

Lifestyle | Movies & Music



Monty Python fans dressed as the Gumbys gather in an attempt to set the world record for the largest gathering of people dressed as Gumbys as a part of the 50th anniversary of Monty Python's Flying Circus at the Roundhouse in London.—Reuters photos

Monty Python fans, handkerchiefs on heads, gather to mark anniversary

Monty Python fans, sporting knotted handkerchiefs on their heads, rolled up trousers and Wellington boots, gathered in London on Saturday for a suitably silly celebration of the 50th anniversary of the comedy troupe. The costumes matched those of the Gumbys who were characters in the "Monty Python's Flying Circus" series that first aired on BBC television on Oct. 5, 1969.

The Gumbys were noted for their

ape-like posture, habit of speaking loudly and slowly, and the catchphrase "my brain hurts". Dozens of Gumbys strutted outside the Roundhouse music venue before events to celebrate the work of Terry Gilliam, John Cleese, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, Michael Palin and the late Graham Chapman. Organizers were hoping to set a Guinness World Record for the Largest Gathering of People Dressed as Gumbys.—Reuters



'Joker' gets last laugh, setting a record on North American screens

Warner Bros.' "Joker" has survived the intense controversy over its violent themes to take in an estimated \$93.5 million in North American theaters this weekend, setting a record for an October release, industry watcher Exhibitor Relations reported Sunday. Starring

Joaquin Phoenix, "Joker" provides the backstory for the rise of Batman's maniacal nemesis, painting a dark and disturbing portrayal of a would-be stand-up comedian's descent into madness.

Amid fears that it might inspire violence—a shooting at a 2012 screening of "The Dark Knight Rises" in Aurora, Colorado claimed 12 lives—some theaters provided extra security for the opening of "Joker." The film, directed by Todd Phillips (maker of "The Hangover" trilogy), has drawn tepid reviews: the Washington Post called it "grim, shallow (and) distractingly derivative." But Hollywood Reporter said the R-rated film got a B+ CinemaScore rating and earned 69 percent on the Rotten Tomatoes website.

Universal's family-friendly "Abominable" placed a distant second at the box office, earning \$12 million for the Friday-to-Sunday period in its second weekend. It tells the story of a teen and her friends trying to help a young Yeti reunite with its family as a wealthy man seeks to capture it as a prize. In third, at \$8 million, was Focus Features' "Downton Abbey," the cinematic follow-up to the hit TV series about an upper-class family and their stately home in a changing Britain. The movie has the Crawleys and their earnest staff scrambling to prepare for an unexpected visit by the British royals.

"Hustlers" from STX Films placed fourth, at \$6.3 million. The Jennifer Lopez movie is based on a true story about

strippers who plot to steal from their wealthy clients in recession-hit New York. And in fifth was horror film "IT: Chapter Two," at \$5.4 million. The Warner Bros. movie features the grown-up versions of the kids who battled the terrifying clown Pennywise 27 years earlier as they are forced to do it again.

Rounding out the weekend's top 10 were:

- "Ad Astra" (\$4.6 million)
- "Judy" (\$4.4 million)
- "Rambo: Last Blood" (\$3.6 million)
- "War" (\$1.6 million)
- "Good Boys" (\$900,000)—AFP

From Hitler to Michael Jackson, unlikely names for Nobel Peace Prize

Eighty years ago on the brink of the bloodiest conflict in history, Adolf Hitler was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, illustrating that literally anyone can be nominated. From the Führer to the "King of Pop", in the nearly 120 years the prize has been awarded nominations have included some choices that—to say the least—have seemed unlikely and outright bizarre. In January 1939, about eight months before the invasion of Poland, Swedish Social Democratic MP Erik Brandt wrote to the Norwegian Nobel Committee to suggest the Peace Prize should be given to Hitler.

In the letter, written only months after the annexation of Austria and the Sudeten Crisis, Brandt praised the leader of the Third Reich's "glowing love for peace", dubbing him "the Prince of Peace on Earth". Brandt later explained the nomination was meant to be satirical—although the irony was lost on many—and was in protest against British prime minister Neville Chamberlain being nominated for the 1938 Munich Agreement in which part of Czechoslovakia was ceded to Germany.

The logic was that if Chamberlain were to be celebrated for appeasing Hitler, the Führer might as well be too. Brandt eventually withdrew the nomination, but Hitler still appears as a candidate in the archives. "The history of Erik Brandt's nomination of Adolf Hitler fully shows how dangerous it may be to use irony in a heated political setting," Nobel historian Asle Sveen told AFP.

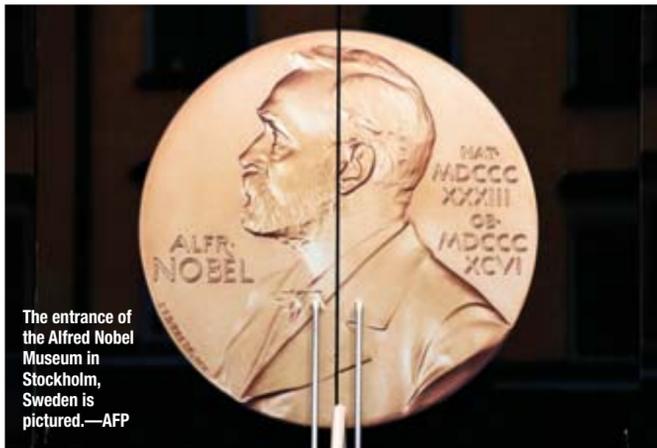
Stalin and Mussolini too?

The Nobel Committee accepts all proposals as long as they are sent before the January 31 deadline. But while anyone alive can be nominated, not just anyone can submit a nomination. Those eligible to do so include parliamentarians and ministers from all countries, former laureates, some university professors and current and former members of the Committee itself. All together they number in the thousands.

