

Film

Fan films

Fisher pushed to lose weight

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"Hamilton," would have hit peak pop-culture saturation by now, but then he had to go and top himself: The writer-composer-actor also wrote new music for a cantina scene in the upcoming blockbuster "Star Wars: The Force Awakens."

The film's director, J.J. Abrams, revealed Miranda's participation on "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon," throwing in a little of the backstory of how the Broadway creative got involved in "The Force Awakens."



Fisher

In the clip, Abrams recalls that he met Miranda at intermission during one of the performances of "Hamilton" in which Miranda wasn't appearing. Miranda introduced himself and made a jokey offer to write new cantina music — not knowing that Abrams was on the hunt for someone to write a tune for a "Force Awakens" version of the famous cantina scene in "Star Wars: A New Hope." (Composer John Williams, who wrote the original cantina music, had wanted to bow out and concentrate on the rest of the new film's score.)

Miranda confirmed the news on his own, very active twitter feed.

Cultural

Exact details of the song, and the scene in which it appears, remain under wraps. But however the tune is used, it's just one more thing that makes Miranda the it-boy of musical theater, and "Hamilton" the kind of cultural juggernaut that Broadway hasn't spawned in years.

If the teasers, trailers and hints haven't sated your appetite for all things Star Wars in advance of the latest entry in the franchise, then it's time to tap into the force of fan films.

These sometimes hilarious, sometimes awe-inspiring and always off-canon creations are showcases for the creativity of Star Wars fanatics. You've got to give them credit for piecing together trailer hints into logical themes, pulling off low-budget special effects, and acting in generally cheesy fashion.

And fear not — the Disney empire won't be striking back. The company encourages these mash-ups, having revived the annual Star Wars Fan Film Awards in 2014 two years after buying Lucasfilm.

Here's a mini-marathon playlist to get you primed for the premiere of "Star Wars: Episode VII — The Force Awakens":

1. A musical tribute to Star Wars fans set to Elton John's "Rocket Man." <http://bit.ly/1PP5tFy>
2. A low-budget remake of "The Force Awakens" trailer. <http://bit.ly/1kTP8T0>
3. A special-effects laden duel, complete with Kylo Ren's wicked lightsaber crossguard. <http://bit.ly/1N892Ac>
4. The crew of the US aircraft carrier Dwight D. Eisenhower remade the teaser trailer, complete with real-life fighter pilots. <http://bit.ly/1MRNtVe>
5. A clever stitching together of various teasers and trailers to date, including bits from international trailers and voice-overs from previous films. <http://bit.ly/1NdfFPN>
6. A lightsaber fight that gets extra points for the choreography (note the behind the back parry) and alternate endings. <http://bit.ly/1QlxSxc>
7. Lightsaber boomerangs make this fan film scream "From Down Unda." <http://bit.ly/1Xrp6CK>
8. An officially sanctioned fan film that riffs on characters from the prequel trilogy and "The Clone Wars" animated series. <http://bit.ly/1kTPGIZ>
9. A Boba Fett spin-off teaser premised on his escape from the sarlacc that swallowed him in "Return of the Jedi." <http://bit.ly/1Tf9B09>
10. Yet another lightsaber battle — this time taken to deliberately ridiculous extremes. Watch for the Minecraft reference. <http://bit.ly/1LA507o>

"Star Wars" fans might be making a journey to the Midwest for future franchise releases.

The Alamo Drafthouse cinema chain has opened a "Star Wars"-themed movie theater in Omaha, Nebraska. The theater comes with all the bells and whistles that a fan of the series could want.

The light panels inside are replicated from Imperial ships; the concession stand also draws from Death Star/Star Destroyer architecture; there is a 10-foot Death Star hanging in the lobby that includes a green superlaser.



'The Idol' cast and crew at the third Ajyal Youth Film Festival

Film

DIFF to mark Deneuve's career with lifetime achievement award

Ajyal makes colorful start with 'Idol'



His Excellency Dr Hamad Bin Abdulaziz Al Kuwari, Qatar Minister of Culture, Arts and Heritage.

Variety

LOS ANGELES: Adele's "25" has — unsurprisingly — hit No. 1 on the US album sales chart after moving 3,482,000 units in the week ending Nov 26, according to data from Nielsen Music.

This marks an album's single largest sales week in the Nielsen SoundScan era. The former holder of the record was *NSYNC's "No Strings Attached," which sold 2,416 million copies in its debut week in 2000.

