



Presented by Cinema/Chicago
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NEWS

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LA LA LAND TO OPEN, ARRIVAL TO CLOSE 52nd CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

U.S. Indies, Spotlight: Musicals and After Dark category selections announced in full

Chicago (September 13, 2016) - The Chicago International Film Festival today announces **Opening and Closing Night selections, as well as the full slate of films included in the Festival's U.S. Indies, Spotlight: Musicals and After Dark categories.** Chicago will play host to gala screenings of Damien Chazelle's *La La Land* and Denis Villeneuve's *Arrival* as respective bookends to the 52nd Festival, opening on October 13 and closing on October 27. A full list of these newly announced programs is below and at www.chicagofilmfestival.com. Tickets for these events and all film screenings go on sale September 21 for Cinema/Chicago members and September 23 for the general public.

***La La Land*, starring Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone and hailed as a "musical masterpiece" (The Guardian),** kicks off the Festival as a whole (details on tickets, time and location below), as well as this year's Spotlight: Musicals category, featuring the newest global contributions to this timeless genre. Joining the previously announced *Junction 48* in this category is **the North American premiere of *Elis*, the energetic, pulsating musical biopic about Elis Regina, arguably the biggest Brazilian singer of all time; a new restoration of 1930's *King of Jazz*, featuring soon-to-be-superstar Bing Crosby in a fascinating Technicolor time capsule from the big-band era; and a special presentation of *Trolls* in 3-D, the new animated feature from 20th Century Fox about those optimistic creatures with a dance in their hips and a song on their lips.**

As the Festival closes on October 27, audiences will enjoy a **Closing Night presentation of *Arrival*, the stirring and thoughtful drama starring Amy Adams, Jeremy Renner and Forest Whitaker** as an elite team enlisted to help humankind communicate with aliens. The selection compliments the Festival's After Dark program, featuring the best in new science-fiction, thrillers and horror films from around the world. In addition to *The Autopsy of Jane Doe* and *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer* (celebrating its 30th anniversary re-release at the Festival where it first premiered), featured After Dark selections include ***Prevenge*, the venomous dark comedy about a pregnant woman convinced her unborn baby is urging her to murder; *Raw*, winner of the FIPRESCI Prize at Cannes Film Festival's Critics' Week and the feminist horror tale that follows a young vegetarian who discovers an insatiable taste for meat; and first-time filmmaker Nicolas Pesce's *The Eyes of My Mother*, the elegant, visually striking nightmare about a young woman's isolated adulthood.**

Also announced today is the full U.S. Indies category, highlighting the emerging and established voices of filmmakers from across the country. Recently announced *Middle Man* is joined by ***Hunter Gatherer*, the story of a newly-released convict (Andre Royo, *The Wire* and *Empire*) trying to get back on his feet; *Women Who Kill*, Ingrid Jungermann's deadpan mystery about two Brooklyn-based podcasters and the suspicious new woman in their life; and *The View From Tall*, the Chicago-based production about a high schooler reeling from a very public affair with her teacher and the therapist she makes an unexpected connection with.**



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The 52nd Chicago International Film Festival is October 13-27. A full list of all the films announced today follows; images may be found [here](#). Additional selections and full categories will be announced throughout September with a complete lineup and schedule released September 19. Passes are on sale now at www.chicagofilmfestival.com. Media interested in covering the Festival should apply for credentials at www.chicagofilmfestival.com/accreditation.

OPENING NIGHT SELECTION

La La Land – Dir. Damien Chazelle

Written and directed by Academy Award®-nominee Damien Chazelle (Best Adapted Screenplay, *Whiplash* – 2014), *La La Land* tells the story of Mia (Emma Stone), an aspiring actress, and Sebastian (Ryan Gosling), a dedicated jazz musician, who are struggling to make ends meet in a city known for crushing hopes and breaking hearts. Set in modern day Los Angeles, this original musical about everyday life explores the joy and pain of pursuing your dreams. Starring Amy Adams, Jeremy Renner, Forest Whitaker and Michael Stuhlbarg.

Join us as we celebrate the magic of movies and musicals at Opening Night of the 52nd Chicago International Film Festival! Opening Night will be held at AMC River East 21 on Thursday, October 13 with a pre-film reception at Ogden Plaza at the Sheraton Hotel Chicago. Opening Night lead sponsors: Chloe Wine Collection, Bloomberg Philanthropies. Visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com for details.

