

# 2007 RIFF Festival Highlights

## FEATURE FILMS

### **AMERICAN FORK**

**Chris Bowman**, director

94 min. USA, 2007

Cast: Bruce McGill, Kathleen Quinlan, William Baldwin and Hubbel Palmer

In a supermarket in the armpit of the Mountain West, an enormous grocery clerk scribbles poetry. Tracy Orbison (Hubbel Palmer) is a dreamer. His outsized sense of wonder fuels a series of tragicomic adventures. First Tracy enrolls in an acting class, falling under the spell of the arrogant instructor, a Z-list actor named Truman Hope (William Baldwin). Next he befriends a young bagboy, Kendis Cooley (Vincent Caso), and begins a new project: mentoring Kendis and his skate-punk friends. He urges the teens to give up their surly ways and get high on life; the gang's mean-eyed ringleader, Shawn (Nick Lashaway), has entirely different plans. At home, Tracy fends off Agnes, his God-fearing, self-loathing mother (Academy Award nominee Kathleen Quinlan), while his sister Peggy (24's Mary Lynn Rajs Kub), a perennial lonely heart, at long last finds somebody to love. Through it all, Tracy struggles to pass his driver's exam, lose 'about ten pounds,' and win fame beyond his working-class job.

### **BACK SOON**

**Rob Williams**, director

83 min. USA, 2007

The writer/director and stars of last year's popular "Long-Term Relationship" return to RIFF with this romantic drama. Logan, a cute would-be actor, is finally selling the house he shared with his recently deceased wife, Adrienne. When he meets the handsome buyer, Gil, a reformed drug dealer who feels inexplicably drawn to the house, the two straight men unexpectedly fall in love. But there's more to their strange connection than either man suspects...

### **BODY/ANTIBODY**

**Kerry Dye and Jordan Hoffman**, co-directors

98 min. USA, 2007

<http://www.bodyantibody.com/>

Cast: Robert Gomes, Frank Deal, Leslie Kendall

Kip Polyard suffers from obsessive-compulsive disorder and hasn't left his rent-controlled Manhattan apartment in 10 months. When the beautiful Celine moves in across the hall, Kip finally opens his door ... to romance. But when Celine's jealous ex-boyfriend Andy shows up, Kip realizes that he's let in more than he bargained for. Also featuring Deborah (Debbie) Gibson, this darkly comic thriller will keep audiences guessing until the very last scene.

### **BLOOD CAR**

**Alex Orr**, director

75 min. USA, 2006

<http://bloodcar.com/>

Cast: Anna Chlumsky, Mike Brune and Katie Rowlett

In the near future gas prices are at an all time high, nearing almost forty dollars a gallon. Archie Andrews, an environmentalist, vegan schoolteacher, is determined to find an alternate fuel source. While experimenting with various wheat grass concoctions, he

accidentally stumbles upon a solution. Blood. Blood is the solution. Human blood. Archie soon becomes the only person driving a car and attracts the attention of a slutty, sex crazed, sex slut named Denise. Unable to turn down her advances, Archie gets attached to her filthy sex and the only way to continue getting that filthy sex is to keep the car running. But Blood Cars don't drive themselves. They require the blood of humans! Clouded by thoughts of Denise, Archie begins grinding up local town folk in his self made Blender Trunk. A string of random murders does not go unnoticed though. A handful of halfwit government agents are dispersed to obtain the Blood Car and Archie's choice of whether to kill people for sex or not pales in comparison to the decision he will be forced to make. Let's just say it involves the government. And children. Lots and lots of innocent children.

### **CTHULHU**

**Daniel Gildark**, director

114 min. USA, 2007

Cast: Cara Buono, Tori Spelling and Jason Cottle

A gay history professor returns to the small town that ostracized him years before to execute his late mother's estate. Falling into an amorous reunion with his closest boyhood friend, he uncovers the bloody past of his father's New Age cult while accelerating events take on a sinister - even apocalyptic - significance.

### **DIVERGENCE**

**Patrick Donnelly**, director

114 min. USA, 2007

<http://www.divergencethefilm.com>

Cast: Jakob Hawkins and Traci Ann Wolfe

DIVERGENCE is a story of how American society has changed and struggled with the effects of 9/11 and the war in Iraq. It is a tale told through the microcosm of two wounded people coming together and grappling with the ramifications of war and loss. The film takes place in a seaside resort town on the Jersey shore in the midst of a cold and bitter winter. Tim Lawson is a wounded and disillusioned soldier returning from Iraq to his hometown. He is forced to cope with the horrors of a war he no longer understands, as he seeks to reclaim a simpler time in his life. We find Clare O'Neil, whose life has been turned upside down by a fatal accident, hiding away in a secluded beach house on the road to self-destruction.

A fateful event brings Tim and Clare together, offering each other a fleeting chance at re-charting their lives. They are drawn to each other in a common bond of pain and loss. In this bond, they try to hide away from the outside world, seeking a momentary sanctuary from an existence they no longer comprehend. As their relationship becomes increasingly more passionate, they must make decisions that will have profound effects on the rest of their lives.

### **FORFEIT**

**Andrew Shea**, director

84 min. USA, 2006

Cast: Billy Burke, Sherry Stringfield and Wayne Knight

A searing psychological drama that explores the human traits of greed, obsession, and revenge. This clever and engaging heist flick tells the story of a man hell-bent on exacting vengeance on the people who have wronged him. Frank O'Neal appears to be re-adjusting to life back in his old neighborhood, including a reconciliation with his ex-girlfriend. We quickly learn however, that his motives are not entirely what they seem.

Ultimately, his friendship with an overzealous televangelist places him on the brink of self-destruction. Andrew Shea's taut thriller features an impressive cast, including Sherry Stringfield (ER), Gregory Itzon (24) and Wayne Knight (Seinfeld).

### **A FOUR LETTER WORD**

**Casper Andreas**, director

USA, 2007, 87 min, Video

Casper Andreas' debut feature, *Slutty Summer*, had its RI premiere at RIFF 2004, so we are excited to welcome him back to the festival with his sexy, appealing new romantic comedy, "A Four Letter Word," as one of our Centerpiece screenings. *A Four Letter Word* follows an ensemble of characters in their daily lives in New York City, navigating sex, love and relationships. At the center of it all is Luke (Jesse Archer), an attractive and witty Chelsea boy who works at a sex shop with the cute gay activist, Zeke (Cory Grant). Zeke (who, incidentally, swears by hot, naked yoga) believes there's more to Luke than he lets on, masking it through one-night stands and a party lifestyle. Luke meets Stephen (Charlie David, *Dante's Cove*) at a bar, but the hunky self-proclaimed artist initially dismisses Luke as a "gay cliché." When they later inadvertently hook up in a backroom, they figure, what the hell?, and embark on a new relationship.

Luke even takes Zeke's advice to heart and attends a sex compulsives meeting to try to get a handle on monogamy. But Stephen's keeping a few secrets - he doesn't seem to be enrolled in the New School, as he's indicated, and more importantly, though Stephen claims to be able to afford his amazing apartment because of a trust fund, Zeke finds his profile on [callboy.com](http://callboy.com)! As Luke tries to get the truth out of Stephen, he realizes that some four letter words, like love, are a lot more complicated than he thought.

### **HER BEST MOVE**

**Norm Hunter**, director

100 min. USA 2007

Cast: Daryl Sabara, Scott Patterson and Drew Tyler Bell

High school is crazy enough, but for fifteen-year-old soccer star SARA DAVIS (Leah Pipes), it's about to get even crazier. On the field she dances through opponents to make impossible shots on goal - skills honed by her father GIL (Scott Patterson), a pro soccer coach. Encouraged by best friend TUTTI (Lalaine) to jump-start her life outside soccer, Sara makes up for lost time and discovers there's more to life than just sports. As Gil pushes Sara to make the Development Team, her hopes of performing in the dance recital and exploring a relationship with JOSH (Drew Tyler Bell), are shoved aside. With scouts watching every shot, Sara faces the challenge of discovering who she is before making the best move of her life.

