pierre Niney, Marion Barbeau, Anthony Bajon, Christophe Montenez

**DIRECTED BY:** Yann Gozlan

THRILLER | 124 MINUTES | R13 *Offensive language, suicide & sexual violence references*

In this tense psychological thriller, Pierre Niney (*The Count of Monte Cristo*) delivers a chilling performance as a popular life coach with a dedicated following.

Mathieu Vasseur (Niney) delivers electrifying seminars, promising empowerment and transformation to his loyal fanbase. But behind his carefully curated image lies a more sinister reality.

As Vasseur's reach grows, the bonds he forms with his followers tighten into chains of control. Self-growth is traded for emotional reliance, and subtle influence becomes total psychological domination. What began as a quest for enlightenment for all involved becomes a predatory hierarchy.

As scrutiny from skeptics and the law pushes Vasseur's organisation towards obsession and collapse, he faces the question: how far can he go before his promise of freedom becomes a prison?

Niney's outstanding turn is bolstered by the excellent supporting cast of Marion Barbeau, Anthony Bajon (*Beating Hearts*), Christophe Montenez (also starring in *13 Days, 13 Nights*) and Holt McCallany (*Mindhunter*).

**Guru** is a razor-sharp examination of power dynamics that masterfully explores the thin line between mentorship and manipulation. Already a box office hit in France with over \$16 million USD at the box office, make sure you don't miss it!



# REDRESS

LA RÉPARATION

**STARRING:** Julia de Nunez, Clovis Cornillac, Julien de Saint Jean

**DIRECTED BY:** Régis Wargnier

DRAMA, THRILLER | 106 MINUTES | M *Sex scenes & offensive language*

Auteur Régis Wargnier (director of the Oscar-winning *Indochine*) returns to filmmaking for the first time in over a decade with the masterfully crafted globe-trotting drama **Redress**.

Renowned chef Paskal Jankovski (Clovis Cornillac, *A Little Something Extra*) is moments away from announcing his third Michelin star when he suddenly vanishes. Disappearing alongside him is Antoine (Julien de Saint-Jean, *Lie with Me*), his trusted sous-chef.

Paskal's daughter Clara (Julia de Nunez) suddenly finds herself the inheritor of the family restaurant at just 20 years old. Once a paragon of Gallic gastronomic excellence, the establishment now faces an uncertain future.

The void left by Paskal's absence feels inescapable, while the mystery of his and Antoine's disappearance remains unsolved.

The enigma deepens when years later, traces of Paskal's cooking style crop up at a restaurant in Taiwan. Clara must embark on a journey to find the truth about her father's fate.

A story that covers continents, cuisines and cultures, **Redress** is brought to life by strong performances and immaculate cinematography. You'll be drawn in by the intriguing mystery, lush environments and variety of sumptuous dishes - just don't see it on an empty stomach!



# THE SON OF

FILS DE

**STARRING:** Jean Chevalier, François Cluzet, Karin Viard, Alex Lutz

**DIRECTED BY:** Carlos Abascal Peiró

COMEDY | 106 MINUTES | *M* Offensive language & sexual references

One week after a chaotic presidential election, France urgently needs a new Prime Minister. A hapless but ambitious young parliamentary assistant (Jean Chevalier) has a plan: convince his retired and highly erratic politician father (François Cluzet, *The Intouchables*) to return from exile and seize the top job. What follows is a breakneck political comedy that transforms into a razor-sharp portrait of power, ambition, and the flexibility of principle.

With *The Son Of*, former political journalist Carlos Abascal Peiró makes an audacious debut, dynamically navigating the treacherous corridors of the French Republic, his camera stalking the backrooms where ideology evaporates and egos dominate,

capturing politicians, fixers and media operators engaged in verbal warfare with astonishing ferocity. Filmed before France's current political turmoil, the narrative hums with uncanny and prophetic resonance. Think *Veep* with a distinctly Gallic accent; anyone appreciative of Armando Iannucci's savage political dissections and *Succession* will find much to savour here.

