

RIIFF CINEMATIC HIGHLIGHTS 2006

The following films represent a small portion of the total films that will be screened at RIIFF. RIIFF received over 2,000 entries this year. Films submitted in 2006 have come from over 62 countries and 34 states in the continental US.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2006

JOURNEY TO JUSTICE

Steve Palackdharry, director

106 min. Germany, France, USA, 2006

JOURNEY TO JUSTICE tells the story of Howard Triest, a German Jew who fled Nazi Germany in 1939 when he was 16 years old, returned as an American soldier and then served as an interpreter during the Nuremberg Trial. He came face-to-face with imprisoned Nazi leaders who were co-responsible for the death of six million Jews, including Howard's parents at Auschwitz. At Nuremberg, Howard felt transformed, from victim to victor, and was able to reclaim parts of his German identity. The documentary also tells the story of how Margot, Howard's younger sister, was rescued from a detention camp in southern France just before her parents' deportation. Margot then saved ten other children from the Nazis in her subsequent escape to Switzerland.

SECRET COURAGE: THE WALTER SUSKIND STORY

Tim Morse & Karen Morse, directors

82 min. Netherlands, U S A, 2005

Walter Suskind was a German Jew living in Amsterdam during the Nazi occupation. He was forced to serve as the Jewish head of deportation at the Hollandsche Schouwburg (the Jewish Theater), the main deportation site in Holland.

Using his fluent German, his skills as an actor and businessman, and unfathomable courage and tenacity, he and an intrepid group of resistance workers orchestrated the escape of close to 1000 Dutch children who were marked for transport to the death camps.

In Secret Courage , we hear the stories of five of the saved children in their own words. Eleven of the resistance workers interweave their own stories, painting a picture of an incredible rescue operation fraught with intrigue and danger, but also carrying the emotional and ethical burden of deciding who could be saved and who could not.

Although Walter took the secret of this mission to his death, these survivors tell his story and reflect on his ability to carry on when others gave up. In an era where the word "hero" is so casually used, Secret Courage will bring to audiences the portrait of ordinary man, a salesman by profession, who chose to take a stand in the face of Nazi terrorism. Although vilified by those who never knew his secret, he was – in the end – a true hero.

Unlike more gruesome treatments of this subject, this film brings the moral dilemmas of the Holocaust to the audience in a compelling and personal way; it leaves us to question our own moral code and what each of us might do when faced with such choiceless choices.

EXPIRATION DATE

Rick Stevenson, director

94 min. USA, 2005

Cast • Dee Wallace Stone, David Keith, Ned Romero & Robert Guthrie

This beguiling romantic fable revolves around the impending fate of Charles Silvercloud III, a stoic young man whose father and grandfather were both killed in bizarre accidents on their 25th birthdays. As Charlie's own ill-fated birthday approaches, he prepares to meet his maker. But things take an unexpected turn when he meets a young woman who won't let him die in peace.

COLMA: THE MUSICAL

Richard Wong, Director

119 min. USA, 2006

Cast • H.P. Mendoza, Jake Moreno & L.A. Renigen

East Coast Premiere

"New York's got New Jersey, San Francisco's got the place where Colma stays." In the small suburban town of Colma, where the dead outnumber the living 1,000 to 1, three friends fresh out of high school tackle the age old question that has plagued humanity: "Now what?"

Together, Billy, Rodel and Maribel unwittingly begin the lifelong process of self-discovery and self-reliance, but at what expense?

Colma: The Musical boasts 13 musical numbers featuring all original music by H.P. Mendoza. It is the feature directorial debut for Richard Wong.

SHUT UP AND SING

Bruce Leddy, director

95 min. USA 2006

Cast • Chris Bowers, David Harbour, David Alan Basche, Elizabeth Reaser, Mark Feuerstein & Molly Shannon

New England Premiere

SHUT UP & SING is an ensemble comedy/drama about a group of guys who sang a cappella together in college and are now reuniting fifteen years later to sing at a friend's wedding. With their spouses and significant others in tow, the group takes a break from their less-than-perfect lives in New York City to spend a long weekend rehearsing at a rambling family beach house. Old feuds are stirred up, secrets are revealed, and relationships are tested as the group reflects on how their lives have progressed -- and in some cases, regressed -- since their college heyday.

In the end, these lifelong friends have readjusted their perspective and raise their voices in song to celebrate what is good and true in their lives.

THE 4TH DIMENSION

Dave Mazzoni, director

80 min. USA, 2006

(English, German dialogue)

Cast • Louis Morabito, Miles Williams, Karen Peakes, Kate Laross & Suzanne Inman

According to Variety, the film is "simmering with neurotic emotions and surreal dream states, "The 4th Dimension" ...that touches subconscious nerves." The 4th Dimension is a meditative examination into the mind of an introverted genius who obsesses to solve the complexity of time. The 4th Dimension explores the dark and lonely world between dreams and reality.

Jack is a loner confined to a workbench in the back of an antique shop. When a mysterious woman presents him with a broken antique clock, unexplainable events begin to occur. After finding Albert Einstein's journal on his still unsolved Unified Field Theory, Jack becomes compulsive about analyzing time and theorizing its connection to his supernatural experiences, his surreal dreams, and his perception of reality, only to lead to the discovery of the biggest mystery of all - himself.

COFFEE DATE

Stewart Wade, Director

93 min. USA 2006

Cast • Deborah Gibson, Elaine Hendrix, Jason Stuart, Jonathan Bray, Jonathan Silverman, Leigh Taylor Young, Sally Kirkland & Wilson Cruz

New England Premiere

Stewart Wade's Directorial debut is a winning comedy about a practical joke that spins wildly and enjoyably out of control. Thanks to his slacker brother Barry (Jonathan Silverman), Todd (Jonathan Bray), a straight guy, ends up on a blind date with Kelly (*My So-Called Life's* Wilson Cruz), a gay man. Despite the awkward circumstances, the two hit it off and decide to take revenge on Barry by pretending to have really hit it off – Todd brings Kelly home and convinces his brother he's gay. But when Barry tells their mother (Sally Kirkland), she arrives on the scene, desperate to convince Todd (and herself) that she's really, really ok with his homosexuality. Despite his protestations, soon everyone believes he's gay, including work colleagues Clayton (Jason Stuart) and Melissa (Deborah Gibson), leading Todd to wonder if he might actually be interested in Kelly after all...

LASSIE

Roadside Attractions/Samuel Goldwyn Films

Charles Sturridge, Director-screenwriter

100 min. United Kingdom 2005

Cast • Peter O'Toole, Samantha Morton, John Lynch, Steve Pemberton, Jonathan Mason, and Peter Dinklage

"Lassie" is a heartwarming and moving adventure that does excellent justice to the classic character. Sensitively written and directed by veteran British filmmaker Charles Sturridge. "Lassie" was recently showcased in the Family Festival section of the Tribeca Film Festival.

The filmmaker has assembled a sterling cast for this remake, set -- as was the original novel -- on the eve of World War II in a Yorkshire mining town. The opening scene, depicting a group of upper-crust hunters pursuing a fox only to be foiled by Lassie, well establishes the class conflicts that form the subtext of the story.

Lassie is a part of the hard-pressed Carraclough family, including coal miner Sam (John Lynch); his loving wife, Sarah (Samantha Morton); and their 9-year-old son, Joe (Jonathan Mason). When hard times hit, the family is forced to sell their beloved dog to the high-toned Duke of Rudling (Peter O'Toole), who wants her for his granddaughter (Hester Odgers).

The adventures of the indefatigable collie are alternately amusing, thrilling and heartbreaking and are beautifully realized by the filmmaker's classical approach. The actors essay their roles with the utmost conviction, with particularly sterling work by the slyly funny O'Toole and child actor Mason. A gallery of estimable performers makes cameo appearances, including Edward Fox, Kelly MacDonald and, most effectively, Peter Dinklage as a kindly puppeteer who takes Lassie under his wing.

Best of all, of course, is the canine, or number of canines, in the title role. A worthy successor to the dog's cinematic and television forebears, this Lassie is bound to induce a run on pet stores and dog breeders everywhere.

JAPANESE SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

• WATER

Shuichi Yoshida, director

25 min. Japan 2006

Cast • Kazue Ito, Saori Koide, Yukihiro Takiguch & Satoru Kawaguchi

World Premiere

Prize winning Japanese novelist, in his first adaptation from one of his own novels, 'Water' brilliantly and delicately portrays the lives of two teenagers in director's own hometown of Nagasaki, Japan.

• HIRO

Matthew Swanson, Director

20 min. Canada 2005

Cast • Hiro Kanagawa, Vicky Huang, William Samples, Darryl Quon

A shy, obsessive Japanese entomologist finds himself thrown into a plot straight out of a gangster movie when a pretty girl walks into life and runs off with his prized possession, an ultra-rare beetle purchased on the black market.