### **HOLLYWOOD DREAMS**

**Henry Jaglom**, Director

100 min. USA, 2006

The story of the journey of a young woman from a small town in Iowa, Margie Chizek (Tanna Frederick), who arrives in Los Angeles deeply scarred by certain events in her childhood and profoundly obsessed with a life-long dream of achieving fame and stardom. After a series of difficult and sometimes comic struggles - including a failed audition for the "part of a lifetime" in a local play - she literally bumps into a self-styled "major producer/manager" (Zack Norman) who, together with his personal and professional partner (David Proval), takes her under his wing. As Margie's fate seems to have suddenly changed and her goal appears finally within reach, her romantic

involvement with an exciting, complex up-and-coming young actor (Justin Kirk) challenges her – and our – ideas of success, fame and love. Written and Directed by Henry Jaglom, the film also stars Karen Black and Melissa Leo and introduces Keaton Simons. HOLLYWOOD DREAMS was produced by Rosemary Marks for the Rainbow Film Company.

### **INTERVENTION**

**Mary McGuckian**, director

93 min. UNITED KINGDOM/USA, 2007

**Cast:** Jennifer Tilly, Andie MacDowell, Russell Means, Colm Feore, Rupert Graves, and Charles Dance

#### **WORLD PREMIERE**

It's a mad world - so who's to say who or what is crazy? Out of order? Or not normal? Where do we draw the fine line between what is 'funny mad' or just 'plain insane'? When does a disorder define as dysfunctional? *Intervention* turns the commonly-held concept of what is unacceptably 'crazy' on its hilarious head - and enlightens the world of rehabilitation, relapse and recovery with a little laughter, debunking the Anglo-American culture of 'therapy' along the way.

### **LAST STOP FOR PAUL**

**Neil Mandt**, Director

80 min. USA, 2006

<http://www.laststopforpaul.com>

Filming Locations: *Brazil, Egypt, France, Germany, Jamaica, Japan, Russian Federation, Senegal, Thailand, United Kingdom, Viet Nam, Chile, Greece*

Cast: Marc Carter, Neil Mandt and Heather Petrone

Cliff and Charlie work together selling bathroom supplies. Charlie's the seasoned traveler, having been to over 50 countries before his 30th birthday. Cliff dreams of travelling but always finds an excuse not to go. When Charlie asks Cliff to go to the Full Moon Party in Thailand, it is no surprise to anyone when Charlie is rejected.

Things suddenly change when Cliff gets a phone call informing him that one of his childhood friends died unexpectedly. At the funeral, Cliff learns his buddy had been planning a trip around the world. Cliff decides to make sure his friend still makes that trip, even if it means carrying his ashes in a thermos to do it.

Together, all three embark on a trip of a lifetime.

### **LE PARADIS D'ARTHUR**

**Luc Beauchamp**, director

50 min. CANADA, 2006

<http://www.leparadisdarthur.com>

Lyrical, impressionistic, poetic, sometimes chaotic, Arthur's Paradise is anything but a conventional film. In a daring and unsettling step Luc Beauchamp proposes an unique film experience that is part documentary and part fiction with music acting as the only dialogue. Every morning, Arthur gets up and feeds the animals on his farm, to the haunting voice of opera singer Victoria Rossellini. On this particular morning, Arthur's favourite record has disappeared, the pigs are on a hunger strike and Arthur wonders how he will ever enjoy life again. Arthur's Paradise introduces us to the character of a farmer, played by a real farmer, and to a bunch of pigs with a talent for comedy. With plenty of wit and humour, this rural neo-thriller conveys us to the discovery of this strange and fragile world where music can sometimes play a strong and unexpected role...

## **THE LINE**

**Michael Adante**, director

97 min. AUSTRALIA, 2007

<http://www.theline-film.com>

Cast: David Barry

Amidst a volatile underworld, a member of an Asian crime family is brutally murdered in cold blood. To prevent a gang war, recently promoted detective, James Jewel is teamed with rogue undercover cop, Mike Calis. Against the clock, the officers must unravel the truth behind the killing. The deeper they delve, the greater the web of deceit grows.

## **MAN FROM EARTH**

**Richard Schenkman**, director

96 min. USA, 2006

**Cast:** Ellen Crawford, William Katt, Richard Riehle, David Lee Smith, Tony Todd, John Billingsley, Annika Peterson

Professor John Oldman unexpectedly announces his resignation from the University which he teaches at. Curious as to why his friends start to fish for details and John tells them that he is immortal and cannot stay in one place for more than ten years without his secret being discovered. From the pen of legendary writer, Jerome Bixby.

### **The Backstory to "Man From Earth":**

The concept of immortality is rich terrain for a writer's imagination. But late screenwriter Jerome Bixby couldn't have known just how personally he would embrace the extension of life beyond death.

Although he died in 1998, Bixby's final screenplay, "The Man From Earth," has been turned into a film by writer-director Richard Schenkman ("The Pompatus of Love"), and it will screen at Comic-Con on Saturday. It's a perfect venue for Bixby's brand of philosophical sci-fi.

A feature writer in the 1950s ("It! The Terror From Beyond Space"), Bixby gained acclaim in the 1960s for writing episodes of "The Twilight Zone," "Fantastic Voyage" and the original "Star Trek." His "Mirror, Mirror" teleplay, about an alternate reality for Spock and Co., solidified his legacy in "Trek" lore because the seminal idea became a recurring part of subsequent series spinoffs.

By the late '90s, he was in his mid-70s and felt mortality creeping in. So he finally began developing an idea he first had 50 years earlier about a thirtysomething college history professor named John Oldman who claims to friends and university colleagues that he is actually 14,000 years old.

As he lay dying, Bixby dictated the rest of the feature screenplay to his son, Emerson, a screenwriter himself ("Last Dance"). Emerson dutifully transcribed his father's ideas and, after his death, gave the script to Schenkman to direct on a \$200,000 micro-budget. Anchor Bay Entertainment acquired the movie for distribution on DVD in the fall.

"The movie definitely provokes discussions, on a lot of levels," Schenkman says. "You just sit there and think, 'What would I ask him? If a guy I knew claimed to be 14,000 years old, and has met all these amazing people, what would I want to know?"

## **THE MEMORY THIEF**

Gil Kofman, director

94 min. USA, 2007

Cast: Mark Webber andd Rachel Mine

The story of Lukas - an aimless, young man in contemporary L.A. who buries thoughts of his own past in the humdrum routine of a tollbooth clerk. A chance encounter with a Holocaust survivor suddenly brings into focus a world and an identity he embraces with frightening intensity - the victimized Jews of World War II. As he begins to enthusiastically act out his newfound obsession, Lukas discovers that survivor's guilt isn't just for the Jews anymore. *THE MEMORY THIEF* is a mesmerizing, audacious psychological thriller in the tradition of *TAXIDRIVER*.

### **NETHERBEAST INCORPORATED**

**Dean Ronalds**, director

90 min. USA, 2007

<http://www.netherbeast.com>

Cast: Darrell Hammond, Judd Nelson, Dave Foley, Jason Mewes, Steve Burns, Amy Davidson and Robert Wagner

A quirky twist on the vampire tale, set in modern day corporate America. Employees of Berm-Tech Industries, Inc. have kept the family secret for a long time. For years it has been business as usual, until the top vampire in charge contracts a dreaded disease and invites the first humans to work in the office in more than a century. Soon the new employees discover that some of their associates are not what they appear to be, especially the dead one in the cubicle with a wooden stake through his heart.

### **PARTITION**

**Vic Sarin**, director

116 min. CANADA/INDIA, 2006

<http://www.partitionthemovie.com>

US PREMIERE

Cast: Neve Campbell, Kristin Kreuk, Jimi Mistry and Madhur Jaffrey

India, 1947, in the last days of the British Raj, a way of life is coming to an end. Intertwining cultures are forced to separate. As *PARTITION* divides a nation, two lives are brought together in a profound and sweeping story that reveals the tenderness of the human heart in the most violent of times. Gian and Naseem are a latter-day Romeo and Juliet. With the partition of India and Pakistan sparking bloodshed between Sikhs and Muslims, their respective people might be mortal enemies, but Gian and Naseem are determined to follow their hearts. As their love flourishes and eventually finds acceptance in Gian's village, the search for Naseem's family goes on, and a brief visit to see her family in Pakistan becomes a kind of imprisonment for Naseem, as her brothers and mother refuse to let her return to India. Gian sets off on a journey across a land whose wounds are still raw, hoping against hope that he can bring home peace and harmony.

