



Media Contact: Nick Harkin / Matthew Bryant
Carol Fox and Associates
773.969.5033 / 773.969.5034
nickh@carolfoxassociates.com
mbryant@carolfoxassociates.com

For Immediate Release: Sept. 17, 2018

54TH CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES CITY & STATE PROGRAM, AN ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF LOCAL FILMMAKING

Line-Up Features the World Premieres of *An Acceptable Loss*, directed by Joe Chappelle (*The Wire*) and starring Jamie Lee Curtis, and the documentary *The City that Sold America*

CHICAGO – The **54th Chicago International Film Festival**, presented by Cinema/Chicago, today released the list of five feature-length films and 10 shorts that make up the Festival's **City & State Program**, continuing a tradition of spotlighting films made in Illinois. The films will be shown during the Festival at AMC River East 21 (E. Illinois St.) in Chicago from Oct. 10-21.

The program features the world premieres of *An Acceptable Loss*, a political thriller shot in Evanston, directed by Joe Chappelle (*The Wire*) and starring Tika Sumpter and Jamie Lee Curtis and *The City That Sold America*, Ky Dickens' examination of the advertising industry in Chicago. Also included are: *The Feeling of Being Watched*, an investigative documentary about F.B.I. surveillance in the Arab-American community from director Assia Boundaoui; Gregory Dixon and McKenzie Chinn's romantic dramedy *Olympia*; and *What They Had*, Elizabeth Chomko's directorial debut, starring Hilary Swank and Michael Shannon.

Further details on the films, as well as other City & State programs at the 54th Chicago International Film Festival, are below:

Shorts Program: Around the Corner – City & State

Thursday, Oct. 11, 6:15 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 13, 12 p.m.; Thursday, Oct. 18, 3:30 p.m.

The program includes *Opening Night*, an animated musical comedy directed by Margaret Bialis; Michael Paulucci's *Hashtag Perfect Life*, which examines the exacting pressures of public reputation; Dan Rybicky's *Accident, MD*, a survey of attitudes about America's healthcare crisis; Felix Piñeiro's *I Am Not Broken*, a psychological journey of self-discovery; Jake Zaluktsky's *Mike Mollo Prepares for a Fight*, a reflective portrait of a Chicago boxer; *Whimper*, a docu-drama

about a boy struggling with increasingly apocalyptic surroundings directed by Pam Austin, and *Commodity/Fetish*, a wry examination of consumer culture directed by Spencer Parsons.

Shorts from Chicago filmmakers featured in the Festival's other short film programs include *Optimism*, a portrait of Dawson City in Canada's Far North directed by Deborah Stratman (in *Meditations- Experimental*); *Creature Companion*, directed by Melika Bass, an abstracted fable on the longing of the female body (in *Meditations- Experimental*) and *Relax, It's Probably Just a Parasite*, an animated investigation into a hypochondriac's paranoia directed by Joel Benjamin (in *Outside the Lines - Animation*).

An Acceptable Loss – Dir. Joe Chappelle, U.S.

Saturday, Oct. 13, 4 p.m.; Monday, Oct. 15, 1 p.m.

When former U.S. security adviser Elizabeth Lamm (Tika Sumpter) leaves public service to take a position as a university lecturer, the sins from her past come back to haunt her. The U.S. President (Jamie Lee Curtis) and her Chief of Staff pressure Lamm to remain loyal to their administration, even as a mysterious student begins stalking her. This political thriller from Chicago writer-director Chappelle (*The Wire*) is an entertaining mix of *Scandal* and *All the President's Men*. 102 min.

The City That Sold America – Dir. Ky Dickens, U.S.

Thursday, Oct. 11, 5:45 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 13, 11:30 a.m.

