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**NEWS**

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**THE 50TH CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL  
ANNOUNCES JURY FOR NEW DIRECTORS COMPETITION**

**Fourteen Competing Films Receiving World, North American and  
U.S. Premieres**

**CHICAGO, IL (October 7, 2014)** – The 50th Chicago International Film Festival announced today the jury for its New Directors Competition. The jury consists of Swedish producer **Anna Croneman**; Moroccan director and producer **Izza Génini**; Director of the Berlin International Film Festival's Panorama **Wieland Speck**; and Managing Editor of RogerEbert.com **Brian Tallerico**.

Celebrating discovery and innovation while representing a variety of styles, genres and viewpoints, this selection of directors' first or second feature films introduces the next generation of the world's great filmmakers. Films in the competition are all receiving their U.S. and North American Premieres at the Festival with "**The Evolution of Bert**," from director Jeffrey Way, receiving its World Premiere. Argentina, France, Mexico, Iceland, Iran, Israel, the Netherlands, South Korea and the United States are among the countries participating in this competition.

"The New Directors Competition truly embodies the spirit of the Chicago International Film Festival, which has always been devoted to the discovery of new talents and voices from around the world," said Programming Director **Mimi Plauché**. "This competition always presents an exciting lineup of films, displaying the next generation of talents and showcasing both impressive virtuosity and self-assured risk-taking."

**NEW DIRECTORS COMPETITION JURY**

**Anna Croneman (Sweden)**

Swedish producer Anna Croneman has produced and co-produced a number of internationally recognized feature films and TV series, including Fredrik Edfeldt's "Sanctuary", Beata Gårdeler's "In your Veins," Jens Jonsson's "King of Ping Pong" which won the Silver Hugo in the New Directors Competition at the 44th Chicago International Film Festival in 2008, Michael Winterbottom's "Trishna" and the Emmy-nominated political drama, "The Crown Princess."

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### Izza Génini (Morocco)

Paris-based Moroccan talent Izza Génini is a producer (“Trances”) and director (“Songs for a Shabbat,” “Return to Oulad Moumen,” “Morocco Body and Soul”). She has also worked as a distributor, promoting Moroccan films and releasing movies in Africa and around the world.

### Wieland Speck (Germany)

Director of the Berlin International Film Festival's Panorama section since 1992, Speck has also worked extensively in Germany as an actor, author, producer, and director of numerous TV and film productions and has worked for several film institutions. He has also taught at universities and film institutes.

### Brian Tallerico (United States)

Tallerico is the Managing Editor of RogerEbert.com and serves as Vice President of the Chicago Film Critics Association. In addition, he is the Editor of “Magill's Cinema Annual,” a weekly guest on WGN-AM Radio 720, writes the PlayStation Guide for About.com, and freelances for Film Threat and FearNet, among others.

## **NEW DIRECTORS COMPETITION FILMS**

**“Ablations”** France/Belgium (Director: Arnold de Parscau) — After waking up to discover one of his kidneys has been removed, a pharmaceutical salesman sets out on a strange and unsettling journey to piece together what happened. Like a mix of David Lynch and Park Chan-Wook, this surrealist thriller shows how one man's obsessive quest leads to his own undoing. Virginie Ledoyen co-stars, along with Philippe Nahon (Gaspar Noe's “I Stand Alone”) as a menacing senior citizen. *North American Premiere*

**“The Boss, Anatomy of A Crime”** Argentina/Venezuela (Director: Sebastián Schindel) — A hard-working man is allowed to run his own butcher shop, but his sleazy boss subjects him to a series of escalating exploitations and abuses that build to a violent climax. Assured new director Sebastián Schindel expertly captures beautifully understated performances with a naturalistic, unobtrusive camera, while detailed close-ups of meat being ground up underscore this incisive story about the unfair treatment of the working-class. *North American Premiere*

**“El Cordero”** Chile (Director: Juan Francisco Olea) — When Domingo, a mild-mannered, highly devout Catholic, accidentally kills his secretary, he suffers... from a lack of remorse. Tormented by not feeling a sense of guilt, he sets out, ironically, on a spree of unlawful and increasingly bloody acts in order to recover his moral compass. “El Cordero”—which literally means “the lamb”—is a pitch-black comic character study and skillful inquiry into the double standards of Catholic guilt and repentance. *North American Premiere*

**“The Evolution of Bert”** USA (Director: Jeffrey Wray) — Bert, an African-American first-generation college student, struggles to define himself. Diving headfirst into a world of campus poetry readings, jazzy beats, and unavailable women, Bert tries to avoid the stereotyped social roles that so often pigeonhole black men. Employing a free essayistic style, bold new director Jeffrey Wray offers a witty and poignant meditation on the cultural factors that shape African-American identity. *World Premiere*

**“A Few Cubic Meters of Love”** Iran, Afghanistan (Director: Jamshid Mahmoudi) — In a shantytown encampment comprised of sheet metal and abandoned tires, Sabar, an Iranian worker, and Marona, the daughter of an illegal Afghan laborer, meet for chaste romantic encounters in a shipping container. But faced with the threat of Marona's deportation and the prejudice of their communities, can their dreams of marriage be realized? This year's breakout

