

IV EDITION
MACAO
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL &
AWARDS

MacauDaily 澳門每日時報®
Times

SUPPLEMENT

TUE 03.12.2019



FILM FESTIVAL OPENS WITH PRAISED DARK COMEDY

FOCUSING ON FIRST AND SECOND TIME FILM-MAKERS

The 4th International Film Festival & Awards establishes Macau as a hub for new film-makers in Asia. Local audiences will be drawn by a colorful and exciting program, while international guests will not only get to taste the excitement of Macau as a destination but meet the Chinese and Asian industries, exploring the best of new films.

The industry experts in the organizing team will help film-makers and industry from both sides of the globe to get to know each other in an informal manner. IFFAM also forges an identity for international competition, which is a thrilling showcase for first and second time film-

-makers.

The festival acts as a meeting place for Asian and western film-makers and industry to collaborate in both artistic and business terms, to build a local audience for diverse world cinema, while also putting a spotlight on the city as a new cultural destination and location for film production. Taika Waititi's provocative Nazi dark comedy "Jojo Rabbit" has been set as the opening night gala screening at the fourth edition.

The festival packs together a 10-film competition section that includes recent festival favorites Gitanjali Rao's animation "Bombay Rose," and barely fictionalized modern-day slavery drama "Buoyancy,"

by Rodd Rathjen, alongside gala screenings of "Shaun The Sheep 2: Farmageddon," and Japan's "Dance With Me," by Shinobu Yaguchi.

A strong Chinese presence includes "Better Days," by Derek Tsang; Cannes Critics Week film "Dwelling In The Fuchun Mountains," by Gu Xiaogang; "To Live To Sing," by Johnny Ma; and Singaporean director Anthony Chen's "Wet Season."

To single out the 20th anniversary of the Macau SAR, a special five-film section was introduced this year, featuring exclusively domestic productions.

The 2019 IFFAM runs from December 5 to 10.

SHOWING INSIDE

The Competing Films I
The Opening Film Jojo Rabbit
The Jurors

Love & Liberty is in the air THE C

Ten feature films of a variety of topics and origins are in competition for the top IFFAM Award 2019. They will be shown in Macau venues - from December 5 to 10 - as Asian or international premieres. In this first supplement, MDT presents the first five competing movies, by alphabetic order while the second installment will be published tomorrow

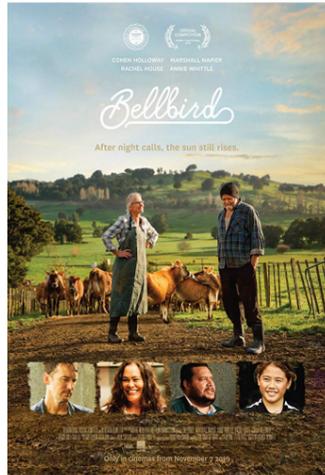


BELLBIRD

Ross is a man of few words, and when his wife Beth suddenly dies, so does his spirit. His son Bruce is reluctant to change his own life to help run the farm but can see his father struggling, both physically and emotionally. When young Marley keeps turning up to help Ross with the daily milking, he ignores Ross's sullen moods.

Beth was Marley's teacher and friend, so he is quietly determined to stick around and help out. Local Connie is also in for the long haul and they come together with others in the community to share the load, but Ross is reluctant to accept their help.

Almost a year after Beth's death the situation unexpectedly comes to a head and Ross has to finally connect with his own grief and let go. He realises he has the support he needs to continue and that his son Bruce needs to find his own place in the world.



BOMBAY ROSE

A red rose brings together three tales of impossible loves. Love between a Hindu girl and a Muslim boy. Love between two women.

Love of an entire city for its Bollywood stars. Based on true events, Bombay Rose is a chronicle of intimate yet collective struggles of people who migrate from small towns, seeking minimal life in the maximum city.



BUOYANCY

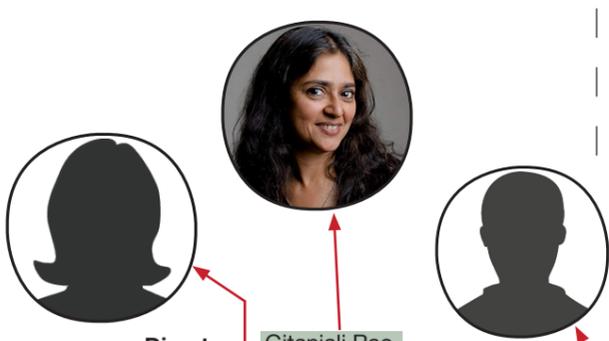
Deep in rural Cambodia 14 year-old Chakra works the rice fields with his family. He yearns for independence and seeks out a broker who can get him paid work in a Thai factory. Without telling his family, Chakra travels to Bangkok to make his fortune.