### **SOMETHING BENEATH**

David Winning, director

91 min. CANADA, 2007

Cast: **Kevin Sorbo**

US PREMIERE

Just under your feet lurks an evil so deadly, so intelligent, it's scary. The attendees of an ecological summit are about to discover a bigger problem than global warming.

### **SUFFERING MAN'S CHARITY**

**Alan Cumming**, Director

92 min. USA, 2007

Cast: Alan Cumming, David Boreanaz, Anne Heche, Carrie Fisher, Karen Black, Henry Thomas, Jane Lynch

John Vandermark (ALAN CUMMING) has taken in a struggling writer, Sebastian St. Germain (DAVID BOREANAZ) who overstays his welcome. When John discovers that Sebastian has simply been using him, he turns the tables on his young tenant in an effort to make him work off his rent debt. Sebastian accidentally dies in the process, and John tries to make it up to him by helping get his book published posthumously. When the book is published, John can't help but take credit for the work of genius... and Sebastian comes back to haunt him.

### **TAKE**

**Charles Oliver**, Director

99 min. USA, 2007

'Take' occurs over two days - one day in the present and one day in the past. Ana (Minnie Driver) drives through the desert to witness the execution of Saul (Jeremy Renner), the stranger who destroyed her life so many years ago. Saul waits out the final hours of his life. Both are caught in the memory of the day when their lives crossed paths and changed forever. Years earlier, Saul is out of a job, out of money, and out of time to pay his debts. Ana, with her young son, tries to work out her uncertain future. It only takes a moment for their lives to collide and become permanently intertwined.

### **TALES OF RAIN AND MAGIC // SHUI YU TONGHUA**

Director: Sun Xiaoru

90 min. China, 2007

Cast: Xiaoshuang Yu, Pengfei Zhang, Caiping Wang

#### **US PREMIERE**

The story of a young girl's coming of age, and of the psychological and psychological changes that she encounters along the way to adulthood.

### **THESE FOOLISH THINGS**

Julia Taylor-Stanley, director

107 min. United Kingdom, 2005

Cast: Anjelica Huston, Diana Shaw, Lauren Bacall, Terence Stamp and David Leon  
An affectionate story which follows the fortunes of Diana (Zoe Tapper), a young ingénue who comes to 1930's London to try to make it as an actress. She meets and falls in love with Robin (David Leon) an aspiring playwright who is trying to secure backing from eccentric Broadway angel investor Lottie Osgood (Anjelica Huston). She agrees to produce his play, much to the chagrin of the villains of the piece, the dastardly and impossibly handsome matinee idol Douglas Middleton (Mark Umbers) and Diana's cousin, Garstin (Leo Bill) a bitter, runt of a man intent on causing trouble. The supporting players become embroiled in the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune as they try to protect the innocents abroad. Baker (Terence Stamp), the effusive and sarcastic piano playing butler, the love rival, Christopher Lovell (Andrew Lincoln) and Diana's fairy Godmother Aunt Ada (Hayden Gwynne) give heartwarming and hilarious performances against the backdrop of world on the brink of war.

### **TRANSFORMATIONS**

**Javier Molina**, director

100 min. USA, 2006

Cast: Kenneth Browning, James Clark and Joe Bartolotta

A fateful encounter between three friends and a suburban teen leads to a revenge-fueled scheme to oust a menacing local drug dealer. But as the scheme unfolds, their plans go awry, and things grow more intense and violent with every murder the friends leave in their wake. They must choose whether to embrace the world of sex, drugs, and

violence that surrounds them, or to rise above it. With its gritty, documentary feel, Transformations offers an honest, non-judgmental look at the true nature of crime and violence in the inner city.

### **WHO LOVES THE SUN**

**Matt Bissonnette**, director

94 min. Canada, 2006

<http://www.wholovesthesun.com>

Will Morrison (LUKAS HAAS) and Daniel Bloom (ADAM SCOTT) were the best of friends. They grew up together. Went to the same schools. Liked the same records. Loved the same girls. Daniel was Will's best man at his wedding to Maggie Claire (MOLLY PARKER). Then one day Will disappeared without a word. Half a decade later he re-surfaces and sets off a tsunami of unforeseeable events. WHO LOVES THE SUN is a delightfully witty character comedy from director Matt Bissonnette, featuring perfectly pitched performances, a great soundtrack from Portastatic, songs from Silver Jews, and some hilariously realistic bad fighting.

### **VANAJA**

**Rajnish Domalpalli**, director

111 min. India/USA, 2006

<http://www.vanajathefilm.com>

Cast: Bhavani Renukunta, Karan Singh, Mamatha Bhukya and Ramachandriah Marikanti  
Vanaja, the 15 year old daughter of a financially troubled fisherman goes to work in the local landlady's house in hopes of learning Kuchipudi dance. She does well, but when the Landlady's son returns from the US, what begins as innocent sexual chemistry turns ugly, ending in a rape - a rape of a minor. Set in rural South India, a place where social barriers are built stronger than ancient fort walls, the film explores the chasm that divides classes as a young girl struggles to come of age.

### **FROM THE VAULTS:**

#### **"Speedy" directed by Harold Lloyd (1928)**

Featuring a live score by the Alloy Orchestra. Speedy is Lloyd's last silent film and certainly one of his best. See why Lloyd was more popular than even Chaplain and Keaton at the end of the silent era. This fast paced dramatic comedy, shot in the streets of New York (Lower Manhattan—the Tribeca area) explores the theme of modernization, pitting the last horse drawn trolley in the city, against the evil forces of the transit monopoly.

#### **"Mary Poppins" directed by Robert Stevenson (1964)**

"You never need a reason, never need a rhyme," to join in and step-in-time to the Sing-Along Mary Poppins brought to musical life by the award-winning score of Richard and Robert Sherman. The classic and beloved film stars film icon, Julie Andrews. Follow the adventures of little Jane and Michael Banks, wide-eyed and untidy, as they place their own unique ad for a very special nanny—and spit spot—we're off on a jolly holiday full of tea parties on the ceiling, horse races through pavement pictures, and of course the biggest word you ever heard.

#### **"Viva Las Vegas" directed by George Sidney (1964)**

Lucky Jackson arrives in town with his car literally in tow ready for the first Las Vegas Grand Prix - once he has the money to buy an engine. He gets the cash easily enough but mislays it when the pretty swimming pool manageress takes his mind off things. It seems he will lose both race and girl, problems made more difficult by rivalry from Elmo Mancini, fellow racer and womaniser. Perhaps some singing will help.



**Principal Cast:** Elvis Presley and Ann-Margret

**“Jailhouse Rocks” directed by Richard Thorpe (1957)**

Vince Everett is serving a one-year jail sentence for manslaughter. While in the big house, his cellmate, a former country singer, introduces him to the record business. Everett takes to it so well that he decides to become a singer when he gets out. However, he is quickly disillusioned by the record business. But with the help of a new friend, he decides to form his own label, and soon becomes an overnight sensation. But when he becomes a superstar, will his desire for fame and money cause him to forget the people who got him there?

## **DOCUMENTARIES**

**BEEN DOWN THAT MUDDY ROAD: THE LEGEND OF JOE BARRY**

Carol Carimi Acutt, director

70min. USA, 2006

Joe Barry. The name is synonymous with legendary rock and roll. And bad behavior. Few know the tortured man behind the music, who struggled with personal and professional demons, giving up on music several times to pursue careers as diverse as pimp, preacher and mercenary. He threw punches and received them, shot others and got shot, was bitten by the snake and then spread the Word of God. But he always returned to his roots - the bayou country of Southern Louisiana. This documentary weaves the stories of his songs into the colorful tapestry of a remarkable life. It transports you back in time to a place that is gone forever - the richly-colorful 1950's and 60's music scene of South Louisiana and Southeast Texas.

