# AI reboots the silver screen with ‘cinematic news’ revolution



A new wave of creativity is sweeping the film industry, driven by advances in artificial intelligence that are transforming how cinematic content is produced. One example is *Midnight Drop*, a 12-minute AI-generated film depicting the recent US attack on Iranian nuclear sites. Created in just two weeks by directors Samir Mallal and Bouha Kazmi, the film uses AI to deliver visually arresting, news-based cinema at a fraction of the time and cost of traditional methods.

The film features a haunting image of a woman feeding stray cats amid ruins in Tehran following Israeli airstrikes. Though it appears shot on location, the protagonist is entirely fictional, conjured by AI. Mallal, a London-based documentary filmmaker, describes this new form as “cinematic news”, offering a way to explore current events through rapid, AI-driven production that once required years and substantial budgets.

At the heart of this shift is Google's Veo3 model, part of the Flow AI video tool, which is transforming content on platforms such as YouTube. Alongside technologies like OpenAI’s Sora and Midjourney, Mallal has produced short films that blend current affairs with vivid visual storytelling. His earlier work *Spiders in the Sky* recreated a Ukrainian drone strike on Russian bombers, showing how AI can compress content timelines from years to weeks.

Industry figures acknowledge the transformative potential. TV producer Richard Osman called it “the end of one era and the birth of another”, predicting that by 2027, AI will underpin much of advertising, trailers and short-form content. David Jones, CEO of Brandtech Group, foresees a total overhaul of brand content production, with generative AI becoming widespread. Netflix has also adopted the technology, using it to create visual effects for the Argentine sci-fi series *El Eternauta*. According to CEO Ted Sarandos, AI-generated sequences there were completed ten times faster than traditional methods.

Yet the rise of AI filmmaking raises legal and ethical concerns, especially over copyright. UK government proposals to allow AI models to train on copyrighted material without explicit permission have sparked backlash. Campaigners such as Beeban Kidron emphasise the need for fair compensation for creators. Mallal supports accessible AI programmes that reward original artists, stressing the importance of balance in the evolving ecosystem.

Creatively, Mallal champions “prompt craft”—the skill of guiding AI with precise instructions to achieve specific cinematic effects. This digital craftsmanship enables rapid experimentation with elements like camera angles and lighting, injecting new energy into the filmmaking process. But it also brings challenges, including the need to sift through incoherent or low-quality outputs—what Mallal calls “slop”—amid a deluge of generated content.

AI-powered tools offer a moment of optimism for the UK, with the potential to democratise filmmaking, empower independent voices and respond rapidly to cultural shifts. As these technologies evolve, the UK is well positioned to lead in responsible AI innovation within the creative industries—fostering a future where human ingenuity and machine intelligence tell stories together in unprecedented ways.

Created by [Amplify](https://www.hbmadvisory.com/amplify): AI-augmented, human-curated content.

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/jul/20/artificial-intelligence-ai-tools-gamechanger-for-film-makers> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/jul/20/artificial-intelligence-ai-tools-gamechanger-for-film-makers> - This article discusses how AI tools are revolutionising filmmaking by enabling directors to produce high-quality content rapidly and cost-effectively. It highlights the creation of 'Midnight Drop', a 12-minute AI-generated film about the US attack on Iranian nuclear sites, produced in just two weeks. The piece also mentions the use of Google's Veo3 model and other AI tools in the production process, and touches upon the broader impact of AI on the entertainment industry, including concerns about copyright and the future of creative professions.
3. <https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/netflix-says-it-used-genai-argentine-tv-series-2025-07-17/> - Netflix announced the use of generative AI in its Argentine sci-fi series 'El Eternauta', marking the first time the company has employed AI for visual effects in an original production. The AI-generated sequence depicting a building collapse in Buenos Aires was completed ten times faster than traditional methods, showcasing AI's potential to enhance creativity and reduce production costs.
4. <https://www.techradar.com/computing/artificial-intelligence/netflix-uses-generative-ai-vfx-in-a-show-for-the-first-time-as-ceo-says-the-cost-just-wouldnt-have-been-feasible-for-a-show-on-that-budget> - Netflix utilised generative AI for visual effects in its Argentine sci-fi series 'El Eternauta'. CEO Ted Sarandos highlighted that the AI-generated sequence, depicting a building collapse, was completed ten times faster than traditional methods, demonstrating AI's ability to enhance creativity and reduce production costs.
5. <https://www.tomsguide.com/features/5-best-ai-video-generators-tested-and-compared> - This comprehensive comparison evaluates leading AI video generators, including Veo3, Runway Gen-3 Alpha, Luma Labs' Ray2, Kling, and Hailuo MiniMax. The article assesses each platform's capabilities, such as cinematic results, realism, motion fluidity, prompt adherence, and user-friendliness, providing insights into the evolving landscape of AI-driven video creation tools.
6. <https://computercity.com/streaming/best-ai-movies> - This article explores how artificial intelligence is reshaping the movie industry, highlighting AI-generated films like 'Echo Hunter', a 27-minute short created by Arcana Labs featuring a fully unionised cast. It discusses the potential of AI to assist in high-quality, cost-effective production pipelines, especially for short-form storytelling, while also raising ethical and creative questions about actor likeness and the roles of directors and set designers.
7. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Makemation> - 'Makemation' is a 2025 Nigerian AI-themed family film directed by Michael Akinrogunde. It tells the story of a brilliant young girl in rural Lagos who uses her tech knowledge to navigate challenges. The film grossed ₦32.9 million within its first four days of release, marking a significant milestone in African cinema's engagement with AI technology.