

**For Immediate Release**

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**Stars Expected at 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Stony Brook Film Festival Opening Weekend**

July 15, 2014, Stony Brook, NY –The opening days of the Stony Brook Film Festival will have recognizable faces from movies and TV: **Karina Smirnoff** (“Dancing with the Stars”), **Ralph Macchio** (*The Karate Kid*); **Joe Pantoliano** (*The Matrix*), **Daphne Rubin-Vega** (Original Broadway cast *Rent* - Mimi; “Smash”); and **Bebe Neuwirth** (*Jumanji*, “Frasier”) are expected to attend the Stony Brook Film Festival in support of new independent films.

*Across Grace Alley*, a 25-minute short film written, directed and produced by Ralph Macchio, will open the Stony Brook Film Festival on Thursday, July 17 at 7:00 pm, preceding the U.S. premiere of a poignant feature from Germany, *Back on Track*. Ralph Macchio was Karina Smirnoff’s partner on TV’s “Dancing with the Stars.” She makes her acting debut in the film. Newcomer **Ben Hyland**, who plays a ten-year-old boy coping with his parents’ divorce in *Across Grace Alley*, will also be attending.

Joe Pantoliano, a character actor who has more than 100 film, television and stage credits to his name, is expected to attend the screening of *The Identical* along with producer Yochanan Marcellino on Friday, July 18 at 9:30 pm to support the New York premiere of the film. The rock and roll tale with original music tells the story of identical twins separated at birth, with one going on to lead an Elvis-like career.

*Fall to Rise*, a film written and directed by Jayce Bartok, who has been at Stony Brook with premieres in the past, (*The Cake Eaters*), will have Daphne Rubin-Vega at the Saturday, July 19, 7:00 pm screening, along with many others who worked on the film. In *Fall to Rise*, Rubin-Vega plays a dance teacher who is a friend to a struggling ballet star.

Bebe Neuwirth’s film, written and directed with Chris Calkins, *Jerome’s Bouquet*, a 17-minute short, will screen on Sunday, July 20 at 7:00 pm. Bebe Neuwirth is known for her acting, singing and dancing career, and presented a one-woman show, “Stories with Piano,” at the 2012 Staller Center Gala.

Presenting sponsors generously supporting the Stony Brook Film Festival are Applied DNA Sciences-James A. Hayward; Campolo, Middleton & McCormick LLP; HBO, Suffolk County, Teachers Federal Credit Union, The Village Voice and WALK 97.5 Radio. As in past years, there was no entry fee to submit a film for consideration in 2014 thanks to the sponsors’ support of the Festival.

About Staller Center for the Arts

Staller Center for the Arts, Stony Brook University’s cultural showplace, has been the home of the Stony Brook Film Festival every summer since its beginnings. Staller Center offers over 200 performances annually in dance, music, art, theatre, and film from around the world each season.

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