**BLACK, WHITE + GRAY**

James Crump, director

77 min. USA 2007

**[www.blackwhitegray.com](http://www.blackwhitegray.com)**

In the '70s and '80s, the relationship between legendary curator Sam Wagstaff, photographer Robert Mapplethorpe and musician/poet Patti Smith was at the epicenter of New York's revolutionary art scene. This engrossing documentary features interviews with Smith and a bevy of art world luminaries including Dominick Dunne, Richard Tuttle, Eugenia Parry and Ralph Gibson.

Two burgeoning artists—both of whom would become seminal icons in their field—once shared a loft apartment on West 23rd Street near the famous Chelsea Hotel. Before Patti Smith released her 1975 landmark debut album *Horses*, and Robert Mapplethorpe's photography was causing national debates about public arts funding, the two of them formed a unique troika with legendary curator and collector Sam Wagstaff. With this engrossing documentary, writer and curator James Crump makes a triumphant directorial debut by painting an illustrious portrait of the complex ties between these three visionaries. As the only one of them still living, Patti Smith, along with such luminaries as Dominick Dunne, Richard Tuttle, Eugenia Parry, Timothy Greenfield-Sanders and Ralph Gibson, reminisce about a time when CBGB's, Studio 54 and the Meatpacking District (where a gay/S&M underworld had emerged) all were thriving. Poignant insights illuminate particularly the seminal relationship between Wagstaff and Mapplethorpe—lovers and catalysts for each other. Wagstaff was already a major figure in the art world when he met Mapplethorpe, having curated nationally recognized exhibits during his tenure at both Hartford's Wadsworth Athenaeum and Detroit's Institute of Fine Arts. He became the preeminent collector of photography at a time when photography had yet

to be recognized as an artistic commodity, and was also the central force in the meteoric rise of Mapplethorpe's career. Crump meticulously illustrates the varied sides of these two enigmatic figures, and their close bond with Patti Smith, and arranges the pieces of this film—a story of love, friendship and personal transformation—into a carefully curated whole.

## **BORDER**

**Chris Burgard, Director**

**104 min. USA, 2006**

Filmmaker and family man Chris Burgard has his concerns about the porous nature of the borders of the United States. Living in canyon country just outside of Los Angeles, California, he witnesses first-hand the effect of the influx of people entering the country through illegal methods – and how it may influence his son and daughter as they grow up. He is also frightened by the possibility of people who may not simply want to make money to support their families or better their lives, but to intentionally cause harm to his neighbors, friends, and family.

Chris was discouraged that the federal government was not stepping up to enforce the border. Then, a group of similarly concerned citizens banded together to assist the undermanned Border Patrol by keeping vigil on the border and reporting any suspicious or illegal activity. This group labeled themselves as The Minuteman Civil Defense Corps. Others, including President Bush, labeled them as vigilantes.

With only the media to depend on for information – questionable at best, bipolar at worst – Chris made the decision to find out the facts for himself. Armed with portable cameras and a mobile home, Chris and his dog ventured east along the border, documenting the journey so that others could benefit from his research.

Along the journey, Chris talks with The Minuteman members themselves and bears witness to their activities in an attempt to deny or confirm the “vigilante” rumors. He sits with the politicians and the activists. But, most importantly, he talks with those whose views are most significant – the people, the Everyman: Citizens of the United States, Mexico, and elsewhere.

## **BRAGGING RIGHTS**

**Sonia Gonzalez, Director**

**57 min. USA, 2006**

BRAGGING RIGHTS is an hour-long video documentary that chronicles how the New York City game of stickball has developed leadership, mended racial tension, and created lifelong friendships throughout its long and vibrant history.

Stickball has been played in the streets of New York City since the early 1920's and is known as 'the poor man's baseball.' Historically played with stolen broomsticks and sometimes using a hydrant as third base, stickball is the ultimate sport that improvises much with very little. The story of stickball is told through interviews, archival footage and through the game itself. Throughout its history, stickball has been a place for men to process through difficult emotions, such as racism, recovery from drug abuse, losing players to 9/11 and devising ways to preserve the game as their neighborhoods become increasingly gentrified, squeezing them out. Today, the Old Timers are challenged by the younger players who buck tradition. The lone woman in the game, only wanting to play the game her father taught her, challenges gender in male-dominated sports. Stickball

acts as a character within the piece, much like a feisty old man: a living, vibrant remnant of New York City history that refuses to be forgotten in an ever-changing landscape.

BRAGGING RIGHTS examines the struggle and healing of a community through sports. The players strive to push stickball beyond neighborhood nostalgia and into a revered cultural practice.

### **BUTTS OUT**

**Sherief Elkatsha**, director

58 min. USA, 2006

<http://www.KatshaFilms.com>

He has chain smoked, smoked socially, smoked only when drinking, only after dark. He's bought them, bummed them, rolled his own. Cut down, chewed the gum, worn the patch, been hypnotized, and tried cold turkey. He's quit...and inevitably he's quit quitting. Filmmaker Sherief Elkatsha has been smoking cigarettes for 11 years, and for 11 years he's tried to stop. Frustrated with the endless cycle, he found comfort and inspiration in documenting fellow smokers engaged in the same battle. The result? "Butts Out," a documentary film following a cast of characters over 3 years, in their difficult and often comical struggles to kick the habit. Sherief takes us deep inside their smoke-filled world, where he too tries to beat the urges, stay strong, and ultimately...be free. The faces may be different, but the story remains the same. The characters are bonded by their desperate need to light up - and their equally desperate need to quit. All will try to quit. Some will succeed, others will fail. "Butts Out." will take you into their world where every day is a battle between quitting, and keeping the habit they've grown to love...and hate.

### **CHUAN YUE GAO YUAN (Across the Plateau)**

**Paul Liu, Zhang Zeming**, Directors

95 min. Australia, China, 2007

The extraordinary story of seven Chinese men and women, all of them retired, from different backgrounds and life experiences who come together to form a cycling team. They take an extraordinary journey from the industrial city of Lanzhou in north-west China, across the Tanggula Mountain and Tibetan plateau to Lhasa and finally to the Everest Base Camp. The whole journey is 3,100 kilometres and takes the cyclists across five mountains with altitudes of over 5,200 metres. After conquering countless difficulties, they eventually realise their long-cherished dream, to cross the Roof of the World on bicycles.

### **DALAI LAMA RENAISSANCE**

**Khashyar Darvich**, director

80 min. USA 2007

Narrated by Harrison Ford

Forty of the world's most innovative thinkers travel to India in the Himalayan Mountains to meet with the Dalai Lama to solve many of the world's problems. What happened was surprising and unexpected.

### **THE DHAMMA BROTHERS**

**Andrew Kukura**, director,

76 min. USA, 2006

#### **World Premiere**

East meets West in the Deep South. Behind high security towers and a double row of barbed wire and electrical fence, dwells a host of convicts who will never see the light of day. But for some of these men, a spark was ignited, and an overcrowded maximum-

security prison is forever changed by the influence of an ancient meditation program. The Dhamma Brothers tells a dramatic tale of human potential and transformation as it closely documents the stories of 36 prison inmates who enter into an arduous and intensive Vipassana meditation program. It challenges assumptions about the nature of prisons as places of punishment rather than rehabilitation and raises the question: is it possible for these men, some of whom have committed horrendous crimes, to change?

### **ELECTION DAY**

**Katy Chevigny**, director

min. USA, 2007

Election Day follows a dozen voters over a single day—November 2, 2004—from dawn until long past midnight. An ex-felon in New York votes for the first time in his life at age 50, a factory worker in Oklahoma debates gay marriage with his co-workers, and a frenzied pollworker in Ohio tries to maintain her sanity amidst chaotic lines of voters. While the mainstream media focuses on "red states" vs. "blue states," Election Day moves beyond the horseshoe to look at the stories of the electorate itself. Through scenes that are humorous, outrageous, and eye opening, a day that begins with a profound sense of hope gives way to an unsettling view of American democracy.

