

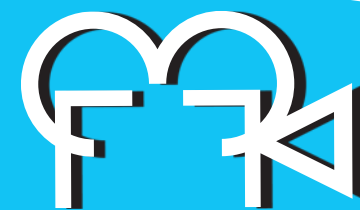
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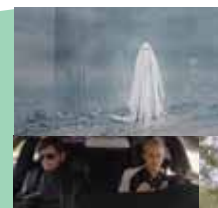


Chicago Critics Film Festival

May 12-18, 2017

*Music Box Theatre
3733 North Southport
Chicago, IL 60613*

www.chicagocriticsfilmfestival.com
www.musicboxtheatre.com



**MUSIC
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Welcome to the 5th Annual Chicago Critics Film Festival

In 2013, the Chicago Film Critics Association attempted something that hadn't been done before. The prospect of working film critics premiering some of their favorite films from the festival circuit for audiences in their hometown before being released into theaters was unheard of at the time and remains so outside of our great city. Deemed everything from "unfeasible" to outright "crazy," we were not interested in the negative thoughts and just powered forward. In a collaboration of critics, volunteers, filmmakers, producers and studios, that first festival was such a success that it included appearances by Sarah Polley, James Ponsoldt, and William Friedkin.

It's hard to believe this is already our fifth anniversary. The industry is changing quickly, as further emphasis is placed on streaming services and rumors of the theater experience dying out. As unsettling as this may be to cinephiles as well as the multitude of talented filmmakers who may never get to see their film played on the big screen, it only strengthens our desire to continue bringing attention to great films. Our main purpose remains undeterred: to show you films we love.

Of course, it couldn't happen without you. Everyone who has attended this festival over the years has been integral to its success. As a not-for-profit organization, the CFCA depends on movie lovers like you to continue investing in our passion to put on the next year's festival. The discovery of new voices and perspectives in the changing cinematic landscape is a responsibility we share and continue to cherish. This is truly a collaborative project.

Joining us once again in this quest is A24, a studio that had its first releases in theaters at the same time our festival began. Just a few months ago they won their first Best Picture Oscar with Barry Jenkins' *Moonlight*. The CCF has been honored to show one or more of their films every year of our existence and this year we close with two, including one of the best films we have ever shown at our festival, David Lowery's hauntingly beautiful, *A Ghost Story*. It's a perfect end to our fifth year, a film that holds an audience spellbound while commenting on where we've been and the beauty the future holds.

Erik Childress & Brian Tallerico
Producers of Chicago Critics Film Festival

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Web: www.chicagocriticsfilmfestival.com and
www.chicagofilmcritics.org



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Notice: All titles, screening dates, times, and special appearances are subject to change. Please visit ChicagoCriticsFilmFestival.com for schedule announcements, changes, and updates.

Friday May 12

Opening Night!

Medieval nuns Alessandra (Alison Brie), Fernanda (Aubrey Plaza), and Ginevra (Kate Micucci) lead a simple life in their convent. Their days are spent chafing at monastic routine, spying on one another, and berating the estate's day laborer. After a particularly vicious insult session drives the peasant away, Father Tommaso (John C. Reilly) brings on new hired hand Massetto (Dave Franco), a virile young servant forced into hiding by his angry lord. Introduced to the sisters as a deaf-mute to discourage temptation, Massetto struggles to maintain his cover as the repressed nunnery erupts in a whirlwind of pansexual horniness, substance abuse, and wicked revelry.

"It's often hysterically funny, especially when allowing its talented cast to play up to their individual strengths."

Brian Tallerico, *RogerEbert.com*

Special appearance and Q&A with director
Jeff Baena, stars Aubrey Plaza and Kate Micucci

Jeff Baena

Writer/director Jeff Baena grew up in Miami, Florida, and studied film production at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. He co-wrote Fox Searchlight's *I Heart Huckabees* with David O. Russell. His directorial debut, *Life After Beth*, premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival. Baena's second feature, *Josh*, played last year's Chicago Critics Film Festival.

Aubrey Plaza

Aubrey Plaza is an actress, best known for her work in the television shows *Parks and Recreation* and *Legion*. She will next be seen starring in the upcoming features which premiered at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival - *Ingrid Goes West* and *The Little Hours* which she also produced.

Kate Micucci

Kate Micucci is the co-creator and co-star with Riki Lindhome of the group *Garfunkel and Oates*, and her solo show *Playin' with Micucci* has been selling out at the Steve Allen Theater and Largo nightclub since 2008. She recently appeared in Mike Birbiglia's critically acclaimed *Don't Think Twice* and Joe Swanberg's anthology *Easy* for Netflix. Micucci's artwork has appeared in solo exhibits in Los Angeles and Dallas.

The Little Hours

7:00pm



Director:

Jeff Baena

Starring:

Alison Brie, Dave Franco,
Aubrey Plaza, Kate Micucci

90 minutes



Friday May 12

Opening Night!

Patricia "Killa P" Dombrowski drafts rhymes behind the bar at a dingy dive, trying to pay off her coarse but beloved Nana's medical bills and support her hard-drinking mom, whose own musical aspirations failed long ago. Patti and her rap partner/best friend Jheri share dreams of fame, fortune, and escaping Dirty Jersey for good, but they haven't found a producer with the "fire beats" they need. Unbroken by the taunts of local goons, she unexpectedly gravitates to a reclusive goth-metal musician named Basterd, a newcomer who just might be able to help Patti achieve hip-hop superstardom.

