



cleveland international film festival

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 33rd CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
March 19-29, 2009
at Tower City Cinemas in Tower City Center

FACTS AND FIGURES

- Attendance of 66,476 (27% increase over 32nd CIFF)
- Biggest single day attendance EVER: 9,515
- 68 sold-out screenings
- 143 feature films
- 174 short subjects
- 64 countries of origin
- Films from ALL 7 continents
- Over 100 visiting filmmakers and other guests from around the world
- Over 5,000 FilmSlam high school student attendees
- 100 staff members
- Over 350 volunteers
- 51 Community partners
- 32 Corporate Sponsors
- 69 Film Sponsors
- 65 Media Sponsors
- 125,000 Program Guides printed

AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD WINNERS

ROXANNE T. MUELLER AWARD

The 2009 **Cleveland Magazine Roxanne T. Mueller Audience Choice Award for Best Film** went to:

Cherry Blossoms

Directed by Doris Dörrie, Germany

Runners-Up to the Cleveland Magazine Roxanne T. Mueller Audience Choice Award for Best Film this year were:

The Way We Get By

Directed by Aron Gaudet (USA)

Sin By Silence

Directed by Olivia Klaus (USA)

Herb and Dorothy

Directed by Megumi Sasaki (USA)

Forgotten Transports: To Estonia

Directed by Lukas Pribyl (Czech Republic)

Prom Night in Mississippi

Directed by Paul Saltzman (USA)

GREG GUND MEMORIAL STANDING UP FILM COMPETITION

The selections included in Standing Up are films with a conscience. Standing Up celebrates social justice and activism by presenting films with messages that cannot and should not be ignored.

Thanks to the generosity of The George Gund Foundation and the establishment of an endowment in memory of Greg Gund, Standing Up and its \$5,000 cash prize will remain a permanent part of the Cleveland International Film Festival.

Determined by audience vote, the 2009 Greg Gund Memorial Standing Up Film Competition Award went to:

The Way We Get By

Directed by Aron Gaudet (USA)

AMERICAN INDEPENDENT AWARD

The winner of the \$2,500 cash prize for the 2009 American Independent Film Competition as determined by audience vote was:

Prince of Broadway

Directed by Sean Baker (USA)

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN FILM COMPETITION

This competition is generously sponsored by George Gund and Lara Lee. The winner of the \$10,000 cash prize for the Central and Eastern European Film Competition was:

The Investigator

Directed by Attila Gigor (Hungary)

The three jurors this year were: Mihai Chirilov, film critic, co-founder and Director of the Transilvania International Film Festival; Britta Erickson, associate director of the Denver Film Society which produces Starz Denver Film Festival and Film on the Rocks, and Producer of the documentary "Convention;" Andrew Murphy, Programming Manager for the Atlantic Film Festival Association.

NESNADNY + SCHWARTZ DOCUMENTARY FILM COMPETITION

This competition is generously sponsored by Nesnadny + Schwartz. The winner of the \$5,000 cash prize for the 2009 Nesnadny + Schwartz Documentary Film Competition was:

Trinidad

Directed by PJ Raval & Jay Hodges (USA)

The three jurors were: Christian Gaines, Director of Festivals for Withoutabox, a division of IMDb.com; Brad Horvath, Producer with Halifax-based Arcadia Entertainment; Shane Smith, Executive Producer of In-flight Entertainment at Spafax Canada.

INDEPENDENT SHORTS JURY AWARDS PROGRAM

The jurors were: Goldie Alvis, adjunct professor at Cleveland State University, the University of Akron, and Case Western Reserve University; Kathleen Cerveny, Director of Evaluation and Institutional Learning at the Cleveland Foundation; Matt Dickman, Vice-President of Digital Marketing and practice group leader at Fleishman-Hillard.

They awarded the following prizes:

Best Animated Short Film Award (Academy Award® eligibility)

Sponsored by Reminger Co., L.P.A. (\$1,000)

Hungu - Winner

Directed by Nicolas Brault (Canada)

Procrastination – Honorable Mention

Directed by Johnny Kelly (United Kingdom)

Best Documentary Short Film Award

Sponsored by Jules and Fran Belkin (\$1,000)

Down Here - Winner

Directed by Charles Wilkenson (Canada)

Frozen City – Honorable Mention

Directed by Alex Perez (USA)

Best International Short Film Award

Sponsored by Mike and Nicki Cancelliere (\$1,000)

Surprise! - Winner

Directed by Barrice Marucar (France)

Pig – Honorable Mention

Directed by Bosilka Simonovitch (France)

Best LGBT Short Film: Given in Celebration of the Life of Nikki Babbit

Sponsored by Jamie and Harold Babbit (\$1,000)

Second Guessing Grandma

Directed by Bob Giraldi (USA)