### **ESCAPE FROM SUBURBIA: BEYOND THE AMERICAN DREAM**

Gregory Greene, director

95 min. CANADA, 2007

#### **US PREMIERE**

Suburbia, and all its promises, has become the American Dream — a lifestyle predicated on the dwindling availability of cheap and abundant oil. In Escape from Suburbia, director Gregory Greene introduces three engaging characters and a small town who move us from the realm of theory to the real world where an emerging movement of citizen's groups is confronting our addiction to oil with vision and courage. Escape from Suburbia is a wake-up call that challenges the illusion of never-ending growth and examines alternatives for a more sustainable society in the 21st century and beyond.

### **FIGHTER - a documentary**

**Pericles Lewnes**, Director

60 min. USA, 2006

With unprecedented access behind the scenes, FIGHTER takes an irreverent yet brutally honest look at the world of Reality fighters from their own perspective, through tournaments, training, and daily lives.

From gentle giant Randy 'The Natural' Couture attempting to re-gain the Ultimate Fighting Championship's heavyweight crown to Victoria Schiltz winning inspiration from her boyfriend/manager's ringside cheers, World Cup gold medalist and training guru Rico Chiapparelli's analysis of what makes a great fighter to a first-hand look at what it's like to step into the octagon for the first time, FIGHTER deftly captures the skill, dedication, rivalry, camaraderie, and tremendous mutual respect among our country's 'ultimate' athletes.

### **FROM THE 50 YARD LINE**

Doug Lantz, director

108 min. USA 2007

#### **World Premiere**

The film "From the 50 Yard Line" presents the football field not only as a sports venue but also as a stage for the marching band. The viewer goes on an exciting adventure through band camp, auditions, the marching season, and the regional and national competitions in 2006. You see the great rewards of disciplined practice, the overlooked technical artistry of the group endeavor, and the important life changing effects of instrumental music education. Another layer delves into the misconceptions about marching band, showing band nerds in a whole new light. The primary vehicle to tell the story is the Centerville (Ohio) High School marching band from suburban Dayton, the 1992 Grand National Champions. Realizing that not all bands have reached this pinnacle yet, the film also portrays the band at Fairfax High School in Los Angeles, which has just recently started up again after being silenced for 18 years due to music budget cuts. One wonders what music was lost forever during the silent years at schools nationwide in the same budget predicament. The film tells the memorable story of music education, complete with the never-before seen emotional aspects of the experience. The students at the schools are wonderful subjects and their personal stories genuine and compelling. Nowhere else do you see hundreds of teenagers working together in such unison and commitment for one common goal. The film is part music video, part reality show, part drama, and full-on entertainment.

### **GOD ONLY KNOWS: SAME SEX MARRIAGE**

**Brent Kawchuk**, director

63 min. CANADA, 2005

#### **US Premiere**

In the film *God Only Knows: Same-Sex Marriage*, the deeply personal values of a gay minister and a religious-right family man collide when they agree to exchange lives to debate same-sex marriage in a fascinating television documentary experiment. From conservative Alberta beef country, to the heart of Vancouver's gay community; these men move into each others homes and lives and attempt to hang on to their belief systems while facing off with the opposing social networks.

Dylan Crozier is a church pastor who ministers to a West Vancouver gay community. He and his partner, Vinnie Chiodo live together and firmly believe in the right of same-sex people to marry. Craig Chandler is CEO of the Concerned Christian Coalition, a lobby group dedicated to furthering the values of the socially conservative and religious right. Craig and his wife Julie live in Calgary with their two children.

Over the course of two weeks, Dylan and Craig enter each other's worlds and argue their viewpoints on same-sex marriage with family, friends and politicians. It's a life-altering experience that bounces both men clear out of their comfort zones and into every emotional facet of the human condition. The result is fascinating, hilarious, and so emotionally-charged it threatens to topple the domestic bliss of at least one household.

### **HALF LIFE: A JOURNEY TO CHERNOBYL**

David Bickerstaff, director

40 min. UNITED KINGDOM, 2006

On April 26th, 1986, reactor four at Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant explodes, sending an enormous radioactive cloud over northern Ukraine and neighbouring Belarus. The danger is not immediately communicated and the local population go about their business as usual. May Day celebrations begin, children play, and the residents of Pripjat, the town built to house the workers at Chernobyl, marvel at the spectacular fire raging at the reactor. After three days, an area the size of England becomes contaminated with radioactive dust, creating a 'zone' of contaminated land. Based on Mario Petrucci's

award-winning book-length poem for Chernobyl, this film tells the story of the people who dealt with the world's worst nuclear disaster at ground level: the fire-fighters, the soldiers, the 'liquidators' and their families.

### **HELL ON WHEELS**

**Bob Ray**, Director

89 min. USA, 2007

Hell on Wheels takes a from-the-trenches look at the dizzying clash of athleticism, exhibitionism, egos, politics and business that is modern-era roller derby. A group of hard-hitting Texas women overcome myriad obstacles in resurrecting and revamping the sport, only to find internal strife ripping the fledgling organization apart. Two leagues emerge from the clash, and what follows ignites an international roller derby revival.

### **HEART OF A SOUL SURFER: THE BETHANY HAMILTON DOCUMENTARY**

**Becky Baumgartner**, director

32 min. USA, 2007

Filmed in Australia, Germany, Indonesia, Samoa, Thailand, U S A

Bethany Hamilton, a 13-year-old girl destined for a successful surfing career, lost her arm to a 14-foot tiger shark on Oct. 31, 2003. The attack didn't cause this determined Soul Surfer to give up. Instead, it compelled her to discover her purpose in life as she overcame the loss of her arm and got back on the board just three weeks later.

Heart of a Soul Surfer digs deep into the heart of Bethany's abiding faith in God, and tackles difficult questions such as 'Why does God allow bad things to happen in our lives?' It features exclusive surf & family footage of Bethany before & after the attack, including

Bethany's first attempts at surfing with one arm, as well as her winning the 2005 NSSA National Surfing Championship just 19 months later. Bethany's story has been told by many different people around the world, but this is the first time she and her family have been able to share it from their heart and perspective.

This is a powerful, true story that you won't want to miss!

### **INCEST A FAMILY TRAGEDY**

**Edward Blackoff**, director

96 min. USA, 2006

An intense exploration of the secret world of child sexual molestation by family members and trusted friends. Hear for the first time the truth of how this crime is done and what motivates this violation. All details directly from the mouths of the actual offenders who are undisguised and unscripted. Learn how this abuse actually does to those violated and how their lives are changed forever directly from the survivors themselves. The history of incest is detailed along with how lawmakers are creating laws that make things worse and leave children even more exposed and less protected. There are solutions if we can find the courage, compassion and commitment to better protect our children and their future.

### **IN DREAMS AWAKE**

**Ed Commons**, director

81 min. USA 2006

He painted Elvis and Jonas Salk, screaming angels and talking cows, drag queens and cowboys, landscapes lit by shooting stars, mammoth hearts beating wildly in the sky,

athletes dancing cheek to cheek, frenzied fundamentalists and scenes of sacred solitude. The paintings themselves seem to take a compulsively raucous delight in telling stories of enchantment and wonder and love.

Fearing that the organized efforts of the religious right would result in a mindless intolerant world, many of his paintings are really political cartoons that portray a fervent respect for the first amendment.

In *Dreams Awake* is the heartfelt story of William Joseph Petrie, a man loved by a myriad of friends and family who, in their candid interviews, weave the rich story of this prolific painter, tobacco farmer, political activist and passionate gay man living in the rural bluegrass of Kentucky. It is a vivid look at the man, his work and the impact his life and art continue to have. It is a peek at where a generation has been and how the collective memories of a group, held together by one common thread, create a lasting legacy and tribute to their friend, brother, uncle, lover....artist.

### **LAST CALL AT THE GLADSTONE HOTEL**

Derreck Roemer, director

65 min. CANADA, 2007

US PREMIERE

When aggressive developers buy a flophouse hotel to turn it into a trendy hot spot, long-time staff and residents begin a five-year struggle to survive. Shot over five years in a cinema direct style, this film is an intimate and compelling portrait of the effects of urban renewal upon the poor, revealing the unintentional roles we all play in the process of gentrification.

### **LOVE AND MARRIAGE**

Robert Wagner, director

50 min. USA, 2007

The pros and cons of gay marriage. An in depth look at the issue and at those who are living without the rights of marriage. Is gay marriage THE civil rights issue of our time or is it merely a right denied to the gay community that will never become the norm?