CLOSING NIGHT SELECTION

Arrival – Dir. Denis Villeneuve

When mysterious spacecraft touch down across the globe, an elite team—led by expert linguist Louise Banks (Amy Adams)—is brought together to investigate. As mankind teeters on the verge of global war, Banks and the team race against time for answers—and to find them, she will take a chance that could threaten her life, and quite possibly humanity.

Join us as we celebrate another amazing year of films at Closing Night of the 52nd Chicago International Film Festival! Closing Night will be held at AMC River East 21 on Thursday, October 27. Visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com for details.

U.S. INDIES *American independent highlights from Chicago and beyond*

Destined -- Dir. Qasim Basir, U.S.

Splitting between dual realities, the profound new drama from Qasim Basir (*Mooz-Lum*) maps out two vastly different lives for the same young black man in modern-day Detroit. After surviving an upbringing in the projects, Rasheed (Corey Hardict) lives one life trying to escape his home, and the other trying to dominate it. Each story is connected by deception, heartache, and the inevitability of fate.

Hunter Gatherer -- Dir. Josh Locy, U.S.

Andre Royo (*The Wire*, *Empire*) exudes charisma as Ashley, a middle-aged scam artist freshly released from prison. With his family and friends keeping their distance, Ashley turns to Jeremy (George Sample III, star of 2015 Festival selection *Cronies*), an acquaintance who assists him in ill-advised schemes. Joshua Locy skillfully melds humor and pathos in this singular portrait of men grappling with loss in all the wrong ways.

Imperfections -- Dir. David Singer, U.S.

In this zany caper film from acclaimed local musician David Singer, a struggling Chicago actress named Cassidy (rising star Virginia Kull) starts a job delivering diamonds on Jewelers Row. After the shop owner's son reveals his lucrative plan to



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defraud their insurance company, Cassidy agrees to help fake a robbery. What begins as a simple diamond heist quickly unravels into a wild web of lies, betrayals, and surprises on the mean-ish streets of the Windy City.

Middle Man -- Dir. Ned Crowley, U.S. (*previously announced*)

From the twisted mind of Chicagoan Ned Crowley and starring fellow native Jim O'Heir (Parks and Recreation's lovable punching bag Jerry Gergich), this wickedly dark comedy follows Lenny, a nerdy accountant searching for stand-up comedy fame. But en route to Las Vegas, a mysterious hitchhiker lures Lenny into a violent killing spree—one that accidentally turns him into a comedy sensation.

Miles -- Dir. Nathan Adloff, U.S.

Based on a true story and set in not-so-faraway 1999, Illinois native Nathan Adloff's bighearted dramedy follows Miles, a downstate high school boy who joins the girls' volleyball team. Facing prejudice and protests from rival teams, he eyes an athletic scholarship to Loyola, despite the concerns of his mom (a terrific Molly Shannon) and the objections of his rural community. Bump-set-spike is nothing next to breaking down gender barriers.

Pushing Dead -- Dir. Tom E. Brown, U.S.

When Dan's insurance coverage inexplicably changes, the longtime H.I.V.-positive San Franciscan (James Roday, TV's *Psych*) suddenly finds he can no longer afford his medication. As Dan tries to stretch what's left of his lifeline, a loyal support group gives him new reasons to be hopeful. Danny Glover and Robin Weigert co-star in this warm slice-of-life dramedy that puts a wry, grounded outlook on living with a debilitating illness.

The View from Tall -- Dirs. Caitlin Parrish and Erica Weiss, U.S.

Precocious, isolated, and relentlessly bullied by her classmates, Chicagoland high school senior Justine reluctantly begins therapy in the aftermath of a messy public affair with a teacher. After a rocky first few sessions, she forms an unlikely bond with Douglas, her disabled therapist who nurses demons of his own. Told with a sardonic wit by Chicago theater veterans Caitlin Parrish and Erica Weiss, *The View from Tall* is a tender story of self-discovery at more than one age.

Women Who Kill -- Dir. Ingrid Jungermann, U.S.

Brooklynites Jean and Morgan, former life partners, co-host a cult podcast about female serial killers. But when Morgan falls for a mysterious young woman at the food co-op, the two begin investigating her past and turn up some disturbing secrets. With sly doses of paranoia, secrecy, and a hint of homicide, *Women Who Kill* is a neurotic Park Slope mystery that's deadpan—and almost deadly.

AFTER DARK *The best in genre cinema from around the world.*

Amok (Dzgan) -- Dir. Vardan Tozija, Macedonia

Two sharp, introverted boys struggle against a foster care system that is, at best, indifferent and, at worst, wholly corrupt and cruel. While Petar dreams of escape and prosperity, Filip lashes out and forms a gang of "lost boys" hell-bent on punishing each of their abusers. In this chilly Eastern European City of God, violence, exploitation, and revenge rule the streets. Macedonian with subtitles.

