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## **54TH CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL PRESENTS WOMEN IN CINEMA, SHOWCASING WOMEN FILMMAKERS**

Highlights of the 36 features and 21 shorts include Chicagoan Elizabeth Chomko's *What They Had* and Festival alum Julie Bertuccelli's idiosyncratic family drama *Claire Darling*, starring Catherine Deneuve

CHICAGO – The **54th Chicago International Film Festival**, presented by Cinema/Chicago, today announces a large, diverse selection of films in the their **Women in Cinema** program, an exceptional part of this year's Festival at the AMC River East 21 (322 Illinois St.) from October 10-21. *Women in Cinema* is sponsored by Chloe Wine Collection with additional support from the Jeanne Randall Malkin Family Foundation.

The *Women in Cinema* program showcases the accomplished work of several emerging directors, including Chicago-born Elizabeth Chomko's directorial debut *What They Had*, a poignant family drama set in Chicago and starring Hilary Swank, Michael Shannon and Robert Forster. In Nia DaCosta's feature debut *Little Woods*, Tessa Thompson stars as a woman working her way out of her illegal past, while Wanuri Kahiu's first feature *Rafiki* brings an Afropop style to a traditional story of forbidden love. In *The Third Wife (Phuong Anh Nguyen)*, first-timer Ash Mayfair helms an enthralling depiction of young womanhood in 19th century Vietnam.

Female-driven cinema is on display throughout the festival, including the Gala Presentation of Marielle Heller's *Can You Ever Forgive Me?* starring Melissa McCarthy; *Claire Darling*, an idiosyncratic family drama starring Catherine Deneuve from Festival alum Julie Bertuccelli, and Pernille Fischer Christensen's newest project, *Becoming Astrid (Unga Astrid)*, an affecting biopic of Swedish writer Astrid Lindgren of Pippi Longstocking fame.

Over 40% of the Festival's shorts program, comprising 21 films, are directed or co-directed by women, including such highlights as Chicago-based directors Melika Bass (with *Creature Companion*) and Deborah Stratman (with *Optimism*) as well as Mariama Diallo's popular festival

favorite *Hair Wolf*, German-born filmmaker Réka Bucsi's award-winning animated short *Solar Walk*, and Colombian-Belgian director Juanita Onzaga's official Cannes documentary entry *Our Song to War*. A full list of short films is available at: <https://www.chicagofilmfestival.com/shorts/>

A full list of the feature films in the Women in Cinema program is below:

***3 Days in Quiberon (3 Tage in Quiberon)***

Dir. Emily Atef, Germany, Austria, France

***Becoming Astrid Unga Astrid***

Dir. Pernille Fischer Christensen, Sweden, Germany, Denmark

***Birds of Passage Pájaros de verano***

Dirs. Cristina Gallego and Ciro Guerra, Colombia, Mexico, Denmark, France

***Can You Ever Forgive Me?***

Dir. Marielle Heller, U.S.

***[CENSORED]***

Dir. Sari Braithwaite, Australia

***The City That Sold America***

Dir. Ky Dickens, U.S.

***Claire Darling (Le dernier vide-grenier de Claire Darling)***

Dir. Julie Bertuccelli, France

***Core of the World***

Dir. Natalia Meshchaninova, Russia, Lithuania

***Couch Potatoes (Gli Sdraiati)***

Dir. Francesca Archibugi, Italy

***Daughter of Mine (Figlia mia)***

Dir. Laura Bispuri, Italy

***Dreamaway***

Dirs. Marouan Omara, Johanna Domke, Germany/Egypt/Qatar

***Entrepreneur (Yrittäjä)***

Dir. Virpi Suutari, Finland

***The Etruscan Smile***

Dir. Oded Binnun, Mihal Brezis, U.S., UK, Switzerland

***Facing the Wind (Con el viento)***

Dir. Meritxell Colell Aparicio, Spain, Argentina, France

***Family First (Chien de garde)***

Dir. Sophie Dupuis, Canada

***The Feeling of Being Watched***

Dir. Assia Boundaoui. U.S.

***Florianópolis Dream (Sueño Florianópolis)***

Dir. Ana Katz, Argentina, Brazil

***The Good Girls (Las niñas bien)***

Dir. Alejandra Márquez Abella, Mexico

***Happy as Lazzaro (Lazzaro Felice)***

Dir. Alice Rohrwacher, Italy, Switzerland, France, Germany

***Joy***

Dir. Sudabeh Mortezaei, Austria

***Little Tickles (Les chatouilles)***

Dir. Andréa Bescond, Eric Métayer, France

***Little Woods***

Dir. Nia DaCosta

***Miriam Lies (Miriam Miente)***

Dir. Natalia Cabral, Oriol Estrada, Dominican Republic, Spain

***Mr. Soul!***

Dir. Melissa Haizlip, U.S.

***Mug (Twarz)***

Dir. Malgorzata Szumowska, Poland

***My Home, in Libya***

Dir. Martina Melilli, Italy

***Rafiki***

Dir. Wanuri Kahiu, Kenya

***Say Her Name: The Life and Death of Sandra Bland***

Dirs. Kate Davis, David Heilbroner, U.S.

***Sibel***

Dirs. Çağla Zencirci and Guillaume Giovnetti, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Turkey

***Sofia***

Dir. Meryem Benm'Barek, Morocco, France, Qatar

***The Third Wife (Phuong Anh Nguyen)***

Dir. Ashleigh Mayfair, Vietnam

***This Changes Everything***

Dir. Tom Donahue, U.S.

***This Magnificent Cake! (Ce magnifique gâteau!)***

Dirs. Emma De Swaef, Marc James Roels, Belgium, France, The Netherlands

***Too Late to Die Young (Tarde para morir joven)***

Dir. Dominga Sotomayor Castillo, Chile, Brazil, Argentina, The Netherlands, Qatar

***United Skates***

Dirs. Dyana Winkler, Tina Brown. U.S.

***What They Had***

Dir. Elizabeth Chomko, U.S.

***Working Woman (Isha Ovedet)***

Dir. Michal Aviad, Israel

**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, including 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](http://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 54<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.chicagofilmfestival.com) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Vimeo](#) and [Twitter](#).

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