

# Movies & Languages Film Festival 2021-2022

## *Rifkin's Festival*

**About the movie** (in English with English subtitles)

<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Woody Allen
<b>YEAR/COUNTRY</b>	2020/ USA, Spain
<b>GENRE</b>	Romantic comedy
<b>ACTORS</b>	Wallace Shawn (Mort Rifkin), Gina Gershon (Sue), Louis Garrel (Philippe), Elena Anaya (Joanna Rojas), Christoph Waltz (Death)



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## PLOT

Mort Rifkin, an elderly film critic from New York, is telling his therapist about his life.

He accompanies his wife, Sue, to a film festival in San Sebastián, because he is suspicious of his wife's feelings for Philippe, the French film director she is working with.

The festival allows Mort to reminisce about his life and the pretentious novel that he's been writing for years, trying to achieve literary greatness. His psychological unease causes physical symptoms, so he agrees to see a doctor about his chest pains. Mort is attracted to the Spanish doctor he sees, Joanna Rojas, who proves to be unhappily married to a temperamental artist. He keeps trying to see her again, pretending he has medical problems, and eventually gets her to go out on a drive together.

Due to a flat tyre, Joanna and Mort are obliged to hitchhike back to Joanna's house, where she finds her husband in bed with one of his models. After a fight with her husband, Joanna takes Mort back to his hotel. Sue comes in very late and ends their marriage, citing Philippe.

The next morning, Mort calls Joanna, hoping to see her again before he returns to New York, but she is busy and unwilling to meet.

The last big scene shows Mort playing chess with Death (in a reference to Ingmar Bergan's film "*The Seventh Seal*"). Death tells him that human life is meaningless but not necessarily empty. Death goes on to say that Mort will see him again in the future, but that he could gain extra time in life by eating healthily and exercising. Mort then wonders whether he should go back to teaching (a time when he was happy and fulfilled), with a changed attitude.

Back in New York, he asks his therapist for his opinion.

## LANGUAGE

Standard American English, apart from some Spanish and some black and white scenes, one of which is in Swedish. However, we are not meant to understand the language here, only get an idea of the content. One French accent, one Spanish.



## VOCABULARY

<p><b>The Grinch:</b> a creation of Doctor Seuss, children’s author. The Grinch is famous for stealing Christmas – therefore someone who destroys anything enjoyable</p>	<p><b>To run late:</b> to be short of time to do what you have to/ be over time for what was specified</p>
<p><b>To bet on the wrong horse:</b> to misunderstand the situation/ current problem</p>	<p><b>To be up to your neck (in):</b> languages differ as to where you are up to. In Spanish, you are “up to the start of your hair parting (overcome with e.g. work)</p>
<p><b>A creep:</b> an undesirable and pathetic person who breaks social rules, e.g. an unattractive older man who stares at pretty girls</p>	<p><b>To kill time:</b> to make empty time pass more quickly</p>
<p><b>A shrink:</b> slang for a psychiatrist, or any person who deals with psychological problems</p>	<p><b>To wind up (at/in):</b> indicating the end result of a complicated/ unexpected process, in any realm of life</p>
<p><b>To drool:</b> excessive salivation, most frequently used to express a person’s great excitement when seeing a person they would like to go to bed with but don’t know properly</p>	<p><b>Give me a break:</b> used to tell someone to stop bothering you/ to tell someone you are disgusted with or do not believe what they are telling you</p>
<p><b>Lowbrow:</b> considered by the person speaking not to be intellectually interesting/ challenging. “Highbrow” is what Mort claims/tries to be</p>	<p><b>A millstone:</b> a heavy responsibility that you cannot give to anyone else</p>
<p><b>To have sth. checked out:</b> have a problem with your car, house, body etc. examined by a professional to understand what is causing the problem and how to fix it</p>	<p><b>Follow up:</b> this can be a verb or a noun. It indicates action taken with regard to something else which came before to investigate it further or to improve upon the result</p>
<p><b>Tingling:</b> a slight pricking or stinging sensation, frequently experienced after a part of you has gone numb and comes back to life</p>	<p><b>Smothering:</b> suffocating. Often used in an emotional sense to describe the effect of a person or atmosphere when you feel you can’t express yourself or act as you wish</p>

