



MARCHÉ DU FILM
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

Variety

Immersive Competition Launch

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Author : Nick Vivarelli

Cannes Film Festival Launches Competition Section Dedicated to Immersive Cinema

The Cannes Film Festival has announced it is launching a new competition section dedicated to immersive cinema.

In a statement the fest said that in 2017, Alejandro González Iñárritu “made history at the 70th edition of the Festival de Cannes with his groundbreaking virtual reality piece, ‘Carne y Arena (Virtually Present, Physically Invisible)’ marking the first immersive work ever presented as an official selection at a major film festival.”

Iñárritu went on to receive a special Academy Award for the project “and continues to be a prominent figure at the Festival de Cannes,” the statement noted, serving as president of the fest’s Jury in 2019.

Now, seven years since its first immersive selection “and in line with the Marché du Film’s commitment to exploring new technologies and art forms through its innovative-focused programs” the fest is launching the new Immersive Competition for its upcoming 77th edition.

The new competitive strand will feature eight immersive works in competition, plus a curated selection of non-competitive works, “illustrating the synergy between immersive experiences and cinema” that will complement the program.

The competition will feature “immersive, collective and interactive works that utilize virtual reality, augmented reality and other cutting-edge technologies to transcend conventional storytelling and transport audiences to other worlds, narratives and eras,” the statement specified.

The VR works will compete for the fest’s new Best Immersive Work prize. An international jury composed of top figures from the film and immersive art worlds will present the award at a special separate closing ceremony.

The selected VR works will be displayed in large space at the Cannes Cinema – the fest’s cinema complex of Cannes La Bocca, outside Cannes proper, and at the Cannes Georges Méliès Campus, a university dedicated to creative writing and film.

The Venice Film Festival in 2017 became the first major fest to launch a competitive section dedicated to immersive cinema, called Venice VR, now featuring dozens of projects yearly.

The upcoming 77th edition of Cannes will run May 15 to 24. The fest’s main competition will be announced tomorrow.

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