Newcomer Chevalier is perfectly cast as the slippery modern opportunist, supported by an hilarious, never-better Cluzet's reluctant patriarch, Karin Viard's irresistible party operative and Alex Lutz (*The Stolen Painting*) rounding out a stellar ensemble. Sharp, unsparring, and mischievously satisfying, *The Son Of* is a winning satire.



# just an illusion

JUSTE UNE ILLUSION

**STARRING:** Louis Garrel, Camille Cottin, Pierre Lottin, Simon Boubllil

**DIRECTED BY:** Eric Toledano and Oliver Nakache

COMEDY | 119 MINUTES | RATING TBC

From Eric Toledano and Oliver Nakache, the award-winning directors of *The Intouchables* and *A Difficult Year* comes *Just an Illusion*, a heartwarming and brilliant comedy set in the suburbs of Paris in 1985.

The film follows Vincent (an incredible debut performance from Simon Boubllil), a boy standing on the precipice of his 13th birthday and his Bar Mitzvah - a milestone that feels more like an identity crisis than a celebration.

Vincent's mother Sandrine (Camille Cottin, *Three Friends*) tries to hold the family together with her job as a secretary, while his father Yves (Louis Garrel, also starring in *Couture*) grapples with unemployment and a wounded ego.

Caught between his parents' frequent arguments and a distant older brother, Arnaud (Alexis Rosenstiehl), Vincent must find his own rhythm in a family that is out of sync.

Simon Boubllil is being hailed as a major discovery for his performance as Vincent, carrying this nostalgia soaked tale with a winning combination of vulnerability and dry humour. Meanwhile, French cinema stalwarts Cottin and Garrel deliver explosive but grounded chemistry.

Directors Toledano and Nakache blend the infectious energy of a classic 80s soundtrack with their signature brand of heartfelt humour, for their most personal film to date. Book in quick to avoid disappointment!

# Once Upon my Mother

MA MÈRE, DIEU ET SYLVIE VARTAN

**STARRING:** Leïla Bekhti, Jonathan Cohen, Joséphine Japy, Jeanne Balibar

**DIRECTED BY:** Ken Scott

COMEDY, DRAMA | 103 MINUTES | G

Based on the bestselling autobiography by Roland Perez, this exuberant and heartrending film pays tribute to a love like no other – a mother's love for her child.

In 1963, Roland is born to Esther, her sixth child in their close-knit Jewish immigrant family living in the Parisian suburbs. When Esther learns that Roland has been born with a club foot, she vows to ensure her son lives not just a normal life, but a fabulous one.

She enlists the help of a determined specialist and the pop songs of Sylvie Vartan (who makes a cameo in the film) to help Roland defy all expectations and learn to walk.

This joyful crowd-pleaser is vibrantly shot by Oscar-nominated cinematographer Guillaume Schiffman (*The Artist*) and features a powerhouse performance from Leïla Bekhti (*Paris, je t'aime*) as the fiercely devoted Esther.

Once Upon My Mother absolutely smashed the French box office with over 1.5 million admissions, so is sure to be popular at this year's Festival. Book your tickets now to avoid missing out!

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# AN EVENING WITH Victor Hugo

VICTOR COMME TOUT LE MONDE

**STARRING:** Fabrice Luchini, Chiara Mastroianni, Marie Narbonne

**DIRECTED BY:** Pascal Bonitzer

COMEDY, DRAMA | 90 MINUTES | RATING TBC

Director Pascal Bonitzer (*Maigret and the Dead Lover*) brings this charming tale from the late Sophie Fillières brilliantly to life.

French acting legend Fabrice Luchini plays popular performer Robert Zucchini, who has built his career on a stage act that lauds the works of the famous writer Victor Hugo.

Robert's bold reverence of Hugo's 'male genius' doesn't always play well with more enlightened modern audiences, and he finds himself not only at odds with a feminist theatre troupe, but with his adult daughter Lisbeth (Marie Narbonne, *The Count of Monte Cristo*), who has recently reappeared in his life.

