

33rd Annual Boston Film Festival Press Release



BOSTON FILM FESTIVAL UNVEILS 33rd EDITION AS A COLORFUL PALETTE OF HIGHLY ANTICIPATED WORLD PREMIERES, BOLD SCRIPTED THEMES AND COMPELLING TRUE STORIES WITH MANY MASSACHUSETTS CONNECTIONS FROM SEPTEMBER 21-24

Esteemed hollywood talent includes Producers, Directors and Writers Such as James Keach, William Horberg, Chris Matthews and Multiple Hollywood Stars; Four Gripping Documentaries and a Special Presentation of “The Brave,” a new NBC TV series.

BOSTON – Sept. 7, 2017 – Burnishing its established reputation of cinematic dynamism, the 33rd Boston Film Festival (September 21-24) will showcase a full spectrum of eventful new films, including the world premieres of “In the Name of Peace: John Hume in America,” “Damascus Cover,” and “What Haunts Us” and three films inspired by true stories. Five of the features also have local connections to Boston and New England.

Noted producer-directors James Keach (“Glen Campbell...I’ll Be Me,” “Walk the Line”) and William Horberg (“Milk,” “Cold Mountain”), and journalist Chris Matthews will be among the celebrity attendees, which also will include notable political figures. The diverse lineup includes five documentaries: the poignant “Augie,” “In the Name of Peace: John Hume in America,” “What Haunts Us,” “Heal,” and “The Bullish Farmer.” In addition, the Boston Film Festival (BFF) welcomes NBC’s “The Brave,” an all-new drama brought to the festival in conjunction with NBC Boston, starring Anne Heche and Mike Vogel who will be on hand for the screening.

In a refreshing change of pace, the BFF also will showcase the riveting “Tales of Suspense,” a one-man live show presented by bestselling author and master storyteller Casey Sherman on Sunday (24). Sherman, who is the author of “Boston Strong: A City’s Triumph Over Tragedy” (which became the film “Patriot’s Day”) and “The Finest Hours,” and will share gripping behind-the-scenes stories about those New England-based projects.

Theatre locations are list on the web site. Opening Night along with a large number of the weekend screenings will be held at the AMC Boston Common. Party locations will be posted on the web site.

The presenting sponsor this year is Union Point. Other sponsors include A&E, NBC Boston, Revere Hotel, The Hollywood Reporter and AMC Theatres.

The world premiere of “Damascus Cover” (September 23) stars Jonathan Rhys Meyers (“Mission: Impossible III,” “The Tudors”), Olivia Thirlby (“Juno”), John Hurt (in his final performance) and Navid Negahban (“American Sniper”), as written and directed by Daniel Berk (a Brandeis University graduate). After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, a veteran spy is sent undercover into Syria to smuggle a chemical weapons scientist and his family out of Damascus. However, the spy soon realizes that he’s being followed, his partner doesn’t show up, his local contact disappears – and a group of men are trying to kill him.

The world premiere on Opening Night, “In the Name of Peace: John Hume in America” (September 21), is a documentary narrated by Liam Neeson that weaves the dramatic efforts of Nobel-Prize winning John Hume to secure peace in Northern Ireland. Hume, who was inspired by Martin Luther King Jr., rose from the riot-torn streets of Northern Ireland to enlist vital aid from American Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton. The film includes interviews with both presidents and various U.S. senators and congressmen who assisted in securing the accord. Interviews also include Irish leaders and former British prime ministers Tony Blair and John Major. This is a timely film that reveals the steady leadership and international cooperation that are needed to win the peace. Also interviewed are U2 singer Bono and Tom O’Neill, former lieutenant governor of Massachusetts. Maurice Fitzpatrick directs and Bill Whelan (Riverdance) wrote the score.

The third world premiere, “What Haunts Us” (September 23), is produced by Kennedy Marshall, Frank Marshall and Matt Tolmach (“Spiderman”). Within 35 years after their graduation from the 1979 class of Porter Gaud High School in Charleston, S.C., six of the 49 boys have committed suicide. When Paige Goldberg Tolmach gets word that another former student from her beloved high school has killed himself, she delves into her past to uncover the surprising truth and release the ghosts that still haunt her hometown. Goldberg Tolmach directs from Mark Monroe’s script.