### **MISSISSIPPI SON**

Don Wilson, director

95 min. USA 2007

Born and raised on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Emmy award winning filmmaker Don Wilson is furious. Nearly two years after Hurricane Katrina, the coast is still being ignored as the media continues to focus on New Orleans. FEMA and SBA have not come through, and the insurance companies couldn't care less. In *Mississippi Son*, Wilson returns to his homeland to document life on the coast after the storm and to give his people a voice in the darkness.

### **THE MODEL PRISONERS**

David Notman-Watt, director

52 min. BRAZIL, 2007

US PREMIERE

Rio de Janeiro is home to over four-thousand female prisoners serving time for armed robbery, kidnapping, drug trafficking and murder. Over five hundred are held in Talavera Bruce Womens Penal Institute, Brazil's largest. We have unrestricted, exclusive access to the prison in the weeks leading up to 'The Miss Penitentiary' beauty pageant, the search for Brazil's most beautiful prisoner. From their cells to the exercise yard, the kitchens to

solitary confinement, we hear the contestant's stories. For many being part of 'Miss Penitentiary' is the most important event of their lives - a reason to stay alive.

### **MR. DIAL HAS SOMETHING TO SAY**

**Celia Carey**, director

60 min. USA, 2007

<http://www.aptv.org/as/mrdial>

Southern African-American visual art is the lesser-known 'sibling' of jazz and the blues. Like the music, this improvisational form has influenced many now-famous white American artists. But unlike the musicians, the visual artists have not received recognition for their historical impact on American culture. Why? This one-hour high-definition documentary film explores the topic of racism and classism in the elite world of the American art museums, schools and galleries, focusing on the experiences of Thornton Dial--79-year-old 'self-taught' artist from Alabama.

### **NA KAMALEI: THE MEN OF HULA**

**Lisette Marie Flanary**, Director

57 min. USA, 2006

An engaging documentary created with grace, heart and a healthy dose of history, NA KAMALEI: THE MEN OF HULA follows the journey of Hawaii's oldest all-male hula group to the prestigious Merrie Monarch Festival in 2005. Their journey gains additional significance as it marks the 30th anniversary of the group's existence. Not only does the film explore major cultural and gender stereotypes faced by original members of the male Halau Na Kamalei, it also illuminates the historical factors that shaped these stereotypes. Having led the Halau since its inception in 1975 (and widely known for his prolific career in Hawaiian music), Robert Camizero played a major role in the '70s resurgence of Hawaiian cultural pride, one that also kick-started the reclamation of lost masculinity in hula. It is Camizero's outspoken personality, along with the sincere passion demonstrated by the group's "hula brothers," that makes this film a pleasure to watch. Several members have been with the Halau for the entire 30 years, and they and their families express through candid interviews how the dance has defined their lives. Other highlights include extensive footage of the Halau Na Kamalei practicing and their powerful performance at the 2005 Merrie Monarch Festival. Winner of the Hawaii Film Festival's Audience Award for Best Documentary, NA KAMALEI: THE MEN OF HULA offers a fascinating insight into the historical significance of one of Hawaii's most well-known, yet misunderstood traditions.

### **NO BIGGER THAN A MINUTE**

Steven Delano, director

52 min. USA, 2006

Few people ever meet a dwarf face-to-face. In this personal journey, dwarf documentary filmmaker Steven Delano shows firsthand how a genetic mutation marks a person for life. He reveals the isolation of his school age years, his 'ludicrous' strategies to fit in, as well as some mixed blessings of dwarfism. In 'No Bigger Than A Minute,' Delano exercises his license of stature and an irreverent sense of humor to confront head-on conventional misperceptions about dwarfs. From growing up a 'freak' - a form of enforced celebrity - to finally accepting and asserting his deviance, Delano reveals the delightful, fulfilling and sometimes shocking realities that define his tip-toe existence. He further contemplates a future where genetic engineering may eliminate 'people of difference' altogether.

### **RED WITHOUT BLUE**



**Brooke Sebold**, co-director

74 min. USA 2006

In 1983, identical twins Mark and Alexander Farley were born minutes apart in Big Sky country. The twins' early lives were quintessential by-products of their all-American family: picture perfect holidays, a second home by the lake, supportive parents cheering them on. By the time they were 14, their parents had divorced, they had come out as gay, and a joint suicide attempt precipitated a forced separation of Mark and Alex for two and half years.

Today, Mark is attending art school in San Francisco, and Alex is living as a woman named Clair in New York. RED WITHOUT BLUE explodes our notions of self-hood and sexual identity through its deeply personal look at the unique and unconventional relationship between Mark and Clair as they mature into adulthood.

Extensive interviews with each twin candidly depicts the difficulties of growing up gay in Montana, and the boundaries crossed as drugs and sexual experimentation spiraled out of control. Lyrical vignettes illustrate these darker periods of the twins' adolescence through hauntingly beautiful, manipulated home-movies, family photographs, and experimental sequences shot on super-8 film. RWB examines the singular bond that the twins shared as children, the hardships they bore, and Mark's evolving perspective now that his identical twin ceases to be identical. Through the power of Mark's voice we hear the story of his family's redemption from a dark past, and ultimately, its revival to the present.

### **SOLDIERS OF CONSCIENCE**

**Gary Weimberg, Catherine Ryan**, directors

(86 min. USA, 2007

To kill or not to kill? For soldiers, this is not an abstract question of philosophy. It is a personal, immediate and bloody responsibility. How do they, as soldiers and as human beings, make life and death decisions that they will never be able to forget or undo?

SOLDIERS OF CONSCIENCE is a documentary about US soldiers wrestling with the profound question of the morality of killing in war; set during the current conflict in Iraq. SOLDIERS OF CONSCIENCE is a journey into how US soldiers are trained to kill - and a portrait of some who have chosen not to.

### **'SOME KIND OF FUNNY PORTO RICAN?': A CAPE VERDEAN AMERICAN STORY**

**Claire Andrade-Watkins**, director

83m, USA, 2006

Cape Verdean American Story, vividly portrays the largely unknown story of the Cape Verdean community in the Fox Point section of Providence, Rhode Island. The story begins in the early 1900's with the first wave of immigrants from the Cape Verde Islands, a former Portuguese colony, stepping off the small packet ships in the ports of Providence and New Bedford to fill the need for cheap labor in New England's waterfronts, textile mills, factories, and cranberry bogs. Urban renewal and gentrification in the 1970s destroyed the tight knit community

### **SUICIDE KILLERS**

**Pierre Rehov**, Director

80 min. France, Israel, U S A, 2007

This film examines the psychopathology of suicide bombers, taking us on a disturbing journey deep into a culture that few can comprehend, interviewing families of those who

have 'martyred' themselves, as well as those whose efforts have been thwarted and in a dramatic new twist, a 'bomber on the loose' has been captured through Rehov's lens!

### **TELL**

**Tom Murray**, director

USA, 2007, 83 min, Video

Documentarian Tom Murray (the maker of last year's *Almost Myself*) returns to NewFest with another timely film exploring the US military's shameful "don't ask, don't tell" policy. As in his previous films, Murray puts a human face to the issue by interviewing a diverse range of LGBT would-be soldiers and veterans, as well as representatives from organizations fighting for an end to "don't ask, don't tell," and for equal treatment and respect to those who have already proudly served. With no real end in sight to the US's current military involvement abroad, *Tell* adds to the debate by questioning why willing and able potential recruits are kept from serving based on institutionalized discriminatory practices.

### **THE TIMES WERE NEVER SO BAD: THE LIFE OF ANDRE DUBUS**

**Edward J. Delaney**, director

88 min. USA, 2007

#### **World Premiere**

Andre Dubus rises to become a 'writer's writer' (his stories included those made into the films *In The Bedroom* and *We Don't Live Here Anymore*) whose stories celebrate human impulses and human tenderness as he struggles with his own demons. A tragic accident at the age of 49 forces him to re-examine his writing and whether his own life has measured up to the spirit within his own work.

