

**Best of 2021** **Délicieux** **The Big Hit** **The Lost Daughter** **Prayer for a Lost Mitten**  
**El Planeta** **Boogie Nights** **Phantom Thread** **The Velvet Queen** **A Brighter**  
**Summer Day** **Yi Yi** **The Nutcracker** **Pinocchio** **It's a Wonderful Life** **The Shop**  
**Around the Corner** **Children of the Sea** **Weathering With You** **Benedetta** AND MORE



# The Big Hit

EMMANUEL COURCOL, FRANCE, 2020, 105 MIN.

FRI DEC 17	7:50PM	STU
SAT DEC 18	6:00PM	STU
SUN DEC 19	1:30PM, 6:30PM	STU
MON DEC 20	4:30PM	STU
TUE DEC 21	6:30PM	STU
WED DEC 22	6:10PM	STU
THU DEC 23	4:00PM, 8:40PM	STU

Etienne, an often out of work but endearing actor, runs a theatre workshop in a prison, where he brings together an unlikely troupe of prisoners to stage Samuel Beckett's famous play *Waiting for Godot*. When he is allowed to take the colourful band of convicts on a tour outside of prison, Etienne finally has the chance to thrive. Each date is a success and a unique relationship grows between them. But soon comes the final performance in Paris. Will their last night together be the biggest hit of them all?

*In French with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Kad Merad, David Ayala, Lamine Cissokho, Sofian Khammes, Pierre Lottin, Wabinlé Nabié, Alexandre Medvedev, Said Benchnafa, Marina Hands

**The Lost Daughter**  
MAGGIE GYLLENHAAL, USA, 2021, 121 MIN.

FRI DEC 17	5:00PM	VCT
SAT DEC 18	4:00PM, 8:45PM	VCT
SUN DEC 19	1:00PM, 5:50PM	VCT
MON DEC 20	4:00PM	VCT
TUE DEC 21	8:15PM	VCT
WED DEC 22	5:50PM	VCT
THU DEC 23	8:15PM	VCT
MON DEC 27	4:30PM	VCT
TUE DEC 28	2:00PM	VCT
WED DEC 29	4:30PM	VCT
THU DEC 30	2:00PM	VCT

Leda (Olivia Colman) is taking a solo vacation on a Greek island. She's looking for peace and quiet —hopes for which evaporate when a noisy clan moves into the same taverna. When their little girl goes missing Leda finds her. But in the confusion the child's beloved doll vanishes. Nina (Dakota Johnson), the girl's mother, suspects the prickly Englishwoman may be responsible... Adapting a novella by Elena Ferrante, Maggie Gyllenhaal probes taboos around motherhood in this subtle psychological mystery.


*In English*

**CAST** Olivia Colman, Dakota Johnson, Jessie Buckley, Paul Mescal, Peter Sarsgaard, Ed Harris


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Best of 2021

In-Cinema



**Annette**  
LEOS CARAX, FRANCE, 2021, 139 MIN.  

SUN DEC 26	7:30PM	VCT
MON DEC 27	5:00PM	STU

Fresh from opening the Cannes film festival, the new film from Leos Carax (*Holy Motors*) is a rock opera by Sparks siblings, Ron and Russell Mael. Adam Driver plays a stand-up opposite Marion Cotillard as his wife, a famous soprano. Their union is blessed with Annette, herself an extraordinary talent. Yet all is not well in this idyll... Wildly romantic, personal, weird, silly and and, yes, subtle, this is Cinema, a movie on a tear.

"This astoundingly beautiful picture will stand the test of time." *VULTURE*

*In English, French with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Adam Driver, Marion Cotillard, Simon Helberg, Ron Mael, Russell Mael

In-Cinema

VIFF Connect



**Hope**  
MARIA SÖDAHL, NORWAY, 2019, 125 MIN.  

MON DEC 27	7:30PM	VCT
TUE DEC 28	5:00PM	STU
STARTS FRI DEC 24		CONN

In this Bergmanesque Scandinavian drama, Anja (Andrea Bræin Hovig) learns the worst: the doctors want to fast-track her for brain surgery. All the unresolved aspects of what has been, overtly, a productive life, flood in. She is far too young to die. Most acutely, there is the hole at the centre of her relationship with Tomas (Stellan Skarsgård), a significantly older man who may be too much in love with himself to truly love her. A hasty, belated marriage proposal does not assuage her doubts...

