



Presented by: CinematChicago
30 East Adams, Suite 800
Chicago, Illinois 60603
Tel: 312-683-0121 • Fax: 312-683-0122
www.chicagofilmfestival.com

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Alejandro Riera
312.683.0121 x 116
publicity@chicagofilmfestival.com

Nick Harkin/Carly Leviton
Carol Fox and Associates
773.327.3830 x 103/104

nickh@carolfoxassociates.com
carlyl@carolfoxassociates.com

50TH CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES FILMS IN ITS INTERNATIONAL FEATURE COMPETITION

CHICAGO, IL (September 16, 2014) – The **50th Chicago International Film Festival** announced today the films selected for its International Feature Competition. Representing a wide variety of styles, genres, and countries, the chosen films will compete for the top honor in North America’s longest-running competitive film festival, the Gold Hugo, as well as awards for acting, directing, cinematography, screenwriting, and art direction. The 50th Chicago International Film Festival runs October 9-23 at the AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois St.).

“From the very beginning, I wanted the Festival to be competitive in every way, drawing attention to emerging talent and rewarding excellence,” said Founder and Artistic Director of the Chicago International Film Festival, **Michael Kutza**. “The directors we have honored include Robert Altman, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Jan Troell, Hirokazu Koreeda, Mike Leigh, Mrinal Sen, Giorgi Shengelaya, Wim Wenders, Margarethe von Trotta and Zhang Yimou, all of whom were beginning their careers. I am proud the Festival has played a role in establishing them in the international film industry.”

“This year’s Competition lineup presents some of the strongest, most exciting films from around the world. The films range from incisive political and family dramas to offbeat dark comedies and searing courtroom thrillers, and each is unique in its visual and narrative style. However, all share the ability to transport us to another place in time—be it the political and social upheaval in the desert landscapes of Mali or the underside of post-colonial sex tourism in a tropical Dominican resort town—and grant us a new way of seeing and understanding the world,” adds Programming Director **Mimi Plauché**.

The complete list of films is available at www.chicagofilmfestival.com.

INTERNATIONAL FEATURE COMPETITION

“**1001 Grams**” Norway (Director: Bent Hamer) — Anna, a scientist who specializes in weights and measures, lives a life of precision, rigidity and solitude. But when her father, a fellow scientist, suffers a heart attack, Anna’s world falls out of perfect alignment. Wry and winsome, this beautifully told and thoughtful human story—and Norway’s official submission for the

50TH Chicago International Film Festival Announces Films in Competition

Academy Awards—follows Anna on a journey from Norway to France and back, as she attempts to find the right balance in her life. *U.S. Premiere*

“Black Coal, Thin Ice” China/Hong Kong (Director: Diao Yinan) — Winner of the top prize at this year’s Berlin Film Festival, this stark and wintry Chinese thriller has all the ingredients of a classic 1940s *film noir*: a distraught ex-cop; a gruesome crime that is slow to unravel; and a mysterious femme fatale at the center of it all. But more than pulp fiction, “Black Coal, Thin Ice” is a penetrating look into the dark heart of contemporary China. *Chicago Premiere*

“The Fool” Russia (Director: Yury Bykov) — This suspenseful and searing exposé of widespread corruption in Russia follows an idealistic chief plumber racing against time to save the inhabitants of an apartment building on the verge of collapse. A combustible mix of “The Sopranos” and Kafka, “The Fool” presents a scathing portrait of contemporary Russia, where working-class folks are wife-beaters and drug addicts, government officials are killers and extortionists, and one good man will learn the folly of the righteous. *U.S. Premiere*

“Force Majeure” Sweden/Denmark/France/Norway (Director: Ruben Östlund) — When an avalanche disrupts a Swedish family’s ski vacation in the French Alps, the effect is disastrous—but not in the ways one would expect. In this razor-sharp dark comedy of bad manners, rising Swedish director Ruben Östlund (“Play”) skillfully chronicles the dissolution of a seemingly perfect family, and a father’s attempt to redeem himself and his wounded masculinity. Winner of the Cannes Film Festival’s Un Certain Regard Jury Prize. *Chicago Premiere*

“Free Fall” Hungary (Director: György Pálfi) — After an elderly woman miraculously survives a fall from her apartment building’s rooftop, she drags herself up the stairwell, witnessing a series of pitch-black, surreal, hilarious and sometimes shockingly violent vignettes involving her neighbors. Hungarian iconoclast Pálfi (“Taxidermia”) creates images that sear themselves into the brain, skillfully combining gleeful Pythonesque silliness with moments of jaw-dropping Cronenbergian body horror. A one-of-a-kind film. *Chicago Premiere*

