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NEWS

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THE 50TH CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES THREE WORLD PREMIERES IN CITY & STATE PROGRAM

“Algren,” “The Alley Cat” and “This Afternoon” Headline an Exciting Showcase of Illinois-Made Films

CHICAGO (September 30, 2014)—The Chicago International Film Festival’s semi-centennial celebration will feature an exciting lineup of features, documentaries, and shorts made in Chicago and throughout Illinois, including three World Premieres, as part of its **City & State** program. Recently dubbed the “Best Place to Live and Work as a Filmmaker,” by “MovieMaker” magazine, Chicago has firmly established itself as a haven for both independent and big-budget Hollywood film production. The City & State program is sponsored by Cinespace, Periscope Post & Audio and SAG-AFTRA Chicago.

"This year's City & State program is rich with innovation and creativity. Often working with very low budgets, these local directors have crafted films that are strong and singular. Several are returning filmmakers, who we are thrilled to welcome back with new work, and others are coming to the Festival for the first time. Many are trained at Chicago's world class film schools, others have honed their skills working in our vibrant film and television industry," said Chicago International Film Festival Programming Director **Mimi Plauché**. "The panel event, 'Shooting in Chicago', is a great compliment to the film slate, which demonstrates that Chicago is truly a center for creative filmmaking."

Director Michael Caplan explores the life of Chicago author Nelson Algren in the World Premiere documentary, “**Algren**,” featuring evocative images by world-class Chicago street photographer Art Shay as well as interviews with Billy Corgan of “The Smashing Pumpkins” and award-winning Chicago filmmaker William Friedkin. Acclaimed Chicago-based filmmaker Stephen Cone, lauded by the *Chicago Tribune* for his award-winning film “The Wise Kids” (2001), will present the World Premiere of his independent film, “**This Afternoon**.” Director Marie Ullrich returns to the Festival for the World Premiere of her feature debut, “**The Alley Cat**,” born from her short “Faster!,” which was featured in the 2010 Festival’s program.

Local female filmmakers feature prominently in this year’s City & State program, including director Ullrich, shorts directors Kris Swanberg (“**Baby Mary**”), Meghann Artes (“**Speed**

Dating”), Hayoung Jeon (“**Frame Walk**”), Zoe Lubeck (“**Lucy**”), and producer and actor Grace McPhillips (“**The Other One**”). McPhillips, industry advocate and host of “Producer’s Patio,” a podcast on independent film producing, will also participate in the Festival’s filmmaking panel, “**Shooting in Chicago.**”

The “**Shooting in Chicago**” panel provides an opportunity for audiences to hear from Chicago and Illinois-based industry leaders, actors, independent producers, and directors and to gain insight into filmmaking in the city. The panel will be followed by an opportunity to tour Cinespace Studios and Periscope Post & Audio, transportation courtesy of Chicago Film Tour. This free panel will take place on Saturday, October 18 at 11 a.m., at the AMC River East (322 E. Illinois St.). Tickets for the panel must be obtained from the Box Office. For details, call 312.332.FILM.

City & State

“**Algren**” USA (Director: Michael Caplan) — As a passionate chronicler and champion of the underclass, Chicago author Nelson Algren (“The Man with The Golden Arm” and “Chicago, City on the Make”) was a literary genius second only to William Faulkner, according to ardent fan Ernest Hemingway. Illuminated by interviews with artists inspired by his work and embellished with a trove of Art Shay photographs, “Algren” is a long overdue celebration of an under-appreciated literary icon. *World Premiere*

“**The Alley Cat,**” USA (Director Marie Ullrich) — Jasper, a brusque bike messenger, anxiously waits for the much-anticipated “Alleycat,” her friends’ annual booze-soaked bike race across Chicago’s South Loop. When the big night finally arrives, Jasper starts off with a formidable lead, yet quickly finds herself caught in the web of her fellow racers’ longstanding secrets. A thrilling micro-budget road movie, “The Alley Cat” is also a heartrending portrait of a young woman coming to terms with her own family life. *World Premiere*

“**This Afternoon,**” USA (Director: Stephen Cone) — After accidentally stumbling into a therapy group for sex addiction, an aspiring youth pastor strikes up a friendship with a lonely housewife who has a proclivity for picking up strangers on Craigslist. The two spend the afternoon together, revealing themselves to one another through a profound and penetrating conversation which eventually leads to transformative personal revelations. Raw and sensitive, this micro-budget Chicago indie is an intimate look into individuals struggling to find fulfillment in their lives. *World Premiere*

“**The Other One,**” USA (Director: Josef Steiff) — In this bold, atmospheric story of loss and acceptance, former schoolteacher Amber returns to her childhood home to look after her ailing mother. Still haunted by a tragedy that took the life of her husband, Amber tries to cope with her mother’s deteriorating mental state. As she slowly uncovers secrets from her childhood, she must also confront her own tenuous grasp on reality. *Chicago Premiere*

Shorts 1: City and State - Locally Sourced — Spanning animation, fiction, documentary, and experimental filmmaking, these quirky Chicago shorts offer fresh perspectives and strong new visions. Ava is desperate to find the man of her dreams in “**Speed Dating.**” An eight-year-old girl decides to take a neglected toddler home in “**Baby Mary.**” “**The Fox of Bloody Woman Island**” is a loving portrait of Ulf, a traditional Norwegian boat builder. “**Lucy**” is a story about a girl and her dog. Local icon Cloud Gate (aka the Chicago Bean) is dissolved and deconstructed in “**Frame Walk.**” A scientist creates the perfect woman in “**A Priceless Woman**” (1961). Jaspa Jenkins wants to become “civilized” in “**Jaspa’ Jenkins.**” “**The Muck**” will leave you never wanting to take a bath again. Simon is left to survive in the middle of the ocean on an airplane wing in “**Drifting.**”

The 50th Chicago International Film Festival runs October 9-23, 2014. The complete list of films is available at www.chicagofilmfestival.com.

Festival Passes, Ticketing and Theater Information

Festival Passes and Tickets 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

Individual ticket prices:

Regular films: \$11/members, students*, and seniors*; \$14/non-members (*with valid ID)

Weekday matinees (films only): \$7 tickets, Monday-Friday through 5:00pm

10 after 10: \$10 tickets, every day after 10:00pm

Special Presentations: \$16/members, \$20/non-members

Tickets and passes can be purchased online at www.chicagofilmfestival.com, by calling 312-332-FILM (3456), or in person at the Festival Box Office at AMC River East 21 (until October 9: 7 days a week, noon – 8:00pm; October 10-23: tickets will be on sale one hour before the start of the first show until the start of the last show).

Festival screenings will be held at the AMC River East 21 Theater (322 E. Illinois St.).

For the full schedule and ticketing information, visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com

FESTIVAL SPONSORS

Led by Tourism Partner Illinois Office of Tourism and Presenting Partners Columbia College Chicago, the 50th Chicago International Film Festival's sponsors include Official Airline: American Airlines; Headquarters Hotel: JW Marriott Chicago; Major Partners: 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.

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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 Program. Celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, the Chicago International Film Festival is North America's longest-running competitive film festival.

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.