*In Norwegian with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Andrea Bræin Hovig, Stellan Skarsgård, Elli Müller Osborne, Gjertrud Jynge, Alexander Mørk-Eidem

In-Cinema



**The Power of the Dog**  
JANE CAMPION, AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND, 2021, 127 MIN.  

TUE DEC 28	7:30PM	VCT
WED DEC 29	5:00PM	STU

In her strongest movie since *The Piano*, Jane Campion turns the machismo of the western film on its head. On the Burbanks' Montana cattle ranch the boorish Phil (Benedict Cumberbatch) rules the roost over his mild mannered brother George (Jesse Plemons). When George finds himself a wife and heir in the form of Rose (Kirsten Dunst) and her effete son (Kodi Smit-McPhee), Phil is determined to make their life hell. But then he takes a shine to the boy...

A stark, brooding tale destined to be a modern classic.

*In English*

**CAST** Benedict Cumberbatch, Jesse Plemons, Kirsten Dunst, Kodi Smit-McPhee, Thomasin McKenzie, Genevieve Lemon, Keith Carradine, Frances Conroy

In-Cinema

VIFF Connect



**Dear Comrades!**  
ANDREI KONCHALOVSKY, RUSSIA, 2020, 120 MIN.  

WED DEC 29	7:30PM	VCT
THU DEC 30	5:00PM	STU
STARTS FRI DEC 24		CONN

A prize winner at the Venice Film Festival last year, and Russia's entry for the Academy Award for Best International Feature, *Dear Comrades!* is Andrei Konchalovsky's searing, indelible account of the brutal suppression of a strike in an industrial city in the summer of 1962. More than two dozen citizens were killed, 80 wounded, and all of it covered up by the Communist Party. Shot in black and white, this is a drama of intense focus, fire and fury, with a stunning central performance by Julia Vysotskaya.

*In Russian with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Julia Vysotskaya, Vladislav Komarov, Andrei Gusev, Yulia Burova, Sergei Erlich

In-Cinema



**Drive My Car**  
RYUSUKE HAMAGUCHI, JAPAN, 2021, 179 MIN.  

SAT DEC 18	12:30PM	VCT
MON DEC 20	6:30PM	VCT
THU DEC 30	7:30PM	VCT
FRI DEC 31	1:00PM	VCT

Kafuku is a theatre director, actor, and storyteller... yet even he withdraws when it comes to confronting his deepest sorrow. Mourning his wife, and the secrets that died with her, he accepts an invitation to mount a new production of *Uncle Vanya*, and surprises everyone by casting a troubled young movie star, Takatsuki, his late wife's lover, in the title role. Elaborating on a short story by Haruki Murakami, *Asako I & II* director Hamaguchi has crafted a piercing, sublime philosophical drama.

*In Japanese, Korean, English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Tagalog, Indonesian, German, Malaysian with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Hidetoshi Nishijima, Toko Miura, Masaki Okada, Reika Kirishima, Park Yurim, Jin Daeyeon, Sonia Yuan, Ahn Hwita, Perry Sodon, Satoko Abe

In-cinema 3 Ticket Pack: \$30

In-Cinema



**In the Heights**  
JON M. CHU, USA, 2021, 143 MIN.  

SAT JAN 1	7:30PM	VCT
SUN JAN 2	4:45PM	VCT

Usnavi (Anthony Ramos) runs the local bodega, but plans to return to his native Dominica. But the news that someone from the hood bought a winning lottery ticket at his store has the whole block buzzing... Lin-Manuel Miranda's brash, expansive, euphoric musical about the predominantly Dominican working class community of Washington Heights, NYC, is a fascinating counterpoint to *West Side Story*, a rhapsody in red, white and blue.