• KETZUSOKU

Yuji Nukui, director

39 min. Japan, 2005

Cast • Keiichi Mano, Tateki Matsuura & Masayuki Hidaka

In modern day Tokyo, a young man's free will is consumed by the emptiness of the city. Shin has no hope for his life. It all seems meaningless. As if guided by an

unseen force, he wanders out of the city to a place he recognizes... his grandmother's house where he spent his childhood summers and there he discovers his past and himself.

- **MISSING PAGES**

Jerome Olivier, director

24 min. Japan, 2006

After developing a time machine, an inventor finds himself enwrapped in a war ignited by his creation.

- **THE SANDBOX**

Kory Juul, director

5 min. U S A/New Zealand 2005

East Coast Premiere

Inspired by Akira Kurasawa's 'Dreams,' director Kory Juul's short cg animated film 'The Sandbox' tells a tale of artistic struggle, and perseverance.

THREE WOMEN AND A CHATEAU

Catherine Ryan, Gary Weimberg, directors

80 min. USA 2006

The Heiress. The Countess. The Doctor. Although they never met, these 3 women shared a place and a passion: Chateau Carolands, a 100 room architectural masterpiece in Hillsborough, California; the 2nd largest private home in the United States; and a three dimensional window into the last 100 years of American history.

The story of Chateau Carolands is like a Greek tragedy with a twist, with the chateau in the role of an enchanted magic mirror, so grand that it encourages a dangerous hubris in those who fall under its spell. We watch this drama unfold through three generations of owners of Carolands as they fall into failure and near-ruin, until the recent restoration brings about an artistic triumph for the house and current owner.

This is a story of fabulous wealth but also financial disaster, of great loves and bitter betrayals; including wars, earthquakes, a murder, a porno film, and of course great works of art and architecture. The documentary provides an insider's look at the struggles and desires of the ultra-rich in America, where even limitless money cannot guarantee that dreams come true.

LIBERTY STREET: ALIVE AT GROUND ZERO

Peter Josyph, director

118 mins. USA 2006

New England Premiere

The focus of the film is 114 Liberty Street, which stands a few yards from the World Trade Center on one of the oldest streets in the nation. This small residential building escaped demolition when the Twin Towers were put up, and narrowly escaped it when they were knocked down. In this evacuated building, with its astonishing views of the site and the surrounding neighborhood, the viewer is

eyewitness to the recovery and the removal at Ground Zero and to the lives of the people who were proud -- and cursed -- to call it home.

KAREN BLIXEN - OUT OF THIS WORLD

Marcus Mandal, director

58 min. Denmark 2005

Official US Premiere at RIFF

This is the story of the incredible life of Danish author Karen Blixen (Isak Dinesen) - a story just as dramatic as her own fantastic tales.

During the documentary the viewers are taken on a journey through the life of Karen Blixen, told by people close to her. Blixen herself contributes through old footage. Among those taking part are also Meryl Streep.

The directors have been given unique access to photos and letters from private archives, many of which have never been made public before. To complement the rich imagery of this film, additional footage and historical reenactments have been shot on location in Denmark and Kenya.

The music consists exclusively of the original lacquer discs Karen Blixen collected throughout her life.

NICE GUYS SLEEP ALONE

Stu Pollard, director

92 min. USA, 1999

A young man (Sean O'Bryan) in Louisville sees his dating failures are related to his always being nice. All of his dates end up going with the rude, obnoxious guys. Deciding to change his ways, he goes after a new acquaintance (Sybil Temchen), who unfortunately is tired of the male bores she meets and is seeking Mr. Right - the rose-bearing guy who wants to be nice to her.

KEEP YOUR DISTANCE

Stu Pollard, director

92 min. USA, 2005

In the perfectly normal town of Louisville, KY, there is a perfectly normal man living the perfect life. GIL BELLOWS stars as David Dailey - a man who has it all: A great career, a community that adores him, and an enduring marriage. But beneath the surface, David's idyllic world is crumbling. He's haunted by a series of mysterious notes that warn of an imminent fall from grace. His sultry wife Susan (KIM RAVER) is hell-bent on expanding the horizons of their sex life - with or without him. His longtime assistant Whit (JAMIE HARROLD) is gunning for his job. And he finds himself increasingly attracted to Melody Carpenter (JENNIFER WESTFELDT), a curious stranger he instinctively trusts because she doesn't know him well enough to betray him. Complicating matters, Melody's jilted boyfriend Sean (CHRISTIAN KANE), a charming and talented trust fund baby, regards David and Melody's fledgling friendship with contempt. As his jealousy seethes deeper, he concocts a devious plan to win her back, unaware his overly protective father (STACY KEACH) has ordered his number one ally (ELIZABETH PEÑA) to keep

an eye on everyone involved. As David and Melody grow closer, they discover they have much in common - including the maddening suspicion they're each being stalked - and are plunged into a harrowing web of desire, deceit, and paranoia. Suddenly, the man everyone loves fears everyone has a reason to bring him down. As his perfect life veers further and further off course, David is about to learn that the biggest danger of having it all is having everything to lose.

DIAMOND IN THE GOLDEN LAND

Dr. Glenn B. Short, director

54 min. USA/Burma, 2005

The Great Po Sein' is legendary in Myanmar. Until his death in the middle of the 20th Century, he was at the core of the cultural history of the nation. A gifted dancer, singer and actor, he created a legacy of classical dance that forms the basis of traditional performances in Myanmar today and was at the heart of the anti-colonial movement of his time, with the famous national founder, Aung San, father of Nobel Prize winner, Aung San Su Kyi.

By means of the documentary format, with interviews and stunning graphics, the dance of the ancient courts of Myanmar are revived and its history traced from its beginnings in the remote mountains and steppes of Central Asia and in the ancient dynasties of Myanmar.

STATISTICS

Frank Robak, director

104 min, USA, 2006

U.S. premiere

"Statistics" is the story of six individuals who all share one thing in common: they will become statistics by the end of the day. They are neither heroes nor criminals, but everyday people who will become victims of everyday life. The events that take place will be read about today and forgotten tomorrow, but in that blink-of-an-eye, their lives and the lives of the people around them will be changed forever. It happens every day. Despite the tragedies, this is not a story about dying, but is in fact a very uplifting story about living. The message is simple: cherish life today because no one is guaranteed a tomorrow.

"LITTLE ATHENS"

Tom Zuber, dir

105 min. USA, 2006

Little Athens is multi-storied drama/comedy about a single day in the lives of four groups of disillusioned youths living in a small rural town. The depression of their dead-end lives eating away at them, these diverse characters pursue their own pathetic aspirations in lieu of true escape. Their separate journeys lead to an explosive house party, where each character desperately seeks to resolve the problems that define both them and their town.

LEMONADE STORIES

Mary Mazzio, Director

47 min. USA 2005

"Lemonade Stories," a film about extraordinary entrepreneurs and their mums, chronicles the impact mothers have had on igniting the entrepreneurial spirit and innovative thinking. Virgin founder, Richard Branson and his sense of risk-taking, for example, emerged from the life and example of his mother, Eve, a pilot and WWII veteran. Billy Starr began the Pan-Mass Challenge, motivated by his mother's untimely death from cancer. He has since raised more than \$100 million for cancer research. Arthur Blank's vision for The Home Depot was inspired by his mother, a widow with no business experience, who took over and ran a family business with enormous success. The film features Richard Branson (Virgin); Arthur Blank (Home Depot); Russell Simmons (Def Jam); Kay Koplovitz (USA Network); Tom Scott (Nantucket Nectars) among others. This film was the subject of a USA Today cover story (complete with photos and a trailer on USA Today's home page); a cover story on Forbes.com, ABC News.com, Christian Science Monitor, The Boston Globe, NPR, Bloomberg Radio, Fast Company, CNNMoney.com, and also featured on CNN Headline News, among others.

LEMONADE STORIES also was awarded the first place Judge's Commendation for Best Documentary at the Rhode Island International Film Festival, one of the few festivals which qualify films for Academy Award Consideration.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2006

ENCOUNTER POINT

Ronit Avni, Julia Bacha, Directors

89 min. USA, 2006

New England Premiere

Abstaining from the usual media headlines of hatred and conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, **Encounter Point** instead focuses on their commonality: loss. As Palestinians battle to end the occupation of an Israeli military state and Israelis demand an end to the suicide bombings, people from both sides seek peaceful resolutions. The Bereaved Families Forum is a group of 250 Palestinians and 250 Israelis who have lost loved ones and are looking for a way to dialogue with each other to prevent the loss of more lives. Robi Damelin, an Israeli mother and activist whose son was killed by a sniper, comments, "You can sign as many peace agreements as you like, but if people don't learn to forgive each other . . . there will never be peace. It has to be between the people." Ali Abu Awwad, a Palestinian member of the Forum whose brother was killed by an Israeli soldier, is also a tireless activist who talks with both Israelis and Palestinians about his choice to resist nonviolently. Although grief is an element of **Encounter Point**, hope is the more prominent emotion expressed as people from both sides put issues of anger and revenge aside in hopes of reconciliation. Politicized by their personal experiences and guided by leaders from other nonviolent movements—Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandela—these citizens refuse to adhere to the political rhetoric that surrounds them and instead choose

to solve their problems on their own. As Ali puts it, "This is our message to the world."