“Gett: The Trial of Viviane Amsalem” Israel/France/Germany (Directors: Ronit Elkabetz, Shlomi Elkabetz) — Viviane wants a divorce from her ultra-orthodox spouse, Elisha, but Israeli law dictates only the husband may end a marriage—something Elisha is unwilling to grant. Undergoing a grueling, five-year legal process, Viviane is forced to contend with a religious court system that refuses to acknowledge her autonomy. Driven by Ronit Elkabetz’s extraordinary performance, this award-winning Israeli drama powerfully documents the injustices of a culture stubbornly committed to the oppression of women. *Chicago Premiere*

“Human Capital” Italy (Director: Paolo Virzì) — “Amores Perros,” Italian-style: This slick tripartite drama recounts the same story from three different character’s perspectives, each one disclosing new revelations about the tragic incident at its core. Winner of Italy’s best film, writing, and acting awards, “Human Capital” combines excellent performances (from Italian luminaries Valeria Golino and Valeria Bruni Tedeschi), with an incisive critique of the country’s culture of greed and the resulting low value put on human life. *Chicago Premiere*

“The Owners” Kazakhstan (Director: Adilkhan Yerzhanov) — In this bizarrely darkly comic adventure set in the Wild Wild East of rural Kazakhstan, three orphaned siblings from the city try to reclaim their mother’s home in a far-flung village, only to encounter corruption, indifference, and cruelty at every turn. With outbursts of singing, dancing, violence and visually arresting tableaux, “The Owners” presents a lurid and shocking vision of injustice that is as idiosyncratic as it is alarming. *Chicago Premiere*

50TH Chicago International Film Festival Announces Films in Competition

“The President” Georgia/France/UK/Germany (Director: Mohsen Makhmalbaf) — In this dark satire of power, dispossession and revenge from Iranian New Wave master Mohsen Makhmalbaf (“Kandahar”), a dictator comes face to face with the people he previously subjugated. When a coup d’état overthrows a leader’s brutal rule and the rest of his family flees the country by plane, The President becomes a fugitive, along with his young grandson, and confronts, first-hand, the hardships and anger experienced by his own people. *North American Premiere*

“Red Rose” Iran/France/Greece (Director: Sepideh Farsi) — With riots erupting on Tehran’s streets following the 2009 election, a group of demonstrators finds sanctuary in a middle-aged man’s flat. After one of the activists, a progressive and vivacious young woman, returns to the near-reclusive man, a playful yet provocative relationship between the two unfolds. Skillfully weaving scripted drama with ground-level footage from the Green Revolution, “Red Rose” is a multi-layered chamber piece set against the country’s cycle of political protest and oppression. *U.S. Premiere*

“Refugiado” Argentina/Colombia/France/Poland/Germany (Director: Diego Lerman) — After escaping the clutches of her abusive husband Fabian, Laura and her seven-year-old son Matias venture through Buenos Aires shelters, factories, and flophouses seeking refuge. With Fabian on their tail, the duo’s perilous journey alternates between safety and terror. Veteran director Diego Lerman, working in a mode of delicate realism, sensitively limns the social and emotional plight of a mother and child upended by harrowing domestic circumstances. *Chicago Premiere*

“Rudderless” USA (Director: William H. Macy) — After a tragic shooting takes the life of his teenage son, a grieving father (Billy Crudup) discovers the boy’s demo tapes. When he musters the will to perform one, he forms a tight bond with a young musician (Anton Yelchin) and together, they form a rock band that revitalizes their lives—until a hidden secret is revealed. Actor William H. Macy (“Fargo”) delivers a poignant and inspirational drama about the power of love, forgiveness and redemption. *Chicago Premiere*

“Sand Dollars” Dominican Republic/Argentina/Mexico (Directors: Laura Amelia Guzmán and Israel Cárdenas) — In a Dominican resort town, Noeli, a dark-skinned local, hooks up with international tourists in exchange for money, sharing the proceeds with her boyfriend. But Noeli’s longstanding romantic relationship with Anne, a wealthy lesbian woman (the extraordinary Geraldine Chaplin) threatens to upend their lives. This deftly directed multi-character portrait, both tender and cynical, paints a highly sensitive and sophisticated picture of the collision between haves and have-nots. *U.S. Premiere*