"Jasper's dynamic debut crackles with energy and grass roots authenticity."

Todd McCarthy, *Hollywood Reporter*

"Music video director Jeremy Jasper launches an unlikely rap star - and unforgettable indie underdog - in his high-energy feature debut."

Peter Debruge, *Variety*

Friday May 12

Opening Night!

Jill (Marianna Palka), a lonely, distraught housewife with four unruly children, paces on her dining room table with a belt around her neck, contemplating a desperate end to her wretchedness. Focused on his identity as breadwinner and an affair with a lusty co-worker, her husband, Bill (Jason Ritter), is as oblivious to Jill's pain as he is to the panic at his unraveling company. Meanwhile, dogs bark and howl through the night, as one persistent mutt continually stalks the family's yard. When Jill's psyche finally breaks, she takes on a vicious new canine persona.

"A deeply personal, intimate piece of storytelling that holds within it dark, uncomfortable humor and pain."

Steve Prokopy, *Ain't It Cool News*

"Bitch won't give you a moment's rest, keeping you anxious and alert until its extremely satisfying and quite lovely conclusion."

Meredith Borders, *Birth.Movies.Death*

Patti Cake\$
9:30pm



Director:
Jeremy Jasper

Starring:
Danielle Macdonald, Bridget Everett, Siddharth Dhananjay, Cathy Moriarty
108 minutes

Bitch
Midnight



Director:
Marianna Palka

Starring:
Jason Ritter, Jaime King, Marianna Palka
93 minutes

Saturday May 13

This documentary brings Hollywood's premier composers together to give viewers a privileged look inside the musical challenges and creative secrecy of the world's most widely known music genre: the film score.

"Terrifically engaging."

Sheri Linden, *Hollywood Reporter*

"Easy to simply embrace Score as a jukebox of some of the greatest musical moments in film history, enjoying the sweeping musical moments as they play out against dozens of classic films."

Jason Gorber, *Birth.Movies.Death*

Score: A Film Music Documentary
11:00am



Director:
Matt Schrader

Starring:
Hans Zimmer, Danny Elfman, Trent Reznor
93 minutes

Upcoming Chicago Film Critics Association Events

Critics Classics Series

Screenings at 7pm | Tickets \$5

Elk Grove Theatre: 1050 Arlington Heights Road, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007

Held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month.

Our critics choose a classic film and host a Q & A discussion afterwards.

www.classiccinemas.com

June 14: - *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*, hosted by Erik Childress

July 12: *Indiana Jones & the Temple of Doom*, hosted by Patrick Bromley

August 9: *The Dark Crystal*, hosted by Peter Sobczynski



Saturday May 13

Drawn and Recorded: Teen Spirit — From Animator Drew Christie tells the story behind one of the most iconic songs ever written.

Approaching A Breakthrough — A man (Kieran Culkin) has a terrible argument with his girlfriend (Mae Whitman) just before running into a string of characters from his past.

Hopptornet (Ten Meter Tower) — depicts the fears of jumping from a great height.

The Dundee Project — Mark Borchardt explores UFO enthusiasts in Wisconsin.

Kaiju Bunraku — A story of monsters is created with marionettes.

Tough — New light is shed on childhood cultural misunderstandings when a mother and daughter speak as adults for the first time.

Fry Day — An adolescent girl comes of age against the backdrop of serial killer Ted Bundy's execution in 1989.

Hell You Talmhout — Dance, spoken word and music is used to explore injustices in the black community.

Mark Borchardt

Mark Borchardt began making films at the age of 14 with a Super-8 camera in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In later years he wrote and directed radio dramas and in 1997 he completed his 16mm film, *Coven*, a psychological study shot in atmospheric black and white. In print Mark served as both theater and film critic as well as book reviewer. In the ensuing years he continued to film in the realm of personal exploratory art. His next public cinematic adventure is *The Dundee Project*, a sly meditation on belief, persona, and downright wonder under the celestial skies of UFO gazing.

Laura Moss

Laura's work has screened at MoMA, Anthology Film Archives and the Boston International Film Festival, where she was awarded Best Director for her featurette, *Rising Up*. Her latest short, *Fry Day*, screened at SXSW and Tribeca 2017. She recently completed her studies at NYU's Graduate Film Program. Her feature screenplay, *Gordon*, is currently in development. Laura works as a filmmaker and production designer in New York City.

Shorts Program #1 1:00pm



Directors:

Noah Pritzker, Axel Danielson, Maximilien Van Aertryck, Mark Borchardt, Lucas Leyva, Jillian Mayer, Jennifer Zheng, Laura Moss, Denzel Boyd, Joseph Webb, Tyler Rabinowitz

93 minutes

Special appearance and Q&A with directors Mark Borchardt & Laura Moss



Saturday May 13

Each at a standstill in their careers and having suffered a heartbreak neither wants to face, a married couple (Zoe Lister-Jones and Adam Pally) fight constantly. But one day they come up with a brilliant idea: Why not start a band and use their arguments as songwriting inspiration? Almost as soon as they dig out their old electric guitars from the garage, their musical partnership starts to jell, but it soon becomes apparent this is only a temporary distraction from their real problems.

"Heartfelt, funny, and straight-up enjoyable."

Brian Tallerico, *RogerEbert.com*

"Sweet and sincere *Band Aid* makes a convincing case that relationships are all about how you heal from them."