In Arabic and Hebrew with English subtitles

DIRT

Jeff Bowden, Greg Biggerstaff, Directors

81 min. USA, 2005

A season inside the soul of American racing—the World Class Street Stocks—at the legendary Devil's Bowl Speedway, in Mesquite, Texas—as the racers careen on and off the track toward the 2002 season championship. Shot in mixed formats, DIRT focuses on seven competitors, including; Gayla Jones, a rookie and the only woman driver at the half-mile oval; and Travis Pace, a former champ who missed the previous season after accidentally blowing up his house.

WETLANDS PRESERVED: THE STORY OF AN ACTIVIST ROCK CLUB

Dean Budnick, director

96 min. USA, 2006

Featuring • Pearl Jam, 311, Moe, Phish, Richard Gehr, Mike Doughty, Robert Randolph, Spin Doctors, The Roots, Agnostic Front, Ben Harper, Blues Traveler, Bob Weir, Dave Matthews, Hanson, Kenneth Jackson, Larry Bloch, Laura Bloch & Michael Musto

North America Premiere

Wetlands. For many the name evokes a spirit, a community, an ethos. People still rave about the time they first encountered the Dave Matthews Band, Phish or Pearl Jam at the legendary New York City rock club. Some have seen its signature bus in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Still others participated in Wetlands' working groups for social and environmental advocacy.

On February 16, 1989 Larry Bloch and a team of novices fused music with activism in an altogether distinctive manner. As part of the club's monthly operating budget Bloch created and funded a not-for-profit Center for Social and Environmental Justice. Meanwhile, Wetlands served as a proving ground and nurturing environment for numerous notable acts (many riveting performances appear in the film, with music from the aforementioned bands along with Blues Traveler, Sublime, Ben Harper, 311, Ani DiFranco and many more).

The documentary is as novel and innovative as its subject matter. This is the first feature-length film produced in conjunction with the RES Media Group and it features the work of a dozen animators who breathe new life into still photography.

Wetlands Preserved shares the perspectives of staffers, musicians and clubgoers in relating the venue's development. Indeed, there is no single account of Wetlands Preserve, for the film presents many facets, many arcs, encompassing a New York story, a diary of a rock club, a look at social activism and an

account of grassroots music thriving in a supportive environment, as Wetlands became a true Preserve.

LAND OF THE BLIND

Robert Edwards, Director

102 min. 2006

Cast • *Ralph Fiennes, Lara Flynn Boyle, Donald Sutherland, Tom Hollander*

New England Premiere

A tyrannical monarch who represses free speech and thinks little of his citizenry is ultimately overthrown by a radical rebellion that promises to return power to the people. However, in this post-revolutionary world, do the new leaders create a better society or do they simply become just like those they replaced? History shows that we could be describing any number of events: the Bolshevik Revolution and the formation of the Soviet Union; the rise of the Nazis in Germany; Castro's overthrow of Batista in Cuba; the Ayatollah Khomeini's overthrow of the Shah of Iran; and the advent of the Taliban in Afghanistan. Each of these major geopolitical and social earthquakes took shape thanks to nationalistic movements growing out of the depths of oppression. Similar events create the backdrop for first-time feature writer/director Robert Edwards' startling political satire *Land of the Blind*, in which Ralph Fiennes plays a soldier who begins questioning his government after he befriends a political prisoner (Donald Sutherland). When the soldier helps the dissident overthrow the government, he soon discovers the truth in the old dictum: absolute power does, in fact, corrupt absolutely. *Land of the Blind* takes place in an unnamed country during an unspecified time period, but its all too timely look at terrorism and revolution-encapsulated within the framework of a memory play-will seem eerily familiar to most. Edwards has created a stylish and complex drama that captivates from its opening moments and keeps its audience thinking long after the credits roll.

CAFFEINE

John Cosgrove, director

88 min. USA, 2005

Cast • *Mike Vogel, Mena Suvari, Katherine Heigl & Andrew Lee Potts*

World Premiere

There's always something strange brewing at the Black Cat Cafe. During one lunchtime at this offbeat London coffee house, the relationships of the quirky staff and several couples are turned upside down by the sudden revelations of supremely embarrassing secrets and idiosyncrasies, generally having to do with their sexual behavior...and misbehavior.

A neurotic young commitment-phobe runs into his ex-girlfriend while he's whacked out on killer dope; a high strung control freak finds out that her husband-to-be is a transvestite; a hyper-possessive boyfriend discovers that his girlfriend is an ex-porn actress; and the manager's boyfriend has a ménage a trois which he says is pardonable because the girls were identical twins.

CAFFEINE is an eccentric comedy about these characters' hapless attempts to repair their fractured relationships.

PIRATE RADIO USA

Jeff Pearson, director

84 min. USA, 2005

East Coast Premiere

Pirate Radio USA is a look at the underground world of illegal radio stations, where people play and say what they want—until the FCC catches them. DJ's Him and Her take you on a rock-n-roll trip inside rogue stations across the country to show why Americans fight to free the airwaves.

FLYING DOWNHILL: BODE MILLER

W.C. Rogers, Director

124 min. USA, 2006

Bode Miller is among the world's fastest skiers and is arguably the very best American to hit the slopes and a challenge to the great legends of the sport. His style is wild and untamed, as was his childhood on a 450-acre homestead near Fanconia, New Hampshire. This film chronicles Miller's meteoric rise in the realm of the Alpine ski race—a path beset with major injuries and alternative training methods—en route to the top of World Championship and Olympic competition.

A LIFE AMONG WHALES

Bill Haney, Director

56 min. USA, Netherlands, 2005

Weaving together natural history and biography, *A Life Among Whales* is a fascinating exploration into the life and work of whale biologist and activist Roger Payne. Payne's controversial discovery in the early 1970s that whales sing "songs" helped ignite the modern day environmental movement. His pioneering spirit has consistently advanced the boundaries of science and activism over the last four decades. With beautiful and haunting images, *A Life Among Whales* follows one scientist's dedication to saving the whales and forces us to question our stewardship of Earth and our co-existence with some of its most intriguing creatures.

EARS, OPEN. EYEBALLS, CLICK

Canaan Brumley, Director

95 min. USA/ Canada 2005

They have to learn everything all over again: from shoe-cleaning to ten-second showers. Only then, marching and fighting techniques are addressed. For twelve weeks, the recruits of Platoon 1141 of the U.S. Marines are subjected to the orders of screaming drill instructors. In nearly two hours of pure *cinéma vérité*, the spectator experiences them, too. No voiceover, no interviews, just the camera that stays close to the soldiers, or keeps its distance for a more abstract impression of life on the base. Rapidly edited images reflect the frenzy and the soldiers' anxiety. During a nocturnal cleaning marathon, the fatigue is palpable. The soundtrack is largely filled with yelled orders and the soldiers' "Yes sir, aye-aye sir." Only a subtle musical score offers some relief. The film is divided into twelve chapters with short titles that betray a subtle sense of humour.

This film is the first half of Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket* brought to reality. Told in a handful of titled chapters, this portrait of soldiers in training isn't your average documentary; with no interviews or narration, Brumley presents our characters with visual emotion and intensity. Rather than getting to know each of the recruits personally as they fight through boot camp, we travel the road with them and witness the experiences up close and personal.

Debuting director Brumley was once a marine himself, on the base where he shot his film. He chose not to focus on individual people: the soldiers are interchangeable and the drill instructors all look similar. Only briefly does he highlight the rise and fall of one ambitious soldier from the platoon; the real protagonist is and remains the army base.

BRATS: OUR JOURNEY HOME

Donna Musil, Director

98 min. USA 2005

Air Force brat Kris Kristofferson leads us on a heartfelt journey into the strange but interesting life of an American military "brat". Based on poignant and provocative interviews with adult brats of all ethnicities, including General H. Norman Schwarzkopf and author Mary Edwards Wertsch. This is the first non-fiction film to explore the peculiar subculture of brats from the child's point-of-view.

PIRATE RADIO USA

Jeff Pearson, director

84 min. USA, 2005

East Coast Premiere

Pirate Radio USA is a look at the underground world of illegal radio stations, where people play and say what they want until the FCC catches them. DJ_s Him and Her take you on a rock-n-roll trip inside rogue stations across the country to show why Americans fight to free the airwaves.

"THE AMATEURS"

Michael Traeger, director

97 min. USA, 2005

Cast • Jeff Bridges, Tim Blake Nelson, Joe Pantoliano, Glenna Headly, Ted Danson, Patrick Fugit, William Fichtner, Lauren Graham, John Hawkes, Jeanne Tripplehorn Steven Weber & Valerie Perrine

Michael Traeger's directorial debut *The Amateurs* is a hilarious, sexy comedy about this small town's attempt to make what becomes the world's most innocent adult film. The quest begins innocently enough with Andy (Jeff Bridges) seeing that sex is everywhere; in the paper, all over town, everywhere. It's a multi-billion dollar industry, and better yet, one of its more popular forms is the amateur variety. And Andy and his friends are indeed amateurs, so why shouldn't they be able to strike it rich in this booming industry? *The Amateurs* is a sweetly comic film that plays with the conventions of filmmaking and the movie business all while having fun with its good-hearted characters.