The documentary, “Augie” (September 22), is from James Keach, the director of the Grammy-winning and Oscar-nominated “Glen Campbell...I’ll Be Me.” Buoyed by an irreverent humor and a boundless love of life, paralysis has done little to slow down Augie Nieto twelve years post diagnosis – a genius visionary and founder of LifeFitness, who has channeled his entrepreneurial spirit into finding a cure for ALS.

“American Satan” (September 22) centers on a young Anglo-American rock band whose members drop out of college and move to the Sunset Strip to chase their dreams. Living in a van, their passion and talent exceed their means of survival, and they find themselves caught up in a Faustian web when they meet an enigmatic stranger who manipulates them during a time of weakness. Can the lads re-claim their own destiny before it’s too late? Malcolm McDowell (“A Clockwork Orange”), John

Bradley (“Game of Thrones”), Booboo Stewart (“X-Men: Days of Future Past”) and Rhode Island native Olivia Culpo (2012 Miss America), Andy Biersack (“Black Veiled Brides”).

The scripted film “Dabka” (September 23) is directed and written by Massachusetts native Bryan Buckley and produced by Matt Lefebvre (a New Hampshire native). The true story concerns a rookie reporter (Jay Bahadur) who forms a half-baked plan in 2008 to embed himself among the pirates of the Somalia coast. He ultimately succeeds in providing the first close-up of who the men are, how they live and the forces that drive them. Bahadur wrote the book “Pirates of Somalia.” Oscar winner Al Pacino, Melanie Griffith and Barkhad Abdi (“Captain Phillips”) also star.

In the documentary “Heal” (September 23), director Kelly Noonan embarks on a scientific and spiritual journey where discoveries indicate that our thoughts, beliefs and emotions greatly impact our health and ability to heal. Citing the latest science, the film argues that people have more power over their health and life itself than we believe. Among the many featured speakers are Dr. Deepak Chopra, Dr. Bruce Lipton, Marianne Williamson, Dr. Michael Beckwith and Rob Wergin.

“The Brave” (September 23), from NBC, is a fresh, heart-pounding journey into the complex world of America’s elite undercover military heroes. The show follows Captain Adam Dalton (Mike Vogel), and his heroic Special Ops squad of highly trained undercover specialists who carry out ground missions. The diverse team works hand-in-hand with D.I.A. Deputy Director Patricia Campbell (Anne Heche) and her team of analysts as they wield the World’s most advanced surveillance technology from headquarters in D.C. All members of the elite squad, both in D.C. and across the world, have one thing in common; their resilience and commitment to freedom is unmatched by any other--despite insurmountable challenges. “The Brave” was created by Dean Georgaris.

”The Bullish Farmer” (September 24) tells the story of John Umbaldo (as himself), a successful Wall Street investment banker who quits his job after the loss of a friend in the September 11 terrorist attacks – and trades his former life for one as a farmer on 185 acres in upstate New York. Umbaldo soon transforms into a passionate activist who lobbies for GMO labeling, animal rights and the reduction of chemical fertilizers to help preserve small farms and rural America. Ken Marsolais is the director and co-producer and Nancy Vick is the writer and co-producer.

Written by Maine native Jeremy Catalino and produced by William Horberg (“Milk”) and Alexander Payne (“The Descendants”), “Crash Pad” (September 24) is a smart, laugh-out-loud battle of the sexes that finds a sentimental slacker and a misfit. Stensland (Domhnall Gleeson) is caught up in a love triangle between Morgan (Christina Applegate, “Anchorman”) and her alpha-male husband (Thomas Haden Church, “Sideways”). What begins as a one-night stand leads to blackmail, revenge and drunken debauchery as Grady moves into Stensland’s apartment and takes over

his life. But Stensland knows that his survival depends on reuniting the married couple. Kevin Trent directs and Nina Dobrev (“The Vampire Diaries”) also stars.

VIP passes for the film events and after-parties are available on the web site or via TicketLeap. There will be a red carpet each night outside of the Revere Hotel. The short film program will be announced separately.

Filmgoers can access www.bostonfilmfestival.org for more details and to purchase tickets. Facebook: Boston Film Festival; Twitter: Bostonfilmfest

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