"There are so many people who have the right to nominate a candidate that it's not very complicated to be nominated," the influential Committee secretary, Olav Njølstad, told AFP. In 1935, Italian dictator Benito Mussolini was proposed, ironically, by German and French academics mere months before his country invaded Ethiopia. As one of the victors of World War II, Russian leader Joseph Stalin was nominated twice, in 1945 and 1948.

Once the deadline has passed and the nominations are in, only a handful are kept on a shortlist to be reviewed by the Committee and its advisors. "Neither Hitler, Stalin nor Mussolini were seriously considered for the Peace Prize," historian Geir Lundestad, former secretary of the Committee, told AFP. "What surprises me most is that many dictators around the world have refrained from getting themselves nominated."

Over the last two decades the number of candidates has skyrocketed and today generally exceed 300, so it isn't too sur-



The entrance of the Alfred Nobel Museum in Stockholm, Sweden is pictured.—AFP

prising that a few odd names show up. "One or two" nominations distinguished by their peculiarity show up "at regular intervals", according to Njølstad.

From pop to peace

The list of candidates is kept confidential for at least 50 years, but a sponsor can publicly announce their pick. Whether a nomination is odd or not is of course a matter of perspective, but some proposals would certainly make most people do a double-take. In 2001 the sport of football represented by the international football federation FIFA was nominated. The Swedish lawmaker behind the nomination argued that sports had the "ability to create positive international contacts" and contribute to a "more peaceful world".

This wasn't even that novel of an idea, since Jules Rimet, who initiated the first World Cup, had also been nominated in 1956, noted journalist Antoine Jacob, author of "History of the Nobel Prize". Pop icon Michael Jackson found himself in

the running in 1998. Even though many of the child sex abuse allegations against the "King of Pop" had not surfaced at the time, the artist's message to "Heal the World" did not impress the Committee.

"The Romanian parliamentarians who proposed Michael Jackson considered this nomination to be very serious, but it was not considered by the Committee either," said Lundestad. But in 2001 Lundestad also said it didn't seem impossible that famous musicians involved in causes, such as Bob Geldof, Bono or Sting could one day receive the award.

"Artists' names come in regularly, but it's a more recent trend," explained Njølstad. Among this year's known nominations for the Nobel Peace Prize, which will be awarded on October 11, are US President Donald Trump and Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg. However Lundestad insists that one shouldn't get too excited over just a nomination. "It's pretty easy to be nominated," he said. "It's much harder to win".—AFP

Review

Egypt Cinema

By Nermin Al-Houthi

It is not easy for one to write about a friend's life, so the words are confused between the elements of the "Egypt Cinema" play. I was keen to attend the play while in Egypt after hearing about it from many critics. The "Egypt Cinema" play was presented by the second batch of the acting department of the artistic innovation center "Talents studio" as a graduation project directed by Khalid Jalal and executive director Ola Fahmy.

The direction effort on stage was distinguished, as everyone is aware of the innovations of Khalid Jalal, and the products of his theatrical displays, and this applies to Ola Fahmy as well. We won't focus on the direction though it is the most important element in any integrated art work. The play brings the past to simulate the present and confirms the future that Egypt's Cinema is a civilization and is still present in the history of Arab and international cinema.

The director through his artistic vision had the "Last Night" movie and played on its theme to prepare its plot "amnesia." Through his theme the director wanted to remind the audience what Egypt Cinema is in more than 15 sketches that he selected from Egyptian films that left a print in the history of Arab and International cinema. He employed those sketches with the "last night" theme, so the dramatic event moved in two parallel dramatic lines towards one goal which is reviving the history of "Egypt Cinema."

I summarized the idea to give the other elements their critical focus. The actors, who are the main target that the play was based on, brought out their theatrical and artistic talents. More than 60 students gave an outstanding performance and both directors employed their artistic energy in the roles given to them. As some of them went for comedy and overcame amnesia, others brought up the basic tragic characters to remind us of their sufferings in selected scenes.

Students provided musical effects and sang along to enhance the scenes and characters. They all played their role with innovation and professionalism to revive their civilization and bring the Egypt Cinema memory back. The acoustic effects that played between the past and present simulated the future and mix technology with live effects. A musical art mix took us to the past while we were in the present. The theater's decor, though simple, was in harmony with the play. As scenes were changing, along with the actor's movement and lightning, there was a bright opening concentrated in the middle of the theater space, as a focal point for a hopeful future.

Reese Witherspoon uses facial roller to keep dark circles at bay

The 43-year-old actress has shared the simple three-step nightly skincare routine she undertakes to keep her complexion clear and she revealed one vital step is to massage her face. Showing off her \$95 NuVibe RX Amethyst Massaging Beauty Roller, she explained: "It feels so good. I do it in the morning, too, a little bit. And then it helps me get rid of the dark circles." Before her facial massage - which experts claim can temporarily reduce puffiness and maintains good blood flow to keep skin looking young -

the 'Morning Show' actress cleanses her face with Elizabeth Arden's \$36 Ceramide Replenishing Cleansing Oil. In a video for Instagram TV, she used the product to remove all her make-up and explained: "This is great. It takes off all my make-up and it makes my skin so soft and moisturized. Love this!" Reese concludes her nightly regime with a "very gentle" peel, explaining how she needed to mix the Elizabeth Arden PreVage Progressive Renewal Treatment - a four-part, four-week treatment that costs \$162 and uses lactic acid and gluconolactone to boost cell turnover and reveal polished - together "like a scientist" before patting it all over her skin. She said of the serum: "This is very gentle. And don't forget ladies, always with the moisturizer at night."

