



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **North Texas Film Festivals Announce BEST OF FESTS Film Festival Event (January 10-13, 2019)**

**First of its kind event celebrates film  
with special selections representing 22 film festivals  
in Dallas, Fort Worth, and North Texas**

**Dallas, TX (November 14, 2018)** – Film festivals based in Dallas, Fort Worth, and North Texas have joined forces for the first time to present a **Best of Fests** film festival on January 10-13, 2019. Twenty-two different film festivals will present films that either were popular with their audiences or represent their programming esthetic. The films will be screened at venues across Dallas that include Alamo Drafthouse Cinemas, Cinépolis Luxury Cinemas, Studio Movie Grill, and the Texas Theatre.

Participating film festivals include; 3 Stars Jewish Cinema, Asian Film Festival of Dallas, Crossroads Film & Music Festival, Czech That Film, Dallas International Film Festival (DIFF), Dallas Jewish Film Festival, Dallas Video Fest, Deep in the Heart Film Festival, Denton Black Film Festival, EarthxFilm, Festival de Cine Latino Americano, Flicks By Chicks, Fort Worth Independent Film Showcase, Frame4Frame, Lone Star Film Festival, Oak Cliff Film Festival, Pegasus Film Festival, Q Cinema, Sons of the Flag Film Festival, South Asian Film Festival, Thin Line Film Festival, and Women Texas Film Festival.

EarthxFilm Festival Producer Emily Hargrove (one of the organizers who made Best of Fests happen), said, “The film festival community in Dallas, Fort Worth and North Texas has long been an unsung hero for film lovers locally, bringing films to audiences that they likely would never have had an opportunity to see on a big screen or even be aware of, otherwise. These films come from different sources, different cultures, and countries, yet demonstrate the universal magic and power of storytelling through cinema. We wanted to do something that has never been done before: bring all of these unique film festivals

together and offer this sampling of these incredible festivals as a gift to film lovers across our region.”

Best of Fests will open on Thursday, January 10, at the Texas Theatre with DIFF’s offering of David Blue Garcia’s thriller TEJANO, about a South Texas farmhand, who attempts to smuggle cocaine across the Mexican border in order to help his ailing Grandfather. The film will be preceded by one of the Flicks by Chick’s short film selections, Liz Cardenas’s IMAGO, about a 15-year-old gay teen’s decision to fully embrace his true identity.

Variety is the theme (as it naturally would be) throughout the festival, including; the Asian Film Festival of Dallas’s screening of Sung-hoon Kim’s RAMPANT, a fresh take on the zombie film sub-genre; Deep in the Heart Film Festival’s screening of Christopher J. Hansen’s BLUR CIRCLE, a drama about a woman still struggling to come to terms with her son’s death two years prior when she meets a mysterious stranger who may change everything; the Lone Star Film Festival’s offering of Rob Smat’s drama The Last WHISTLE, about a high school football coach facing protests from the town when he keeps pushing his team toward a championship despite one of his star players collapsing during a practice; and Q Cinema’s screening of Matthew Montgomery’s DEVIL’S PATH, which follows two gay men as they are attacked and then pursued by murderous thugs looking to finish the job.

Best of Fests will also offer some entertaining and compelling documentaries, including; 3 Stars Jewish Cinema’s screening of Ferne Pearlstein’s THE LAST LAUGH, which looks at the use of the Holocaust as comedy and movie material; Dallas Video Fest’s offering of Mark Birnbaum’s THE BIG BUY: TOM DELAY’S STOLEN CONGRESS, about the infamous, criminally convicted former Texas Congressman’s dealings which led to him being put in jail; EarthxFilm’s screening of Matthew Testa’s THE HUMAN ELEMENT, which follows photographer James Balog (CHASING ICE) as he explores how environmental change is affecting the lives of everyday Americans; Festival de Cine Latino Americano’s screening of Jose Manuel Davila’s 1950: THE NATIONALIST UPRISING, about the experiences of Puerto Ricans who participated in the Nationalist Uprising of 1950 to free Puerto Rico from the United States of America; and Women Texas Film Festival’s presentation of Skye Borgman’s film festival hit, ABDUCTED IN PLAIN SIGHT, a true crime documentary about a naïve, church going Idaho family that were “groomed” by a sociopathic neighbor to hand over their 12-year-old daughter to him.

