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Direct from Cannes: Netflix and the big controversy at the 70th

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Monica Bellucci, mistress of ceremonies at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival



Catherine Deneuve

Cannes Film Festival

CINEMA

In the official competition for the Palme d'Or, the two Netflix films “Okja” and “The Meyerowitz Stories” are causing something of a storm at the 70th Cannes Film Festival. Take a closer look at this cinematic sandal.

By [Maia Morgensztern](#)

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The Meyerowitz Stories réalisé par Noah Baumbach, avec Ben Stiller, Dustin Hoffman et Adam Scott

A brief summary of the facts

On April 13th the Festival announced the 18 films to be shown at Cannes. Among them – to everyone’s great surprise – was *The Meyerowitz Stories* (directed by Noah Baumbach) and *Okja* (directed by Bong Joon-ho). The problem is these two films produced by Netflix are only available to subscribers of their own channel and won’t be shown in regular cinemas... Their selection caused immediate outcry at Cannes. But *Okja*, in the official competition for the Palme d’Or, maintains its online release will happen next month. Netflix: 1 – Movie theatres: 0.

The festival subsequently announced – to avoid a boycott perhaps – that from next year the competing films must be available for general release in French cinemas. A return snub for Netflix...



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Pedro Almodóvar hammered the point at the opening press conference:

“It is unimaginable for me to give a Palme d'Or to a film that won't be seen on the big screen, in one way or another.”

A resounding silence fell over the room.

Will Smith – who'd already warmed the ambiance with his slightly forced jokes about being the token black American on

the jury – hastened to make his own, not exactly spontaneous, heartfelt appeal, duly validated by his PR, where he declared his kids' love of going to the movies was equal to their love of Netflix. No really, there are no conflicts of interest here. "*I love life, I love Netflix!*" Exclaimed the star of *Bright*, a science-fiction detective movie with a pharaonic budget of 90 million dollars set for release in December exclusively... on Netflix.

The following day the cast of *Wonderstruck*, produced by Amazon, hit the red carpet. Its director Todd Haynes confided that unlike Netflix, "*at Amazon, the guys really do love cinema.*" This is clearly set to be the fortnight's theme...

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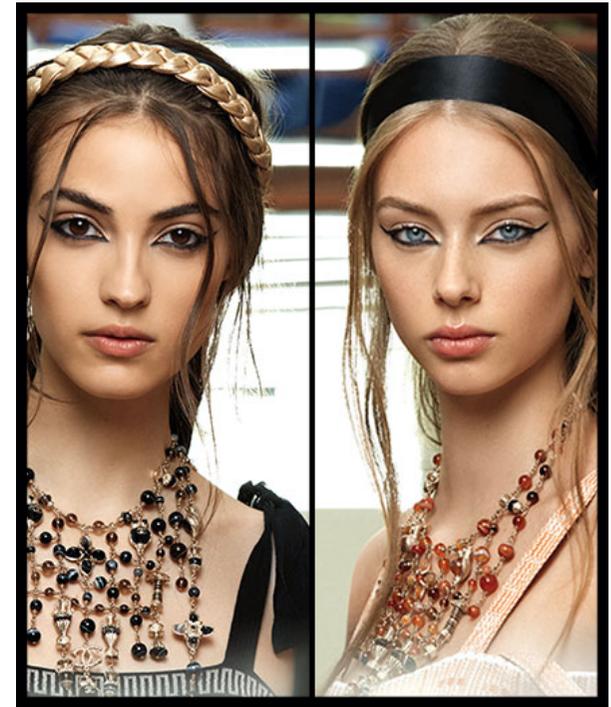
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