After a grueling journey across the border with other Cambodians, Chakra finally arrives in Thailand. But there he and fellow Cambodian Kea realise that the Broker has lied to them. He sells Chakra and Kea as slaves to a fishing captain.

Trapped at sea indefinitely, they are forced to work 22 hours a day trawling trash fish and surviving on a handful of cold rice. The ruthless captain quickly weeds out those slaves weakened by the conditions or trying to escape, and throws them overboard. Schooled in brutality and with nothing to lose, Chakra starts to understand what it will take to attain freedom.



Director Hamish Bennett
Producers Orlando Stewart, Catherine Fitzgerald
Cast Marshall Napier, Cohen Holloway, Rachel House, Kahukura Retimana, Stephen Tamarapa
Scriptwriters Hamish Bennett
Cinematographer Grant McKinnon
Editor Jason Pengelly
Production Designer Shayne Radford
Music Karl Steven
Costumes Designer Emily Carter
Production Companies Stella Maris Productions Ltd., Herringbone Productions Ltd., Blueskin Films
World Sales LevelK Film



Director Gitanjali Rao
Producers Rohit Khattar, Anand Mahindra
Principal Voice Cast: Cycli Khare, Amit Deondi, Gargi Shitole, Makrand Deshpande
Scriptwriter Gitanjali Rao
Animator Sangita Khatu, Sanjay Dengle, Prashant Shikare
Editor Gitanjali Rao
Production Designer Rupali Gatti
Music P.M. Satheesh
Production Companies Cinestaan Film Company, Les Films d'Ici
World Sales C International Sales



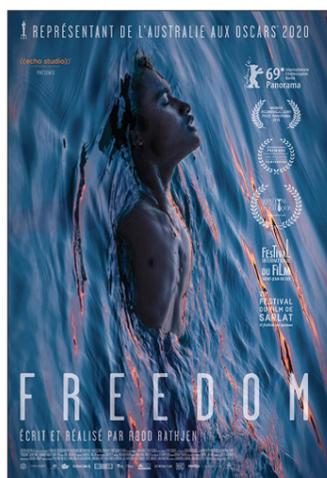
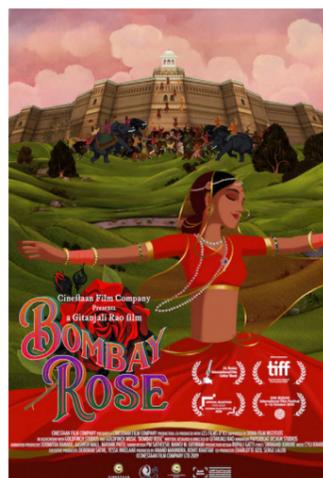
Director Rodd Rathjen
Producer Samatha Jennings
Cast Sarm Heng, Thanawat Kasro, Mony Ros, Saichia Wongwirot
Scriptwriter Rodd Rathjen
Cinematographer Michael Latham
Production Designer Bethany Ryan
Editor Graeme Pereira
Music Lawrence English
Costumes Designer Salin Kuong
Production Company Causeway Films
World Sales Charades

SHOWTIME
Dec 07 Wed | 5:00pm | Macao Cultural Centre

SHOWTIME
Dec 08 Thu | 3:30pm | Macao Cultural Centre

SHOWTIME
Dec 08 Thu | 9:45pm | Macao Cultural Centre

COMPETITION - I



FAMILY MEMBERS

Lucas (17) and Gilda (20) travel to a small Argentine beach town to fulfill the last wishes of their recently deceased mother: scatter her remains in the ocean. Unfortunately, the only “remains” they have is her prosthetic hand, but as Gilda says when they throw it into the surf, “it’s the same as long as we get it off our backs”.

Ready to return home, the two siblings find themselves stranded by a nationwide bus strike. Lucas, obsessed with bodybuilding and contact fighting, finds the nearly deserted town fertile ground for exploring his sexuality and the limits of his body. Gilda, still affected by her recent stay at a rehab center and obsessed with her “bad energy”, tries countless therapies and divination methods in order to find some meaning in the world.

Trapped in their own limbo, the two confront the empty space left by their mother’s suicide as they bid farewell to their adolescence and face the ambiguity of life, death and fitness.