Best Live Action Short Film Award (Academy Award® eligibility)

Co-sponsored by Anne Bloomberg and Alan Gordon Lipson & Judy Harris (\$1,000)

Gilles - Winner

Directed by Constant Mentzas (Canada)

Lightborne (Alumbramiento) – Honorable Mention

Directed by Eduardo Chaperro-Jackson (Spain)

Best Student Short Film Award

Sponsored by Mike and Nicki Cancelliere (\$1,000)

Kwame

Directed by Edward Osei-Gyimah (USA)

Best Women's Short Film Award

Sponsored by Jinny and John Johnson (\$1,000)

Love, Sadie

Directed Naiti Gamez (USA)

The Clover and Maggie Award: In Celebration of Life

Sponsored by Barbara Hawley and David Goodman (\$1,000)

Forget-Me-Not

Directed by Katia Grivot (France)

Jesse Epstein Humanitarian Award

Sponsored by Kodak Motion Picture Film (\$1,000)

Crossing Midnight

Directed by Kim Synder (USA)

Kodak Best Ohio Short Film Award

Sponsored by Kodak Motion Picture Film (\$1,500 in Kodak film stock)

Operation Falcon

Directed by Tim O'Hara (USA)

The Spalding Award: In Celebration of Joy

Sponsored by Marcie Goodman and John C. Williams (\$1,000)

Bronx Balletomane

Directed by Jeremy Joffe (USA)

The 2009 Cleveland State University Audience Choice Award for Best Short Film

The \$1,000 prize was awarded to:

Toyland

Directed by Jochen Alexander Freydank (Germany)

SOMEONE TO WATCH: Ramin Bahrani and Gerardo Naranjo

Since 2003, the CIFF has selected filmmakers whose careers are on the rise and whose work deserves extra attention. This year we focused on two outstanding filmmakers.

Ramin Bahrani has set his three feature films within two places of personal import: Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where he was born of Iranian parents, and New York City, where he received his BA in Film from Columbia University. Bahrani also studied film abroad in Iran and France. His first film, "Man Push Cart," premiered at the Venice Film Festival and earned praise around the world. Following Bahrani's second film, "Chop Shop," he received the "Someone to Watch" Independent Spirit Award in 2008. His third and most recent film, "Goodbye Solo," won the international film critics' FIPRESCI award for best film at the Venice Film Festival.

Gerardo Naranjo, born in the small town of Salamanca, concentrated on studying film, especially the work of Jean-Luc Godard and the French New Wave. After years of schooling himself and his friends, he began his formal education at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City. He later moved to Los Angeles to earn his MFA at the American Film Institute. In

2004, he released his first feature film "Malachance." Two years later he wrote and directed "Drama/Mex," which garnered international acclaim. Naranjo's most recent film, "I'm Gonna Explode," is lauded as an integral player in the rebirth of Mexican cinema.

OPENING NIGHT – SPONSORED BY DOLLAR BANK

"Lightbulb" was screened for 1,100 patrons as part of the Opening Night festivities, followed by the Opening Night Gala at the M.K. Ferguson Plaza located in Tower City Center. Special guests, Mike Cram, Greg Goodell and Dallas Roberts were in attendance at the gala.

CLOSING NIGHT

"The Brothers Bloom" was spotlighted as the Closing Night film at the 33rd CIFF, with 1,955 people in attendance for the last round of films. Patrons then enjoyed the Closing Night party around the fountain at Tower City Center.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The Cleveland International Film Festival is committed to using film as an impetus for educating people on issues faced around our world today. The educational programs of the CIFF include: Cultural Journeys, FilmForums (including "Lights! Camera! Action Steps!"), and FilmSlam.

CULTURAL JOURNEYS

Cultural Journeys (sponsored by Cleveland State University) offers unparalleled opportunities to learn about different countries, societies, languages, issues, and points of view through film. This year, Cultural Journeys emphasized the culture of the Middle East and Arabic World. There were thirteen films to choose from: ***Garbage Dreams, Lemon Tree, Loose Rope, The Market-A Tale of Trade, Melodrama Habibi, My Marlon and Brando, Ordinary Boys, Ramchand Pakistani, Strangers, Summer Book, Two Ladies, Under the Bombs*** and ***Youssou N'Dour***.

FILMFORUMS

FilmForums are moderated panel discussions that offer Film Festival audience members the opportunity to learn more about the issues brought up in the film – to ask questions and to share their ideas. FilmForums take place immediately after the conclusion of selected film screenings. Panels include filmmakers, educators, and people who have experienced issues addressed in the films.

This year the CIFF launched "Lights! Camera! Action Steps!" with the help of the Cleveland Colectivo giving circle. CIFF staff and Colectivo volunteers worked with visiting filmmakers and experts to develop "action steps" that audience members could take after the conclusion of FilmForums.