David Ehrlich, *Indiewire*

Band Aid 3:30pm



Director:

Zoe Lister-Jones

Starring:

Zoe Lister-Jones, Adam Pally, Fred Armisen

91 minutes

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Lucky To Know Him: The Career of Harry Dean Stanton

By Peter Sobczynski,
RogerEbert.com and eFilmCritic



The late Roger Ebert once wrote that he was creating what he called *The Stanton-Walsh Rule*, which stated that “no movie featuring either Harry Dean Stanton or M. Emmet Walsh in a supporting role can be altogether bad.” When it comes to Stanton’s resume, which includes more than 100 features, even the lesser endeavors temporarily come to life when he comes into a scene, thanks to his distinctive hangdog look and prodigious acting talents. On the other hand, when he is working with worthwhile material and with filmmakers who know their stuff (and his filmography has seen him working with the likes of Alfred Hitchcock, Sam Peckinpah, Francis Ford Coppola, John Huston, John Carpenter, Wim Wenders, John Milius and David Lynch) you would be hard-pressed to find a more mesmerizing on-screen presence than his. If anyone wanted to put together a Harry Dean Stanton Film Festival, the program would be all killer and no filler with the only possible hiccup coming in trying to decide which of the numerous classics and cult favorites in his filmography would make the cut and which would be held back for a later edition.

He began his screen career with an unbilled bit part in Alfred Hitchcock’s docudrama *The Wrong Man* (1957), working steadily in small roles on both the big and small screens over the next decade, mostly in westerns and crime stories that were able to make effective use of his distinct look. By the mid-’60s, he was turning up in more notable films like *Cool Hand Luke* (1967) and *Kelly’s Heroes* (1970). At the same time, he began getting cast in films made by an emerging breed of iconoclastic filmmakers who preferred his air of absolute authenticity over the kind of blandly handsome types that populated most films. Monte Hellman gave him a supporting part in his existential western *Ride in the Whirlwind* (1966), beginning an association that would also include appearances in *Two-Lane Blacktop* (1971) and *Cockfighter* (1974). Sam Peckinpah cast him as a member of Billy the Kid’s gang in the cult classic *Pat Garrett & Billy the Kid* (1973) and John Milius put him in his directorial debut, *Dillinger* (1973). He turned up as an FBI agent in *The Godfather, Part II* (1974) and he had one of his biggest roles to date as part of the ill-fated crew of the Nostromo in *Alien* (1979).

As the ’80s began, demand for Stanton was increasing with turns in such films as *The Black Marble* (1980), *Private Benjamin* (1980), *Escape from New York* (1981), *One from the Heart* (1982) and *Christine* (1983). For first-time filmmaker Alex Cox, he co-starred with Emilio Estevez in the cult sci-fi comedy *Repo Man* (1984) and stole every single scene he was in as a world-weary car reposessor showing the ropes to his new protégé while tracking down a 1964 Chevy Malibu with a big surprise in the trunk. For rising German director Wim

Wenders, he got his first true leading role when he appeared as a largely silent drifter who returned after a mysterious four-year absence and struggled to reconcile with the wife and young son that he abandoned in *Paris, Texas* (1984). Although he had precious little actual dialogue in the film, he was able to convey a lifetime of pain, shame and hurt with a single glance, and the only thing more astonishing than his performance is that his work did not receive any of the traditional industry accolades despite richly deserving all of them.

Over the next couple of decades, Stanton turned up in a wide variety of films in a wider variety of roles. Some of these films were wonderful, such as his appearances in a number of films that he worked on with David Lynch, *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988) and his recurring role on the HBO series *Big Love*. Some of them were quite popular—his performance in the Molly Ringwald hit *Pretty in Pink* (1986) exposed him to a new generation of moviegoers. In all of these films, he brings a presence to his parts that comes at least as much from him as it does from the script—probably more in most cases. Almost invariably, whenever one of his characters leaves the screen, most viewers want to follow.

One exception to that notion is his latest film, *Lucky*, and that is partly because he is front-and-center for virtually the entire running time, his first major lead role since *Paris, Texas*. Set in a small desert town, he plays a 90-year-old man who attributes his shocking good health (despite a pack-a-day habit) to his self-sufficiency and willingness to stick to his daily regimen. He also claims to be an atheist but as the end theoretically draws near, the notion of entering a great void now fills him with unease. The film by actor-turned-director John Carroll Lynch is concerned less with plot than with character. In the lead role, Stanton is such a perfect fit that it is simply impossible to think of anyone who could have remotely approximated what he does here. Although not precisely a one-man show—there are standout bits from actors as varied as Tom Skerritt and David Lynch—it is Stanton’s show all the way, serving as a beautiful reminder of just how much of a genuine screen presence he possesses. It is tempting to consider a film like *Lucky* to be some kind of career summation but one hopes that Harry Dean Stanton will continue to be as surprisingly resilient as his character. We should be so lucky.

Saturday May 13

Lucky follows the spiritual journey of a 90-year-old atheist and the quirky characters that inhabit his off the map desert town. Having out lived and out smoked all of his contemporaries, the fiercely independent Lucky finds himself at the precipice of life, thrust into a journey of self-exploration, leading towards that which is so often unattainable: enlightenment. Acclaimed character actor John Carroll Lynch's directorial debut, *Lucky*, is at once a love letter to the life and career of Harry Dean Stanton as well as a meditation on mortality, loneliness, spirituality, and human connection.

Read Peter Sobczynski's essay, *Lucky To Know Him: The Career of Harry Dean Stanton* on pages 8 & 9.

"A beautiful showcase for the 90-year-old Harry Dean Stanton, giving one of the best performances of his remarkable career."

