

RI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL NEWS

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RHODE ISLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES OPENING NIGHT PROGRAMMING

August 8th, 2006

The RIIFF Begins its 10th Annual Festival With a Showcase of Short Films and Dazzling Evening Events and Salute to Filmmaker Michael Corrente

PROVIDENCE, RI (July 18, 2006): Maintaining its traditional focus on the importance of short films and saluting its affiliation with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences (the Oscars), the **Rhode Island International Film Festival** (RIIFF) opens this year's fest with an eclectic and exciting array of shorts that range from funny and sensitive to the East Coast Premiere of a new animation short by the Walt Disney Studios. The Opening Night is Tuesday, August 8th with a 7:00 p.m. curtain at the historic Columbus Theatre Arts Center, 270 Broadway in Providence with a ticket price of \$15.

This year's opening screening will be bracketed before and after by two gala parties—one VIP and one public—at the Rotunda of One Citizens Plaza in downtown Providence—which will salute Rhode Island director, writer and actor, Michael Corrente who will be receiving RIIFF's annual **Creative Vision Award**. Past winners of the prestigious award have been German film director Rosa von Praunheim and Elaine Lorillard, Founder of the Newport Jazz Festival.

The VIP vibe of the Film Festival's opening reception will continue into the rest of the evening as the RIIFF staff will be rolling out the red carpet to welcome filmmakers, public, and special guests into the Columbus Theatre for the Opening Night Screenings.

From acclaimed actors like David Strathairn and Edward James Olmos to animation directing legends Roger Allers and Henry Selick, to the presentation of

the Creative Vision Award to Rhode Island's-own, director Michael Corrente, RIFF's Opening Night Gala will feature a program that is sure to dazzle.

"Our goal this year," said RIFF Executive Director, George T. Marshall, "has been to produce an opening event that will leave audiences wanting more. What better way to celebrate our 10th Anniversary than to break old molds and create an evening that we believe is daring and definitely original.

"We have done a lot of new things with our programming this year. Since RIFF is considered a "filmmaker's festival," we attempted to provide a platform for exposure to as many film artists as possible. We had a record number of entries this year—over 2,000—and from that we've selected a little more than 250 for screening throughout the week of the Festival. Many are World and United States premieres."

The Opening Night Gala for RIFF will feature 10 short films that will be screened for the first time; three will be animations.

"All three animated films come with unique pedigrees: Roger Allers directed the original 'The Lion King' for the Walt Disney Studios as well as creating the book for the Broadway musical production. He also wrote the stories for Disney's 'Aladdin,' 'The Emperor's New Groove,' and 'The Little Mermaid.' Allers directed this year's 'The Little Matchgirl,' which has its East Coast Premiere with RIFF," added Marshall.

The screening of "The Little Matchgirl" is the second Disney animated short to play at RIFF. In 2003, the Festival had the United States premiere of "Destino," a collaboration between Walt Disney and Salvadore Dali, which went on to be nominated for an Academy Award for Best Animated Short.

"Animator Henry Sellick has submitted an original short entitled 'Moongirl.' Seleck is the director of such acclaimed stop motion films, 'Tim Burton's The Nightmare Before Christmas' and 'James and the Giant Peach.'"

"Finally" said Marshall, "from New York director, Alex Weil, comes the computer generated 'One Rat Short,'" which recently won Best of Show in the Siggraph — the 33rd International Conference and Exhibition on Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques. RIFF's screening marks its Film Festival World Premiere.

"One Rat Short," written and directed by Charlex, Inc. co-founder Weil, is not just a technical marvel; the film's emotional tone, cinematography and technical realization all meld into a simple yet touching short film. Repeatedly, the two lead characters transfix our gaze with extreme close-ups, and audiences instantly wonder what they were thinking. It's the ability for viewers to clearly empathize with the main characters' desires that is one of the film's single greatest achievements.

The lead characters are rats.