EarthxFilm is the 501c3 fiscal sponsor of Best of Fests. Sponsors and partners include EarthX, Prekindle, Selig Polyscope, Arts OnePass, Alamo Drafthouse, Texas Theatre, Studio Movie Grill, Cinépolis Luxury Cinemas, Kelly Kitchens PR and Wildworks PR.

Film festival passes and tickets are on-sale now. For more information, go to: [www.bestoffests.org](http://www.bestoffests.org).

## **The Best of Fests Film Festival official selections:**

### **3 STARS JEWISH CINEMA**

#### **THE LAST LAUGH**

Director: Ferne Pearlstein

Country: USA, Running Time: 88 min

In this outrageously funny and thought-provoking film, director Ferne Pearlstein puts the question about comedy's ultimate taboo (the Holocaust) to legends including Mel Brooks, Carl Reiner, Sarah Silverman, Gilbert Gottfried, Alan Zweibel, Harry Shearer, Jeff Ross, Judy Gold, Susie Essman, Larry Charles, Jake Ehrenreich, and many other critical thinkers, as well as Holocaust survivors themselves. These interviews are woven together with a vast array of material ranging from THE PRODUCERS and "Curb Your Enthusiasm," to clips of comics such as Louis CK, Joan Rivers, and Chris Rock, to newly discovered footage of Jerry Lewis' never-released film Holocaust comedy THE DAY THE CLOWN CRIED, to rare footage of cabarets inside the concentration camps themselves. In so doing, THE LAST LAUGH offers fresh insights into the Holocaust, our own psyches, and what else—9/11, AIDS, racism—is or isn't off-limits in a society that prizes freedom of speech.

### **ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL OF DALLAS**

#### **RAMPANT**

Director: Sung-hoon Kim

Country: USA, Running Time: 129 min

A darkness looms over ancient Korea: murderous creatures known as Night Demons have overrun the country. Returning from a long imprisonment abroad, Prince Ganglim discovers that it will take the strength of his entire kingdom to stop the bloody rampage spreading across the nation in this fresh new take on zombie horror from the studios that brought you TRAIN TO BUSAN.

### **CROSSROADS FILM & MUSIC FESTIVAL**

#### ***Lonesome Dove – Episode 1***

Director: Rob Hartill

Country: USA, Running Time: 80 min

Episode 1 of the legendary mini-series about love and adventure in the Great American West. Gus McCrae and Woodrow Call, two retired Texas Rangers, lead a peaceful existence in the small Texas town of Lonesome Dove. Then an old friend of dubious repute arrives, telling tales on the fortunes to be made in the uncharted territory of Montana. The pair are thus persuaded to undertake a hazardous cattle drive to build an empire in the new land.

### **CZECH THAT FILM**

#### **8 HEADS OF MADNESS**

Director: Marta Nováková

Country: USA, Running Time: 105 min

Story of the talented Russian poet, Anna Barkova (1906-1976), who spent twenty-two years of her life in the Gulags. She survived with a help of her poems, owing it to hope for better days and to her passionate love for a woman named Valentina.

## **DALLAS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**

### **TEJANO**

Director: David Blue Garcia

Country: USA, Running Time: 88 min

Desperate for cash to save his sick Grandfather, a South Texas farmhand resorts to the extreme: he breaks his own arm to smuggle a cast made of cocaine across the Mexican border.

## **DALLAS JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL**

### **THE BODY COLLECTOR**

Director: Tim Oliehoek

Country: USA, Running Time: 143 min

An investigative journalist fights to unmask a prominent art collector as a murderous Nazi war criminal, in the gripping true-life drama THE BODY COLLECTOR. When multimillionaire Pieter Menten (Aus Greidanus) decides to auction off a portion of his prized art holdings, Dutch newspaper editor Hans Knoop (Guy Clemens) receives a tip from an Israeli colleague about Menten's hidden wartime past. As the mild-mannered but steely and idealistic journalist sets out to uncover the elusive facts, he is warned off the story by fellow reporters, stonewalled by bureaucrats, and threatened by the untouchable Menten and his wife (Carine Crutzen).

## **DALLAS VIDEO FEST (PAWFEST/DOCUFEST/ALTFICTION)**

### **THE BIG BUY: TOM DELAY'S STOLEN CONGRESS**

Directors: Mark Birnbaum, Jim Schermbeck

Country: USA, Running Time: 75 min

A look at the criminal investigation of Texas Congressman Tom DeLay on campaign fundraising charges and his efforts to redraw the state's Congressional districts.

*Preceded by*

### **MOSCA**

Director: Lizette Barrera

Country: USA, Running Time: 10 min

A wayward teen revisits her hometown to reconnect with her cousin, despite her aunt's wishes.