Brian Tallerico, *RogerEbert.com*

"A wise and wistful love letter from one remarkable character actor to another."

David Ehrlich, *Indiewire*

John Carroll Lynch

Colorado native John Carroll Lynch landed his first major film role in the Coen brothers' Academy Award-winning *Fargo* while he was a member of the Minneapolis' Guthrie Theater Acting Company. Since then, his work has spanned an impressive range of characters in a variety of genres. His more than 50 film roles include *Shutter Island*, *Gran Torino*, *Zodiac*, and most recently *Jackie* and *The Founder*. Lynch has appeared in dozens of television shows, including *American Horror Story*, *The Walking Dead*, *Billions*, and *The Americans*. He also continues to work in the theater and honored to make his film directing debut with *Lucky*.

Lucky 6:00pm



Director:
John Carroll Lynch

Starring:
Harry Dean Stanton, David Lynch,
Ron Livingston
88 minutes

**Special appearance
and Q&A with
director John Carroll Lynch**



Saturday May 13

A flop when it was released in theaters in 2007, writer-director Richard Kelly's wild follow-up to his 2001 cult favorite *Donnie Darko* is looking better and more prescient with every passing year, as this special 10th anniversary screening will prove. Mixing together science-fiction, political satire, paranoid conspiracies, an eclectic cast (including Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Sean William Scott, Mandy Moore, Kevin Smith, Wallace Shawn, Amy Poehler and Christopher Lambert) and even a couple of knockout musical numbers to boot, this ambitious, no-holds-barred epic is a singular cinematic experience and the festival is especially happy to be presenting it in glorious 35mm.

Read Peter Sobczynski's essay, *This is US: An Appreciation of "Southland Tales"* on pages 12 & 13.

Richard Kelly

Richard Kelly was born in Newport News, Virginia, the son of Lane and Ennis Kelly. He grew up in Midlothian, Virginia, where he attended Midlothian High School and graduated in 1993. When he was a child, his father worked for NASA on the Mars Viking Lander program. He won a scholarship to the University of Southern California to study at the USC School of Cinema-Television where he made two short films, *The Goodbye Place* and *Visceral Matter*, before graduating in 1997. His first feature, the cult classic *Donnie Darko*, ended up second on *Empire* magazine's list of the 50 greatest independent films of all time. He later wrote the screenplay for Tony Scott's *Domino*, produced Bobcat Goldthwait's *World's Greatest Dad* and directed the feature *The Box*, based on a short story by sci-fi writer, Richard Matheson.

Southland Tales 8:30pm



Director:
Richard Kelly

Starring:
Dwayne Johnson, Seann William
Scott, Sarah Michelle Gellar
145 minutes

**Special appearance
and Q&A with
director Richard Kelly**





This Is US: An Appreciation of “Southland Tales”

By Peter Sobczynski,
RogerEbert.com and *eFilmCritic*



When Richard Kelly went into the 2006 Cannes Film Festival with his sophomore effort, *Southland Tales*, it was one of the hotter tickets that year because people were eager to see the latest from the mind that created *Donnie Darko*, a film that had not done well on its initial release but which soon entered the all-time cult canon, and to witness what kind of film could attract a cast of talents as eclectic as Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Sean William Scott, Mandy Moore, Janeane Garofalo, John Larroquette, Amy Poehler, Wallace Shawn and the proverbial many, many more. Critics and audiences alike were completely befuddled by a sprawling three-hour-long epic that suggested a combination of *Short Cuts*, *Kiss Me Deadly*, *Blade Runner*, *Repo Man*, *Strange Days*, and other films centered on a vision of Los Angeles teetering on the brink of chaos. It was nearly a year-and-a-half later when it finally emerged in a version that was 30 minutes shorter (with Garofalo’s character being eliminated entirely save for one fleeting shot), in a release that started off as token and quickly devolved to non-existent.

And yet, as those who have managed to see it over the years can attest, this is a film that grows and lingers in the mind in an era when most multiplex offerings are forgotten the minute the end credits finish. It is a strange and ungainly work that combines goofy comedy, paranoid science-fiction, sprawling melodrama, sharp social commentary and even a musical number or two into a final product that is liable to split audiences between those who embrace it as visionary masterpiece and those who dismiss it as a pretentious disaster. The film is a bold and challenging work that is alive and kicking in every frame, and feels as fresh and vital today as it did ten years ago—possibly even more so in some respects.

How does one recap *Southland Tales*? On IMDb, there is a plot synopsis that reads “*Southland Tales* is an ensemble piece set in the futuristic landscape of Los Angeles on July 4, 2008, as it stands on the brink of social, economic and environmental disaster. Boxer Santanos (Johnson) is an action star who’s stricken with amnesia. His life intertwines with Krysta Now (Gellar), an adult film star developing her own reality television project, and Ronald Taverner (Scott), a Hermosa Beach police officer who holds the key to a vast conspiracy.” Of course, that description leaves out a few tiny details, such as the fact that the US is virtually a police state since a nuclear attack of Texas three years earlier, a vast government computer program designed to spy on American citizens, a German firm with an invention that can turn seawater into energy, and a brewing revolution with dreams of overthrowing the government. There is the fact that Ronald has been involved with some mysterious experiments that may involve alternate time lines that have left him out of sorts. It all culminates on the July 4th as

anarchy breaks out in the streets, the elite hover above it all in an elaborate zeppelin and the city—possibly the world—is on the brink of truly going out with a bang.