Before the Opening Night Screening there will be a special **VIP Pre-Gala Reception** beginning at 5:00 p.m. at the Rotunda at One Citizens Plaza in downtown Providence. Rhode Island filmmaker Michael Corrente will be feted along with visiting filmmakers and guests. This first reception is reserved specifically for filmmakers, sponsors, press, VIP ticket holders, and special guests. VIP tickets will be available to the public for one hundred dollars per person (\$100) on a limited basis. This cost includes access to all opening night events and parties. An RSVP is requested for this specific event.

Special guests scheduled to attend this year's festival include actresses *Cicely Tyson, Tiffani Thiessen, Tori Spelling, Emma Bing, Mena Suvari*, actor *David Strathairn, Joe Pantoliano, Heather Henson*, daughter of *Jim Henson*, *Jason Priestely, Randy Spelling, Cady Huffman*, actress/singer *Lisa Zane*, composer *Andrew Chuckerman*, actor *Michael Rappaport, Adrian Grenier*, actress *Carmen Electra*, and young actor *Preston Nyman*, the star of the "Foster" who is flying in from the United Kingdom to attend the United States Premiere of his film.

After the Opening Night Screening, the public is welcome to return to the Rotunda at One Citizens Plaza for the **RIIFF Opening Night Gala Party** kicking off at 9:30 p.m. It's an open invitation to join the RIIFF Team for a night of food and fun while celebrating the Opening of the 10th Annual Rhode Island International Film Festival. Sidney Frank Importing Co. is helping the fest ring in its Anniversary with panache by providing Jagermeister, Corazon Agave Tequila, and Michael Collins Irish Whiskey. Budweiser Select courtesy of McLaughlin & Moran and two ice sculptures. Admission to the Gala Party is \$35 with tickets sold in advance and at the door. Dress is casual evening attire; but come prepared for a dazzling party!

RIIFF is the largest Film Festival in New England and one of only 60 festivals worldwide qualified for Oscar nomination by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in the Short Film Category. Celebrating the art of the short film has always been an important part of the Rhode Island International Film Festival and short films have helped it to establish a reputation for being an important Festival in its own niche outside of the standard Hollywood fare. In all, over 270 films being presented at this year's Film Festival. The opening night's program of shorts will emphasize themes of originality and love of the art of film.

The **Rhode Island International Film Festival** (RIIFF) is dedicated to the creation of opportunities for artistic interaction and exchange among independent filmmakers, directors, producers, distributors, backer, and the film-going community. Rhode Island Governor Donald Carcieri, Providence Mayor David M. Cicilline, and US Senator Jack Reed serve as honorary chairs to this year's event.

The **Rhode Island International Film Festival** is supported in part by the City of Providence, the Providence Tourism Council, the Providence Department of Arts, Culture & Tourism, Clear Channel Communications, Sony, Rule Broadcast Systems, WJAR TV 10, the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, Amtrak,

Providence Monthly, Motif Magazine, Radio Disney, FeinsteIn IMAX Providence Place, and contributions from members and community supporters.

The Flickers Arts Collaborative, an organization with 24 years of experience presenting major artistic events as well as independent and foreign films to the public, produces RIFF.

Advance ticket sales for screenings and special events are available through the RIFF website (www.RIFilmFest.org). Student, group, and senior discounts are also available but only in advance. To purchase tickets or obtain more information about any aspect of RIFF, call 401-861-4445; or write RIFF, 268 Broadway, Providence, RI 02903; email info@film-festival.org. or log onto www.RIFilmFest.org.

THE SELECTIONS FOR THIS YEAR'S OPENING NIGHT SCREENING ARE AS FOLLOWS: *(in the order in which they will be screened)*

HEAVY METAL DRUMMER

Toby MacDonald, Luke Morris, Directors

6 min. United Kingdom 2005

Cast • Yassine Jars

A celebration of rock music in the Arab world and a portrait of a music fan on a quest to reconcile his love for metal with a disapproving world.

MOONGIRL

Henry Selick, director

8 min. USA 2005

One night, a boy and his flying squirrel are caught by a fish and taken to meet the Girl In The Moon.

Henry Selick is the animation director for "Tim Burton's The Nightmare Before Christmas" and the director of "James and the Giant Peach."