The Autopsy of Jane Doe -- Dir. André Øvredal, U.S./U.K. (*previously announced*)

A father-son coroner team (Brian Cox and Emile Hirsch) face the ultimate head-scratcher with their latest corpse: an unidentified beautiful young woman who boasts no obvious cause of death. As they dig deeper into the examination (and into Jane Doe's body), the duo uncover increasingly strange and terrifying things. This bloody, clever, and medically rigorous horror film turns the morbid conventions of the genre literally inside-out.

The Darkness (Las Tinieblas) -- Dir. Daniel Castron Zimbrón, Mexico

In a fog-drenched forest trapped in eternal dusk, a father and his three children are sequestered in a log cabin, hiding from a monster lurking just outside. When the eldest son disappears, the middle child begins to question his father's judgement and the truth of what really lies beyond. Fantasy, terror, and Oedipal conflicts combine in this hypnotizing post-apocalyptic fable that evokes both Guillermo del Toro's fantasy-scapes and Victor Erice's *The Spirit of the Beehive*.

The Eyes of My Mother -- Dir. Nicolas Pesce, U.S.

In this visually striking nightmare, one horrific act forever alters a young farm woman's life. We follow Francisca, a surgeon's daughter, from this traumatic event to an isolated adulthood, as she seeks to fulfill her parents' legacy in increasingly gruesome ways. Elegant black-and-white cinematography elevates shocking body horror into the realm of a timeless folktale.

Headshot -- Dirs. Kimo Stamboel and Timo Tjahjanto, Indonesia

This bloody martial-arts extravaganza is filled to the brim with eye-popping stunts. A nameless amnesiac (*The Raid*'s Iko Uwais) wakes up in a hospital with severe head trauma. Dubbed "Ishmael" by his doctors, the only thing he remembers is his uncanny ability to kick ass—and that a crime syndicate wants him dead. To uncover his dark past, Ishmael must fight his way through large swaths of the Indonesian criminal underworld.

Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer -- Dir. John McNaughton, U.S. (*previously announced*)

Thirty years after its premiere at the Festival, John McNaughton's unflinching, fact-based exploration of a sociopathic mind remains one of the most disturbing horror films ever made. Michael Rooker is galvanizing as the titular loner who catches the eye of Becky (Tracy Arnold), the troubled sister of his leering roommate. This masterful independent film will screen in a never-before-seen anniversary restoration, with cast and crew in attendance.

Prevenge -- Dir. Alice Lowe, U.K.

At seven months expecting and on her own, Ruth becomes convinced her unborn baby is instructing her to kill people—and so she does, giving new meaning to the term "pregnancy craving." Writer-director-star Alice Lowe (*Sightseers*) made *Prevenge* while she herself was pregnant, adding another subversive layer to a venomous comedy that skewers the mystique of motherhood.

Raw -- Dir. Julia Ducournau, France/Belgium

Justine's having a tough time adjusting at her new veterinary school. After the timid vegetarian is forced to eat raw meat for the first time in a hazing ritual, she's overtaken by a different sort of insatiable hunger—and an unexpected sexual appetite. This gruesome feminist horror tale cooks up a deadly dish of sexual identity with a dash of dark humor and a generous helping of gore.

We are the Flesh (Tenemos la carne) -- Dir. Emiliano Rocha Minter, Mexico

This psychedelic carnival of S&M, incest, cannibalism, and other X-rated taboos follows a fleeing brother and sister who seek shelter in a dilapidated building inhabited by a modern-day ogre. In order to survive, they must submit to his every sick whim and enact his most depraved fantasies. Produced by Mexican compatriot Carlos Reygadas and endorsed by Alejandro G. Iñárritu, *We are the Flesh* represents a shockingly original vision from a new Mexican auteur.

SPOTLIGHT: MUSICALS *Celebrating the newest additions to this timeless genre.*

Belgian Rhapsody (Brabançonne) -- Dir. Vincent Bal, Belgium/Luxembourg

Two Belgium concert bands, one Flemish and the other Walloon, are competing for a single slot at a European music showcase. The tension reaches a crescendo when the Flemish band poaches their competitor's star trumpeter, a move that also wedges the hunky brass-man into a love triangle with the band's winsome manager. This lighthearted musical comedy pokes fun at Belgium's historic political divide while celebrating the country's rich cultural history.