EVE OF UNDERSTANDING

Alyson Shelton, director

93 min., USA, 2005

When Donna's mother, EVE, dies, her sister, LISA, inherits everything of value; all Donna gets is a list of addresses and mementos from her mother's life, to be delivered to the significant people of her past. Her mother's dying wish sends Donna on a road trip from Texas to Arizona to make peace, uncover secrets, and find understanding in the life she's been dealt.

Each delivery closes a chapter of Eve's life, but it's ripping Donna's old wounds right open. Her absentee father, her evangelical aunt, people who were supposed to be there and weren't, even in death Eve can't calm the storm caused by secrets and lies. Self destructive and hurt, Donna falls off the wagon and into old familiar patterns, old familiar beds...

DISAPPEARANCES

Jay Craven, director

107 min., USA, 2006

Cast: Gary Farmer, Genevieve Bujold, Kris Kristofferson, Lothaire Bluteau, Luis Guzman, William Sanderson

"Disappearances" is a Prohibition-era whiskey-running adventure, comedy and drama, based on the award-winning novel by Howard Frank Mosher. It tells the story of Quebec Bill Bonhomme, a hardy schemer and dreamer, who, desperate to raise money to preserve his endangered herd through an unusually long winter, resorts to whiskey-smuggling, a traditional family occupation. Quebec Bill takes his son, Wild Bill, on the journey. Also, Henry Coville, an inscrutable whiskey smuggler and Rat Kinneson, Quebec Bill's perpetually disconsolate hired man. Together, they cross the border into vast reaches of Canadian wilderness for an unforgettable four days 'full of terror, full of wonder.'

WHOLE NEW THING

Amnon Buchbinder, Director

92 min. Canada, 2005, 35mm

A Picture This! Releasing film.

(Outfest: Los Angeles Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, OUTstanding International Narrative Feature)

Brimming with dry wit and sensuality, *Whole New Thing* depicts the many life changes occurring around Emerson Thorsen, a precocious thirteen-year-old thrust from his hippie home school environment into the odd world of public school. Having a mature confidence and intellect unusual for his age, Emerson grows close to his attractive older English teacher Mr Grant (Daniel MacIvor), a private man struggling with a proclivity for bathroom encounters. Meanwhile, his seemingly carefree parents' bedroom troubles come to a head through Emerson's growing obsession with Mr. Grant. Amnon Buchbinder is a fresh, smart, and sweet coming-of-age story about family, love, lust and missed connections.

VAJRA SKY OVER TIBET

John Bush, director
97 min. USA/Tibet, 2005

New England Premiere

VAJRA SKY OVER TIBET is a documentary feature and a cinematic pilgrimage to some of the most revered venues and festivals still surviving in Tibet.

VAJRA is a Sanskrit word - the thunderbolt of illumination, flashing from the vastness of an open sky. This poignant journey bears witness to the indomitable faith of its endangered Buddhist community and the imminent threat to its very survival.

The vastness of the Tibetan sky, reflecting snowy mountains, rushing rivers, and turquoise lakes, leads the journey west.

Responding to the denial of the human right to practice one's religion without interference, Tibetans visit these legendary sites with a defiant ardor and overt displays of devotion.

As interviews were not appropriate because of likely retribution, VAJRA SKY employs the evocative voice of Tenzin Choegyal, a Tibetan in exile. Many of Tibet's most legendary musicians and singers are featured in the compelling soundtrack. The film has received the blessing of The Dalai Lama.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 11, 2006

IN-A-DAY

Evan Richards, Director
80 min. United Kingdom 2006

Cast • Lorriane Pilkington, Finlay Robertson, Rose Keegan, Jake Broder, Nolan Hemmings

Ashley Branstead is a twenty-something woman, who works in a sandwich shop in the East End of London while pursuing a career as a musician and singer. One morning an incident with a lewd stranger jumpstarts what turns out to be a very curious and unpredictable day. Ashley finds herself being pursued by another young man in his twenties, who turns out to be a regular customer of the sandwich shop. She ends up spending the day with him, but learns that his actions might have an ulterior motive, one that makes a difference in their relationship once that mystery is revealed.

LOVE IN THE AGE OF DION

Peter Cioffari, director
88 min., USA, 2006

For 26 years Frankie Razzini has carried in his wallet the picture of his first love. Now, with his second marriage on the rocks, his life in L.A. in shambles, he returns to his old neighborhood in the Bronx. With his childhood buddy and two women

from the neighborhood, he re-visits his favorite haunts. What he finds changes his (and their) lives in unexpected ways.

SPECIAL

Jeremy Passmore, director

82 min. USA, 2006

Cast • Michael Rapaport, Josh Peck & Alexandra Holden

LES FRANKEN (Michael Rapaport) leads a painfully unremarkable life as a metermaid until he enrolls in a drug study for an experimental anti-depressant. An unexpected side effect of the drug convinces Les he is developing special powers and must quit his job to answer his new calling in life... as a Superhero.

From the movie tag line: A very select group of people in life are truly gifted. "Special" is a movie about everyone else.

BOMBHUNTERS

Skye Fitzgerald, Director

85 min. USA/CAMBODIA 2006

Between 1968 and 1973, over 20 million bombs, cluster munitions, and landmines were dropped on Cambodia. Over thirty years later, the countryside is still littered with landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). To clear their land for farming, and to feed their families, villagers increasingly turn to the harvesting of scrap metal for profit. This is the story of these remarkable individuals, as they search for and dismantle war munitions in order to survive.

THE BIG BAD SWIM

Ishai Setton, Director

96 min. USA, 2006

Cast • Paget Brewster, Jeff Brandon, Jess Weixler, Ricky Ullman, Todd Susman, Liza Lapira, Avi Setton, Kevin Porter Young

A stripper and a schoolteacher have decided to jump head first into Noah Owens's adult beginner swim class. Noah and his students soon advance beyond bubbles and backstrokes, and the lessons they learn give them the courage to leave behind their unfulfilling lives and risk the "big bad swim" to a better future.

FAT ROSE AND SQUEAKY

Sam Irvin, director

108 min. USA, 2006

Cast: Cicely Tyson, Jo Anderson, Julie Brown, Lea DeLaria, Louise Fletcher

World Premiere

Fat Rose and Squeaky is an all female, five-character story revolving around the Irish-willed, eighty-something Bonnie Ash Fitzpatrick and her only friend, the seventy-something French-born Celine Snow.

DEADPAN VALENTINE

Robert Lindsey, director

80 min., United Kingdom, 2005

East Coast Premiere

This is a movie for anyone who has ever wished there was no such thing as Valentine's Day. If you have ever been made aware of how acutely unloved you were on February the 14th then this "Anti- Rom- Com" will be right up your street. Two young men, Scott and Jamie, share a grubby London council flat. Scott seems to think he's got it made; he's got a lovely head of hair, a beautiful new girlfriend and a bit on the side. If one man wasn't blessed enough, he's also the natural successor to Marlon Brando and a fringe theatre play appears to be the ideal vehicle for his talent. However, today is the perfect day for a few lessons in love and acting.

"THE CIRCLE

Yuri Zeltser, director

100 min. USA, 2006

Cast • *David Proval, Angela Bettis, Scott Cohen & Henry Czerny*

WORLD PREMIERE

'The Circle' is a unique supernatural mystery, shot in one 96-minute long uninterrupted take, with no edits whatsoever. As a contract killer (Scott Cohen) prepares for his next hit, a frightened woman (Angela Bettis) pounds on his hotel door asking for help. He rebuffs her at first, until he discovers that her husband is his next target, and that she is prepared to sacrifice her own life in order to save the man he loves. The cat-and-mouse game between the woman and the assassin is darkly humorous, suspenseful, and filled with twists and reversals, as they try to outsmart and outplay each other -- all the while fighting mutual attraction that sneaks up on them in the most inopportune circumstances. As they travel through the night city, these two "lost souls" find an intangible connection, and she finally convinces him to take her to a crime boss' club, so that she can plead for her husband's life.... After her descent into this hellish club with its vice and its violence, the woman returns to her husband, and with one dizzying final twist, the true nightmare of her journey and the true nature of the 'circle' is revealed. The one-take approach is not a mere cinematic device, but a thematic extension of the story. The uninterrupted flow of the Steadicam shot (complete with flashbacks, multiple locations, and travelling sequences) adds to the tension and suspense, enhancing the hypnotic, dream-like journey of the main character.

YOU DID WHAT?

Jeff Morris, director

97 min. USA, 2005

Cast • *A.J. Buckley, Ed Kerr, Kathy Wagner & Kelly Overton*

"You Did What?" is a heartfelt comedy based on the true-life experiences of first time writer/director Jeff Morris.

