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**15th Annual Stony Brook Film Festival Scheduled for July 22-July 31
at Stony Brook University Announces Program:
International and American Premieres Set to Screen**

June 1, 2010, Stony Brook, NY—The 15th Annual Stony Brook Film Festival will bring the best in independent film from around the world to audiences this summer, beginning with a unique opening night double bill on Thursday, July 22. Two outstanding dramas from The Netherlands, *The Storm*, a U.S. Premiere, and *Bride Flight*, an East Coast Premiere, have been chosen to start the festival.

More than 15,000 filmgoers are expected at the 10-day festival. Seven world premieres, five U.S. premieres, eight East Coast premieres and six New York premieres will be among the 32 feature and short films presented during the Stony Brook Film Festival from July 22 through July 31 on the large Main Stage screen at Staller Center for the Arts at Stony Brook University.

Prices and Schedules

Film passes are \$75 for ten days of films. Visit www.stonybrookfilmfestival.com or call (631) 632-ARTS to order. Tickets for individual screenings can be purchased starting Monday, July 12. Single tickets are \$9 general admission; \$7 for students and seniors. (A ticket includes a short film followed by a feature through most of the Festival.) Tickets to the Opening Night party and the Closing Night awards reception are also on sale.

Opening Night

The Storm, on Thursday, July 22 at 7:00 pm, stars Sylvia Hoeks and Barry Atsma, followed by a 9:15 pm screening of *Bride Flight*, which includes a strong ensemble cast including Karina Smulders, Waldemar Torenstra, Anna Drijver and Elise Schaap. Sylvia Hoeks, the Dutch actress and central character of *The Storm*, will attend Opening Night, as will its main producer, Alain De Levita, whose company in The Netherlands has been instrumental in bringing films to the Stony Brook Film Festival before.

The riveting dramas, *The Storm* and *Bride Flight*, are both the work of director Ben Sombogaart, and the stories are driven by one of the most critical post World War II events, the devastating North Sea Flood of 1953.

Stony Brook Film Festival Director Alan Inkles notes, “Our Opening Night is unique in film fest circles: two Dutch films in a double billing by the same director. The producer, Alain De Levita produced *Alice in Glamourland (Ellis in Glamourland)*, which shared a Jury Award for Best Feature at Stony Brook in 2005. We are honored to screen *The*

Storm this year as well as *Bride Flight*. *The Storm* and *Bride Flight* were shot with only ten months between them. *Bride Flight* was made first, and then *The Storm* followed.”

“It seems the support for *The Storm* was unprecedented—filming took place in an area where permission was given to open floodgates and 90 landowners allowed their farmlands to be submerged specially for the film. Digital technology also played a major part in creating realism in the film. Our Festival will follow the historical chronology and open with *The Storm*, since the story of *Bride Flight* is about the emigration of young Dutch women to New Zealand after the North Sea Flood,” said Mr. Inkles.

World Premieres

The Pardon

Returning filmmaker Tom Anton, (*At Last*), brings the World Premiere of *The Pardon* to the Stony Brook Film Festival this year. *The Pardon* is based on the true story of Toni Jo Henry, the only woman to be sentenced to the electric chair in the State of Louisiana for a 1940 robbery and murder. Playing the 26-year-old Toni Jo is Jaime King (*The Spirit, My Bloody Valentine*) who will attend the screening along with Tom Anton and Sandi Russell (writer/producer) on Friday, July 23 at 9:30 pm.

Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story

This World Premiere documentary, *Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story*, celebrates the contributions of Jewish major leaguers and the special meaning that baseball has had in the lives of American Jews. Interviews with Al Rosen, Hank Greenberg and Sandy Koufax as well as baseball managers and fans, including Larry King and Ron Howard, complement archival materials.