*In English*

**CAST** Anthony Ramos, Corey Hawkins, Leslie Grace, Melissa Barrera, Olga Merediz, Daphne Rubin-Vega

In-Cinema



**Spencer**  
PABLO LARRAÍN, GERMANY/UK, 2021, 111 MIN.  

MON JAN 3	7:30PM	VCT
TUE JAN 4	5:00PM	VCT

Xmas with the in-laws, House of Windsor-style. Pablo Larrain's doomy but defiant tribute to Diana is rigorously designed to put us inside the gilded cage, and indeed, inside the head of the woman on her perch, desperate to break free—perhaps the performance of the year, from Kristen Stewart, who embodies an icon, a princess, in revolt.

"*Spencer* is more than the portrait of a woman in distress. If it's a fable, it's a political fable, an allegory of powerlessness, revolt and liberation." *NEW YORK TIMES*

*In English*

**CAST** Kristen Stewart, Timothy Spall, Jack Farthing, Sean Harris, Sally Hawkins

In-Cinema

VIFF Connect



**Wheel of Fortune and Fantasy**  
RYUSUKE HAMAGUCHI, JAPAN, 2021, 121 MIN.  

SUN JAN 2	7:30PM	VCT
MON JAN 3	5:00PM	VCT
STARTS FRI DEC 24		CONN

An unexpected love triangle, a literary seduction, and a chance encounter with an old school friend... Propelled by coincidence and imagination, and guided by love's gentle current, acclaimed director Ryusuke Hamaguchi (*Drive My Car*, *Asako I & II*) returns with a spellbinding triptych that spins mundane encounters into a world of infinite possibilities.

"Ryūsuke Hamaguchi's film is an alternately scathing, erotic, terrifying, and affirming fable of the primordial power of storytelling." *SLANT MAGAZINE*

*In Japanese with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Kotone Furukawa, Ayumu Nakajima, Hyunri, Kiyohiko Shibukawa, Katsuki Mori, Shouma Kai, Fusako Urabe

In-Cinema



**Zola**  
JANICZA BRAVO, USA, 2021, 90 MIN.  

TUE JAN 4	7:30PM	VCT
WED JAN 5	5:00PM	VCT

Inspired by a viral 148-tweet thread by A'Ziah Zola King, Janicza Bravo's movie is full of fresh flourish and bravado; it's a smart and snappy crime film, a nightmare scenario jacked into an exhilarating and defiant black comedy. Zola (Taylor Paige) is persuaded to take off with brand new bestie Stefani (Riley Keough) to make bank dancing in Sunshine State strip clubs but the road trip spirals out of control.

"Whip-smart, funny, complicated, and just plain wild, *Zola* is 90 minutes of brilliance." *THE WRAP*

*In English*

**CAST** Taylor Paige, Riley Keough, Nелcie Souffrant, Nasir Rahim, Amelia Rose Montegudo, Ariel Stachel, Colman Domingo

In-Cinema



**Titane**  
JULIA DUCOURNAU, FRANCE, 2021, 108 MIN.  

WED JAN 5	7:30PM	VCT
THU JAN 6	5:00PM	VCT

The love child of Jean Cocteau and David Cronenberg, this ugly duckling of a movie has more gasp-out-loud moments than anything we've seen in a long, long time. Alexia (Agathe Rousselle) has a steel plate in her head and a chip on her shoulder. She's also a killer hand with a metal-tipped chopstick. Oh, and she's carrying a baby which might very well be born with four wheels and a motor. The film's dream logic is aggressive but deliriously, ecstatically demented. Did we mention it won the Palme d'Or?