GIVE ME LIBERTY

Vic, a hapless young Russian American, drives a handicapped transport in Milwaukee where he shares an apartment with his grandfather.

Already late on a day when street protests break out, Vic reluctantly agrees to ferry his grandfather and a dozen elderly Russians to a funeral, but they’re distressed when he stops first in a predominantly African American neighborhood to pick up Tracy, a black woman with ALS. On the verge of being fired, Vic’s day goes from bad to worse.

Director Mateo Bendesky
Producer Agustina Costa Varsi
Cast Tomás Wicz, Laila Maltz, Alejandro Russek Ofelia Fernández, Edgardo Castro, Javier Abril Rotger

Scriptwriters Mateo Bendesky
Cinematographer Roman Kasseroller
Production Designer Mirella Hoijman
Editor Ana Godoy
Music Santiago Palenque
Costumes Designer Analia Bernabé
Production CompaniesVolpe Films, Varsovia Films
World Sales Patra Spanou Film Marketing & Consulting

Director Kirill Mikhanovsky
Producer Alice Austen
Cast Chris Galust, Lauren “Lolo” Spencer, Maksim Stoyanov, Steve Wolski, Michelle Caspar, Ben Derfel

Scriptwriters Alice Austen, Kirill Mikhanovsky
Cinematographer Wyatt Garfield
Production Designer Bart Mangrum
Editor Kirill Mikhanovsky
Costumes Designer Kate Grube
Production Companies Give Me Liberty, Mfg.
World Sales Wild Bunch

SHOWTIME
Dec 07 **Wed** 7:00pm Macao Cultural Centre

SHOWTIME
Dec 08 **Thu** 7:15pm Macao Cultural Centre

IFFAM FAQ

Q WHAT IS THE LINE-UP FOR THIS YEAR’S DIRECTOR’S CHOICE SEGMENT?

A Three films are chosen, Tokyo Story, Blow Up, and The 400 Blows. Yasujiro Ozu’s Tokyo Story is timeless, as moving and universal today as it was on its release in 1953, bewitching audiences and film-makers alike with its simple structure and resonant story of family, love and loss. Much of Francois Truffaut’s The 400 Blows’ drama takes place on the wintry streets of Paris, filled with artful scenes of pure, glorious cinema. With Blow Up, Michelangelo Antonioni captured the revolution of fashion, art, drugs, sex and protest that had engulfed London and made his finest film.

Q WHAT FILMS WILL BE SCREENED AT THE GALA PROGRAM?

A Dance With Me, Judy, and A Shaun the Sheep Movie: Farmageddon. Shaun, the baa-baad-blacksheep is back in his second cinematic outing. This time he takes his new extra-terrestrial friend to Mossingham Forest to find her lost spaceship. Shinobu Yaguchi, whose Survival Family screened at the first IFFAM in 2016, returns to Macau. Dance With Me is a winning comedy musical in which song and dance aren’t merely incidental but the basis of the plot. Judy portrays a period in Garland’s life through a compassionate lens, portraying the woman as a fragile artist with an extraordinary gift as a performer who battled daily with anxiety.

Q WHAT IS IFFAM PROJECT MARKET?

A Taking place during the International Film Festival & Awards Macao in the framework of its Industry Hub, the IFFAM Project Market will gather 14 promising feature-film projects under one roof. Designed around collaboration, the programme exists to bridge the gap between distant lands, bringing filmmakers together with the experienced industry partners and financiers that they will need to bring their projects to life. 14 projects grouped according to type – including Genre Projects that represent the very best in genre-oriented fare, high level Auteur Projects, Macao Projects, and one each from International Partners – are participating in a vigorous program with industry professionals from around the globe.

Q WHO IS THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR?

A Mike Goodridge. An independent film producer, Goodridge also has his own company. Having worked in senior editorial positions at Screen International for 19 years including 12 years as US editor in Los Angeles and 3 years as editor in London, he was also a programmer for the international Kinoscope section of the Sarajevo Film Festival from 2012 to 2017 with several books written on film directors, and is a member of BAFTA and the European Film Academy.



OPENING NOIR WITH JOJO RABBIT



Long ago, turning Nazi Germany into a joke was verboten. Or, at least, it seems like it was; it's actually hard to imagine a time when that was the case. Charlie Chaplin made Hitler into a figure of ridicule in "The Great Dictator," released in 1940. I grew up watching "Hogan's Heroes," which portrayed life in a German wartime prison – the inept sadist Col. Klink! – as a kind of Nazi sitcom day camp (with the emphasis on camp). "Springtime for Hitler," the scandalous musical number from Mel Brooks' "The Producers," was once the cutting edge of black comedy, but not for the last 50 years. Quentin Tarantino thumbed his nose at Nazis with jaunty glee in "Inglourious Basterds," and who would have had it any other way?