In addition to the gargantuan success of "25," Adele's previous album, "21," has leapt back into the top 10. After topping the chart for multiple weeks after its 2011 release, "21" has charged up the chart from 25th place to ninth place, having moved 46,000 units alongside the release of "25." "21" is the tenth-largest selling album of the Nielsen era, with more than 11.2 million sold units on the books.

Adele's chart domination still leaves room for success for other artists, though. Justin Bieber had a relatively large second week for "Purpose," which finished in second place with 290,000 units moved, down 55% from last week's 649,000-unit debut. One Direction's second week of "Made in the A.M." was also strong; the lads finished at No. 3, down 76% with 108,000 units. (RTS)

BRASILIA: The US rock band Pearl Jam is donating \$100,000 to victims of a toxic mining spill in Brazil that killed at least 13 people and was the country's worst environmental disaster.

The group's singer Eddie Vedder interrupted a show last month in Belo Horizonte, capital of the southeast state of Minas Gerais — where the disaster occurred November 5 — and called for the mining company involved to be severely punished.

"Pearl Jam will donate \$100k to help the communities impacted by the tragedy in Brazil," the band tweeted on Tuesday, encouraging fans to join in the donation drive.

Brazil's government said last week that it will sue mining giants BHP Billiton and Vale for \$5.2 billion in clean-up costs and damages after the deadly collapse of a waste water dam at the iron-ore mine.

The deluge swept down the River Doce to the Atlantic, sparking claims of major contamination, although the mining companies insist there is no serious pollution. (AFP)

HONG KONG: South Korea's biggest stars will gather in Hong Kong Wednesday night at one of K-pop's biggest events.

"Gangnam Style" Psy, K-pop boy band Big Bang and South Korean-

entertain and move them." She added: "Alongside a dynamic selection of the best films from around the world, the Ajyal Youth Film Festival also celebrates the extraordinary talent emerging in Qatar with two special programmes of films in the Made in Qatar section. Our film screenings as well as a range of special events, exhibitions, digital installations, outdoor screenings live performances, panels and family weekend activities defines Ajyal as a truly community oriented event that also nurtures the next generation of talent."

The third annual Ajyal Youth Film Festival flagged off with the Middle East and North Africa premiere of The Idol (Palestine, UK, Qatar, The Netherlands; 2015), directed by Academy Award-nominated Hany Abu-Assad, bringing the inspiring life story of 'Arab Idol' champion Mohammed Assaf to the big screen. The opening red carpet gala welcomed Hany Abu-Assad, Mohammed Assaf, the film's producers Ali Jafaar and Amira Diab, cinematographer Ehab Assal and a range of acclaimed filmmakers and local and regional celebrities.

The Ajyal Film Competition's 520 young jurors also participated in the opening ceremony at the Katara Opera House. Over the week, they will watch and analyse a dynamic programme of films under three competitive sections — Mohaq, Hilal, and Bader — followed by discussions and events including panels, workshops and Q&A sessions with filmmakers.

Creativity

At the opening ceremony, His Excellency Dr Hamad Bin Abdulaziz Al Kuwari, Minister of Culture, Arts & Heritage, said: "Ajyal Youth Film Festival is an initiative that brings great value to our community. It was created to bring people of different generations together through cinema and the first two editions have made a positive impact on the lives of many people. Telling our stories through film allows us to connect as a community, to share our perspectives and to generate cultural dialogue within our society. Ajyal gives great importance to developing the creativity of the next generation."

Fatma Al Remaihi, Festival Director and CEO of the Doha Film Institute, added: "This year, we pay tribute to the 120-year history of cinema. While the changes over the years have been vast and groundbreaking, here we are — still coming together in a dark room with a big screen for the perfect cinematic experience. Over the next seven days, we will make our own history through the films of Ajyal. Audiences young and old will experience films that will delight, inspire,

more importantly the story carried many aspects — not just about my life but about the difficulties and plight of Palestinians in Gaza. It's a story of hope and is inspirational for young people not just in Palestine but for Arab youth. It teaches us to persevere, have hope and to realise our dreams; the film is a story of positivity that the people of Gaza have not given up hope despite the suffering."

A producer of the film Amira Diab added: "It was very important for Hany to have the children in Gaza in the movie. They have their own energy and presence, they are self confident. The children in the film have witnessed two wars in their lives and so they are fearless and very confident and we wanted to convey that."

