

Two LI film festivals coincide in July

May 31, 2013 by RAFER GUZMÁN / rafer.guzman@newsday.com



Two local film festivals will go head to head next month when the Stony Brook Film Festival runs July 18-27, while the [Long Island International Film Expo](#) in [Bellmore](#) takes place July 17-25.

The expo, usually held earlier in July, moved its dates because of a scheduling conflict with its regular venue, Bellmore Movies.

The nearly identical festival dates mean moviegoers may find themselves choosing between [Nassau](#) and [Suffolk](#) counties for an evening of screenings and special guests. Stony Brook will have a wide array of foreign films and is offering Q&A sessions with producer Christine Vachon ("At Any Price") and filmmakers from around the world. The expo will feature more films with local connections but is also promising appearances by celebrity

guests Ally [Sheedy](#) and William Sadler ("Iron Man 3").

Both festivals are playing down any sense of competition. "It gives people in Nassau and Suffolk an awful lot of films to see over the course of two weeks," says Alan Inkles, director of the Stony Brook festival and of its venue, the Staller Center. "I think film festivals are the wave of the future. Any chance for people to get their films seen, in any way, is a good thing."

The expo's director, Debra Markowitz, said in a statement, "We'll have the Island covered when it comes to independent films." Markowitz is also director of the Nassau County Film Office.

The Stony Brook festival, now in its 18th year, includes 33 features and shorts. Highlights include an opening-night appearance from Israeli director Eran Riklis, who will present his film "Zaytoun," starring [Stephen Dorff](#) as an Israeli pilot taken prisoner by Palestinians during the 1982 Lebanese War. Vachon, who co-founded the production company Killer Films and recently joined the faculty of Stony Brook Southampton, will be honored with a career achievement award. She'll also present her latest film, "Deep Powder," about a boarding-school club that runs drugs.

One screening sure to draw interest is "TWA Flight 800," a documentary made for the EPIX television channel about the airliner that exploded over the South Shore in 1996 and killed all 230 people on board, prompting a long, costly and contentious air disaster investigation.

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Director Kristina Borjesson will appear at the screening with Tom Stalcup, who launched his own independent investigation.

Individual tickets for Stony Brook festival screenings are \$9 and go on sale July 8. Passes good for all films are on sale now for \$80 at stonybrookfilmfestival.com.

The 16th annual edition of the expo boasts a total of 146 films and is programmed in blocks that typically consist of one feature preceded by several shorts.

The festival begins with two "warm-up" days of screenings and opens officially July 19 with "Wet Behind the Ears," a comedy about an underemployed young woman written and directed by past expo winner Sloan Copeland. Festival favorite Fred Carpenter returns with his latest crime film, "Send No Flowers," starring [Sean Young](#) as a woman trying to replace her murdered father as the head of a mob ring. There's also an all-horror block July 20 that is becoming a festival tradition of sorts.

The expo also plans to offer panels on scriptwriting and film distribution, plus a breakfast panel with filmmakers. The closing-night party will honor Sheedy and Sadler, and awards presenters include Robert Clohessy ("Blue Bloods") and Federico Castelluccio ("[The Sopranos](#)").

Individual tickets for each block of the expo are \$10 and passes are \$25-\$65. All tickets and passes are on sale now at liifilmexpo.org.

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