*In French with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Vincent Lindon, Agathe Rousselle, Garance Marillier, Laïs Salameh, Myriem Akheddiou, Mara Cissé

Christmas Crackers

Family Viewing

In-Cinema



**The Royal Ballet's The Nutcracker**  
UK, 2021, 150 MIN.  

THU DEC 23	2:30PM	VCT
FRI DEC 24	12:30PM	VCT
SUN DEC 26	3:30PM	STU

*The Nutcracker* makes for a sparkling festive treat for the whole family. Tchaikovsky's much-loved music is matched to a story of magic on Christmas Eve, and the journey of Clara and her Nutcracker to the Land of Sweets brings with it some of the most familiar of all ballet moments. Peter Wright's gorgeous production for The Royal Ballet keeps true to the spirit of this Russian ballet classic, and the many solo roles and ensembles show the world-class skills of the Company at its best.

**CAST** Akane Takada, Cesar Corrales, Isabella Gasparini, Luca Acri, Christopher Saunders

In-Cinema



**The Shop Around the Corner**  
ERNST LUBITSCH, USA, 1940, 99 MIN.  

FRI DEC 24	1:00PM	STU
SUN DEC 26	1:00PM	STU

A Christmas classic that doesn't get the love it should, this bittersweet romantic comedy is one of the jewels of Hollywood's Golden Age. James Stewart is the well meaning but starchy head clerk in an up-market Budapest boutique who somehow rubs his latest employee (Margaret Sullivan) up the wrong way. She has no idea he is the same man she is falling in love with as a pen pal... Effortlessly witty and sophisticated, with a deeply romantic heart that's impossible to resist.

*In English*

**CAST** Margaret Sullivan, James Stewart, Frank Morgan

In-Cinema



**Pinocchio**  
MATTEO GARRONE, ITALY/FRANCE, 2020, 125 MIN.  

FRI DEC 24	3:30PM	VCT
SUN DEC 26	12:30PM	VCT
MON DEC 27	1:55PM	VCT
WED DEC 29	1:55PM	VCT

A treat for young and old, we are delighted to showcase this new live action version of the classic tale of the wooden puppet who dreams of being a real boy. Director Matteo Garrone is well known to festival audiences for his acclaimed films *Gomorrah*, *Dogman*, and *Tale of Tales*, and he has outdone himself here with a movie that is darkly gripping, openly emotional, authentic and fantastical. Roberto Benigni (*Life is Beautiful*) stars as Geppetto.

*In Italian with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Federico Ielpi, Roberto Benigni, Gigi Proietti, Rocco Papaleo, Massimo Ceccherini, Marine Vacth

In-Cinema



**It's a Wonderful Life**  
FRANK CAPRA, USA, 1946, 130 MIN.  

FRI DEC 24	3:00PM	STU
SUN DEC 26	3:00PM	VCT

Every time a bell rings, an angel gets its wings. You know you need to see this genuine Christmas classic as it was intended to be seen, on the big screen. Although the picture has become synonymous with homespun, small town values—values James Stewart personified and director Frank Capra obviously cherished—it achieves its profound emotional resonance precisely by stressing their limitation; its riven with anxiety and doubt.

*In English*

**CAST** James Stewart, Donna Reed, Lionel Barrymore, Thomas Mitchell, Henry Travers, Beulah Bondi

Anime

Family Viewing

In-Cinema



**Children of the Sea**  
AYUMU WATANABE, JAPAN, 2019, 111 MIN.  

TUE DEC 28	2:30PM	STU
THU DEC 30	2:30PM	STU

In this environmental fable for all ages, three teenagers become entangled in the call of the sea as they hang out at the local aquarium. On a narrative level, the film is hard to describe. Visually, it's simply one of the most staggering aesthetic achievements in recent animation.

"It leaves you with the sense that the art form's boundaries have been nudged a little wider as you watched." ROBBIE COLIN, *DAILY TELEGRAPH*

"Stunning... something to be celebrated." PETER DEBRUGE, *VARIETY*

*In Japanese with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Mana Ashida, Hiroyuki Ishibashi, Seishu Uragami, Win Morisaki, Goro Inagaki, Yu Aoi

In-Cinema



**Weathering With You**  
MAKOTO SHINKAI, JAPAN, 2019, 112 MIN.  

WED DEC 29	2:30PM	STU
FRI DEC 31	2:30PM	STU

In Japan, this dazzling magical realist love story from the director of *Your Name* was the biggest homegrown hit that year and it's easy to see why: its heart-stopping tale of teen love is bathed in spectacularly detailed but frequently fantastical animation. Tokyo looks so real you can practically smell it—and oh, those skies, full of clamour, portent, tempest and hope. Whatever else it may be, this is a stunning climate change movie.