Peter Miller is the Director/Producer of *Jews and Baseball*. His award-winning documentaries include the film *Sacco and Vanzetti*; the *American Experience* PBS series “A Class Apart”; and *The Internationale*, shown on PBS and the winning documentary at the Woodstock Film Festival. He has produced numerous documentaries by Ken Burns, including *The War* and *Jazz*. He teaches documentary filmmaking at Columbia University’s MFA program in film. Mr. Miller will attend the World Premiere at Stony Brook on Sunday, July 25 at 5:00 pm.

Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story is written by Ira Berkow, sports columnist and feature writer for *The New York Times* for 26 years. He shared the Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting in 2001 and is the author of 18 books, including *Minority Quarterback and Other Lives in Sports*.

Autobiographical, Biographical and Historically-Driven Films

Many of the films in the 2010 Festival are based on true stories, including *The Pardon*. Along with the Dutch films that revolve around the North Sea Flood of 1953, (*The Storm, Bride Flight*) there are numerous films this year that reflect the director’s own story or are historically based.

Berlin 36 - A German film directed by Kaspar Heidelbach is a fictionalized version of Jewish high jumper Gretel Bergmann's experience competing in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. Karoline Herfurth and Sebastian Urzendowsky star in the film. Screening Sunday, July 25 at 7:15 pm.

Kaifeck Murder – East Coast Premiere

Based on the biggest unresolved murder case in Germany, a slaying on a remote Bavarian farm, *Kaifeck Murder* is directed by Esther Gronenborn. Benno Fürmann (*North Face*) and Alexandra Maria Lara (*Downfall*) star. Screening Monday, July 26 at 9:15 pm.

The Big Dream (Il Grande Sogno)- East Coast Premiere

An autobiographical film by director Michele Placido, a policeman during the student protests in 1968 who eventually became an actor. "The 1968 that I relate here is that of my 'conversion': that of a young man of twenty from southern Italy, a policeman who, after beating up university students, understood their protests and crossed to the other side of the barricades," writes Mr. Placido. The film stars Riccardo Scamarcio, Jasmine Trinca and Luca Argentero. Screening Tuesday, July 27 at 9:30 pm.

The Army of Crime – Based on the story of actual Resistance fighters in Paris led by a poet of Armenian descent, Missak Manouchian. The story of the group that fought against Nazi occupation is a powerful World War II Holocaust drama. Directed by Robert Guédiguian. Screening Thursday, July 29 at 7:00 pm.

Howl- East Coast Premiere

In an ode to Allen Ginsberg, the biographical film stars James Franco, performing "Howl" in a smoky bar and recreating the early Ginsberg years. In black and white and color, with animation accompanying the reading of the poem. Written and directed by Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman. Screening Thursday, July 29 at 9:40 pm.

Last Train Home

A documentary by Lixin Fan is about the mass movement of Chinese workers leaving the cities to return to their rural villages at Chinese New Year, focusing on one family. Screening Friday, July 30 at 7:00 pm.

The Sicilian Girl - N.Y. Premiere

The true story based on the life of Rita Atria, a 17-year-old daughter of a Mafioso. When her father and brother were murdered she was the first to break the code of silence and go to the police. Writer/director Marco Amenta made a documentary from the same material in 2002. Screening Friday, July 30 at 9:00 pm.

Closing Night

Mao's Last Dancer – East Coast Premiere –Based on a true story, the autobiography of Li Cunxin, a Chinese peasant boy chosen to study ballet. A film about his journey to America and his quest for freedom. Directed by Bruce Beresford (*Driving Miss Daisy, Tender Mercies*). Li Cunxin is played by Birmingham Royal Ballet dancer-turned-actor, Chi Cao. Screening Saturday, July 31 at 8:30 pm.

U.S. Premieres

New features shown for the first time in the U. S. include:

Love and Savagery – U.S. Premiere – Directed by John N. Smith. Filmed in The Burren in Ireland. A Canadian geologist meets a woman who is about to dedicate her life to the Church. Starring Allan Hawco and Sarah Greene. Screening Sunday, July 25 at 9:30 pm.

Ayla - U.S. Premiere - Directed by Su Turhan. An independent Turkish woman in Germany deals with family, traditions and temptations. Screening Monday, July 26 at 7:00 pm.