The third annual Ajyal Youth Film Festival consists of daily public screenings of local and international films; the popular 'Made in Qatar' section dedicated to showcasing home-grown talent from Qatar; SONY Cinema Under the Stars; family weekend; the Doha Giffoni Youth Media Summit; special events and exhibitions; the Sandbox interactive digital playground; school screenings; and the Ajyal Competition.

The Ajyal Katara Main Box Office will be open from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM until December 5th. The Ajyal FNAC Ticket Outlet will be open until December 5th from 2:00 PM till 9:00 PM. Tickets can also be purchased securely online through the Festival's website at ajyalfilm.com.

Tickets are priced at QR 25 for regular screenings, and QR 40 for premium screenings (including the opening and closing night films). QM Culture Pass members get a discount of QR 5 on all regularly priced Festival screenings and events when they present their QM Culture Pass at any Festival ticket outlet. Pass holders can purchase up to two discounted tickets per screening.

For more information on the movie timings and the Ajyal Youth Film Festival, log onto www.dohafilminstitute.com.

Also: **DUBAI:** Catherine Deneuve, the grande dame of French cinema, will be honoured at the 12th Dubai International Film Festival (DIFF) this month when she is presented with its prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award. The accolade will recognise Deneuve's illustrious career which spans almost 60 years and includes more than 120 films.

Deneuve made her silver screen debut in 1957 aged just 13 and went

to make a name for herself for her impressive portrayal of enigmatic female leads. Her eminent career has seen her nominated for an astonishing 31 Cesar awards including winning Best Actress for Le Dernier Metro (1980), a romantic drama set in 1940s France, and Indochine (1992), Regis Wargnier's epic about French Indochina for which she also received a Best Actress in a Leading Role nomination at the Academy Awards. For one of her best-known roles, as the lead in Belle du Jour (1967), she was also nominated as Best Actress at the BAFTA Film Awards.

Chairman of the Dubai International Film Festival, Abdulhamid Juma, spoke of the importance of DIFF's Lifetime Achievement Award: "Catherine Deneuve is an icon and one of the most influential women in cinema. Her contribution to film across the globe has been phenomenal and we are proud to be honouring her incredible talents at the Festival this year. DIFF is about more than just showcasing film; it is about bridging cultures and bringing worlds together and this sentiment is reflected in the recipients of this year's Lifetime Achievement awards which will see talented individuals from all around the world recognised for their outstanding contribution to cinema."

Speaking on her nomination, Catherine Deneuve said: "It is such an honour to receive the Dubai International Film Festival's Lifetime Achievement Award. I have been lucky enough to work all over the world and to have my work recognised here in the Middle East as well is testament to the cross-cultural and universal appeal of film."

DIFF's Lifetime Achievement Awards are dedicated to honouring the world's greatest film industry actors, writers, directors and producers. Previous honourees include Omar Sharif, Faten Hamamah, Adel Imam, Jameel Rateb, Sabah, Morgan Freeman, Sean Penn, Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, Daoud Abdel Sayed, Youssef Chahine, Rachid Bouchareb, Souleymane Cisse, Nabil El-Maleh, Oliver Stone, Danny Glover, Terry Gilliam, Yash Chopra, Subhash Ghai, Michael Apted, and Mahmoud Abdel Aziz.

The 12th annual Dubai International Film Festival takes place from Dec 9-16, 2015. The DIFF box office is now open at www.diff.ae. Additional information is also available through the Festival's dedicated customer care number — 363 FILM (3456).

Chinese heartthrobs EXO are in the line-up for the seventh annual Mnet Asian Music Awards (MAMA) at the AsiaWorld-Expo.

The Koreans will be joined by Britain's Pet Shop Boys, who are set to perform with girl group f(x), as well as other celebrities such as Taiwanese diva Jolin Tsai and Hong Kong movie star Chow Yun-fat, organisers said. The K-pop genre has made huge



Adele



Psy

inroads into the international music scene in recent years, particularly with the global success of Psy's "Gangnam Style".

The song's music video — which features the now-famous horse-riding dance — has racked up more than 2.4 billion YouTube views and became its most-watched video of all time.

Seoul's Gangnam district last month announced that a statue modelled after

the song's dance moves is to be erected.

The night's other attractions include hip-hop rapper San E, boy band GOT7, and Hyuna of girl group 4Minute.

The MAMA awards ceremony was first held in 2009 and has attracted big international names since then.

In 2013 music legend Stevie Wonder performed with South Korean singing star Hyolyn. (AFP)