The story chronicles marriage phobic Charlie Porter (Ed Kerr) as his perfect two-year relationship with his girlfriend (Kathy Wagner) is turned up side down when his brother (A.J. Buckley) proposes to a girl (Kelly Overton) he's known less than 24 hours.

Charlie is forced to deal with why it's not him and Ashley planning the wedding. Before he knows it, Ashley takes measures into her own hands to get Charlie to walk down the aisle. However, Charlie tries just about everything to keep the relationship status quo.

BOY CULTURE

Q. Allan Brocka, Director

85 min. USA 2006

Rhode Island Premiere

RIFF Board member, Q. Allan Brocka's whip-smart *Boy Culture*, fresh from its North American premiere in Tribeca Film Festival only days before it screens in Miami, cuts down to the gay bone with zero tolerance for bullshit in an up-to-the-minute way. Finding it difficult to negotiate the intersection of sex and love in 2006's gay singles scene? You'll find company with the studly "nuclear reactor family" of 3 sassy-in-Seattle gay roommates, headed by X (Derek Magyar), a 25-year-old high-end call boy with a slick and tight roster of 12 discreet well-to-do clients. X is secretly smitten with his late-twenty something roommate Andrew (played by the Darryl Stephens, star of "Noah's Arc"), only recently out of the closet and still tentatively dipping his toes in the gay whirlpool. Joey, an 18-year-old cutie party boy whom X allows to live rent-free out of guilt for rejecting Joey's near-daily amorous advances, occupies bedroom #3. X is a complicated case, "a whore who's not a slut" and hasn't had sex outside of his professional duties since the age of 12. He meets his match in a new client, the 79-year-old Geezer (played with elegance and grace by Belgian actor Patrick Bauchau), who pays X not to have sex with him until X desires Geezer as much as Geezer desires X. Got mind game? *Boy Culture* asks gay men of any age: How in touch are you with yourself as a sexual being? *Boy Culture* is hip, witty, sexy, and tough-minded, and it movingly declares sincerity to be the biggest gift of all.

Director in attendance

OPEN WINDOW

Mia Goldman, director

97 min. USA, 2005

Cast • Robin Tunney, Joel Edgerton, Cybill Shepherd, Elliott Gould & Scott Wilson

Izzy is a struggling young photographer. Peter is an assistant professor at a university in Los Angeles. Newly engaged and madly in love, they find their cozy world shattered by a random act of violence. Their respective parents, the idiosyncratic Arlene and sportswriter John, and Peter's mercurial father, Eddie, weave their way through their children's lives and it soon becomes clear that irrevocable losses have touched not only Izzy and Peter, but their entire circle of relationships. Long-hidden emotions rise to the surface as the trauma turns into a complex test of Izzy and Peter's relationship.

WIL

Jeremy Weinstein, Director

82 min. Australia 2006

World Premiere

Wil, finds himself in a dead-end accounting job where the rhythm of repetition is the soundtrack to his life. Just when things couldn't get worse, they do – he gets offered a promotion that will lock him in for the next decade of his life. Given a minute to think, Wil delves into his psyche, which he imagines is a corporate elevator. As his mind jumps from thought to thought so does the landscape within the elevator. 'Wil', a visually rich, light-hearted, philosophical, tale explores things we think about constantly; money, relationships, family, identity and what makes us truly happy.

BOB AND JACK'S 52-YEAR ADVENTURE

Stu Maddux, Director

42 min. USA 2006

World Premiere

In 1952 an Army sergeant was cornered and courted, by his commanding officer. Their romance grew and then grew too obvious. Rumors became anonymous tips to headquarters. They avoided court-martial by confronting the troops in their unit. That moment cemented Bob and Jack together.

PUNK LOVE

Nick Lyon, Director

Cast • *Chad Lindberg, Emma Bing, Max Perlich, Robert Blanche*

96 min. USA 2006

New England Premiere

Chad Lindberg and Emma Bing star as two lost souls looking for salvation in this darkly stylish drama set in the grimy, rain-soaked streets of Portlands underbelly. Battling the demons of their drug addiction and the violent world theyre trying to escape, these lovers seemed doomed from the start. But the cruel hand of fate often makes for the best love stories.

As Spike, Chad Lindberg gives an outstanding performance as a man-child whose love knows no bounds, even when such bounds are called for. Emma Bing, as Sarah, delivers a powerful and realistic performance as an achingly vulnerable teenager desperate to keep a glimmer of hope alive of the better life she dreams of. In the end, all Spike and Sarah have are each other, and their love for one another, a love that cant be torn apart. Unconditional love.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 12, 2006

LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP

Rob Williams, writer/Director

97 min. USA 2006

Cast • *Matthew Montgomery, Windham Beacham, Artie O'Daly, Jeremy Lucas, Bret Wolfe & Judy Farrell*

New England Premiere

Out of all the gay men in Los Angeles (and sadly, he's tested out more than a few), Glenn (played by Matthew Montgomery) has finally found his soul mate -- a cute Southern boy named Adam (Windham Beacham). Their relationship started, as so many great relationships have, with the personal ads ("GWM seeks LTR"). From the moment they met, it was instant attraction. Now Glenn's in love for the first time, and it feels great.

There's only one problem. Well, actually a few problems. But are they big enough to be deal-breakers, or can Glenn and Adam work through their differences?

Glenn's straight friends encourage him to stick it out and make it work -- after all, everyone's happier as part of a couple, right? Meanwhile, his gay friends tell him to move on and find someone they can all like.

Ultimately, only Glenn and Adam can decide what it takes to sustain a long-term relationship.

Long-Term Relationship is the first feature from writer/Director Rob Williams. A classic romantic comedy with appeal to both gay and straight audiences, *Long-Term Relationship* celebrates the power of true love. Filming was completed in January 2006. Look for *Long-Term Relationship* at film festivals later in the year

CHRISTA MCAULIFFE: REACH FOR THE STARS

Renee Sotile, Mary Jo Godges, directors

75 min. USA, 2005

This is a riveting and unusually moving story, told from the inside. It is made uniquely affecting by the use of Carly Simon's music, a favorite of McAuliffe's.' -- Ken Burns

Narrated By Susan Sarandon and songs by Carly Simon.

The most complete documentary ever produced on the life of our nation's first Teacher in Space by first time feature filmmakers Renee Sotile & Mary Jo Godges who wanted to tell the inspiring story of Christa McAuliffe.

A courageous woman and passionate teacher, it will be easy to see how she came to be so beloved, how deeply her loss was felt across the nation, and how this deeply personal loss drastically changed the dynamics of her family.

IN THE SHADOWS OF THE PALMS

Wayne Coles-Janess, Director

91 min. Australia, 2005; Ipso-facto Productions

In Arabic and English

The feature length documentary *In the Shadow of the Palms* – Iraq has been described as a 'humane and profoundly authentic' portrayal of the struggles of the people of Iraq through this tumultuous war.

It provides an intimate insight into the lives of ordinary people during Saddam's Regime as they prepare for the rapidly approaching War. As the War raged and despite numerous arrests by the Iraqi Government the production continued to film "un-embedded", documenting life in Baghdad not been seen in the media.

With a new Government in place, the film takes audiences back to Iraq documenting the changes in the lives of these individuals and Iraqi society now living with freedom.

In the Shadow of the Palms – Iraq presents the only documentary of everyday realities for Iraqi's living through this controversial War - The War that is shaping the political future of the region and the world.

International Award winning Ipso-facto Productions presents the only documentary filmed in Iraq prior to, during and after the fall of Saddam's Regime.

Presenting a comprehensive insight, while breaking the usual stereotypical depiction of the Middle East, Iraq and its people.

THE CALL OF CTHULHU

Andrew Leman, Director

47 min. USA 2005

Cast • Matt Foyer, David Mersault, Patrick O'Day, Barry Lynch, Noah Wagner

A young man is charged with sorting out the estate of his much-whispered-about uncle. What he discovers includes mysterious cults, long-buried civilizations, and a malevolent galactic beastie or two. The unimaginable, tentacle-intensive horrors of Rhode Island's own, H.P. Lovecraft receive an impressively faithful, faux-silent film treatment with a dazzling symphonic score.

"Federal Hill"

Authored, produced and directed by Providence-native Michael Corrente, is set in Federal Hill, Providence, Rhode Island, a local Italian-American neighborhood.

A band of five best friends—Ralph (Nicholas Turturro), Nicky (Anthony DeSando), Frank (Michael Raynor), Joey (Robert Turano), and Bobby (Jason Andrews)—grew up together in Federal Hill, and each of them becomes allied with crime in one way or another. Ralph is a hotheaded cat burglar; Nicky is a smooth small-time coke dealer; Frank is the son of a local mobster; Joey is a paroled convict; and Bobby is a counterfeit money dealer who owes thirty grand to a counterfeiter. When Nicky sells a bag of coke to a rich, blond Brown student, Wendy (Libby Langdon), he is immediately smitten by her upscale glamour and dreams of escaping Federal Hill with her. Nicky's best friend and bed-sharing roommate Ralph is jealous of Nicky's new love, and tries desperately to douse Nicky's infatuation. Failing to persuade him, Ralph conceives of a break-in to guarantee that the relationship crumbles.

