

Highly anticipated releases at the box office this July

By  Daniel Derksen

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Get ready for some exciting new film releases in July, including the eagerly anticipated *Oppenheimer*, *Barbie*, and *Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning*.



1 July

Tony Award-winning director Ivo van Hove makes his Met debut with a new staging of Mozart's tragicomedy *Don Giovanni*, re-setting the familiar tale of deceit and damnation in an abstract architectural landscape that explores the dark corners of the story and its characters.

Nathalie Stutzmann makes her Met debut conducting a star-studded cast led by baritone Peter Mattei as a magnetic Don Giovanni, alongside the Leporello of bass-baritone Adam Plachetka. Sopranos Federica Lombardi, Ana María Martínez, and Ying Fang are Giovanni's conquests—Donna Anna, Donna Elvira, and Zerlina—and tenor Ben Bliss sings Don Ottavio.

There are four exclusive screenings on 30 June, 1, 2, 4 July at Nouveau cinemas. Book seats [here](#).

7 July

In the supernatural-horror *Insidious: The Red Door*, Josh Lambert heads east to drop his son Dalton off at an idyllic, ivy-league university. However, Dalton's college dream becomes a nightmare when the repressed demons of his past suddenly return to haunt them both. To end the haunting and to put the demons to rest once and for all, Josh and Dalton must return once again to the Further in order to stop the Lambert nightmare for good.

The film stars Ty Simpkins, Patrick Wilson, Andrew Astor, Rose Byrne, and Lin Shaye. It's a direct sequel to *Insidious* (2010) and *Insidious: Chapter 2* (2013), and the fifth instalment in the *Insidious* franchise. Patrick Wilson in his directorial debut from a screenplay by Scott Teems and story by Leigh Whannell.

When a woman's s business trip to Asia goes sideways in the raucous comedy *Joy Ride*, she enlists the help of Lolo, her childhood best friend, Kat, a college friend, and Deadeye, Lolo's eccentric cousin. Their epic, no-holds-barred experience becomes a journey of bonding, friendship, belonging and wild debauchery that reveals the universal truth of what it means to know and love who you are.

Directed by Adele Lim, in her feature directorial debut, and written by Cherry Chevapravatdumrong and Teresa Hsiao, the film stars Ashley Park, Sherry Cola, Stephanie Hsu, and Sabrina Wu.

14 July

Ethan Hunt and his IMF team embark on their most dangerous mission yet in *Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning Part One* to track down a terrifying new weapon that threatens humanity before it falls into the wrong hands. With control of the future and the fate of the world at stake, and dark forces from Ethan's past closing in, a deadly race around the globe begins. Confronted by a mysterious, all-powerful enemy, Ethan is forced to consider that nothing can matter more than his mission – not even the lives of those he cares about most.

Directed by Christopher McQuarrie, who also co-wrote the screenplay with Erik Jendresen, it is the sequel to *Mission: Impossible – Fallout* (2018) and the seventh instalment in the *Mission: Impossible* film series. The film stars Tom Cruise, Hayley Atwell, Ving Rhames, Simon Pegg, Rebecca Ferguson, Esai Morales, Vanessa Kirby, Pom Klementieff, and Henry Czerny.

In the animated science fiction comedy *Boonie Bears Guardians Code* Briar and Bramble lose their mother at a very young age in mysterious circumstances. Many years later, logger Vick takes the bears to visit the Robot Research Institute, and they uncover a clue relating to Briar and Bramble's mother. Suddenly, all the answers surrounding her disappearance are about to be revealed. It's the ninth film in the Boonie Bears series and is directed by Lin Yongchang and Shao Heqi

Detective Khumalo finds himself tangled in a complex case when a bloodied girl runs into his station with an elaborate story the horror *You're Next*. He contacts an old detective to help him come to terms with the information. Their investigation takes them down a path of murder and deceit linked to the social media world. Filmed in South Africa, it's written and directed by Arish Sirkissoo, Drew Baillie, Dr Raj Singh, S'bonelo Cele, Rakshana Singh, Rahul Polton, Tamlyn Prosser, and Dylan Swanepoel

One of opera's most beloved works receives its first new Met staging in 19 years — *Mozart's Die Zauberflöte* offers a daring vision by renowned English director Simon McBurney that *The Wall Street Journal* declared “the best production I've ever witnessed of Mozart's opera.”