Bon Appetit – U.S. Premiere — Directed by David Pinillos. Set inside the kitchen of a Zurich gourmet restaurant. Screening Wednesday, July 28 at 9:15 pm.

Beloved Berlin Wall – U.S. Premiere – Directed by Peter Timm. A romantic comedy about the last days of the GDR (East Germany). Starring Felicitas Woll and Maxim Mehmet. Screening Tuesday, July 27 at 7:00 pm.

American Independent Films

A select showing of American indie films rounds out the Stony Brook Film Festival: The East Coast Premiere of *Five Star Day* directed by Danny Buday with Cam Gigandet (*Twilight*), Jena Malone (*Book of Stars*, 2001 Stony Brook Film Festival; *Donnie Darko*, *Into the Wild*), Brooklyn Sudance and Max Hartman.

Lovely, Still – East Coast Premiere of a film by director Nicholas Fackler, starring Martin Landau and Ellen Burstyn, which unfolds to provide a poignant look at the effects of aging. Screening Saturday, July 24 at 7:00 pm.

The Extra Man – N.Y. Premiere. Directed by Shari Springer Berman and Robert Pulcini. A quirky comedy starring Kevin Kline, Paul Dano, Katie Holmes, John C. Reilly, Cathy Moriarity and Alicia Gornanson. A quirky comedy about a male escort who serves as a social companion for wealthy widows. Screening Saturday, July 24 at 9:30 pm.

Howl- East Coast Premiere- with James Franco playing the beat poet Allen Ginsberg. Also with Mary-Louise Parker, Jon Hamm, Jeff Daniels, David Strathairn, Alessandro Nivola, Treat Williams, Aaron Tveit, Bob Balaban, John Prescott, Todd Rotondi and Andrew Rogers. Screening Thursday, July 29 at 9:40 pm.

Short Films

Twelve short films have been selected for the Stony Brook Film Festival out of hundreds of entries. Five are World Premieres being shown for the first time at Stony Brook. Short films screen before features at the Festival: before films on Friday, July 23 through Wednesday, July 28.

About the Festival

The Stony Brook Film Festival has a reputation for being one of the best on the circuit, and was dubbed “super selective” by *Moviemaker Magazine*. Formats accepted for projection at the Festival are 35 mm and beta formats. The Festival is produced by Staller Center for the Arts, Long Island’s most comprehensive arts center.

Filmmakers attend screenings to represent their films and winning filmmakers are brought back for the closing night awards, which will be hosted by film critic John Anderson once again this year. The reception is held on the Main Stage of Staller Center directly after the closing night film screening.

Having a film at Stony Brook is a career highlight for many filmmakers because of the 1,000-seat packed theatre and large screen, quality of the screening, the intelligence and enthusiasm of the audience, the accommodations and the receptions.

For more information about past festivals and a complete schedule of this summer’s films, go to www.stonybrookfilmfestival.com.

Presenting sponsors of the Stony Brook Film Festival are HBO, Suffolk County, Teachers Federal Credit Union, The Village Voice and WALK 97.5 Radio.

About Staller Center for the Arts

Staller Center for the Arts, Stony Brook University’s cultural showplace, is located in the center of campus. Staller Center has been the home of the Stony Brook Film Festival every summer since its beginnings, which started with classics and art films. Staller Center offers performances in dance, music, art, theatre, and film from around the world and is a cultural resource to the campus and community.

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Photos:

The Storm is one of two Dutch films directed by Ben Sombogaart opening the 15th Annual Stony Brook Film Festival on Thursday, July 22. Actress Sylvia Hoeks (pictured) will attend Opening Night.

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Bride Flight will screen after *The Storm* on Opening Night at the Stony Brook Film Festival.

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World Premieres include the documentary *Jews and Baseball: An American Love Story* on Sunday, July 25 at 5:00 pm, narrated by Dustin Hoffman and *The Pardon*, directed by Tom Anton. *The Pardon* screens on Friday, July 23 at 9:30 pm.

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