The eleven FilmForum films selected for the 33rd CIFF represented a wide range of issues that affect our world today:

- **Ask Not:** Does being openly gay in the military endanger our national security? And what drives the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy?
- **At the Edge of the World:** How is it possible that we are still trying to save whales from wholesale slaughter 20 years after an international ban on killing them?
- **The Garden:** Is it possible for the underdog to triumph over big business and big government?
- **Generation RX:** Are we helping our kids function better in their daily lives with the increased use of "adult" prescription drugs? Or are we medicating them to squelch behaviors that aren't convenient for us?
- **The Lovers:** Fifty years after this movie became an international scandal and led to a significant U.S. Supreme Court case, do we know pornography when we see it?

- **Poly Cultures: Food Where We Live:** Could we eat well on food produced only in Northeast Ohio as a means to better sustain the land and protect the environment?
- **Prodigal Sons:** How do families resolve the inevitable conflicts that evolve through their histories together?
- **Prom Night in Mississippi:** Does the confluence of Obama's election and the openness of today's youth foretell of a more integrated society?
- **Sin by Silence:** What leads some victims of domestic abuse from silence to victims?
- **Tiny Tears:** What is the future for children infected and impacted by HIV/AIDS?
- **The Wrecking Crew:** For better or worse, what was the impact of the Wrecking Crew on rock 'n roll music?

FILMSLAM

FilmSlam (sponsored by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and Cuyahoga Community College, with additional support provided by the Eva L. and Joseph M. Bruening Foundation; the Thomas H. White Foundation, a KeyBank trust; and the Kiwanis Foundation of Cleveland) is a program that gives students from Northeast Ohio high schools the opportunity to see new films by some of the world's most innovative filmmakers, as well as to discuss the films topics and themes with the visiting filmmakers. The eight films chosen for FilmSlam 2009 included: **Between the Folds** (USA), **French Short Films** (France, Canada), **German Short Films** (Germany), **Prom Night in Mississippi** (Canada, USA), **Scenarios USA** (USA), **Short Subject Program** (International), **Spanish Short Subjects** (Spain, Argentina), and **The Way We Get By** (USA).

Community Partners (Non-profit organizations for mutually-beneficial promotional activities)

- A Place for Us
- ACLU of Ohio
- AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland
- American Advertising Federation
- American Veterans for Equal Rights
- Bellflower Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse
- Case Western Reserve University Inamori International Center for Ethics and Excellence
- Cleveland Botanical Garden
- Cleveland Council on World Affairs
- Cleveland Institute of Art Cinematheque
- Cleveland Metroparks
- Cleveland Museum of Art
- Cleveland Museum of Natural History Green City Blue Lake Institute
- Cleveland Music School Settlement
- Cleveland Pride
- Cleveland Public Art
- Cleveland Sight Center
- Council of International Programs
- Cuyahoga River RAP
- Czech Cultural Center Sokol Greater Cleveland
- Domestic Violence Center
- Earth Day Coalition
- Equality Ohio
- Esperanza
- French-American Chamber of Commerce
- Friends of Capitol Movie Theatre / Gordon Square Arts District
- Global Cleveland
- Greater Cleveland Sports Commission
- Heights Community Congress

- Hungarian Heritage Association
- International Community Council
- International Services Center
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- Italian Cultural Garden Foundation
- Karamu House
- LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland
- Magnolia Clubhouse
- MOCA Cleveland
- MotivAsians
- Ohio State University Extension
- Organization of Chinese Americans of Greater Cleveland
- Passport Project
- Pittsburgh Filmmakers
- Plexus
- Polish American Cultural Center
- Project S.A.F.E.
- Rock and Roll Hall of Fame & Museum
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- Kodak Motion Picture Film
- Process Creative Studios
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OFFICIAL AIRLINE: Continental Airlines

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OFFICIAL RESTAURANT: Hard Rock Cafe

OFFICIAL BAR & GRILLE: Tower 230 and Tower Deli

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- The Cleveland Foundation
- Community West Foundation
- The George Gund Foundation
- Kiwanis Foundation
- John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
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GOVERNMENT

- Cuyahoga Arts and Culture
- National Endowment for the Arts
- Ohio Arts Council
- Ohio Department of Travel and Tourism

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FILM SPONSORS

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- Evening at the Cedar Lee Theatre
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- Carolyn Friedland
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WPXI-TV NBC
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WSYX ABC
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ABOUT THE CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

The Cleveland International Film Festival promotes artistically and culturally significant film arts through education and exhibition to enrich the life of the community.

For more information, visit the Cleveland International Film Festival website at www.clevelandfilm.org or call 216.623.FILM.

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(updated 4.2.09)