Nathalie Stutzmann conducts the Met Orchestra, with the pit raised to make the musicians visible to the audience and allow interaction with the cast. In his Met-debut staging, McBurney lets loose a volley of theatrical flourishes, incorporating projections, sound effects, and acrobatics to match the spectacle and drama of Mozart's fable.

The brilliant cast includes soprano Erin Morley as Pamina, tenor Lawrence Brownlee as Tamino, baritone Thomas Oliemans in his Met debut as Papageno, soprano Kathryn Lewek as the Queen of the Night, and bass Stephen Milling as Sarastro. There are four exclusive screenings on 14, 15, 16, and 18 July at Nouveau cinemas. Book seats [here](#).

20 July

Widely regarded as one of the leading film festivals on the African continent, the 44th edition of the Durban International Film Festival will showcase an impressive variety of shorts, features, documentaries, and student films.

The film festival will showcase 90 films from 54 countries from 20 to 30 July.

Highlights include *What The Soil Remembers*, a South African documentary that won the Ammodo Tiger Short Award at the International Film Festival Rotterdam in February – the film tells of the trauma of uprooted communities during Apartheid. *City Of Ashes* by Sheetal Magan presents a dystopian Johannesburg in the near future of 2035. And Malusi Bengu's *Vinyl On Bones* explores music as a healing tool and the cost of this alchemy to the healer. The restored South African film *Mapantsula* by Oliver Schmitz, which had its world premiere in February. Programme and bookings: <https://ccadiff.ukzn.ac.za/>

21 July

Written and directed by Christopher Nolan, the biographical thriller *Oppenheimer* explores the world of J. Robert Oppenheimer, the theoretical physicist who helped develop the first nuclear weapons.

Based on the 2005 biography *American Prometheus* by Kai Bird and Martin J. Sherwin, the film stars Cillian Murphy as Oppenheimer and Emily Blunt as his wife, biologist and botanist Katherine “Kitty” Oppenheimer. With Matt Damon portrays General Leslie Groves Jr., director of the Manhattan Project, and Robert Downey, Jr. plays Lewis Strauss, a founding commissioner of the US Atomic Energy Commission. *Oppenheimer* also stars Rami Malek and reunites Nolan with Kenneth Branagh.

The film is based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning book *American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer* by Kai Bird and the late Martin J. Sherwin. It was filmed in a combination of IMAX 65mm and 65mm large-format film photography including, for the first time ever, sections in IMAX black and white analogue photography.

In the outrageous fantasy comedy *Barbie*, Barbie and Ken are having the time of their lives in the colourful and seemingly perfect world of Barbie Land. However, when they get a chance to go to the real world, they soon discover the joys and perils of living among humans.

This live-action film is directed by Greta Gerwig from a screenplay she wrote with Noah Baumbach and is based on the Barbie fashion dolls by Mattel. It stars Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling as Barbie and Ken, respectively, alongside a ensemble supporting cast that includes America Ferrera, Kate McKinnon, Issa Rae, Rhea Perlman, and Will Ferrell.

28 July

Directed Paul Schrader based on his original screenplay, *Master Gardener* follows Narvel Roth (award-winner Joel Edgerton), the meticulous horticulturist of Gracewood Gardens. He is as much devoted to tending the grounds of this beautiful and historic estate, to pandering to his employer, the wealthy dowager Mrs. Haverhill (Sigourney Weaver). When Mrs. Haverhill demands that he take on her wayward and troubled great-niece Maya (Quintessa Swindell) as a new apprentice, chaos enters Narvel's spartan existence, unlocking dark secrets from a buried violent past that threaten them all.

The French 3D computer-animated musical superhero film *Miraculous Ladybug & Cat Noir: The Movie* follows two Parisian teenagers who transform into the superheroes to protect the city from supervillains led by Hawk Moth. Directed and co-written by Jeremy Zag, it's an adaptation of the animated television series *Miraculous: Tales of Ladybug & Cat Noir*

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ABOUT DANIEL DERCKSEN

Daniel Dercksen has been a contributor for Lifestyle since 2012. As the driving force behind the successful independent training initiative The Writing Studio and a published film and theatre journalist of 40 years, teaching workshops in creative writing, playwriting and screenwriting throughout South Africa and internationally the past 22 years. Visit www.writingstudio.co.za

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