The Academy sees record-breaking Best International Feature submissions

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The Academy notified voting members of the submissions for the Best International Feature Film category at the 99th Academy Awards Oct. 18.

The list featured a variety of films, including festival award winners and previous Oscar winners in the Best International Feature category.

Each year, countries submit films to the Academy for voting, and this year's number of submissions is the highest since the award's inception. A record breaking 101 countries submitted films, and for the first time in the history of the category, certain film festival award winners also automatically qualified for consideration. Seven films became eligible with this new rule, but three were additionally submitted by the countries that produced them.

Three countries submitted films for the first time this year. Rwanda submitted "Ben'Imana," directed by filmmaker Marie Clémentine Dusabejambo. The film won the Caméra d'Or, the award for debut feature directors, at the Cannes Film Festival. It also became the first Rwandan film to premiere at the festival. Cyprus submitted filmmaker Myrsini Aristidou's debut feature "Hold onto Me," which won the Audience Award: World Cinematic Drama prize at the Sundance Film Festival. El Salvador submitted "Vértices," marking their first submission to the Academy.

The list of submissions includes films from two former winners in the category. Japanese filmmaker Ryusuke Hamaguchi won for his 2021 film "Drive My Car," and now his 2026 film "All of a Sudden" was submitted by Japan for the upcoming ceremony. Polish filmmaker Paweł Pawlikowski won the award for his 2013 film "Ida," with Poland having submitted his newest 2026 feature "Fatherland," for which he won the Best Director award at Cannes.

This year's most competitive film, according to prediction websites and articles, is "La bola negra," a Spanish film directed by Javier Ambrossi and Javier Calvo that also won the Best Director Award at Cannes and the People's Choice Award at the Toronto International Film Festival. This film is predicted by many to win the Best International Award and reach success in outside categories, including Best Picture and Best Director.

Another film that many consider to be a safe nomination is "Fjord," which stars Academy Award nominees Norwegian actress Renate Reinsve ("Sentimental Value") and Romanian-American actor Sebastian Stan ("The Apprentice"). Romanian director Cristian Mungiu won his second Palme d'Or for this film, after winning for "4 Months, 3 Weeks, 2 Days" in 2007.

Other submitted films that competed for the Palme d'Or could follow in the footsteps of last year's Best International winner, "Sentimental Value," by winning the Oscar and not the Palme d'Or. "Sentimental Value" won the Grand Prix prize at last year's festival, with this year's Grand Prix going to France's "Minotaur." Directed by two-time Oscar nominee Russian filmmaker Andrey Zvyagintsev ("Leviathan" and "Loveless"), the film is predicted to achieve Zvyagintsev's third Oscar nomination by Variety and The Hollywood Reporter.

East Asia presents two possible contenders for nominations: Japan's previously mentioned "All of a Sudden" and South Korea's "Possible Love." Both films received major festival recognition, with "All of a Sudden" winning Best Actress at Cannes for Belgian-French actress Virginie Efira and Japanese actress Tao Okamoto, and "Possible Love" winning the Grand Jury Prize at the Venice Film Festival.

Another Venice winner contending for a nomination is "Woman Unknown" from Denmark. Director May el-Toukry won the Golden Lion, the festival's highest award, for her newest drama. Other winners of this award have achieved major success at the Oscars, including Best Picture winner "Nomadland" and Best International winner "Roma."

The two other films that remain likely to contend for one of the five nomination slots are Austria's "Rose" and Belgium's "Coward." "Rose" stars Oscar-nominee German actress Sandra Hüller (Anatomy of a Fall), who also won the Silver Bear for Best Leading Performance at the Berlin International Film Festival for her performance in "Rose."

Belgian filmmaker Lukas Dhont, the director of "Coward," was previously nominated in the international category for his 2022 film "Close." The lead actors of "Coward," French actor Valentin Campagne and Belgian actor Emmanuel Macchia, shared the Best Actor award at Cannes. While "Rose" appears to have overtaken "Coward" in many predictions, there's still over a month before voting for the shortlisted films begins.

While the ceremony is still months away, Spain's "La bola negra" appears most likely to win Best International Feature. Also based on current predictions and festival awards, a combination of Japan's "All of a Sudden," Poland's "Fatherland," Romania's "Fjord," South Korea's "Possible Love," France's "Minotaur," Denmark's "Woman Unknown," Austria's "Rose" and Belgium's "Coward" will likely fill the remaining four nomination spots.