Like the aforementioned *Blade Runner* and *Strange Days*, Kelly does an excellent job of creating a convincing view of the not-too-distant future that relies less on elaborate special effects and more on creating a distinct and unsettling mood to get the job done. The then-futuristic L.A. that he depicts is a scarily convincing world that is perched on the brink of physical and psychological disintegration at the hands of the privileged few while the masses are either too oblivious or too wrapped up in their own messy dramas to notice or care. There are also plenty of bits of Thomas Pynchon-style screw-loose humor strewn throughout that fit in perfectly with the films trippy vibe, such as the hilariously obscene car commercial that we see at one point (though we are assured that it is the version meant for broadcast in Europe) and the scene in which Boxer’s wife (Moore, effectively skewering the good-girl vibe that she still held at the time) and Krysta confront each other for the first time. There are even a few musical moments to behold as well, the best of which is the moment when all the tension and pressure that has been building finally and cathartically explodes into a full-blown production number in which a beer-swilling Justin Timberlake dances and lip-synchs his way through a version of The Killers’ “All These Things That I’ve Done.” It is such a brilliant, out-of-left-field moment that it becomes the haunting highlight of the entire project.

Despite casting an extremely wide net in terms of his actors, Kelly gets strong performances across the board from actors who all seem to be on just the right wavelength—Johnson is especially good in what was the first film to show that he really could act and do more things than simply play the jovial muscle guy, and Scott also displays heretofore unexpected depths as an actor. The heady blend of humor, paranoia and sci-fi strangeness holds up wonderfully. There is a life and energy in the material that you can feel practically bursting through the screen. *Southland Tales* may not have won the box-office derby when it was first released but it has stood the test of time and reminds us A.) what a gifted filmmaker Richard Kelly is and B.) that we need him making new movies now more than ever.

Saturday May 13

There is light and beauty, even in the darkest of worlds. Stranded on an island in a post-apocalyptic world, teenager Dinky and her friends hatch a dangerous plan to escape in the hope of finding a better life. Meanwhile, her old friend Birdboy has shut himself off from the world, pursued by the police, haunted by demon tormentors, and with a secret inside him that could change the world forever. Winner: Best Animated Feature, Goyas.

"There are impressively lush backdrops and coloring of what was originally monochrome material, and...Rivero and Vázquez shake things up in a way that delivers a genuine jolt or moment of awe."

Jay Seaver, *eFilmCritic.com*

"A precise and rigorous transposition of instabilities, desolations and real anxieties to the plane of fables carried out by adorable talking animals."

Daniel de Partearroyo, *Cinemanía*

Sunday May 14

Sprawling, immediate, and complex, Peter Nicks's vérité documentary moves like a pulsing, timely thriller. In 2014, after over a decade of federal monitoring for misconduct and civil rights abuses, the Oakland Police Department hires Chief Sean Whent—a young, clear-eyed idealist—in hopes of bridging an historically tense divide between its officers and the community they serve. Whent's intentions and calls for transparency are immediately met with enthusiasm, but as his tenure begins, the realities of his department's scandal-plagued past coincide with fresh accusations of brutality and harassment.

"The strength, and fascination, of *The Force* is that the movie isn't on anyone's side."

Owen Gleiberman, *Variety*

"A complex, human-driven look at race relations between police and the community, and it could offer some viewers a stark conclusion: this is a permanently broken system."

Brian Tallerico, *RogerEbert.com*

Birdboy: The Forgotten Children Midnight



Directors:
Pedro Rivero & Alberto Vázquez

Starring:
(voices) Andrea Alzuri,
Eba Ojanguren, Josu Cubero
76 minutes

The Force Noon



Director:
Peter Nicks

93 minutes

Sunday May 14

Because the World Never Stops — This documentary is a revelatory look at the hidden side of the evening news.

The Arrival — A boy feels betrayed when his mother has another son and decides to give her a taste of her own medicine— by summoning another mother.

Dawn of the Deaf — The horror film puts a clever new spin on the zombie genre.

Victor and Isolina — 3-D printed figures tell the story of a Latino couple who refuse to live together.

Night Shift — Depicts a night in the life of a men's room attendant.

The Collection — This documentary depicts two friends who stumble upon a unique and valuable treasure trove of movie memorabilia.

Nutag — The hand-painted visual poem explores a dark piece of Russian history.

Mare Nostrum — A Syrian Father makes a decision that puts his daughter's life at risk.

Shorts Program #2

2:15pm



Directors:

Axel Danielson, Maximilien Van
Aertryck, Jocelyn DeBoer, Dawn
Luebke, Rob Savage, William "Davy"
Caballero, Marshall Tyler, Adam
Roffman, Alisi Telengut, Rana Kazkaz
& Anas Khalaf
92 minutes



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Sunday May 14

Frankie, an aimless Brooklyn teenager, is having a miserable summer. With his father dying and his mother wanting him to find a girlfriend, Frankie escapes the bleakness of his home life by causing trouble with his delinquent friends and flirting with older men online. As his chatting and webcamming intensify, he starts hooking up with guys at a nearby cruising beach while also entering into a cautious relationship with a young woman. As Frankie struggles to reconcile his competing desires, his decisions leave him hurtling toward irreparable consequences. Winner: Best Director, Sundance Film Festival 2017.

"A drama with a strong lead performance and even stronger sense of place."