LA CERCA

S.J. Main, director

17 min. USA/Israel 2005

New England Premiere

Cast • Hector A. Garcia, Rene Pereyra

Narrated by Edward James Olmos

An aged Mexican man recounts a vivid memory of his youth -- The year was 1959. At the age of 17, Nino arrived to California from Mexico to live with his father, Chappa, on a modest cattle ranch in the rural coastal Santa Lucia Mountains. Working tedious days as a ranch-hand, Nino found himself trapped within a barbed wire world. Nino could not imagine a life different than the laborious one he led. That was, until a cow broke free from the herd and discovered a bizarre opening in the fence. Nino tracked the cow across the fence-line and into the wild unknown. Nino's discovery of the unexplored world

beyond the barbed wire fence changed his life forever.

FILM NOIR

Osbert Parker, director

4 min. United Kingdom 2006

East Coast Premiere

An original animated adventure combining live action to take the viewer through a non-linear narrative that recalls the spirit of a classic noir thriller. Created in-camera this mixed media film is crafted through play and experiments, where found objects to movie clips have been re-animated to construct a unique story in a cinematic world never seen before that weaves a non linear narrative which unfolds into a dark story of romance and psychological tension.

ONE RAT SHORT

Alex Weil, director

10 min. USA 2006

World Premiere

The mesmerizing ballet of a discarded food wrapper leads a New York subway rat into an adventure of love and loss.

THE SHOVEL

Nick Childs, director

15 min. USA 2006

Cast • David Strathairn, Glenn Fleshler, Neal Huff & Tim Guinee

When weekender Paul Mullin discovers his neighbor digging a hole in the middle of the night, he writes it off simply as a bizarre encounter... until the neighbor and his cheating wife both disappear. Worried he's stumbled onto more than he bargained for, Paul calls on the local sheriff to help unearth the truth. And finds out that, in this small town, some secrets are better left buried.

THE RUN

Shawn Costa, director

2 min. USA 2005

Jack's life is turned upside down when a shadowy figure begins running after him, yelling terrible screams of agony. What happens next will surprise and shock even Jack.

THE BUTLER OF THE VAN DER WAAL HOUSE

Adam Kreps, director

8 min. USA USA

Cast • Kade Coates, Kristofer Updike & Michael Carlucci

New England Premiere

When major changes affect the Van der Waal household, Orson, the family's butler, must help young Master Martin, deal with the loss of his mother and prevent the boy from killing his neglectful father with an unusual arsenal that includes a crossbow, Molotov cocktail and an upright piano.

ROSE

Mike Murphy, director

9 mins. New Zealand 2006

Cast • Cohen Holloway & Erica Lowe

World Premiere

Rose tells the story of a young single woman, (played by Erica Lowe), who works in a flower shop on the worst day of the year to be dateless....Valentines Day. Will the mysterious man she keeps flirting with show up to sweep her off her feet or simply wilt away?

Rose was shot while the director (Mike Murphy) was working on Lord of the Rings down in New Zealand. Most of the talent on Rose also contributed to LOTR. Rose also features amazing special effects that took over 1 year to create.

THE LITTLE MATCHGIRL

6.5 min. USA 2006

East Coast Premiere

Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale about a poor young girl whose burning desire to find comfort and happiness comes to life through the magic of rich hand-drawn Disney animation in this powerful and inventive short film directed by Roger Allers ("The Lion King"). Desperate to keep warm, the girl lights the matches she sells, and envisions a very different life for herself in the fiery flames filled with images of loving relatives, bountiful food, and a place to call home. Set to the music of composer Alexander Borodin's String Quartet No. 2 in D Major (Third Movement: Noturno (Andante), in an exciting new recording by the six-time Grammy Award-winning Emerson String Quartet, the film tells a captivating and emotional tale.

FOSTER

Jonathan Newman, director

9 min. United Kingdom 2005

Cast • Preston Nyman & Tim Beckmann

United States Premiere

Seven year old foster child Zach has been waiting his whole life for a mom and dad. Simultaneously, a parallel story unfolds with a mysterious man. Could this be Zach's lucky day?

The films star, Preston Nyman and director, Jonathan Newman will be in attendance

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