The shortlist for the category will be revealed Dec. 15, as the journey towards the 99th Academy Awards continues.



A guide to fall fashion at Quinnipiac

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As the cold weather settles in, more and more Quinnipiac students have traded their warm-weather attire for more layered, longer clothes.

It is a common belief among the fashion community that fall is more fun to dress up in, as it allows for layering coats and accessories that the warmer months won't, especially at a school in New England, like Quinnipiac.

This season, students have been wearing neutrals, navy blue, white, brown and black, with the occasional fall color or jewel tone. Wine red, mustard yellow and sage, matcha or pea green are popular statement colors.

If you want to look fashionably put together, choose a palette for each outfit, about two to three colors that repeat. It helps to choose colors that are analogous on the color wheel, like yellow, green and blue or complementary colors, like purple and yellow. There are also plenty of other color palettes you can experiment with that will look just as cohesive or striking.

Good fall colors are jewel tones and warm colors. Deep, rich colors - reds, yellows and oranges, and warm purples and greens; even blues can be a fall color in more desaturated and navy tones.

A lot of students have been spotted wearing solids and graphic tees. And while solids are a good base, they can be spruced up with a patterned or textured piece within the color palette of the outfit.

Polka dots or stripes never go out of style, and plaids are perfect for fall, so pull out your flannels; now is the time. As for textures, opt for heavier fabrics for the weather and softer textures. Crushed velvet, suede, silk and corduroy are great fall fabric choices, and embroidery, beading, ruffles, knitting and ribbing are all timeless textures that can spruce up a look.

Wide-leg pants have been in style recently, fewer people are wearing skinny, ripped or mom jeans. Pairing some wide-leg jeans with a button-up in a fun color or texture is a solid outfit that can look both professional and casual.

There have also been a lot of loungewear sets, velvet or cotton, sweatpants and zip-up or pullover hoodies. Many students spruce them up with jewelry and accessories, favoring thinner, daintier earrings and rings, while wearing chunkier metal charms on small, chunky leather bags and platform sneakers and Uggs.



The biggest shoe trend at the moment among Quinnipiac students seems to be Ugg slides; they have a taller sole, as do most shoes nowadays with the prevalence of platforms, and an almost Birkenstock-like quality, while still being comfortable, fluffy Uggs.

Even as the weather has gotten colder, many students are not wearing coats yet, but instead zip-collar fleeces and thick sweaters or cardigans. On the more frigid days, fur-collared puffers have come back into style, with the rise of Y2K fashion trends.

Speaking of Y2K, despite shorter-length tops and high-rise still being in style, low-rise and longer tops have also come back, creating fun mixes of the two in layering. Some fashion-forward people have been wearing low-rise jeans and longer camisoles, layered over top with chunky knit, cropped cardigans and sweaters.

In the same vein, while drop-shoulder sleeves are still very prevalent, baby sleeves are back as well. It is quite interesting how the two opposite styles have become on trend at the same time, and how people layer them.

With the prevalence of athletic wear, lounge wear and ballet flats, ballet-style athletic tops have been coming into fashion as well. Some students will wear low-cut or window-backed shirts, with baby or long sleeves, that are tightly fitted, in athletic fabrics. They pair these with the aforementioned ballet flats, jeans and simple metal jewelry. Sweaters with a wide neckline, pushed off one shoulder, reflect this trend in simple, cute, athletic wear as well.

On the masculine side of things, fashion seems a lot simpler, with the go-to being T-shirts, gym shorts and jeans. Sweat sets are also in fashion on this side as well. Some more elevated looks have been sweaters colored like sports jerseys, knitted sweaters and Henley-style shirts. It can be spruced up even more with some layering and accessories. The classic long-sleeve shirt under a short-sleeve T-shirt can look grunge and youthful, and a white undershirt peeking out from under the sweater looks put together. As for accessories, cool vintage sneakers, watches, bracelets and necklaces add more flair.

In both feminine and masculine dressing, trends favor sweat sets. Flannels and zipper-collar fleeces are pretty big. Cottons, jeans and ribbed textures are classics that aren't going anywhere. While it is vitally important to those of us who are fashion-forward to stay aware of trends and to decide which we would like to participate in, it is more so important to express ourselves outside of trends and their cyclical nature. If you prefer a style, fabric or fit, wear it.

If you want to wear something that is not on trend, start the trend yourself. Experiment and have fun with fashion this fall.