

Herald Cafe



Urvashi Rautela

Indian Films at Cannes 2025

While no Indian films are competing in the main competition, Indian cinema is still receiving prominent attention through groundbreaking storytelling by both established and emerging voices.

Homebound, directed by Neeraj Ghaywan, is part of the Un Certain Regard section and has received support from legendary filmmaker Martin Scorsese. Satyajit Ray's 1970 classic Aranyer Din Ratri (Days and Nights in the Forest) returns to Cannes in a restored 4K version, featured in the Cannes Classics section.

Adding to the lineup is Kokob Gebrehweria Tesfay, a student filmmaker from Kolkata's SRFTI, whose short film A Doll Made of Clay has been selected for the La Ciné section. Meanwhile, veteran actor Anupam Kher is making his directorial debut with Tanvi the Great, which will premiere at the Cannes Film Market.

Cannes' desi touch: India's stars and stories to light up 2025 festival

The 2025 Cannes Film Festival is underway, running from May 13 to 24. India is making its presence felt with a strong line-up of films and star power

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The red carpet was rolled out in grand style, with one of the first Indian celebrities to make an appearance being filmmaker Payal Kapadia, who is part of an elite jury panel led by Juliette Binoche and including Halle Berry and Jeremy Strong. Next up

was Urvashi Rautela, who attended the screening of Partir un jour (Leave One Day), dazzling in a vibrant gown featuring bold shades of blue, red, and yellow. She completed the look with a colourful tiara and a crystal-embellished, parrot-shaped clutch that turned heads.

Indian Celebs to Walk the Red Carpet

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan
A Cannes mainstay for over two decades, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan will once again grace the red carpet as a brand ambassador for L'Oréal Paris.

Nitanshi Goel
Sixteen-year-old Nitanshi Goel is set to become the youngest Indian actress to walk the Cannes red carpet, marking her debut appearance at the festival this year.

Simi Garewal and Sharmila Tagore
Veteran icon Simi Garewal will make her Cannes red carpet debut on May 19, attending the screening of Aranyer Din Ratri. She will be joined by fellow legend Sharmila Tagore, who previously served on the festival's main jury in 2009. The film is part of the Cannes Classics selection.

Janhvi Kapoor and Ishaan Khatter
The lead actors of Homebound, Janhvi Kapoor and Ishaan Khatter, will attend the film's world premiere in the Un Certain Regard section. Karan Johar, whose Dharma Productions co-produced the film, is also expected to be present.



WHY INDIA'S WEATHER CALENDAR MAKES FOR MAGICAL TRAVEL



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Robert De Niro presented Honorary Palme d'Or at Cannes



Leonardo DiCaprio handed over the honorary Palme d'Or to his friend and colleague, Robert De Niro, during the opening ceremony of the Cannes Film Festival. Robert De Niro, the 81-year-old actor accepted a lifetime achievement award — and used the moment to take a strong swipe at US President Donald Trump. "Trump has cut funding and support to the arts, humanities and education. And now he has announced the 100 percent tariff on films produced outside the US," he said. He further added, "You can't put a price on creativity, but apparently, you can put a tariff on it. Everyone who cares about liberty should protest against Trump's decisions."

Halle Berry changes dress to follow Cannes' guidelines

Halle Berry changed the outfit she had planned for the 2025 Cannes Film Festival and played it safe as to not break any rules while serving on this year's jury. Initially Halle planned to wear a dress by Indian designer Gurav Gupta at the opening ceremony's red carpet but instead opted for a black and white striped trapeze gown by Jacquemus, added, "I had to make a pivot. I had an amazing dress by Gupta that I cannot wear tonight because it's too big of a train. I'm not going to break the rules." Cannes also added another rule to their dress code this year: no nudity, to which Halle noted she thinks "is probably also a good rule."



Jenna Ortega recently wore the John Galiano designed iconic Dior newspaper-print dress, made famous by Carrie Bradshaw in 'Sex and the City', to the NYC premiere of 'Hurry Up Tomorrow'.



AI vs artists: UK musicians demand copyright protection

In a united front, leading UK artists have urged the government to regulate AI, warning that the unchecked use of copyrighted works could harm the music industry

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In a powerful show of solidarity, some of the UK's most influential artists and creative figures—including Elton John, Dua Lipa, Coldplay, Paul McCartney, Kate Bush, and Florence Welch—have voiced urgent concerns about the growing threat artificial intelligence (AI) poses to copyright laws.

In an open letter addressed to Prime Minister Keir Starmer, the artists called for

immediate regulatory reforms to address the unregulated use of copyrighted material in AI training. They warned that such practices undermine creators' rights and threaten the integrity of the music industry. "We must protect against the predatory use of AI to steal professional artists' voices and likenesses,

violate creators' rights, and destroy the music ecosystem," the letter stated.

The letter also urged tech companies, AI developers, and digital music platforms to commit to not developing or deploying AI tools that compromise the rights of songwriters and artists or deny them fair compensation for their work.

On May 12, the House of Lords voted to introduce amendments to the Data (Use and Access) Bill, imposing new restrictions on AI training. These amendments require developers to disclose all copyrighted works used in AI model training—an effort to promote transparency and protect creative rights. However, critics argue the changes could restrict access to data and stifle innovation in the UK's



growing AI sector.

Artists are especially concerned about their music, lyrics, and visual art being used to train AI systems capable of generating derivative content that mimics their original work. The letter called on the government to ensure creators have control over how their work is used by AI companies, advocating for greater transparency and a fair licensing framework.

A RECURRING CONCERN IN THE US

This is not the first time artists have spoken out on this issue. In 2024, more than 200 music artists, including Nicki Minaj, Katy Perry, Billie Eilish, Stevie Wonder, J Balvin, and Jon Bon Jovi, signed a similar open letter condemning the "predatory use of AI" in the music industry.

The UK's creative industries contribute over £100 billion annually to the economy. Artists warned that without stronger protections, both their livelihoods and the UK's status as a global creative hub could be at risk.

Geoff Taylor, CEO of the British Phonographic Industry, emphasised that while AI presents significant opportunities, it must not come at the expense of creative talent and intellectual property.

Although the campaign has received support from key industry organisations such as PRS for Music and Guardian News & Media, it has faced pushback from the tech sector. Some argue that overly restrictive

copyright laws could drive AI development abroad, weakening the UK's position in the global tech race.