That said, let's give "Jojo Rabbit" credit for this much: It's the first hipster Nazi comedy. Written and directed by the New Zealand-born Taika Waititi ("Thor: Ragnarok"), it's like a Wes Anderson movie set during the Third Reich. The opening-credits sequence hits a devilish note of rock 'n' roll effrontery I hoped would continue, as the Beatles' German-language version of "I Want to Hold Your Hand" plays over documentary clips of World War II Germans raising their hands in the "Heil Hitler!" salute. This is followed by scenes at a Hitler Youth camp, where Sam Rockwell, as the squad leader, and Rebel Wilson, as some sort of seething assistant, parade themselves as confidently one-note caricatures.

And then there's the movie's satirical trump card. Waititi, looking like Michael Palin in an old Monty Python sketch, keeps popping up as a kind of stylized goof-head version of Adolf Hitler, who speaks in aggressive ana-

chronisms ("That was intense!" "I'm stressed out!" "Correctamundo!" "That was a complete bust!" "So, how's it all going with that Jew thing upstairs?"), sounding like a petulant mean-girl version of the Führer.

So why are we watching this cartoon-fantasy Hitler? He's the imaginary friend of Jojo Betzler (Roman Griffin Davis), a goggled-eyed, tousle-haired 10-year-old boy – is it a coincidence that he looks like a young version of Chaplin? – who has grown up in the Third Reich and is still in thrall to it. It's all that he knows. Since his father is away in the war, Waititi's Hitler, who shows up whenever Jojo needs counseling, is like a fairy godfather who happens to believe in genocide.

Once you get used to this rather affable satirical Hitler (though he does have his tantrums), which takes all of two minutes, he's not what I would call bombs-away hilarious, unless you're the sort of person who still finds "Springtime for Hitler" outrageous. Then again, the ultimate intent of the comedy in "Jojo Rabbit" isn't to make us laugh. It's to get the audience to flatter itself for liking a movie that pretends to be audacious when it's actually quite tidy and safe. The comedy is the hook, the bait, the amuse-bouche, the cue for us to detach ourselves from whatever we're watching and feel good about it (as opposed to merely disengaged). It's part of the "Jojo Rabbit" package – a movie that's trying to hip itself into the center of the awards season (and just might). It's this year's model of Nazi Oscar-bait showmanship: "Life Is Beautiful" made with attitude.

From Variety

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION JURY



PETER CHAN HO-SUN (HONG KONG SAR) - PRESIDENT.

A Chinese film director, producer and screenwriter, Peter Ho-Sun Chan is regarded as one of the most accomplished and successful Hong Kong filmmakers in recent history. Born in Hong Kong, Chan spent his childhood years in the Tsim Sha Tsui section of Hong Kong, his teen years in Bangkok, Thailand, and studied film in Los Angeles during the early 1980s.



TOM CULLEN (UK). Born in Wales, Tom Cullen is a versatile,

multi-awarded actor who has just made his directorial debut with a film he also wrote, Pink Wall. A graduate of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, he burst into public consciousness back in 2011 with a lead role in the breakthrough drama Weekend, directed by Andrew Haigh.



ELLEN ELIASOPH (US). Ellen R. Eliasoph is a veteran film

executive and producer who has spent the last 25 years building bridges between China's film industry, Hollywood and the global film market. The first Hollywood executive to be based in China, she established Warner Bros.' Beijing office in 1993. She imported The Fugitive to China as the first Hollywood revenue-sharing film.



DIAN SASTROWARDOYO (INDONESIA). Born and raised

in Jakarta, Indonesia, Dian Sastrowardoyo is an actress and producer, who began her acting career in 1999 in the film Shooting Star directed by Rudy Soedjarwo. Appeared in more than a dozen films, she won numerous awards including best actress at the Deauville Asian and Singapore film festivals in 2002 for Nan Achnas' Whispering Sands.



MIDI Z (MYANMAR). Born in Myanmar, Midi Z moved to

Taiwan at the age of sixteen. His graduation film, Paloma Blanca, was invited to several international film festivals in 2006 including Busan and Gothenburg. In 2011, Return to Burma, his debut feature, was selected for Busan New Currents and Rotterdam Tiger competition.