Elis -- Dir. Hugo Prata, Brazil

The life of Elis Regina—arguably the biggest Brazilian singer of all time—is set to an energetic, pulsating rhythm in this musical biopic. A cultural trendsetter who signaled a shift in styles from bossa nova to Brazilian popular music, the fiery "pimentinha" (brilliantly played by Andréia Horta) lived a turbulent life. While clashing with her country's dictatorship, she struggled with her own personal demons. Elis is imbued with the soul of the singer and the country she loved.

Game On (#WszystkoGra) -- Dir. Agnieszka Glińska, Poland

In this uplifting musical featuring lively dance numbers set to the greatest hits of Polish pop music, three generations of women discover that love and happiness lie closer than they think. Zosia, a spunky young artist trying to change the world, plans to move to London for her dream job. On the eve of her departure, she discovers a surprising secret: her mother and grandmother are facing eviction. The three women join forces to save their house and home.

Junction 48 -- Dir. Udi Aloni, Israel/Germany (*previously announced*)

Tamer Nafar, the originator of the Palestinian hip-hop movement, stars in and co-writes a vibrant autobiographical story about the pursuits of fame and justice in a broken land. Kareem, a rising star in his hardscrabble hometown of Lod (a.k.a. Lyd), must contend with a family tragedy and the ever-present eyes of the Israeli government to follow his path to socially conscious hip-hop fame. This pulse-pounding musical drama drops a beat over the Israel-Palestine conflict.

King of Jazz -- Dir. John Murray Anderson, U.S.

This long-lost 1930 musical revue from the golden age of Universal Pictures finds new life thanks to one of the most elaborate restoration projects in film history. Starring legendary jazz bandleader Paul Whiteman and soon-to-be-superstar Bing Crosby, and pairing elaborate and visually innovative production numbers with classic tunes from figures like George Gershwin, King of Jazz is a fascinating Technicolor time capsule from the big-band era.

That Day We Sang -- Dir. Victoria Wood, U.K.

Manchester, 1969. Reconnecting 40 years after singing together in a once-famous children's choir, Enid and Tubby rediscover their voices in middle age. The inimitable Imelda Staunton (who lit up the West End in London's smash revival of Gypsy) and Michael Ball sing their hearts out in this delightful musical that proves it's never too late to live for the first time. Colorful fantasy sequences and spectacular choreography will have you dancing in the aisles.

The Eccentrics: On the Sunny Side of the Street (Excentrycy, czyli po słonecznej stronie ulicy)

-- Dir. Janusz Majewski, Poland

After the death of Stalin, a jazz musician and ex-soldier return to Poland to assemble a ragtag swing band, hoping a little song and dance will lift the spirits of their weary, war-torn home. Pulsing with the livewire energy of the American jazz standards that took off in the country's liberalized era, Janusz Majewski's charming toe-tapping comedy brims with romance, mystery, and a blast of a cast that is, indeed, eccentric.



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Trolls (in 3D) – Dirs. Mike Mitchell and Walt Dohrn, U.S.

A funny, irreverent comedy about the search for happiness, Trolls transports audiences to a colorful world populated by the optimistic Trolls, who have a constant dance in their step and a song on their lips, and the pessimistic Bergens, who are only happy when they have Trolls in their stomachs. After Bergens invade Troll Village, Poppy (Anna Kendrick), the happiest Troll ever born, and the curmudgeonly Branch (Justin Timberlake) set off to rescue her friends. The soundtrack, produced by Timberlake, features five original songs along with classic hits.

Urban Family (Ollaan Vapaita) -- Dir. Oskari Sipola, Finland

Over a dozen Finnish songwriters contributed to this euphoric modern musical fantasia about sacred bonds that run deeper than blood. A woman in her 30s reexamines her life choices when a child she gave up for adoption 16 years earlier suddenly shows up on her doorstep. Through catchy alt-rock pop music, Urban Family pokes gentle fun at adult bohemia and celebrates unconditional love in all its forms.

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ABOUT CINEMA/CHICAGO

Cinema/Chicago, the presenting organization of the Chicago International Film Festival, is a year round not-for-profit arts and education organization dedicated to fostering better communication between people of diverse cultures through the art form of the moving image. In addition to the annual Festival, the organization presents a number of film-centric programs throughout the year, including the International Screening Program, the Chicago International Television Festival, CineYouth Festival, the Education Program and Members Film Screening Series. Celebrating its 52nd edition October 13-27, the Chicago International Film Festival is North America's longest-running competitive film festival.

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