Borrowing from memories of his own youth, Corrente breathes new life into a tired plot that could so easily have degenerated into melodrama and cliché. Dangerously reminiscent of Scorsese's MEAN STREETS and GOODFELLAS, what redeems FEDERAL HILL is its small-budget authenticity. Its ability to be striking comes through its semi-autobiographical underpinnings, its seductive, moody black-and-white photography, and its bold relocation of its New York mafia scene from the big-city streets to small-town Providence. Reviewed by Roger Ebert, "FEDERAL HILL covers familiar ground, but with feeling and style...Corrente is not just treading in Scorsese's footsteps but testing new ground...The series of ironic developments at the end of the movie feels a little like movie plotting, yes, but Corrente has set them up well enough to get away with them. Y'know?"

HOT TAMALE

Michael Damian, Director

102 mins. USA, 2006

Cast • Carmen Electra, Randy Spelling, James Best & Jason Priestely

East Coast Premiere

A small sleepy town in Wyoming is just no place for a young man with dreams of playing the timbale drums in a salsa band. Seizing his destiny, Harlan (Randy Spelling) packs up his car, bids the Midwest adios, and heads west to the Mecca of showbiz wannabes everywhere: Los Angeles.

Stopping along the way at a roadside cafe, Harlan encounters the mysterious Jude (Jason Priestley) who is on the run from two vicious thugs. Jude hides a small bag in Harlan's car, which Harlan doesn't discover until he arrives in L.A. where he plans on staying with his Puerto Rican buddy Caesar.

After his first night in L.A., Harlan awakes to find Caesar gone, but in his place is Caesar's friend, the lovely Tuesday Blackwell (Diora Baird).

Caesar has arranged an audition for Harlan with the local salsa band featuring local salsa legend Johnny Polanco. The band rehearses in the middle of a rough Latino neighborhood where a nice boy from Wyoming like Harlan is a 'fish-out-of-water.' But Harlan surprises everyone - he really can play timbales and the band takes him on.

Meanwhile, the two ruthless thugs chasing Jude have discovered that Harlan's got the missing bag. And so has Jude's former partner in crime, the femme fatale Riley (Carmen Electra). The thugs kidnap Tuesday and leave word that if Harlan wants to see her alive, he had better come up with what they're looking for - a fortune's worth of diamonds last seen in Jude's bag. But there are no diamonds in the bag.

Enlisting the help of his newfound friends from the salsa band and their connections to L.A.'s Latino underworld, Harlan throws himself into a wild rescue mission that has him running one step ahead of the cops and headlong into the grips of a pair of ferocious killers.

THE TOURNAMENT

Eugene Celico, Director

98 min. USA, 2006

Cast • [Vin Fraioli](#), [Michael Amitrano](#), [Stephen DiMassa](#), [Vini Ames](#) & [Vinny Paziienza](#)

World Premiere

From Westerly, Rhode Island comes the story of a relationship between a man and his son and a game called "Bocce." Told from the son's perspective, the drama centers on the quiet nature of interpersonal relationships in a small New England town. The through-line of the story is the game of Bocce and how a father and a son learn how to connect.

ICE KINGS

Craig Shapiro, director

83 min. USA, 2006

World Premiere

The winds of change that blew over Boston and gave the Red Sox their first World Series win in 86 years first passed through Rhode Island. In March 2004, Toll Gate High School upset Mount Saint Charles Academy's men's ice hockey team and pushed them off the state championship throne they held for 26 years, the longest consecutive championship streak in national high school sports history. And in a state where hockey is as important as Texas football, the win immediately became legend.

At Mount St. Charles, 75-year-old head coach Bill Belisle and his assistant coach and son Dave Belisle owned the state title since the Carter Administration. The legendary program, set deep in the French Canadian area of Woonsocket, RI is the greatest high school sports program in history.

The Mount has produced some of the NHL's best: Garth Snow, Brian Berard, Keith Carney, Mathieu Schneider, and Brian Lawton. In telling the story of the Mount, we pay homage to these, and all the great Rhode Island teams and players that the Mount had to go through.

In 2004, in the best of 3 game finals, the Toll Gate Titans shocked everyone with a 4-3 win in the opener, followed by a 4-0 shut out in Game 2 to make Rhode Island Hockey history.

Ice Kings delves into the storied past of the Mount's reign and fall as kings of high school hockey. The film tells the amazing story of the phenomenon that is Rhode Island hockey.

"HEATHER HENSON PRESENTS" HANDMADE PUPPET DREAMS

Shorts films by puppet artists.

A touring festival of independent artists films exploring their handmade craft specifically for the camera. These films have allowed artists to build their vision, then breathe life into their dreams. In addition RIIF will screening a special

selection of Jim Hensons' early works and Muppet Shorts introduced by his daughter, Heather Henson.

HEADER

Archibald Flancranstin, Director

90 min. USA

World Premiere

Set deep in the untamed backwoods of West Virginia, HEADER depicts the collision course between ATF Agent Stewart Cummings, and ex-con Travis Clyde Tuckton. Stewart's sickly girlfriend puts a major strain on his wallet, forcing him to traffic narcotics to make ends meet. Meanwhile, Travis, free from prison for the first time as an adult, returns to live with his grandfather. Grandpap mentors Travis about country life, family feuds, sexual perversion, and most importantly, how to achieve revenge on ones enemies. An intense psychological journey unfolds as Stewart investigates a series of bizarre and violent murders, entangling his life with those of Travis and Grandpap. Delusion, desperation, and immorality all come to a head, triggering a hellish conclusion that will blow your mind wide open. Unspeakable acts. Insanely perverse. Ultimate revenge.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 13, 2006

SWEET DREAMS

Eric Latek, director

115 min. USA, 2006

Sweet Dreams tells the story of two Italian-American men. One of them, Gary "Tiger" Balletto is a 27-year-old boxer, who, burdened by the memories of a fellow boxer killed in the ring, attempts to unionize the sport to provide boxers with health insurance and other benefits, as well as future jobs outside the ring. While trying to organize the only professional sport where athletes have no protection, Balletto shoulders the tasks of raising a family, running a construction business, and training and boxing professionally. Then there is Derek Fleming, a 19-year-old bartender and bookie – and "wanna-be" wiseguy. Derek dreams of upholding a reputation as a tough enforcer but faces hardship in this endeavor due to his naturally gentle, soft-spoken personality, and sometime thoughtless ways.

THE CONRAD BOYS

Justin Lo, Director

93 min. USA 2006

Cast • Barry Shay, Boo Boo Stewart, Bruce Blauer, Dorian Frankel & Justin Lo
The Conrad Boys are 19-year-old Charlie (first time writer/Director Justin Lo) and his precocious 9-year-old brother Ben. After the sudden death of their mother, all they have left is one another. Charlie decides to put his college plans on hold indefinitely to take care of Ben. But when charming drifter Jordan enters his life, Charlie's dreams of youthful freedom are reawakened. As the two attractive

young men begin a romance, Charlie soon finds himself pulled between the responsibility of family and the demands of his heart – a situation intensified by the sudden reappearance of Doug, the Conrad boys' long absent father, now looking to reconcile with his sons. Will Charlie use this opportunity to finally follow his own dreams?

Director in attendance

REX TRAILER'S BOOMTOWN

Michael Bavaro, director

62 min. USA, 2006

Cast • Jay Leno, Mike O'Malley & Rex Trailer

World Premiere

In the early days of television most broadcast markets had a local children's personality. Some were clowns, fairy godmothers, or spacemen but Boston had a real cowboy named Rex Trailer. He is the subject of this first feature-length film by Massachusetts native Michael Bavaro.

His interactive Western-themed show 'Boomtown' was a weekend staple for the 4 million children who watched on WBZ-TV in Boston and which reached into most states of New England. More than 200,000 kids appeared live on the show during its run throughout the 1950s, 60s and 70s. The 3-hour show offered music, games, cartoons and life-learning lessons.

This meticulously constructed documentary is a treasure of salvaged footage, including a 1952 kinescope, found on Ebay from Rex's early days at WPTZ in Philadelphia. While 'Boomtown' aired live every Saturday and Sunday, it was uncommon and expensive to record each show to videotape but the few that survived are classic eye-candy entertainment.

The film is told through the memories of more than 100 grown-up kids who were interviewed from Boston to California. Television stars Jay Leno, Tom Bergeron, Mike O'Malley, comedians Steven Wright, Lenny Clarke, Jimmy Tingle, and Boston mayor Tom Menino are just some of the more celebrated figures who share their childhood passion for this real life cowboy and broadcast pioneer.

'Rex Trailer's Boomtown' is a time machine back to an age of innocence, 'WANTED' posters, and live one-take TV.