Brian Tallerico, *RogerEbert.com*

Sunday May 14

Lee Hayden (Elliott) is an aging Western acting icon with a golden voice, but his best performances are decades behind him. He spends his days reliving old glories and smoking too much weed with his former-co-star-turned-dealer, Jeremy (Nick Offerman), until a surprise cancer diagnosis brings his priorities into sharp focus. Faced with his mortality, Lee soon strikes up an exciting, contentious relationship with a stand-up comic (Laura Prepon) as he attempts to reconnect with his estranged daughter (Krysten Ritter) and searches for one final role to cement his legacy.

"A bittersweet celebration of life, with laughs and tears in equal measure."

Dan Mecca, *The Film Stage*

**Special appearance and Q&A
with director Brett Haley**



Brett Haley

Florida native Brett Haley graduated with a BFA in directing from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. He went on to co-write and direct *I'll See You in My Dreams*, which premiered at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival, won Best Actress and Best Director at the Louisiana Film Festival, and earned Blythe Danner a for a Gotham Award for Best Actress nomination.

Beach Rats

4:45pm



Director:

Eliza Hittman

Starring:

Harris Dickinson,
Madeline Weinstein, Kate Hodge

95 minutes

The Hero

7:00pm



Director:

Brett Haley

Starring:

Sam Elliott, Laura Prepon,
Nick Offerman, Krysten Ritter

93 minutes

Sunday May 14

While holidaying in Berlin, Australian photographer, Clare, meets Andi, a charismatic local man and there is an instant attraction between them. A night of passion ensues. But what initially appears to be the start of a romance, takes an unexpected and sinister turn when Clare wakes the following morning to discover Andi has left for work and locked her in his apartment. An easy mistake to make, of course, except Andi has no intention of letting her go again. Ever.

"Shortland serves up something that's got plenty of bite to it, and Palmer gladly tears into it."

Kate Erbland, *Indiewire*

"Incredibly effective. It gets to know the innocent, while rendering the evil banal."

Noel Murray, *The Playlist*

Monday May 15

Encore presentation of *Bitch*. For more information, please see page 4.

Berlin Syndrome

9:30pm



Director:

Cate Shortland

Starring:

Teresa Palmer, Max Riemelt,
Lucie Aron

116 minutes

Bitch

3:00pm

The Chicago Film Critics Association

Founded in 1990, the Chicago Film Critics Association is dedicated to supporting and celebrating quality filmmaking and honest, passionate film criticism. For twenty-seven years, the CFCA has celebrated the rich history and exciting future of the art form and worked toward professional, charitable and educational goals.

The CFCA is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit organization. The Board of Directors currently includes Dann Gire (President), Brian Tallerico (Vice President), Erik Childress (Executive Secretary), Peter Sobczynski (Membership), Steve Prokopy (Studio Liaison), Locke Peterseim (Secretary and Speakers Bureau), and Alejandro Riera (Treasurer).

Monday May 15

Dina's getting married in a few weeks and she still has to move her boyfriend from his parents' house to her apartment, get her dress, confirm arrangements with the venue, and make peace with her family, who remain nervous for her after the death of her first husband and the string of troubled relationships that followed. Throughout it all, Dina remains indomitable in the face of obstacles large and small. She's overcome tragedy and found the man she wants and, at age 48, is bent on building the life for herself that she believes she deserves. Winner: Grand Jury Prize, Sundance Film Festival 2017.

"A tender love story, *Dina* is a documentary that could easily be mistaken for a fiction film."

John Fink, *The Film Stage*

Monday May 15

Ray is a fledgling entrepreneur who specializes in high-end simulated abductions. He jumps at the chance when a mysterious client contracts him for a weekend kidnapping with a handsome payday at the end. But the job isn't all that it seems.

"A funny, demented, dark-as-hell ride. Taylor Schilling is uninhibited and certifiable, and Pat Healy's wig might just steal the movie."

Steve Prokopy, *Ain't It Cool News*

Special appearance and Q&A with director & star Pat Healy



Pat Healy

Actor, writer, and director Pat Healy began his career on stage at Chicago's famed Steppenwolf Theatre Company and has appeared in dozens of television series and over 40 feature films including *Cheap Thrills*, *Compliance*, *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford*, and *Magnolia*. Healy has authored several episodes of the HBO series *In Treatment* and his screenplays *Strange Skies* and *Snow Ponies* both appeared on The Black List of the best un-produced scripts. *Take Me* is his feature film directorial debut.

Dina 5:00pm



Directors:
Antonio Santini & Dan Sickles

101 minutes

Take Me 7:15pm



Director:
Pat Healy
Starring:
Pat Healy, Taylor Schilling,
Alycia Delmore

83 minutes

Monday May 15

Vic Edwards (Burt Reynolds) was one of the biggest movie stars in the world, known of his mustachioed good looks and cocky swagger. With his Hollywood glory a distant memory, the now-octogenarian Vic begins reassessing his life with the passing of his beloved dog and the arrival of an invitation to receive a lifetime achievement award from the (fictional) International Nashville Film Festival. Intrigued by the promise of long-lost adulation, Vic accepts the offer. The festival, however, turns out to be very different from the glitz and glamour affair he expected, personified by his foul-mouthed, text-obsessed, punkish escort/driver for the weekend, Lil (Modern Family's Ariel Winter). Humiliated but motivated to make the most of his time in his home state of Tennessee, Vic and a reluctant Lil take off for Knoxville on a road trip neither will soon forget.

