



## Cannes Confidential VII: New Opportunity, Old-Style Film

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By [Victoria Charters](#)  
(from the [2011 Cannes Film Festival](#))

Day 10.

11 a.m.: I start my business day at a too-civilized hour.

The [Short Film](#) Corner workshop I have been invited to attend is titled “Coup de Pouce,” which iTranslate tells me means “boost” and covers distribution, [film festival](#) strategy, producing and other broad categories; I’ve been selected for the writing block.

Although I’d little knowledge of what this really meant, it turns out to be an invitation to participate in an all-expenses-paid 60-day artist retreat at the Moulin d’Andé, a cultural center in Normandy (and fantastically situated in an old mill, [check it out](#)). For this French equivalent of

the coveted Sundance labs, I've been invited to submit a script for a short, feature or [documentary](#) in either the French or international program.

Hmm, now I really do have to rewrite that feature script that has been “in the works” for way too long. It seems to be, in this industry, that the reward for a job well done is the opportunity to do more.

12 p.m.: I hoof it over to the Star theater (250 seats) to see a market screening of the much-buzzed-about “The Artist,” directed by Michel Hazanavicius. Hazanavicius is well-known in Europe for his James Bond spoofs, the “OSS 117” films. “The Artist” premiered four days ago at the Grand Lumière to rave reviews. Amazingly for a film released in 2011, it is almost entirely silent, replete with dialogue cards, and shot in black and white. As word-of-mouth suggested, Hazanavicius has crafted a sensational cinematic experience with brilliant performances from its leads, Jean Dujardin and Bérénice Bejo. Jean “of the Garden” — I think I have a new favorite French actor.

Speaking of epic cinema, I have not yet seen a film at the Grand Lumière. In 2008, I saw four. In order to see a film in the theater to which the [red carpet](#) leads, you must first obtain a ticket. Here's how it works: Our badges are color-coded and bar-coded according to where you fall in the tiers of Cannes attendees.

On the badges are two codes that you enter on the ticketing site in order to retrieve le Invitation. It's a points system. At the start of the festival, you are given 130 points and accrue two points a day. A [premiere](#) at prime time (7 p.m.) might cost you 100 points, whereas a premiere at 8:30 a.m. might be 30 points. Tickets are released at specific times during the day and are snapped up speedily. Despite the fact that I have two badges accruing points this year (one for the Marché and one for the Short Film Corner), I have been too busy to jump on the tickets at the required times.

So I have one last thing to accomplish this Cannes, see a film at the Grand Lumière. Christoph Thoke, one of our Producers Workshop keynote speakers, quoted Roger Ebert in his opening address to us. Thoke tells us that Ebert says, “There is no better place on Earth to see a movie than in the Palais des Festivals at Cannes with its screen three times the size of an ordinary theater screen and its perfect sound system, and especially its audiences of 4,000 people who care passionately about film.”

Fingers crossed.

*Photo by [Victoria Charters](#)*