...MORE THAN 1000 WORDS

Solo Avital, director

77 min. Israel, Japan, USA, 2006

East Coast Premiere

Ziv Koren's photographs have become instantly recognizable icons that have helped shape our perception of the conflict in the Middle East. In '...More Than 1000 Words' director Solo Avital followed Ziv over a two-year period, shooting in the heart of riots, terror attack scenes, secret meetings with wanted militants, all

the way to Israel's pullout from Gaza. This movie, however, is not about the Israeli/Palestinian conflict; it is merely set in it. It's a movie about a man's struggle with a history in which he is involved, and the place he finds for himself in it. Like Ziv, it seeks the universal through the most personal; it asks how and why this man gets up in the morning to leave his wife and daughter for a war zone. The movie does not only seek history through the photographer's lens – but also the photographer through the lens of history.

Like its subject, the film looks back to look ahead, treading the thin taut line between subjectivity and objectivity. As the cycle of destruction and creation turns, Ziv's place in it comes into focus. As in Greek tragedy, the hero's place in the cycle illuminates our own.

As a photographer Ziv strives to disappear into the situations he shoots. The film's experiential aesthetic reflects this. Its driving and jolting audiovisual rhythms are those of Ziv's work. Much of the musical accompaniment is mixed from sound recorded on site. As video snaps into still and back we feel what it is to snatch an image from the rush of experience.

FOR THE LOVE OF DOLLY

Tai Uhlmann, Director

56 min. USA 2006

New England Premiere

For the Love of Dolly, a feature length documentary, takes you into the hearts and homes of Dolly Parton's most dedicated fans. Illuminating the phenomenon of fandom, the film focuses on the human stories and what inspires them to extreme acts of devotion.

The diverse characters in the film are held together by the shared love for their icon and the need to close to her. They go to great lengths and it is through these experiences that we come to understand who our characters truly are and what motivates them.

For these five people Dolly is much more than a country singer. She is the mother they never had, a guardian angel, a reason to live. She has helped them through hard times, and allows them to express things they otherwise cannot. In some way, the lives of all the people in this film have been broken and it is through their love of Dolly that they have found hope. In return for this feeling no sacrifice is too great. They quit jobs, rearrange schedules, leave family and friends behind, all for a single moment when they might get Dolly's attention, a smile, eye contact, a moment of recognition.

The documentary culminates with the anticipation and chaos of Dolly's big parade through the streets of her hometown, the one chance our fans have to see her each year.

For the Love of Dolly, is an intimate look into the world of fandom and the real life stakes our characters experience in their quest to get close to Dolly.

JACK MITCHELL: MY LIFE IS BLACK AND WHITE

Craig B Highberger, Director

75 min. USA, 2006

New England Premiere

Director Craig Highberger follows his acclaimed documentary *Superstar in a Housedress* with this exceptional portrait of Jack Mitchell, a pivotal photographer of the arts for more than four decades. Through hundreds of his beautiful images, recollections from Jack and from Bob Pavlik, his partner of nearly 50 years, as well as interviews with luminaries including Edward Albee, Clive Barnes, Merce Cunningham, and Ned Rorem, among others, Highberger reveals his fascinating life and the art world he documented for *Dance Magazine*, *The New York Times*, and countless other publications. More than just a fantastic photographer with an eye for capturing the essence of his subjects, Jack emerges as a true chronicler of the changing face of performance arts.

TOMORROW IS TODAY

Frederic Lumiere, director

98 min. USA 2006

Cast • Scout Taylor-Compton, David Brown, Marc Heffi & Luke Pennington

World Premiere

At the New Jersey shore, young Julie Peterson (Scout Taylor-Compton) saves the life of a drifter who's on the skids. Going one further, Julie resolves to save him emotionally, too, by instilling the gift of hope. But first, she has to contend with a local sheriff who wants the drifter gone and an admirer who's jealous of Julie's relationship with her new 'project.' Soon, a chain of events is set in motion that will change everyone's lives.

LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP

Rob Williams, writer/Director

97 min. USA 2006

New England Premiere

Cast • Matthew Montgomery, Windham Beacham, Artie O'Daly, Jeremy Lucas, Bret Wolfe & Judy Farrell

Out of all the gay men in Los Angeles (and sadly, he's tested out more than a few), Glenn (played by Matthew Montgomery) has finally found his soul mate -- a cute Southern boy named Adam (Windham Beacham). Their relationship started, as so many great relationships have, with the personal ads ("GWM seeks LTR"). From the moment they met, it was instant attraction. Now Glenn's in love for the first time, and it feels great.

There's only one problem. Well, actually a few problems. But are they big enough to be deal-breakers, or can Glenn and Adam work through their differences?

Glenn's straight friends encourage him to stick it out and make it work -- after all, everyone's happier as part of a couple, right? Meanwhile, his gay friends tell him to move on and find someone they can all like.

Ultimately, only Glenn and Adam can decide what it takes to sustain a long-term relationship.

Long-Term Relationship is the first feature from writer/Director Rob Williams. A classic romantic comedy with appeal to both gay and straight audiences, *Long-Term Relationship* celebrates the power of true love. Filming was completed in January 2006. Look for *Long-Term Relationship* at film festivals later in the year.

CLASS ACT

Sara Sackner, director

90 min. USA, 2006

Cast • Andy Garcia, Brett Ratner, Debra Zane, Desmond Child & Sandy Veith

New England Premiere

More than 20 years have passed since New York producer Heather Winters and California director Sara Sackner graduated from Miami Beach Senior High School, a huge public high school with a big fat love of football. Besides sharing a professional relationship, the filmmakers share something else - a favorite teacher - Jay W. Jensen.

When the filmmakers decided to go "back to school" to tell the extraordinary story of their high school drama teacher, Jay W. Jensen, they knew they would be telling the 50 year story of a man who dedicated his life to education, saved every penny, and became known as the "Teacher to the Stars."

What they didn't know is the real story they would uncover. The drama program Jay created and ran for over 30 years, 7 days a week, day and night, no longer existed. Sackner and Winters set out on a journey across the country, talking to everyone from Teachers, Principals, Administrators, Government Leaders (on both sides!), and students themselves, turning their camera lens on the American public school system only to discover the arts were disappearing from the American classroom at an alarming rate.

CLASS ACT weaves Mr. Jensen's personal story with the fate of arts education in America today, giving us a report card on what lies ahead for America's children. But the story doesn't end in the classroom. With a starting salary of just \$2,000 in 1959, Jay secretly amassed millions. To the astonishment of everyone, he then did the most extraordinary thing: he gave it away in the name of education and the arts becoming the most unlikely philanthropist. Today, Jay continues to inspire thousands of students - fat, thin, shy, extroverted, gay, straight, under achiever and academic powerhouse - to follow their dreams.

Jay alumni include a virtual who's who of Hollywood, including actor Andy Garcia, film director Brett Ratner, songwriter Desmond Child, music executive José Behar, Broadway producer Adam Epstein, casting director Debra Zane, and sportscaster Roy Firestone, as well as the filmmakers themselves.

THE O TAPES

Chris Arnold, director

90min, USA, 2006

"The O Tapes" is the controversial and highly acclaimed 90-minute documentary by an award-winning film maker. It features real women talking about their intimate personal experiences and their quest for sexual ecstasy. Along the way the women explore such "forbidden zones" as orgasm, masturbation, the G spot, "kinky" sex and female ejaculation.

THE TROUBLE WITH DEE DEE

Michael Meiners, director

80 min., USA, 2006

East coast Premiere

The story of an eccentric socialite with a knack for pulling off hopelessly wild adventures who struggles when she finds herself disowned by her millionaire father and abandoned by her teenage son, *The Trouble with Dee Dee* is a new take on parents and children that frustrates, amuses and warms the heart. At once shocking and endearing, Dee Dee overcomes her rough exterior to draw people in with her childlike joy of life and her heart of gold. The movie attacks our knee-jerk reaction to write people off when they don't adhere to accepted social norms, by enticing us to stick with a character we might otherwise have turned away, with a feeling that we might be pleasantly surprised.

FORGIVEN

Paul Fitzgerald, director

83 min. USA 2006

Cast • Kate Jennings Grant, Russell Hornsby, Susan Floyd & Paul Fitzgerald

East Coast Premiere

FORGIVEN is set in the cross hairs of a contemporary American society where the idiom of religious beliefs penetrates the dialogue of politics, where private lives are public, and where factors such as race, class and economic standing affect the ways in which punishment is meted out by our legal system. Set against the stark backdrop of the ever-increasing chasm of misunderstanding and vitriol between persons separated by social and economic differences, *FORGIVEN* is a story about the essential need for accountability from those in positions of power. The greater question that ultimately emerges, however, is how the individual in society may leave the shadows of attachment to one's personal truth and perspective, in order to more clearly see the 'other' in his midst.

DREAMLAND

Jason Matzner, Director

88 min. USA 2006

Cast • John Corbett, Agnes Bruckner, Justin Long, Kelli Garner & Gina Gershon

Jason Matzner's woozily romantic, gorgeously lensed directorial debut about a trailer park love triangle unspool in a dream of its own, and it is pretty intoxicating.