### **THIS IS NOLLYWOOD**

Franco Sacchi, director

54 min. NIGERIA, 2007

#### **US PREMIERE**

The story of the Nigerian film industry, a revolution enabling Africans with few resources to tell African stories to African audiences. Despite all odds, Nigerian directors produce between 500 and 1,000 movies a year. The larger Nollywood story is intercut with the struggle of director Bond Emeruwa to complete a feature-length action film in just 9 days on the outskirts of Lagos. Armed only with a digital camera, two lights, and about \$20,000, Bond faces challenges unimaginable in Hollywood and Bollywood. Will he make it?

### **TRANTASIA**

**Jeremy Stanford**, director

88 min. USA, 2007

TRANTASIA is a no-holds-barred behind-the-scenes look at the first-ever 'World's Most Beautiful Transsexual Pageant.' With a starring role in a sensational new Vegas Revue as a high-stakes backdrop, TRANTASIA explores the intensely private and moving stories of its extraordinary contestants. Told through provocative hometown profiles and heartbreaking one-on-one interviews, the film documents the sometimes humorous, always personal journeys of these true survivors. United by common histories of hardship and persecution, these women will finally realize their diva dreams. Their ultimate triumph is a moving celebration of the human spirit.

### **THE UNION: THE BUSINESS BEHIND GETTING HIGH**

**Brett Harvey**, director

105 min. CANADA, 2007

**US PREMIERE**

BC's illegal marijuana trade industry has evolved into a business giant, dubbed by some involved as 'The Union'. Commanding upwards of \$7 billion Canadian annually, The Union's roots stretch far and wide. With up to 85% of 'BC Bud' being exported to the United States, the trade has become an international issue. Who are the players, and when do their motives become questionable? Follow filmmaker Adam Scorgie as he demystifies the underground market and brings to light how an industry can function while remaining illegal. Through growers, police officers, criminologists, economists, doctors, politicians and pop culture icons, Scorgie examines the cause and effect nature of the business behind getting high. Nobody's innocent in this exploration of an industry that may be profiting more by being illegal.

**VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE: STORIES FROM KOSOVO**

John Ealer, director

105 min. USA, 2007

**US PREMIERE**

In 1999 the United States and NATO went to war in Kosovo in an unprecedented exercise of military might to end ethnic violence. Six years later, we returned to Kosovo and found out that just because the bombs stop falling, doesn't mean there's peace. Told through the first person stories of Serbs, Albanians and Roma (Gypsies), VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE juxtaposes the scars and the tears, the nightmares and dreams of Kosovars as it portrays a society trying to build a future while inextricably bound to the past. Sometimes hopeful, sometimes tragic, yet always unnervingly honest, the struggle to make peace in Kosovo, captured eloquently in VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE, provides a remarkable window into the profound legacy of the politics of hate.

**WILL EISNER: Portrait of a Sequential Artist**

Andrew D. Cooke, director

98 min. USA, 2007

Others may be more renowned for their superhero creations, but Eisner was the godfather of the American comic book. From utilizing pictures and words to stretch the boundaries of storytelling, to innovating methods of production and publishing including the graphic novel form, Cooke's documentary presents how Eisner inspired other artists working in the field today.

He may not have created Superman, Batman or even the recently deceased Captain America, but as director Andrew D. Cooke illustrates in his informative and compelling documentary, nobody had a greater influence over the development of comic book storytelling than Will Eisner. Both writer and artist, Eisner developed the comic strip and comic book forms into a combination of art and literature, stretching the boundaries of storytelling with a medium that had previously focused on good-versus-evil superhero tales. Eisner was also a producer; he made innovations on the more than half-century-old tradition of comic book production, while always looking for new ways to use the medium for different and more serious types of stories. As a major inspiration to titans of the form-Jules Feiffer, Art Spiegelman, Frank Miller and Max Allan Collins- Eisner had a huge influence on the development of the tremendously popular graphic novel, and the film adaptations of ""Sin City,"" ""The Road to Perdition"" and ""300."" Cooke uses footage, as well as interviews with some of those who have followed in Eisner's wake, to explore the broad reach of his influence. The film also features interview footage with Eisner himself, all the more potent since this captivating man passed away in 2005. Cooke

provides us with a record of one of the most important creative men in the history of the 20th century—a man who took one of the few American-born art forms and planted the seeds that allowed it to blossom, beyond even his wildest dreams.

### **THE WONDER OF IT ALL**

**Jeffrey Roth**, Director

83 min. USA, 2007

Cast: Alan Bean, Buzz Aldrin, Charlie Duke, Edgar Mitchell, Gene Cernan, Harrison Schmitt, John Young

From 1969 to 1972 12 men on 6 Apollo missions walked on the moon. Seven Moonwalkers are interviewed in depth regarding their personal lives and the impact of their space travels on them and their families. These are intimate accounts of how these historical missions affected each man in his personal life. Each of these unique and highly capable men unfold their story from childhood to today. Captured are candid and emotional moments, as well as revealing statements about the real nature of spaceflight in the Apollo era.

### **THE YEAR OF PAPER**

**Nikki Parker, Kelly Rouse**, directors

91 min. USA, 2007

When officials began issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples in 2004, this country went to war over a word. How different is a gay marriage from a heterosexual one?

THE YEAR OF PAPER chronicles the newlywed year of three couples -lesbian, heterosexual and gay- exploring how saying "I Do" has changed their relationships. The film also follows the firestorm of debate that surrounds the very idea of marriage for same-sex couples.

## **SHORT FILMS**

### **ORCHIDS**

**Bryce Dallas Howard**, director

17 min. 2006 USA

Cast: Alfred Molina and Katherine Waterston

When a lonely young woman answers a mysterious personal ad, she discovers that love is not what she expected.

### **ROOM 10**

**Jennifer Aniston**, director

18 min. USA, 2006

Cast: Kris Kristofferson and Robin Wright Penn

Frannie is a veteran nurse with a hardened heart and a crumbling marriage. It's a typical night in the ER until an unexpected relationship with a patient challenges her to rethink her decisions and choices in life.

### **FOR THE LOVE OF GOD**

**Joe Tucker**, director

UNITED KINGDOM, 2007

Cast: Ian McKellen and Steve Coogan

### **US PREMIERE**

Graham lives with his tyrannical Mother and their pet Jackdaw in a Christian bookshop, trapped in the seedy outskirts of a decaying nowhere town. He and his Mother both love

God... but in very different ways. Will Graham consummate his unholy fantasy and can it live up to his expectations?

### **MATTERS OF LIFE AND DEATH**

**Joseph Mazello**, director

29 min. USA, 2007

Cast: David Strathairn, Rachael Leigh Cook, Joseph Mazello, and Daniel Gillies

The directorial debut of actor Joseph Mazello (Jurassic Park, Simon Birch, The River Wild) is a powerful story about three siblings struggle to maintain control of their lives after the unexpected death of their parents which thrusts them into an uncertain world of adulthood.

### **Moi**

**Yan England**, director

17 min. CANADA, 2006

Cast: Emile Mailhiot, Bianca Gervais and Linda Roy

The story of Alexis (Emile Mailhiot), a 15 year old boy. Passionate about cinema and Chaplin, he dreams of becoming a film director. For Alexis, every dream is possible. But, his life will collapse the day when, through the gaze of others, he will suddenly become aware of his reality.

### **THE HAPPIEST DAY OF HIS LIFE**

**Ursula Burton**, director

11 min. USA, 2006

Cast: Jill Eikenberry, Seymour Cassel, Harry Groener and Michael Tucker

A light-hearted story told through a colorful lens, subtly challenges gender roles and traditions with a sense of humor. Depicting a classic, traditional wedding and following the iconic scenes from typical Hollywood wedding movies like FATHER OF THE BRIDE, THE HAPPIEST DAY OF HIS LIFE reverses both gender roles and our assumptions. With a star-studded cast, this is an entertaining crowd pleaser that's politically relevant and appeals to anyone who's gotten married, thought about getting married, or ever been to a wedding.

