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**NEWS**

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**CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES FIRST  
20 FILMS FOR 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

Line-Up Includes Films from North and South America, Asia, Europe, Australia and Restored  
Classics

**CHICAGO, IL (August 20, 2014) –The Chicago International Film Festival**, the oldest competitive film festival in North America, is proud to announce the first selection of titles to be screened during its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. Featuring more than 150 feature-length and short films, the 50th Festival will run October 9 – 23, 2014.

“This sampling includes both innovative new work from around the globe as well as films that pay tribute to our history,” said Founder and Artistic Director of the Chicago International Film Festival **Michael Kutza**. “For 50 years, it has been my great to bring the most exciting work in contemporary international cinema to our audiences. This year, we also take a look back and shine a spotlight on some of the groundbreaking work that has helped to make the Festival the enduring institution it is.”

“Each year, we are privileged to view thousands of new films as we seek out those that will be selected for the Festival,” added Programming Director **Mimi Plauché**. “The submissions this year have been particularly impressive. These first titles offer audiences a preview of what they can expect during our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration: a thought-provoking, thrilling program replete with the work of auteurs and innovators alike.”

**Films include:**

- **“Ablations”** (Director: Arnold de Parscau • France): A pharmaceutical salesman wakes up one morning to discover that one of his kidneys has been removed, and sets out on an unsettling journey to piece together what happened. This atmospheric and absurdist thriller combines the stylish strangeness of David Lynch with a Park Chan-Wook-esque story of thwarted vengeance.
- **“The Babadook”** (Director: Jennifer Kent • Australia): Sundance’s horror-film breakout, “The Babadook” tells the story of a recently widowed single mother who sees her already

shattered world plunge deeper into madness when a two-dimensional monster from a mysterious picture book comes to life and terrorizes her and her unruly son. Jennifer Kent's self-assured filmmaking debut is equal parts emotionally resonant and deeply horrifying.

- **“Birdman or The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance”** (Director: Alejandro González Iñárritu • USA): This black comedy tells the story of an actor (Michael Keaton) - famous for portraying an iconic superhero - as he struggles to mount a Broadway play. In the days leading up to opening night, he battles his ego and attempts to recover his family, his career, and himself.
- **“Black Coal, Thin Ice”** (Director: Diao Yinan • China, Hong Kong): Winner of the Berlin Film Festival's top prize, this stark, wintry Chinese thriller has all the ingredients of a 1940s film noir: a distraught ex-cop; a gruesome crime; and a mysterious femme fatale. More than pulp fiction, “Black Coal, Thin Ice” is a penetrating look into the dark heart of contemporary China.
- **“Clouds of Sils Maria”** (Director: Olivier Assayas • Switzerland, Germany, France): Juliette Binoche stars in this mesmerizing and superbly acted psychological drama about an older actress who agrees to re-stage the play that launched her career 20 years earlier. From the acclaimed director of “Summer Hours,” this fascinating “All About Eve” update co-stars Kristen Stewart as the actress's faithful assistant and “Kick-Ass”'s Chloë Grace Moretz as her beguiling young rival.
- **“Dear White People”** (Director: Justin Simien • USA): “Dear White People” follows the stories of four black students at Winchester University, where a riot breaks out over a popular ‘African American’ themed party thrown by a white fraternity. With tongue planted firmly in cheek, the film explores racial identity in ‘post-racial’ America while weaving a universal story of forging one's unique path in the world.
- **“Doctor Proctor's Fart Powder”** (Director: Arild Frøhlich • Norway): Roald Dahl meets Tim Burton in this loony children's adventure from best-selling author Jo Nesbø (“The Snowman”). When two lonely kids team up with Dr. Proctor, an inventor of a powerful (though non-smelling) fart powder, they must keep it from Mr. Thrane, an evil rival who will stop at nothing to attain the potent gas.
- **“Force Majeure”** (Director: Ruben Östlund • Sweden, Denmark, France, Norway): When an avalanche disrupts a Swedish family's peaceful ski vacation in the French Alps, the effect is disastrous—but not in the ways viewers would expect. With black humor and a razor-sharp edge, this Cannes prizewinner taps into the catastrophic dysfunction festering within the seemingly perfect nuclear family.
- **“A Girl at My Door”** (Director: July Jung • South Korea): Taking up post at a small seaside town, troubled policewoman Lee Young-nam finds herself coming to the rescue of an abused local girl. Forming a close and controversial relationship with her young charge, Young-nam confronts a broader tapestry of social discrimination and destruction. Starring electrifying Korean actresses Doona Bae (“Cloud Atlas”) and Kim Sae-ron.