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film from Iran's Fajr Film Festival is a bittersweet tale of pure love and racial tolerance. *North American Premiere*

**“A Girl at My Door”** South Korea (Director: July Jung) — Doona Bae (“Cloud Atlas”) and newcomer Kim Sae-ron deliver electrifying performances in this penetrating drama about a complicated relationship between two young women. Taking up post at a small seaside town, policewoman Lee Young-nam finds herself coming to the rescue of Do-hee, a local girl damaged by abuse at the hands of family and peers. As the two form a close, controversial relationship, Young-nam confronts a broader tapestry of social discrimination and destruction. *U.S. Premiere*

**“Next to Her”** Israel (Director: Asaf Korman) — Chelli is the sole caretaker for her mentally disabled, self-destructive sister Gabby. When Chelli begins a romantic relationship with the kindly Zohar, a fascinating triangle develops between the threesome, as Chelli loses her controlling grip on her vulnerable sibling. With stellar performances and startling plot twists, “Next to Her” is a compelling, complex and affecting drama about co-dependency and learning to let go. *U.S. Premiere*

**“Paris of the North”** Iceland/Denmark/France (Director: Hafsteinn Gunnar Sigurðsson) — Relocated from Reykjavik to a dilapidated rural fishing village, former alcoholic Hugi spends his time teaching elementary school and attending AA meetings. His path to recovery, however, is derailed by the arrival of his philandering, beer-guzzling dad. A droll and gentle character study, “Paris of the North” is a captivating account of fathers and sons mending their stunted relationships while finding the courage to push forward with their own lives. *U.S. Premiere*

**“Pink Noise”** Colombia (Director: Roberto Flores Prieto) — In the dilapidated small town of Barranquilla, Colombia, amid rolling electrical blackouts and torrential downpours, Luis, an elderly repairman, and Carmen, an aging hotel-worker, briefly come together and rekindle long dormant passions. Bolstered by its exquisitely framed compositions and two amiable characters, *Pink Noise* is a beautiful and bittersweet portrait of aging, loneliness, and love, as gently paced as its characters' tender lives. *North American Premiere*

**“Still”** UK (Director: Simon Blake) — A powerhouse performance from Irish actor Aiden Gillen (“Game of Thrones”) fuels this dramatic thriller about a photographer, reeling from the death of his teenage son. One day, a chance encounter with a street gang sends him down a dangerous path. In his breakout debut film, director Simon Blake paints a gritty, menacing portrait of North London's cruel urban environs, where the dividing lines between evil and innocence are blurred. *North American Premiere*

**“Supernova”** The Netherlands/Germany/Belgium (Director: Tamar van den Dop) — Frustrated with her isolated, rural existence, 15-year-old Meis spends her days thinking about exploding stars and reveling in erotic fantasies, while she and her family live in fear (and hope) that a car will come careening through their front window, and reinvigorate their torpid lives. With everyday events portrayed on a cosmic scale, this sexy coming-of-age film sumptuously chronicles one girl's sexual awakening within the context of the larger universe. *North American Premiere*

**“La Tirisia”** Mexico (Director: Jorge Pérez Solano) — Set amid the surrealist cacti-filled landscapes of Oaxaca, Mexico, this sensual, subtle drama follows the interwoven stories of two women, impregnated by the same uncaring man and unsure of whether they want to keep their babies. Driven by its beautiful cinematography and evocative imagery, “La Tirisia” is both a

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melancholic portrait of rural Mexico and a poignant tale of feminine pain and triumph. *U.S. Premiere*

**“Titli”** India (Director: Kanu Behl) — In the cutthroat environs of Delhi, a young man named Titli struggles to escape from his brutal and abusive family. But his plans are complicated when his criminal brothers instigate an arranged marriage, bringing the unsuspecting bride Neelu into their domestic rat’s nest. Acclaimed at its Cannes 2014 premiere, this outstanding debut film is a gritty and absorbing drama ripped straight from the hardscrabble mean streets of contemporary India. *North American Premiere*

**“Underdog”** Sweden/Norway (Director: Ronnie Sandahl) — A financially strapped, disaffected young Swede lands in Norway in search of employment. When she begins work as a housekeeper at middle-class Steffan’s home, neither anticipates the impact she will have on their lives and his family. Ronnie Sandahl’s emotionally satisfying debut features an urban modern-day romance while tackling issues of class, privilege and the changing balance of power between Sweden and Norway. *North American Premiere*

Columbia College Chicago is the program partner for the New Directors Competition.

### **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](http://www.chicagofilmfestival.com), by calling 312-332-FILM (3456) Monday – Friday 10:00am – 6:00pm, 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](http://www.chicagofilmfestival.com)

### **FESTIVAL SPONSORS**

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### **ABOUT CINEMA/CHICAGO**

Cinema/Chicago, the presenting organization of the Chicago International Film Festival, 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 50th Chicago International Film Festival runs October 9-23, 2014.

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