Adam Rifkin

Adam Rifkin is a Writer/Director whose eclectic career runs the gamut. Most recently Rifkin helmed *Director's Cut*, a twisted thriller penned by Penn Jillette. Rifkin also directed *Giuseppe Makes A Movie*, a documentary about filmmaker Giuseppe Andrews. Rifkin also wrote and directed the films *Look*, *The Dark Backward*, and *Detroit Rock City*, and wrote the screenplays for the family-friendly *Mousehunt* and *Small Soldiers*.

Dog Years 9:30pm



Director:
Adam Rifkin

Starring:
Burt Reynolds, Ariel Winter,
Clark Duke

94 minutes

Special appearance
and Q&A with
director Adam Rifkin



Tuesday May 16

Encore presentation of *Berlin Syndrome*. For more information, please see page 17.

Tuesday May 16

A record collector hustles for a big score while his heartbroken roommate tries to erase a terrible mistake, a teenager bears witness to her best friend's new relationship, and a rookie reporter and her demanding supervisor chase the clues of a murder case involving a life-weary clock shop owner.

"Once you settle into its groove the movie becomes much more than the sum of its parts."

David Ehrlich, *Indiewire*

"*Person to Person* is a lot like the New York character it celebrates: indefinable but unmistakable."

Michael Arbeiter, *Nerdist*

Berlin Syndrome 3:00pm

Person to Person 5:15pm



Director:
Dustin Guy Defa

Starring:
Michael Cera, Abbi Jacobson,
Bene Coopersmith
84 minutes

Tuesday May 16

When a renowned architecture scholar falls suddenly ill during a speaking tour, his son Jin (John Cho) finds himself stranded in Columbus, Indiana - a small Midwestern city celebrated for its many significant modernist buildings. Jin strikes up a friendship with Casey (Haley Lu Richardson), a young architecture enthusiast who works at the local library. As their intimacy develops, Jin and Casey explore both the town and their conflicted emotions: Jin's estranged relationship with his father, and Casey's reluctance to leave Columbus and her mother."

"A film with precise lines that captures very imprecise human emotions."

Brian Tallerico, *RogerEbert.com*

"It's a lovely debut."

A.A. Dowd, *AV Club*

Kogonada

Kogonada's visual work has been noted in *Filmmaker Magazine* ("25 New Faces of Independent Film") and *The New Yorker*, and he's written film criticism for the Criterion Collection and *Sight & Sound*. Born in Seoul and raised in the Midwest, Kogonada currently lives in Nashville with his wife and two sons. *Columbus* is his directorial feature debut.

Columbus 7:00pm



Director:
Kogonada

Starring:
John Cho, Haley Lu Richardson,
Parker Posey
100 minutes

Special appearance and Q&A with director Kogonada



Festival Credits

- Producer/Director/Festival Programmer: Erik Childress
- Director/Festival Programmer: Brian Tallerico
- Programming Advisor/Shorts Programmer: Collin Souter
- Programming Advisor/Talent Liaison: Steve Prokopy
- Programming Advisor: Peter Sobczynski
- Program Design: Ian & Darlena Simmons and Locke Peterseim
- CFCA Advisor: Dann Gire, President

Tuesday May 16

A woman has a strange encounter on her way to work: She finds herself gazing into a wild pair of eyes, and it seems that her entire life hitherto has been a joke. She can't forget that instant and becomes a hunter who indeed finally manages to lock a wild wolf in her high-rise apartment. Now she herself begins to assume a new identity, one that breaks with all the fetters of bourgeois life.

"A disturbing and uncompromising work."

Allan Hunter, *Screen Daily*

"The one safe thing to say about the film is that there never has been anything quite like it."

Todd McCarthy, *Hollywood Reporter*

Wednesday May 17

Encore presentation of *Birdboy: The Forgotten Children*. For more information, please see page 14.

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Wild 9:45pm



Director:
Nicolette Krebitz

Starring:
Lilith Stangenberg, Georg Friedrich,
Nelson & Cossa

97 minutes

Birdboy: The Forgotten Children 3:00pm



Wednesday May 17

A young British woman named Sinaloa comes to Texas to find Merle, her half-sister by way of their dead country musician father. It doesn't take long for Sinaloa to charm her way into Merle's life. Her singing awakens something in Merle and erases some of the lingering doubts about their shared bloodline. But an all-too-familiar chaos comes with it, which soon starts to unravel Merle's stable world—her job, her upcoming marriage, and an already tense relationship with her mother, Patricia. And while the family music legacy brought this stranger to town, darker motives are woven into the songs she sings, showing glimpses of a violent rage that's been building for years.

"A smart, tense movie with two great performances at its center."

Brian Tallerico, *RogerEbert.com*

"[An] absorbing, mostly low-key thriller, which builds atmosphere, psychological texture, an ingrained sense of place and a needling undercurrent of dread."

David Rooney, *Hollywood Reporter*

La Barracuda 5:00pm



Directors:
Jason Cortland & Julia Halperin

Starring:
Allison Tolman, Sophie Reid,
JoBeth Williams

100 minutes



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Wednesday May 17

Jessica James (Jessica Williams) is a young, aspiring New York playwright struggling to get over a recent breakup and also make it in the competitive theater world. Reluctantly forced into dating by a well-meaning friend, she meets the recently divorced Boone (Chris O'Dowd). An unlikely duo at first, together they discover how to make it through the tough times in a social media obsessed post-relationship universe, while realizing they like each other a lot.

"A comedy centered around a multi-dimensional African-American woman who is smart, funny, vulnerable, sensual, charming, flawed, resilient, well-educated, an inspiring teacher and a loving friend feels almost like the cinematic equivalent of a unicorn."