- **“Human Capital”** (Director: Paolo Virzì • Italy): “Amores Perros,” Italian-style: This slick tripartite drama recounts the same tragedy from three different character’s perspectives, each one disclosing new revelations. Accomplished director Paolo Virzì combines excellent performances with an incisive critique of Italy’s culture of greed and the resulting low value put on human life.
- **“Life After Death”** (Director: Joe Callander • USA, Rwanda): In this lucid critique of the complexities of international charity, documentary filmmaker Joe Callander chronicles the troubled life of Kwasa, a 20-something survivor of the brutal Rwandan genocide. Charming and yet helplessly irresponsible, Kwasa relies almost entirely on the generosity of two quirky Christian-American couples. As wry and idiosyncratic as its subjects, “Life After Death” creates a compelling and complex portrait of life in the shadow of tragedy.
- **“The Midnight After”** (Director: Fruit Chan • Hong Kong): Seventeen strangers on a minibus are the only survivors of an apocalyptic pandemic that erases all human life from the planet. Can they solve the mystery of this global disappearance, or will their own malevolent nature literally tear them apart? Genre-maestro Fruit Chan directs this comic bloodbath and trenchant send-up of Hong Kong’s post-colonial society.
- **“National Gallery”** (Director: Frederick Wiseman • France, USA): For his latest institutional portrait, Frederick Wiseman trains his ever-perceptive gaze on London’s venerable National Gallery museum. By showing us the breadth of the Gallery’s audience—from schoolchildren to elite donors—and its offerings, from high-profile exhibitions, such as a major Leonardo da Vinci show, to the fascinating process of painting restoration, Wiseman makes both an observational argument for how an arts organization stays relevant and a loving celebration of the aesthetic experience
- **“One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest”** (Director: Milos Forman • USA): Celebrating its 1975 world premiere at the Festival, Milos Forman’s darkly funny masterpiece stars Jack Nicholson in one of his career-defining roles. Winner of five Academy Awards®, including Best Picture, Best Actor (for Nicholson), and Best Actress (for Louise Fletcher), the film will screen in a newly restored version, honoring producer Saul Zaentz, with surprise guests in attendance.
- **“The Owners”** (Director: Adilkhan Yerzhanov • Kazakhstan): In this bizarre, riotously funny adventure set in the Wild Wild East of rural Afghanistan, three orphaned siblings from the city try to reclaim their mother’s home in a far-flung village, only to encounter corruption, cruelty and lots of singing and dancing at every turn. A lurid, shocking and sad vision of injustice, *The Owners* is a complete original.
- **“Paris of the North”** (Director: Hafsteinn Gunnar Sigurðsson • Iceland): A genial schoolteacher’s summer days are measured by long runs, time with students and AA meetings. However, his best-laid plans for a quiet life are derailed by the arrival of his beer-guzzling father. A droll and assured film about finding yourself, “Paris of the North” is grounded in the wry, patient rhythms of small-town life.
- **“La Tirisia”** (Director: Jorge Pérez Solano • Mexico): Set amid the surrealist cacti-filled landscapes of Oaxaca, Mexico, this sensual drama follows the interwoven stories of two women, made pregnant by the same uncaring man. Driven by its beautiful cinematography and evocative imagery, “La Tirisia” is both a melancholic portrait of rural Mexico and a

poignant tale of feminine pain and triumph.

- **“Two Days, One Night”** (Directors: Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne • Belgium, France, Italy): French star Marion Cotillard teams up with virtuoso filmmakers Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne for this powerful slice-of-life drama about a factory worker who has 48 hours to save her job from being downsized. Like their previous masterpieces “Rosetta” and “The Son,” the Dardennes combine the high stakes of everyday life with a deeply felt humanism.
- **“The Way He Looks”** (Director: Daniel Ribeiro • Brazil): The most acclaimed LGBTQ film of the year, “The Way He Looks” observes São Paulo teen Leonardo as he faces the challenges of adolescence—and he also happens to be blind. With the arrival of a new student, Leonardo feels an attraction he doesn’t need his eyes to confirm. A jubilant portrait of young gay love, this remarkable debut film tenderly parses the confusing terrain of growing up different in more ways than one.
- **“Why Be Good?”** (Director: William A. Seiter • USA): Starring silent-screen siren Colleen Moore—who helped kick-start the first-ever Chicago International Film Festival—this delightful jazz-age 1929 comedy was long thought lost. Recently discovered, restored and now receiving its North America premiere, the film focuses on Moore’s Pert Kelly, a poor flapper girl with a bad reputation who must prove to her wealthy beau that she’s a virtuous woman.

### **Festival Passes and Theater Information**

Festival Passes are on sale now. 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

Passes can be purchased online at [www.chicagofilmfestival.com](http://www.chicagofilmfestival.com) or by calling 312.683.0121.

Festival screenings will be held at the AMC River East 21 Theater (322 E. Illinois St.). The full schedule will be announced at a later date.

### **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 Headquarters Hotel - JW Marriott Chicago; Major Partner: Intersites; Participating Partners: AARP, Bloomberg, Casale del Giglio, Gibson’s Restaurant Group, Stella Artois; Platinum Media Sponsors: NCM Media Networks, Ingage Media, JC Decaux, Michigan Avenue Magazine.

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### **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.