Robert wrestles with how art meets with politics - but more importantly, with his real-life relationships. Where he once took refuge in texts of the past, Lisbeth demands his presence in the moment.

Little by little, with his daughter's help, Robert begins to reconnect with his past, open up to others and relearn the practice of his craft.

Pascal Bonitzer has crafted a slick, emotional, funny account of modern problems playing out on and off stage. Centred by a brilliant performance from the always-exceptional Fabrice Luchini, **An Evening with Victor Hugo** is a must-see at the 2026 Festival.

• Watch trailers and book tickets at [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz) •

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# CYCLE OF TIME

C'ÉTAIT MIEUX DEMAIN

**STARRING:** Elsa Zylberstein, Didier Bourdon, Aurore Clément, Didier Flamand**DIRECTED BY:** Vinciane Millereau**COMEDY | 103 MINUTES | M Sex scenes & offensive language**

Elsa Zylberstein (*Simone: Woman of the Century*) and Didier Bourdon (*The Scammers*) star in this inventive time travel comedy that sharply explores societal roles.

It's 1958 in quiet suburbia. Hélène (Zylberstein) and Michel (Bourdon) live a simple but happy life with their two children. Michel works in a bank, while Hélène focuses her efforts on their home and family life.

Through an unexpected and unlikely series of events, the couple find themselves catapulted into the 21st century. The year is 2025, and everything they know has changed. Hélène and Michel grapple with new technology, social rituals, and the frantic pace of modern life.

Hélène now finds herself a successful bank manager and the sole breadwinner, while Michel has become the stay-at-home-husband.

As they navigate this unfamiliar world, the pair must confront new ways of thinking, loving and living. Hélène and Michel are left wondering not how they will survive in their new reality, but whether they even want to...

Propelled by hilarious performances from Zylberstein and Bourdon, *Cycle of Time* is a delightfully subversive comedy that will have you rediscovering the present through the eyes of two characters from a bygone era.

L'AMOUR &amp; LAUGHTER



# A DASH OF LOVE

UNE POINTE D'AMOUR

**COMEDY, DRAMA | 84 MINUTES | M Offensive language & sexual references**

This exciting debut feature follows a delightful cast of characters on a road trip that will change their lives. Julia Piaton plays Mélanie, a gifted lawyer suffering from a terminal illness. Deciding it's time to live life on her own terms, she convinces her old school friend Benjamin (Quentin Dolmaire) to accompany her on a road trip to Spain. Joining them as their burly chauffeur is Lucas (Grégory Gadebois), one of Mélanie's clients who has recently been released from prison. In exchange for her legal services, Mélanie ropes him into taking the wheel. The unlikely trio embark on an unforgettable journey across stunning vistas, embracing joy and friendship along the way. This a trip you will most certainly want to take!

**STARRING:**

Julia Piaton  
Grégory Gadebois  
Quentin Dolmaire  
Florence Viala  
Claude Guyonnet

**DIRECTED BY:**

Maël Piriou



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# THE PARTY'S OVER!

CLASSE MOYENNE

## STARRING:

Laurent Lafitte  
Laure Calamy  
Élodie Bouchez

## DIRECTED BY:

Antony Cordier

QUINZAINÉ

DIRECTORS' FORTNIGHT  
CANNES 2025

COMEDY | 95 MINUTES | M Violence, offensive language, sex scenes & nudity

This entertaining black comedy follows Mehdi (Sami Outalballi, *Lucky Winners*), a recent law graduate from a modest background spending the summer at his girlfriend's luxurious family villa. He soon finds himself caught in an escalating class conflict between the entitled Trousselard family and their mistreated caretakers. Hoping to secure an internship at his girlfriend's father's prestigious law firm, Mehdi attempts to mediate between the two sides, only to be trapped in a spiralling conflict over money, power and pride. **The Party's Over!** is a biting satirical portrait of class privilege with a sensational comic cast including Laure Calamy and recent César award-winner Laurent Lafitte.