“Speed Walking” Denmark (Director: Niels Arden Oplev) — Being twelve is hard enough, but for Martin, a budding speed walker, this minefield is made more bewildering by his mother’s sudden death and Denmark’s newly liberalized pornography laws. With a candid and sensitive perspective, director Niels Arden Oplev (“The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo”) uses the story of a boy’s sexual coming-of-age in the mid-’70s as a tender allegory about a society coming to terms with its new and sudden openness. *North American Premiere*

“Timbuktu” Mauritania/France (Director: Abderrahmane Sissako) — A beautifully crafted and devastating account of the takeover of Northern Mali by Islamic militants two years ago, “Timbuktu” tells a deeply humanist tale about a diverse group of citizens’ struggles in the face of adversity and intolerance. Like his previous cinematic gem “Bamako,” veteran filmmaker

50TH Chicago International Film Festival Announces Films in Competition

Sissako focuses on the inner fortitude of his characters, particularly the steadfast women, who, despite abuse and oppression, still sing in defiance. *Chicago Premiere*

“**The Word**” Poland/Denmark (Director: Anna Kazejak — When 14-year-old Lila discovers her boyfriend has betrayed her, she sets in motion a series of events that will shake up the lives of everyone around her. Unfolding like a millennial “Macbeth” crossed with a police procedural, this impressively crafted coming-of-age thriller deftly explores the disturbing emotional intensity of high-schoolers, whose even the smallest misdeeds can sometimes spark dire repercussions. *U.S. Premiere*

Tickets, Festival Passes and Theater Information

Festival Passes are on sale until October 19. Pass options include:

Moviegoer (10 regular admissions): \$100 for Cinema/Chicago members, \$130 for non-members.

Passport (20 regular admissions): \$190 for Cinema/Chicago members, \$240 for non-members

Festival Tickets will be available to Cinema/Chicago members on September 17-18. General public tickets will be on sale starting September 19. Tickets can be purchased online via Ticketmaster www.ticketmaster.com/chicagofilmfestival; by phone at 312-332-FILM (3456); or by visiting the Festival box office at AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois St.) or the Cinema/Chicago office (30 E. Adams, Suite 800) beginning September 19.

For ticketing information, visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com.

Festival screenings will be held at the AMC River East 21 Theater (322 E. Illinois St.). The full schedule will be announced Tuesday, September 16.

FESTIVAL SPONSORS

Led by Tourism Partner Illinois Office of Tourism and Presenting Partner Columbia College Chicago, the 50th Chicago International Film Festival's sponsors include Official Airline: American Airlines; Headquarters Hotel: JW Marriott Chicago; Major Partner: Intersites, Wintrust Community Banks; Participating Partners: AARP, Allstate, Bloomberg, Casale del Giglio, Cultivate Studios, Netrix, Stella Artois; Platinum Media Sponsors: NCM Media Networks, Ingage Media, JC Decaux, Michigan Avenue Magazine.

Program partner for the International Feature Competition: John & Jacolyn Bucksbaum Family Foundation

#

ABOUT CINEMA/CHICAGO

Cinema/Chicago is a not-for-profit arts and education organization dedicated to encouraging better understanding between cultures and to making a positive contribution to the art form of the moving image. The Chicago International Film Festival is one of the year-round programs presented by Cinema/Chicago, which also include the Chicago International Film Festival Television Awards, CineYouth Festival, INTERCOM Competition, International Screenings Program, and Education Outreach Program. Celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, the Chicago International Film Festival is North America's longest-running competitive film festival.

50TH Chicago International Film Festival Announces Films in Competition

The Festival and its parent organization, Cinema/Chicago, were founded in 1964 by filmmaker and graphic artist Michael Kutza to showcase great international film, which was conspicuously absent from the city's theaters, and to bring celebrated filmmakers from around the globe to Chicago. Over the past half century, as we have grown to become a world-renowned event and evolved to reflect the changing times, the Festival has remained dedicated to its founding vision: to discover new and rising talents in filmmaking and to bring the best in international cinema and the artists behind the work to Chicago audiences. This year's 50th anniversary Festival will feature a selection of "50th anniversary screenings," featuring the work of returning filmmakers presenting past Festival films and/or personal favorites and important repertory films as well as new films by emerging and celebrated filmmakers alike.

The 50th Chicago International Film Festival runs October 9-23, 2014.

www.chicagofilmfestival.com