The title refers to both a small desert community of mobile homes in New Mexico and the suppressed passions of one of its loveliest residents. A recent high school grad, 18-year-old Audrey (Agnes Bruckner) spends most of her days working at

the local mini-mart and taking care of her relatively young but sickly dad (John Corbett), who hasn't left home since Audrey's mother died. John Corbett's nuanced portrayal of Audrey's concerned but agoraphobic father is an amazing acting feat.

THE GREAT YOKAI WAR

Takashi Miike, director

90 min., JAPAN, 2006

Cast: Ryunosuke Kamiki, Chiaki Kuriyama, Etsushi Toyokawa, Hiroyuki Miyasako
It's tough being ten year old Tadashi (Ryunosuke KAMIKI). His mom just got a divorce and moved him and his Grandfather from Tokyo to small town Japan, where all the kids at his new school pick on him. To make things worse, his Grandpa is starting to go a bit crazy and keeps running away and forgetting who Tadashi is!

One night, Tadashi wanders into a creepy local festival and is knocked on the head by a man in a dragon costume. Someone tells him this means he has been chosen "Kirin Rider," the defender of justice and peace. There is a legend that the Kirin Rider must climb a nearby mountain and claim a legendary sword, guarded by the Great Goblin.

Remembering the bullies at school calling him a crybaby, Tadashi is determined to climb the mountain, but he gets scared half-way and runs home. On the bus ride home, he meets Sunekosuri, a small cat-like sprite that only Tadashi can see. He realizes that Sunekosuri is a Yokai, a magical creature from Japanese folklore. All of a sudden, Tadashi can see more Yokai looking into the bus windows! The next evening, Tadashi hears his Grandpa calling for help from the Goblin Mountain. Forgetting his fears, Tadashi rushes to his Grandfather's aid and into the biggest adventure of his life...

Meanwhile, a great evil called Yomotsumono has been re-awakened, threatening to devour humanity and turn the good Yokai into evil mechanical monsters to do its bidding. Aiding this monster is the evil spirit Kato (Etsushi TOYOKAWA) and Agi (Chiaki KURIYAMA), a traitor Yokai whose love for the evil Kato compels her to turn against the good spirits. She catches them with her white whip and helps turn them into monsters that ransack Japan. Only Tadashi the Kirin Rider and his sword can save the world from this menace, with some help from his Yokai friends!

TEMPESTA

Tim Disney, director

98 min. United Kingdom, 2005

Cast • Paul Guilfoyle (LA Confidential, Crime Scene Investigation), Rutger Hauer (Confessions of a Dangerous Mind, Blade Runner), and Malcolm McDowell (Hidalgo, I'll Sleep When I'm Dead).

American art appraiser, Patrick Donovan, is sent to Venice to authenticate three classical paintings belonging to the famous Galleria dell'Accademia. Arriving during heavy rains, he finds the Galleria besieged by floods and closed to the

public. With the floodwaters rapidly rising, he examines two Bellinis and confirms that they are indeed authentic but before he can get to Giorgione's *The Tempest* it is stolen. Police and media interest is high and Donovan unwittingly finds himself at the center of the investigation. What follows is a highly stylized and complex web of mystery, intrigue and betrayal that unfolds against the ghostly backdrop of the Venetian waterways. Donovan determines to uncover the truth behind the disappearing painting but soon finds himself at the mercy of a corrupt art collector, a petty thief and, ultimately, a deadly seductress.

THE SHAPE OF WATER

Kum-Kum Bhavnani, director

70 min. USA

Narrated by Susan Sarandon with a narration co-written by Edwidge Danticat.

This inspiring documentary tells the rare, intimate and compelling stories of women making change around the world: in Senegal (eliminating female genital cutting); Brazil (tapping trees for rubber and protecting the rainforest); India (a 700,000 strong collective of rural women and a seed saving/protecting biodiversity venture) and Jerusalem (Women in Black protesting the Israeli war and occupation). It interweaves poignant interviews and footage from Senegal, Brazil, India and Jerusalem to reveal the conflicts and pleasures for these five visionaries as they create a more just world.

THE HOLE STORY

Alex Karpovsky, director

83 min. USA

Despite arctic temperatures sheathing Northern Minnesota in snow and solid ice, a massive inexplicable stretch of open water appears on one mysterious lake. Determined to unravel it for a television pilot called 'Provincial Puzzlers', an aspiring director is slowly engulfed in a maniacal search that leads to his own unraveling.

JACK MITCHELL: MY LIFE IS BLACK AND WHITE

Craig B Highberger, Director

75 min. USA, 2006

New England Premiere

Director Craig Highberger follows his acclaimed documentary Superstar in a *Housedress* with this exceptional portrait of Jack Mitchell, a pivotal photographer of the arts for more than four decades. Through hundreds of his beautiful images, recollections from Jack and from Bob Pavlik, his partner of nearly 50 years, as well as interviews with luminaries including Edward Albee, Clive Barnes, Merce Cunningham, and Ned Rorem, among others, Highberger reveals his fascinating life and the art world he documented for *Dance Magazine*, *The New York Times*, and countless other publications. More than just a fantastic photographer with an eye for capturing the essence of his subjects, Jack emerges as a true chronicler of the changing face of performance arts.

THE EAGLE

Clarence Brown, Director

73 min. USA 1925

Cast • Rudolph Valentino & Louise Dresser

Music by the Alloy Orchestra

The new 35mm print has been completed with the new "High Silver" process, at Cinema Arts in Pennsylvania, by Janice Allen and Michael Kolvek.

The Eagle (1925) is old-fashioned screen entertainment based on Russian writer Pushkin's story, *Dubrovsky*, and two earlier film successes, *The Mark of Zorro* (1920) and *Robin Hood* (1922), both starring Douglas Fairbanks. As with Fairbanks', *The Eagle* is fast-paced and simply tongue-and-cheek, including some witty title readings such as "Revenge is sweet, but sometimes a girl is sweeter," or The Eagle's memorable maxim, "The Eagle does not war against women." Direction by Clarence Brown is first-rate, featuring fine camera style tracking over the long dinner table during a social function dinner scene at the home of Kyrilla. Along with some authentic dress designs, compliments of Adrian, this production also includes expensive set designs by William Cameron Menzies that help *The Eagle* capture the flavor of old imperial Russia. Dresser, with relatively little screen time, makes a very impressive Catherine II in her scene-stealing performance. Because Valentino and the Hungarian-born Vilma Banky worked so well together in *The Eagle*, they were reunited again in *The Son of the Sheik* (1926). Also featured in the cast are Albert Conti as Captain Kuschka; George Nichols as The Judge; and Michael Pleschkoff as the Captain of the Cossack Guard.

AND SOME SHORT FILMS...

• **DUTCH BIRD** (Live Action Short)

Director Kirk Weddell, United Kingdom

Starring David Kelly (*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*)

A touching comedy about an Irish pigeon racer who gets involved in an international drug trafficking plot, this story-with-a-twist in its tale looks at ethics and the nature of friendship.

• **THE SHOVEL** (Live Action Short)

Director Nick Childs, USA

Featuring David Strathairn and 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 discovers that, in this small town, some secrets are better left hidden.

• **FOSTER** (Live Action Short)

Director Jonathan Newman, United Kingdom (Official Opening Night & North American Premiere)

The film begins as 7-year-old Zachary walks us through his daily routine. He shows us his room, the foster home, and talks us through, in a very adult way, the ins

and out of being a 'man'. "Everyman," he tells us, "must have one nice outfit". Simultaneously, a story unravels with an older man, though at this stage we do not know who this man is. His daily routine does, indeed, seem to reflect young Zach's daily routine. Could this be Zach as an adult? Or, is it the man that will become Zach's foster Dad?

- **RABBIT** (Live Action Short)
Director Jeff Bernier, USA

Brad's birthday present is hidden somewhere in his grandpa's room, but he doesn't dare go look for it. He's terrified of that horrible, sick old man. But when Brad finally unwraps his new air rifle, he has an encounter with death that reconciles his feelings toward the dying man.

- **LITTLE VICTIM** (Live Action Short)
Director Dean Ronalds, USA
Featuring Robert Wagner and Lori Singer

When a suave Howard and his dumbfounded girlfriend, Tracy, meet Duane and his mother, Irene, in a parking garage, they have no idea how good the good news is and the dark surprise Duane and Irene brought back with them in the trunk.

- **THE LITTLE MATCHGIRL** (Animation)
Director Roger Allers (*The Lion King*), Walt Disney Animation (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. 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: Nocturno [Andante]), in an exciting new recording by the six-time Grammy Award-winning Emerson String Quartet, the film tells a captivating and emotional tale.

- **JOURNEY INTO SUNSET**
Rick Wilkinson, Director

Academy Award Nominee Don Cheadle and his family travel to Africa to bear witness to the lives of Northern Uganda's "night commuters", children who must flee their homes each night to avoid being kidnapped and forced to fight for a rebel army. An American family confronts the tragedy faced by Ugandan families every day.