FRENCH *charm,*  
MARLBOROUGH *craft.*



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# WHAT IS LOVE?

C'EST QUOI L'AMOUR?

STARRING: Laure Calamy, Vincent Macaigne, Mélanie Thierry, Lyès Salem

DIRECTED BY: Fabien Gorgeart

COMEDY, ROMANCE | 108 MINUTES | M Nudity, drug use & offensive language

**What is Love?** is an uplifting and comedic examination of relationships and new beginnings, brought to life by an all-star cast.

Marguerite (Festival favourite Laure Calamy, *How to Make a Killing*) has long since moved on from her ex-husband Fred (Vincent Macaigne, also starring in **Colours of Time**), having established a new life with a different partner and a teenage daughter.

Fred has also put the past behind him, intending to marry Chloé (Mélanie Thierry, *Suddenly*), the woman with whom he now shares his life.

When Fred asks for Marguerite's help in obtaining an annulment of their

marriage from the Catholic Church, she is only too happy to oblige. However, the process turns out to be far more than a simple paperwork exercise, and the pair find out they must prove their union was doomed from the beginning.

What begins as an administrative task soon becomes a deeply personal odyssey through their shared past. As Marguerite and Fred navigate old memories and rediscover genuine affection - as well as the tensions that broke them - long-buried feelings begin to surface.

This charming and perceptive family comedy examines the complicated aftermath of breakups, featuring stellar performances from all involved.

# A NUN IN THE CITY

DOUX JÉSUS

## STARRING:

Marilou Berry  
Isabelle Nanty  
Barbara Bolotner  
Neva Kéhouane  
Valérie Mairesse

## DIRECTED BY:

Frédéric Quiring

COMEDY | 86 MINUTES | PG Violence &amp; coarse language

After twenty years of devotion to her convent, Sister Lucie's (Marilou Berry) quiet life is upended when she is separated from her sisterhood during a group outing. While trying to find her way home, she spots a familiar face on a television screen: her teenage sweetheart, now accused of a high-profile murder. Convinced of his innocence, she makes the impulsive decision to try to help him. Lucie's disappearance has caused panic back at the convent, and the formidable Mother Superior Henriette (Isabelle Nanty, *Amélie*) sends two nuns to track her down and bring her back. **A Nun in the City** is a heartwarming, comedic story where faith, freedom and past love collide with surprising results.

**"Foster's performance commands the screen with subtle intensity."**

METRO WEEKLY

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# A Private Life

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REBECCA ZLOTOWSKI

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# LEAVE ONE DAY

PARTIR UN JOUR

STARRING: Juliette Armanet, Bastien Bouillon, François Rollin, Tewfik Jallab

DIRECTED BY: Amélie Bonnin

COMEDY, DRAMA | 97 MINUTES | M Offensive language

Making waves in 2025 as the first-ever debut feature selected to open the Cannes Film Festival, Amélie Bonnin's joyously entertaining musical romance stars break-out singer/songwriter Juliette Armanet as a talented Parisian chef forced to reconnect with her small-town upbringing during an unexpected trip home.

Cécile (Armanet) – a fan-favourite Top Chef winner – is about to finally realise her dream and open her own restaurant when her father, the cook at a small rural truck stop, falls unwell.

Cécile must deal with a return to her roots that is more complicated than she imagined; when she runs into her teenage first love (César Award-winner Bastien Bouillon), old memories and

sensations resurface... and then her fiancé, who senses something's wrong, shows up.

Evocatively depicting regional France and the complications of family life with tenderness and wit, **Leave One Day** interweaves music naturally into the story, blending several classics with more recent hits by artists such as Stromae and Céline Dion.

Armanet, herself one of France's most popular contemporary artists, performed John Lennon's "Imagine" during the Paris Olympic Games' opening ceremony and proves to be a shining discovery, in this warm-hearted and completely endearing gem.

## FESTIVAL AND TICKETING INFORMATION

### TICKETS

Online: At [frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](http://frenchfilmfestival.co.nz)

Select your session and you will be redirected from there to the appropriate cinema site.