### **FRANZ KAFKA'S INAKA ISHA**

**Koji YAMAMURA**, director

USA PREMIERE

A hapless country doctor describes with breathless urgency a nighttime summons to attend a young patient. Events soon take on a surreal aspect as "unearthly horses" transport him instantaneously to the bedside. The doctor, preoccupied with personal distractions and grievances against those he is employed to care for, fails to find what is revealed to be a vile, fatal wound. He is humiliated by the villagers, who are "always expecting the impossible from the doctor," and doomed to an endless return trip, losing everything.

### **POSTCARDS FROM THE FUTURE**

**Alan Chan**, director

38 min. USA, 2007

Cast: Robert Hughes and Cori Bright

Civilian electrical engineer Sean Everman sends 'Video Postcards' to his wife on Earth as he works to build up NASA's Moonbase. Over time, these postcards from our possible future reveal details of the grand adventure that we are about to embark on.

### **MARRYING GOD**

**Duke Johnson**, director

18 min. USA, 2006

Cast: **Alexa Vega and Ashlyn Sanchez**

In a seedy Hollywood motel where her mother works as a maid, a little girl must find the courage to confront the harsh reality of life when she discovers that nothing is quite what it seems, especially her big sister.

### **PRIVATE LIFE**

**Abbe Robinson**, director

16 min. UNITED KINGDOM, 2006

Cast: Lucy Liemann, Toby Sawyer and Andy Henderson

Yorkshire 1952. Ruth Ackroyd, an unmarried woman in her late twenties leaves the monotony of her work in a Textile mill on a Friday afternoon and secretly takes the train to Manchester (England) where she meets a man on the platform. All is not what it seems?

### **LIFE LOTTERY**

**Theresa Corrao**, director

17 min. UNITED KINGDOM, 2007

Cast: Freddie Conner, James Zager and Laura Fulton

#### **US PREMIERE**

Cecilia is wilting from the heat in her domestic hell. An apparent angel of mercy comes knocking on her door offering a ticket to the kind of life she only dreamed about. Tempted by the trappings of a powerful career and the adventures of life in the fast lane, weary Cecilia signs on the dotted line and is whisked away to begin a new life. As the pressures of the new life increase it becomes apparent that this is nothing like heaven and that her angel may have been peddling something very different indeed

### **TRES**

**Robert Weiermair, Paula Christensen, Anna Christopher**, directors

26 min. USA, 2007

Cast: Bill Mendiotta, Peter Pasco, Laura Breckenridge and Celina Zambon

Three unique short stories share the same heart... an intense but fleeting moment of emotional connection between two people; based on the poetry of acclaimed Argentinean filmmaker, Carlos Hugo Christensen.

### **SEXY THING**

**Denie Pentecost**, director

14 min. AUSTRALIA, 2006

Cast: Catherine McClements, Hanna Mangan Lawrence and Layla Tracey

On a dry suburban day, a 12 year old is caught between the conflicting worlds of family, friendship and imagination. Struggling to endure a confusing love, and longing simply to be seen, the child survives by transforming pain into beauty.

### **SLICE**

**Carmen Maria Milito**, Director

22 min. USA, 2007

Cast: Vincent Pastore, Allan Wasserman and Kathrine Narducci

A Comedy about Italian Americans where the only thing that gets 'whacked', is stereotyping.

Anthony Leone, the young film director of the smash comedy hit 'Goombah Goons', must choose between success or the values he holds dear. Obligated to direct the sequel, Anthony instead wants to make a movie about his grandparents' pizzeria in Brooklyn that will honor his heritage. With Anthony's career on the line his crazy-as-fox family steps in and through their belief in the dreams of their ancestors and the magic of intoxicatingly delicious Italian food they attempt to seduce the reluctant producer. A magical cheesecake, which years earlier in Brooklyn was used by Carmine Leone to win his wife Marie's affections, is now called upon to work its powers in Hollywood.

### **DARKNESS OF TRUTH**

**Kristian A Söderström**, director

40 min. SWEDEN, 2007

Cast: Alicia Vikander

### **US PREMIERE**

Sandra, a young female student, rents a room from Anna-Lisa – a middle-aged actress and former ballet dancer in Berlin. One day Sandra reads her landlady's diary where she expresses outright hatred towards her tenant. As their relationship has appeared good and friendly, Sandra's existence is shattered.

### **THE GRASS GROWS GREEN**

**Jesus Beltran**, Director

19 min. USA, 2006

Cast: Santiago Vasquez and Anthony Moss

THE GRASS GROWS GREEN opens when SERGEANT LOBOS, a Marine recruiter in working-class Fort Worth, TX, awakens to the news that one of his recruits has died in IRAQ. For the first time, Lobos begins to question his life as a recruiter. Wracked with guilt and mourning the loss of a young man he thought he'd saved from the familiar violence of the 'hood, Lobos attempts to clear his head of the specter of the dead recruit as he follows his daily routine. His coworker, SERGEANT WORTHY, pressures Lobos to seal the deal on another young recruit. Confronted with conflicting meanings of honor and duty, will Lobos be broken or does he have what it takes to be "one of the few"?

### **CLUB SODA**

**Paul Carafotes**, director

23 min. USA, 2007

Club Soda is a super natural fable based on true events. It is a story of the struggles that we all face when making the crucial decisions that will define who we are and the direction our lives will take. The Kid, Steve R. McQueen, moves from Boston to NY with dreams of becoming an actor. There, he is befriended by a group of barflies who all offer their own brand of advice to help the young 'Brando from Boston'. The kid steals money from the bar awakening the supernatural spirit 'James Gandolfini' which causes him to re-evaluate his life bringing him into conflict with his friends, and forcing him to make some tough choices and change.

### **BOOTH STORY**

**Edwin McGill and Kasimir Burgess**, directors/writers:

11 min. AUSTRALIA, 2006

Jim's nocturnal rhythms have kept him separate from the world almost his whole life. He longs for something important, something he has never had, family. A story of loneliness in an underground car park and one small miracle.

*Film of the Festival 2006 Raindance International Film Festival, Audience Favourite 2006 Palm Springs International Short Film Festival, Best Editing 2007 Flickerfest Short Film Festival, First Prize – Best in Festival 2007 Realm of the Senses International Film Festival.*

**TO SPITI ME TIS ELIES (House of the Olive Trees)**

**Thouly Dosios**, director

30 min. GREECE, 2006

Anna has constructed a world for herself, in which cicadas obey her signal to sing and her feelings lay suppressed under her tight grip. Her safety net unravels when Markos floats into her life. Their relationship is going to be put to the test during a trip to the seaside.

**LENS LOVE STORY**

**Sonia Whiteman**, director

15 min. AUSTRALIA, 2007

Cast: Damon Herriman and Mia Wasikowska

Len is struggling with the practicalities of day -to-day life months after his mother's death. He clings to short messages she wrote for him in a diary, one for each day. Her last cryptic instruction, taken literally by Len, sets him off on a strange and ultimately cathartic course towards new love.

**NIGHT FALLS**

**Krisztian Majdik**, director

12 min. USA, 2006

<http://www.nightfallsfilm.com>

'Night Falls' is a tale of a young seven-year boy whose child-like innocence is thrust amidst the cruelties of the Civil War. Armed with a wooden sword, the child travels into the forest to experience the world for himself. In the forest, he comes into contact with enemy soldiers created by his own imagination. He eventually tires and finds a place to sleep. The boy awakens to find retreating soldiers clawing their way through the forest. The child attempts to be their leader and experiences the impact of war firsthand. It is a tale of innocence, war and the loss of childhood.

**FLOAT**

**Kareem Mortimer**, director

35 min. Bahamas, 2007

Cast: Jonathan Murray and Stephen Williams

Every one of us needs a place of refuge, a place where we feel safe to reveal our hurt and share our joy and innermost thoughts with like-minded, empathetic companions. This place of refuge is what we call community. Now imagine this community stripped from you. Imagine these companions in your place of refuge ostracizing, victimizing, beating and threatening you because of your sexuality. Welcome to the world of Jonny Andrew, a young painter from the crowded inner city of Nassau who travels to the beautiful island of Eleuthera to clear his mind, there he meets the beautiful and sexually forward Romeo, it is on that island they form a friendship in which they teach each other valuable lessons of love, friendship, risk and freedom.