"Irresistibly romantic... awe-inspiringly gorgeous." *THE WRAP*

*In Japanese with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Kotaro Daigo, Nana Mori

Paul Thomas Anderson

In-Cinema



**Boogie Nights**  
PAUL THOMAS ANDERSON, USA, 1997, 155 MIN.  

FRI DEC 31	7:00PM	VCT
SAT JAN 1	7:50PM	STU

Being the rise and fall of a prodigiously-endowed performer on the seventies porno scene (Mark Wahlberg's Dirk Diggler). Paul Thomas Anderson's flamboyant 1997 calling card movie revels in the wild success of xxxcess, before crashing to earth with a bump.

"Nearly a quarter of a century later, *Boogie Nights* stands as one of the finest and most endlessly rewatchable films of the '90s." KYLE SMITH, *NATIONAL REVIEW*, 2020

*In English*

**CAST** Mark Wahlberg, Julianne Moore, John C. Reilly, Heather Graham, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Burt Reynolds, William H. Macy

In-Cinema



**Phantom Thread**  
PAUL THOMAS ANDERSON, USA, 2017, 130 MIN.  

FRI DEC 31	4:20PM	VCT
SAT JAN 1	5:00PM	VCT

Paul Thomas Anderson's beautifully tailored piece is a battle of the sexes comedy (and a black comedy at that) dressed up as a prestige picture. In what he declared would be his last film role, Daniel Day-Lewis is Reynolds Woodcock, a renowned dressmaker and an obsessive perfectionist. Vicky Krieps is Alma, a waitress who becomes his latest muse, and who is determined to prove more than that, his match.

"Devilishly funny and luxuriantly sensual." *SLATE*

*In English*

**CAST** Daniel Day-Lewis, Lesley Manville, Vicky Krieps

Edward Yang

In-Cinema



**A Brighter Summer Day**  
EDWARD YANG, TAIWAN, 1991, 237 MIN.  

SAT JAN 1	12:45PM	VCT
TUE JAN 4	12:45PM	VCT

Edward Yang's landmark movie is based on the true story of a crime that rocked Taiwan in the early 60s. A film of both sprawling scope and tender intimacy, this novelistic, patiently observed epic centers on the gradual, inexorable fall of a young teenager (Chang Chen) from innocence to juvenile delinquency, and is set against a simmering backdrop of restless youth, rock and roll, and political turmoil.

"Not just a wonderful movie but also an essential piece of modern cinema." *NEW YORK TIMES*

*In Mandarin, Shanghaiese, Taiwanese with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Chang Chen, Lisa Yang, Chang Kuo-Chu, Elaine Jin, Wang Chuan, Chang Han

In-Cinema



**Yi Yi (A One and a Two)**  
EDWARD YANG, TAIWAN/JAPAN, 2000, 173 MIN.  

SUN JAN 2	1:20PM	VCT
MON JAN 3	1:30PM	VCT

Few films speak so profoundly to life as we know it as this intimate epic from the Taiwanese director Edward Yang. When an old woman falls into a coma, her family is encouraged to come speak to her each day. This they do, individually, and over the course of some months they discover much about themselves.

"Yi Yi isn't hard to put into words because it's one of the best movies ever made, it's one of the best movies ever made because it's hard to put into words." *INDIEWIRE*

*In Mandarin, Taiwanese, Japanese, English with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Wu Nien-jen, Elaine Jin, Issey Ogata, Kelly Lee, Jonathan Chang, Hsi-Sheng Chen, Su-Yun Ko, Lawrence Ko





## El Planeta

AMALIA ULMAN, USA, 2021, 76 MIN.