Claudia Puig, *TheWrap*

"Williams along with her burgeoning star power and ability to bring absolute charm and sparkle to every second of the film elevates it."

Kate Erbland, *Indiewire*

Jim Strouse

Writer, director, and Indiana native Jim Strouse's directorial debut *Grace is Gone* with John Cusack premiered at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival, garnering both the Audience Award and the Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award and was nominated for the Grand Jury Narrative Prize. His other works include *The Winning Season* with Sam Rockwell and Emma Roberts and *People, Places, Things* starring Jemaine Clement, Regina Hall and Jessica Williams. Strouse's screenwriting includes *Lonesome Jim* directed by Steve Buscemi, and he also serves as faculty member at the New York School of Visual Arts.

The Incredible Jessica James

7:00pm



Director:

James C. Strouse

Starring:

Jessica Williams, Chris O'Dowd, Noël Wells

85 minutes

**Special appearance
and Q&A with
director Jim Strouse
and star Noël Wells**



Wednesday May 17

After graduating college, struggling 20-something Emily Martin (Noël Wells) moved from Austin, Texas to Los Angeles to pursue a career in comedy. When a loved one falls sick, she returns to Austin and runs into her ex-boyfriend and his amazing and intimidating new girlfriend. Low on funds and stuck in Texas for the weekend, Emily stays with the two of them and quickly finds her way into the social circle of a local female badass. She shows Emily a good time and tries to keep her from spinning out over the new girlfriend, the ways her ex has changed, and her own choices and guilt.

"A very effective story that works as a love letter to both a life and a city in transition."

Michael Roffman, *Consequence of Sound*

Noël Wells

Noël Wells is an actor, writer, and director based in LA. In Film, she recently finished her directorial debut *Mr. Roosevelt* which premiered at SXSW, winning both the Audience Award and the Lone Star Award. Beachside Films produced, Noël wrote the script and also stars. She recently co-starred in the indie comedy *Happy Anniversary* opposite Ben Schwartz as well as *F*cking People* opposite Josh Radnor and produced by Mason Novick. Noël is also featured in Jim Strouse's movie *The Incredible Jessica James* opposite Jessica Williams, Chris O'Dowd, and Keith Stanfield, which premiered at Sundance and will be distributed by Netflix. She also can be seen in Robert Schwartzman's film *Dreamland* which premiered at Tribeca earlier this year, and *Forev* which premiered at the LA Film Festival. In TV, Noël can be seen starring opposite Aziz Ansari in the Emmy Nominated Netflix series *Master of None*. She is also currently developing a show at Comedy Central as creator/writer/star, tentatively entitled *Power Couple*. Noël was a featured player on *Saturday Night Live*, where she broke out with her spot-on celebrity impressions including Lena Dunham and Emma Stone. Originally from Texas, she was discovered from her sketch and parody videos which have garnered over 12 million hits on YouTube.

Mr. Roosevelt 9:15pm



Director:

Noël Wells

Starring:

Noël Wells, Nick Thune, Daniella Pineda

90 minutes

**Special appearance
and Q&A with
director and star
Noël Wells**



Thursday May 18

Closing Night!

Encore presentation of *Lucky*. For more information, please see page 10.

Thursday May 18

Closing Night!

Encore presentation of *Mr. Roosevelt*. For more information, please see page 25.

Thursday May 18

Closing Night!

Deep in the heart of New York's ultra-orthodox Hasidic Jewish community, Menashe, a kind, hapless grocery store clerk, struggles to make ends meet and responsibly parent his young son, Rieven, following his wife Leah's death. Tradition prohibits Menashe from raising his son alone, so Rieven's strict uncle adopts him, leaving Menashe heartbroken. Meanwhile, though Menashe seems to bungle every challenge in his path, his rabbi grants him one special week with Rieven before Leah's memorial. It's his chance to prove himself a suitable man of faith and fatherhood, and restore respect among his doubters.

"Works as both a rare introduction to a way of life largely unseen as well as a touching depiction of fighting for what's most important in life."

Jordan Raup, *The Film Stage*

"As if the Dardennes came to Brooklyn, only funnier."

David D'Arcy, *Screen International*

Lucky
2:00pm

Mr. Roosevelt
4:00pm

Menashe
6:00pm



Director:
Joshua Z. Weinstein

Starring:
Menashe Lustig

82 minutes

Thursday May 18

Closing Night!

Lauded filmmaker David Lowery (*Ain't Them Bodies Saints*, *Pete's Dragon*), reunites with his collaborators for a haunted tale like no other—one conceived in secret and fueled by the spirit of pure, creative expression. Lowery's meticulously sparse narrative contemplates a spectral figure who was once a man (Casey Affleck). Prematurely taken from this Earth, he makes his way toward his former home, where he is fated to remain forevermore. Shrouded in a white sheet, he observes the lament of his grief-stricken lover (Rooney Mara). Bearing unseen witness to her pain, the wisp stands sentry for years to come, interacting only with time as it hurtles further and further forward, the remnants of his humanity quietly evaporating.

"A sneakily ambitious meditation on life after death, the endurance of romantic connection, and the value we place on the spaces we occupy."

A.A. Dowd, *AV Club*

"It's daring, strange, and unforgettable."

Brian Tallerico, *RogerEbert.com*

A Ghost Story
8:00pm



Director:
David Lowery

Starring:
Casey Affleck, Rooney Mara

87 minutes

Thanks To:

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