In cinemas: At box offices daily until sold out. Cinemas can only sell tickets for their respective venues.

Check with cinemas for festival pricing. Some cinemas will charge a booking fee for tickets booked online and over the phone.

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### FESTIVAL CONTACTS

Director: [fergus@frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](mailto:fergus@frenchfilmfestival.co.nz)

General: [bonjour@frenchfilmfestival.co.nz](mailto:bonjour@frenchfilmfestival.co.nz)

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Programme may be subject to change. The Festival reluctantly reserves the right to change the schedule by amending dates, session times or replacing films. Any necessary changes will be amended as soon as possible on the Festival website and at the affected venue.

All films are no complimentary, except for Festival complimentary passes. No cinema vouchers, movie money or ticket discount offers can be used for festival films, unless otherwise specified.

ID will be required for all discounted tickets (seniors, students) and for all restricted films when collecting or purchasing tickets.

Please contact your local cinema for details about their wheelchair access, parking facilities, and any further terms and conditions that may apply.

Merci!

## VENUE INFORMATION

### Kerikeri | 28 May - 21 June

#### Cathay Cinemas

27 Hobson Avenue  
Kerikeri 0230  
09 407 4428  
[cathaycinemas.co.nz](http://cathaycinemas.co.nz)

### Matakana | 28 May - 17 June

#### Matakana Cinemas

2 Matakana Valley Road  
Matakana 0985  
09 423 0218  
[matakanacinemas.co.nz](http://matakanacinemas.co.nz)

### Tauranga | 28 May - 17 June

#### Luxe Cinemas Tauranga

21 Devonport Road  
Tauranga 3110  
07 577 0445  
[luxecinemas.nz](http://luxecinemas.nz)

### Whangārei | 04 - 24 June

#### Event Cinemas Whangārei

18 James Street  
Whangārei 0110  
09 470 1948  
[eventcinemas.co.nz](http://eventcinemas.co.nz)

### Whitianga | 28 May - 17 June

#### Mercury Twin Cinemas

1 Lee Street  
Whitianga 3510  
07 867 1001  
[mercurytwincinemas.com](http://mercurytwincinemas.com)

### New Plymouth | 04 - 24 June

#### Len Lye Cinema

42 Queen Street  
New Plymouth 4310  
06 759 6060  
[govettbrewster.com/cinema](http://govettbrewster.com/cinema)

## VENUE INFORMATION (CONTINUED)

### Whanganui | 28 May - 17 June

#### Embassy 3 Cinema

34 Victoria Avenue  
Whanganui 4500  
06 345 7958  
[embassy3.co.nz](http://embassy3.co.nz)

### Tākaka | 27 May - 07 June

#### The Village Theatre

32 Commercial Street  
Tākaka 7110  
03 525 8453  
[villagetheatre.org.nz](http://villagetheatre.org.nz)

### Wānaka | 28 May - 17 June

#### Cinema Paradiso

72 Brownston Street  
Wānaka 9434  
03 443 1505  
[paradiso.nz](http://paradiso.nz)

### Dunedin | 27 May - 21 June

#### Rialto Cinemas Dunedin

11 Moray Place  
Central Dunedin  
Dunedin 9016  
03 474 2200  
[rialto.co.nz](http://rialto.co.nz)

### Masterton | 28 May - 17 June

#### The Screening Room

435 Queen Street  
Masterton 5810  
06 378 6191  
[thescreeningroom.co.nz](http://thescreeningroom.co.nz)

### Blenheim | 04 - 24 June

#### Event Cinemas Blenheim

4 Kinross Street  
Blenheim 7201  
03 577 8273  
[eventcinemas.co.nz](http://eventcinemas.co.nz)

### Arrowtown | 28 May - 17 June

#### Dorothy Browns

18 Buckingham Street  
Arrowtown 9302  
03 442 1964  
[dorothybrowns.com](http://dorothybrowns.com)





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