

Russian Film 'Leviathan' Competes for Cannes Palme d'Or Award

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Director Andrei Zvyagintsev's 'Leviathan' competes for Cannes Palme d'Or Award.

The 67th Cannes International Film Festival opens in southern France on Wednesday, with Russia's "Leviathan" one of 18 films competing for the gala's top honor.

"Leviathan" — a film four years in the making — was shot in a small town in the northern Murmansk region and details the struggles of one man against the corrupt local mayor. It will compete against 17 other films in the prestigious Palme d'Or competition, with the winner to be announced at the festival's closing ceremony on May 25.

Director Andrei Zvyagintsev says the film, which premieres in Cannes, will resonate with audiences all over the world.

"It's about the nature of man, his earthly destiny, about the issues that have troubled us all for a long time: betrayal, love, lust for power, forgiveness, revenge," Zvyagintsev was quoted as saying by news agency Itar-Tass.

Only two Russian films have been awarded the festival's top gong in the competition's history, with Fridrikh Ermler's "The Turning Point" and Mikhail Kalatozov's film "The Cranes Are Flying" taking home the honor in 1946 and 1955.

Other Russian films to have won awards at the festival include Andrei Tarkovsky's film "Solaris" and Nikita Mikhailov's film "Burnt By The Sun," both of which picked up the Grand Prix award in 1946 and 1958, respectively.

In 2011, Zvyagintsev's film "Yelena" was awarded the Un Certain Regard award for most original picture.

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