From “Whass-up!” to the Marlboro Man, Spuds Mackenzie to orange juice for breakfast, Chicago's advertising companies have given birth to some of the most seminal marketing campaigns ever. This snappy jingle of a documentary reveals, with intriguing insights and wistful nostalgia, the confluence of Chicago's creative talent—from Leo Burnett to Bob Scarpelli—and the transformative ways that they've shaped popular culture. *With post-screening panel*. 69 min.

The Feeling of Being Watched – Dir. Assia Boundaoui, U.S.

Thursday, Oct. 18, 5:30 pm; Friday, Oct. 19, 3:30 pm

In this real-world conspiracy thriller, filmmaker Assia Boundaoui seeks the truth behind long-running FBI surveillance targeting Arab-Americans in Chicago's Bridgeview community. During her investigation, she uncovers thousands of redacted documents, wary neighbors, and a pre-9/11 probe code-named “Operation Vulgar Betrayal.” A timely and unsettling portrait of pervasive prejudice and paranoia in America's Muslim neighborhoods. *With post-screening panel*. *English, Arabic with subtitles*. 86 min.

Olympia – Dir. Gregory Dixon, U.S.

Monday, Oct. 15, 5:30 pm; Tuesday, Oct. 16, 8:30 pm; Friday, Oct. 19 1 p.m.

Making her dazzling feature debut, Chicago writer-actor McKenzie Chinn stars as a struggling artist, navigating work and romance in the Windy City. When her boyfriend asks her to drop everything and move cross-country, she soon discovers that her biggest obstacle may be herself. Featuring quirky animation and a revelatory central performance, *Olympia* is a heartfelt story for anyone who's ever felt adrift on the rough seas of adulthood. 93 min.

What They Had – Dir. Elizabeth Chomko, U.S.

Monday, Oct. 15, 8:30 pm

From first-time writer/director Elizabeth Chomko, *What They Had* centers on a family in crisis. Bridget (Hilary Swank) returns home to Chicago at her brother's (Michael Shannon) urging to deal with her ailing mother (Blythe Danner) and her father's (Robert Forster) reluctance to let go of their life together. *101 min.*

Festival and Ticket Information

The 54th Chicago International Film Festival runs Oct. 10-21, 2018 at the AMC River East 21, 322 E. Illinois St., and features more than 150 films featuring numerous competitive categories and several highlight programs such as Black Perspectives, Cinemas of the Americas, International Comedy, Spotlight: Italy, Women in Cinema, Out-Look, After Dark and the City & State program (showcasing films made in Chicago and throughout Illinois.) Festival passes (\$110 - \$270) are currently on sale. Individual tickets (\$8 to \$20) and Gala Presentation tickets (\$20 to \$150) will go on sale Sept. 18 for Cinema/Chicago Members and Sept. 21 for the general public. Discounted parking is available at AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois Street). For more information, visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com or call 312-683-0121..

Festival Sponsors and Partners

The 54th Chicago International Film Festival's sponsors include Premiere Sponsors: Bloomberg Philanthropies, Wintrust Community Banks; Official Wine Sponsor: Chloe Wine Collection; Education Sponsor: HBO; Participating Sponsor: British International School of Chicago; Airline Partner: LOT Polish Airlines; Headquarters Hotel: St. Jane Hotel; Event Partners: AMC Theaters, The Gwen Hotel, Little Goat Diner; Platinum Media Partner: NCM; This program is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts and a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency. Additional support provided by the Illinois Film Office, Chicago Film Office, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), and Lagunitas Brewing Company.

About Cinema/Chicago

Cinema/Chicago, the presenting organization of the Chicago International Film Festival, is a year-round nonprofit arts and education organization dedicated to fostering better communication between people of diverse cultures through the art of film and the moving image. Cinema/Chicago's programs include the Chicago International Film Festival, International Screenings Program, Chicago International Television Festival, CineYouth Festival, and year-round Education Program. Celebrating its 54th edition October 10-21, 2018, the Chicago International Film Festival is North America's longest-running competitive film festival. For more information, please visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Vimeo](#) and [Twitter](#).

#

#

#