SUN DEC 26	7:00PM	STU
MON DEC 27	8:00PM	STU
TUE DEC 28	8:00PM	STU
WED DEC 29	8:00PM	STU
THU DEC 30	8:00PM	STU

Flat broke and facing eviction, Leonor (director Amalia Ulman) and her mother Maria (Ale Ulman) refuse to go down without a flight of fancy. Their power may've been cut, but lightbulb ideas still spark as these acid-tongued scroungers grift their way into getting one more taste of the finer things. A fleetly paced, winningly droll comedy of poor manners, *El Planeta* transports us through the looking glass into the stylish shared delusion that this mother and daughter have tailored for their circumstances.

*In Spanish, English with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Amalia Ulman, Ale Ulman, Chen Zhou, Nacho Vigalondo, Saoirse Bertram



## Benedetta

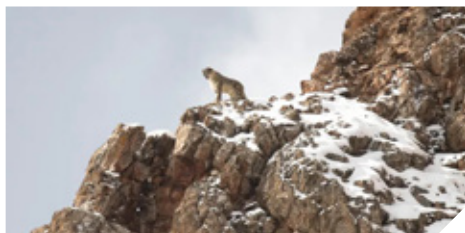
PAUL VERHOEVEN, FRANCE, 2021, 131 MIN.

SAT DEC 18	8:15PM	STU
SUN DEC 19	3:50PM	STU

Dutch filmmaker Paul Verhoeven (*Basic Instinct*; *RoboCop*; *Showgirls*; *Elle*) has successfully straddled the triangle between Hollywood craftsman, art house auteur and exploitation provocateur. As the author of a serious biography of Jesus, he's ideally placed to tackle the true story of Benedetta Carlini, a 17th century Italian nun revered as a mystic and persecuted for engaging in a lesbian affair with another member of her convent. Is she a power-hungry fraud, or has she been touched by God, as she claims?

*In French with English subtitles.*

**CAST** Virginie Efira, Charlotte Rampling, Daphné Patakia, Lambert Wilson, Olivier Rabourdin



## The Velvet Queen

MARIE AMIGUET, VINCENT MUNIER, FRANCE, 2021, 92 MIN.

SAT JAN 1	3:15PM, 5:15PM	STU
SUN JAN 2	3:40PM, 8:00PM	STU
MON JAN 3	4:00PM, 6:00PM	STU
TUE JAN 4	3:30PM, 7:50PM	STU
WED JAN 5	7:50PM	STU
THU JAN 6	7:50PM	STU

Within the vast, mountainous region of the Tibetan plateau, Vincent Munier, a wildlife photographer, and Sylvain Tesson, a travel writer, are determined to find one of the region's most elusive creatures: the snow leopard. As we are treated to glimpses of these stunning landscapes, the pair and director Marie Amiguet begin to consider man's position within nature, mourning a time when "beasts, humans, and gods conducted a common conversation." With a score by Nick Cave and Warren Ellis.

*In French with English Subtitles.*

**FEAT** Vincent Munier, Sylvain Tesson



## Exhibition on Screen

DEC 22 - JAN 9

VCT & STU

Director-producer Phil Grabsky has been a frequent visitor to VIFF over the years. His long-running *Exhibition on Screen* series has provided audiences around the world with close up scrutiny of masterworks which we'd normally have to travel far and wide to see. In this short series we're catching up on the latest documentaries in this popular strand, along with a few old faves. Phil is hoping to join us in person for the screenings December 22 and 23.

**Cezanne: Portraits of a Life** (Phil Grabsky, 85 min.) • **The Danish Collector: Delacroix to Gauguin** (David Bickerstaff, 90 min) • **Frida Kahlo** (Ali Ray, 90 min.) • **Leonardo: The Works** (Phil Grabsky, 102 min.) • **Raphael Revealed** (Phil Grabsky, 88 min.) • **Sunflowers** (David Bickerstaff, 85 min.)