

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY
STALLER
CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Diverse Films from Nineteen Countries
Highlight the 23rd Annual Stony Brook Film Festival
Presented by Island Federal Credit Union, July 19-28, 2018

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Photos attached:

The Etruscan Smile (Thora Birch, Brian Cox- top photo, Brian Cox- 2nd photo, Rosanna Arquette and Brian Cox 3rd photo)

photo credit: Po Valley Productions

Aurora Borealis: Eszaki feny (Closing Night feature, Franciska Töröcsik pictured) photo credit: The Hungarian National Film Fund

June 11, 2018, Stony Brook, NY-- The 2018 Stony Brook Film Festival presented by Island Federal Credit Union presents films of great diversity this summer, both in their themes and their settings. The schedule for the ten-day Festival, held at Staller Center at Stony Brook University from July 19-28, is available at stonybrookfilmfestival.com.

Alan Inkles, founder and director of the Stony Brook Film Festival, comments, "Films from nineteen different countries, from Scotland to Spain, Argentina to Afghanistan, and coast to coast across the United States, promise to take filmgoers on an extraordinary journey. We have carefully curated this Festival to give patrons a great mix of the best in new independent films. Many filmmakers and actors are coming to the Festival to represent their films and will take the stage for questions and answers. It's a highlight of the Festival to hear from them."

This year the Stony Brook Film Festival travels from a war-torn past to an embattled future, from light-hearted comedies to heart-stopping thrillers, and from modern class struggles to sexual abuse stories that feel straight out of the #MeToo movement. Some of the films take place over decades, while others unfold in real time. There are social-media addicted mobsters, Shakespearian partygoers, and a shoe-stealing soccer prodigy.

The opening night film, *Shelter*, is an international spy thriller from returning filmmaker Eran Riklis (*Lemon Tree*, *Zaytoun*) that follows an Israeli agent protecting a Lebanese informant in Germany, and features actress Golshifteh Farahani (best known to U.S. audiences from *Paterson*, and to Stony Brook audiences from *My Sweet Pepperland* and *About Ella*) as well as acclaimed Israeli actress Neta Riskin. (Thursday, July 19 at 8:00 pm)

The closing night film, ***Aurora Borealis: Északi fény***, was directed and co-written by the incredible Márta Mészáros, who—with 65 directing credits to her name going all the way back to 1954—is one of Hungary’s most accomplished female directors. A film that is part mystery and part war-drama, it not only uncovers atrocities during the Soviet occupation of Hungary, it also confronts secrets from the past and the measures people will take to protect those they love. (Saturday, July 28 at 8:00 pm)

Premieres at the Stony Brook Film Festival

The World Premiere of ***Dean Darling*** on Saturday, July 21st at 4:00 pm is an ambitious, coming-of-age drama created by local, Long Island talent and shot entirely in Smithtown and Coney Island on a miniscule budget. The film was written and directed by Calogero Carucci and features Douglas Towers, Joel Widman and Allison Frasca.

Acclaimed actor Brian Cox returns to the Stony Brook Film Festival in the U.S. Premiere of ***The Etruscan Smile***, in which a rugged, old Scotsman who has reluctantly left his beloved Scottish Isle for medical treatment finds his life transformed by a new-found bond with his baby grandson. This gem also stars Thora Birch, JJ Field, and Roseanna Arquette, with several of the actors planning to be in attendance at the 9:30 pm screening on Saturday, July 21st.

Other U.S. Premieres include ***Octav***, a nostalgic, life-affirming story from Romania (Saturday, July 21st at 7:00 pm), ***Outdoors***, a captivating film about a city couple building a home in the country from Israel (Tuesday, July 24 at 7:00 pm), ***Growing Up***, a riotous, romantic comedy from Spain (Friday, July 20 at 9:30 pm), and ***A Dysfunctional Cat***, a quirky story about two Iranians navigating their arranged marriage—and a very bizarre cat—while living in Germany (Wednesday, July 25 at 7:00 pm).

Female Filmmakers at the Stony Brook Film Festival

Fourteen films are by female directors, with ***Growing Up*** written and directed by Spanish filmmaker Clara Martínez-Lázaro, and ***A Dysfunctional Cat***, written and directed by Iranian-German filmmaker Susan Gordanshekan. Another female-helmed feature, ***The Tale***, has writer and director Jennifer Fox recounting her personal story of sexual abuse at a very young age in an intense, unnerving and cathartic work starring Laura Dern, Elizabeth Debicki, Ellen Burstyn and Isabelle Nélisse (Friday, July 27 at 7:00 pm).

Other women filmmakers include writer and director Isabel Coixet, whose film ***The Bookshop*** was adapted from the novel by Penelope Fitzgerald about a widow who puts her grief behind her and opens a bookshop in a small, seaside town in England (Friday, July 20 at 7:00 pm). Virna Molina, who co-wrote and co-directed ***Symphony for Ana***, recounts the struggle of high school students during the bloodiest coup d’etat in Argentina (Thursday, July 26 at 7:00 pm). Writer and director Samantha Davidson Green, whose ***Thrasher Road*** is a big-hearted father/daughter road trip, screens on Sunday, July 22 at 9:30 pm. Skye Borgman, director of the documentary ***Abducted in Plain Sight***, recounts the absolutely bizarre double-kidnapping of Jan Broberg in the 70’s (Sunday, July 22 at 4:00 pm). Female-directed short films have been chosen that will

stretch boundaries and touch hearts-- shorts by Amy Wang, writer/director/actress Ashley Grace, Tesia Walker, Jackie L. Stone, and Helen Crosse.

Films with Heart and Films with Guts

Other selected films include ***My Brother Simple***, a heart-warming and humorous story about a young man trying to take custody of his mentally-handicapped adult brother, screening on Sunday, July 22 at 7:00 pm. ***The Guilty***, an edge-of-your-seat thriller from Denmark that takes place entirely in an alarm dispatch facility, screens on Monday, July 23 at 9:30 pm. ***Trauma***, an intense documentary about the medics and pilots of a US Black Hawk medevac unit in Afghanistan screens on Tuesday, July 24 at 9:30 pm. Wednesday, July 25 at 9:30 pm showcases ***Funny Story***, a dark comedy about a womanizing former TV star trying to reconnect with his estranged daughter. The emotional journey of ***A Boy, A Girl, A Dream*** unfolds in real time against the backdrop of the 2016 Presidential election on Thursday, July 26 at 9:30 pm.

Other shorts include stories about a young woman with cerebral palsy falling in love, an Israeli patient finding out she has an Arab doctor, a foreman protecting her workers from the Department of Labor, and a law school student trying to explain a rather dire situation to police detectives.

Film passes are only \$90, which includes twenty features and sixteen shorts over ten days along with many perks. Each film is treated as a special event, with films shown on one of the region's biggest screens in the Staller Center's 1000-seat Main Stage theatre. Single tickets for individual films become available on July 2. Closing Night Reception tickets are available and winners of Jury and Audience Awards will be announced. Visit stonybrookfilmfestival.com for more information.

Staller Center for the Arts produces and curates the Stony Brook Festival presented by Island Federal Credit Union, with all screenings at Staller Center on the Stony Brook University campus.

Additional Festival sponsorship is provided by Altice Media Solutions; Campolo, Middleton & McCormick, LLP; HBO; Suffolk County; and WLIW21.

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Photo credit: Po Valley Productions
The Etruscan Smile with Brian Cox, Thora Birch and Rosanna Arquette.





Aurora Borealis: Északi fény
(Closing Night Feature)