## **DEEP IN THE HEART FILM FESTIVAL**

### **BLUR CIRCLE**

Director: Christopher J. Hansen

Country: USA, Running Time: 92 min

Jill Temple is a single mother still grieving the loss of her young son after he disappeared two years ago. Unable to face the possibility that she has lost him forever, she pursues every lead and meets Burton Rose, a man with a shrouded past. The details of that past

- and how Burton has responded to it - force Jill to look at her life in a completely new way.

## **DENTON BLACK FILM FESTIVAL**

### **STEPS**

Directors: Jay Rodriguez, Rock Davis

Country: USA, Running Time: 110 min

9 STEPS is the dramatic story about the shortcomings of a man, Brian Coleman, whom after being robbed and shot fourteen years earlier, succumbs to a life of addiction and ultimately loses the love of his life and the gift of knowing his only child. It's a story of recovery, redemption, love, and forgiveness and the steps people must take in their lives to get to these places.

## **EARTHXFILM**

### **THE HUMAN ELEMENT**

Director: Matthew Testa

Country: USA, Running Time: 76 min

Renowned photographer James Balog (CHASING ICE) uses his camera to reveal how environmental change is affecting the lives of everyday Americans. Following the four classical elements— air, earth, fire and water— to frame his journey, Balog explores wildfires, hurricanes, sea level rise, coal mining, and the changes in the air we breathe. With compassion and heart, THE HUMAN ELEMENT tells an urgent story while giving inspiration for a more balanced relationship between humanity and nature.

## **FESTIVAL DE CINE LATINO AMERICANO**

### **1950: THE NATIONALIST UPRISING**

Director: Jose Manuel Davila

Country: USA, Running Time: 105 min

Five Puerto Ricans who participated in the Nationalist Uprising of 1950 to free Puerto Rico from the United States of America, speaks about the history of this forgotten struggle and the consequences in their lives.

## **FLICKS BY CHICKS**

### **AFTER WORDS: THE OPPOSITE OF FOREPLAY**

Director: Maria Bunai

Country: USA, Running Time: 11:45 min

Claire searches for love in a story told entirely by what happens after sex.

## **IMAGO**

Director: Liz Cardenas

Country: USA, Running Time: 8 min

The courageous, life-altering decision to never let anyone bully him again – not even his own father – leads a 15-year-old gay teen to fully embrace his true identity. Based on a true story.

## **TIGHTLY WOUND**

Director: Shelby Hadden

Country: USA, Running Time: 10 min

A woman recounts her experience living with chronic pelvic pain – how health professionals have failed her, men have rejected her, and shame, anger, and hatred have plagued her body.

## **FORT WORTH INDEPENDENT FILM SHOWCASE & FRAME4FRAME FILM FESTIVAL**

### **APACHE WARRIOR**

Director: David Salzberg

Country: USA, Running Time: 93 min

APACHE WARRIOR is a feature film made with 100% unprecedented real footage, actual attack pilot gun tapes, multiple cameras and interviews. The film takes the audience into the cockpit of a squadron of Apache Attack Helicopters during the opening salvo of what would be one of the largest invasions in US and World History.

## **LONE STAR FILM FESTIVAL**

### **THE LAST WHISTLE**

Director: Rob Smat

Country: USA, Running Time: 88 min

When the all-star player of the local high school football team collapses during practice, all eyes turn to the storied head coach. Instead of mollifying the situation, the coach tries to maintain the team's winning streak. The town turns against him, leading to a lawsuit from the player's mother.

## **OAK CLIFF FILM FESTIVAL**

### **RELAXER**

Director: Joel Potrykus

Country: USA, Running Time: 91 min

With the impending Y2K apocalypse fast approaching, Abbie is faced with the ultimate challenge -- the unbeatable level 256 on Pac-Man -- and he can't get off the couch until he conquers it.

*Preceded by*

### **END TIMES**

Director: Bobby Miller

Country: USA, Running Time: 9:06 min

A man finds a dying squirrel in a park and has an existential crisis in this surreal, absurd, live-action short film about death.

## **PEGASUS FILM FESTIVAL**

### **AMERICA**

Director: Crislyn Fayson

Country: USA, Running Time: 3:36 min

A song written by Erica Burkett that touches on the realism of what America has become.

### **FIELD TRIP**

Director: Bob Cummins

Country: USA, Running Time: 6:06 min

A young group of children trek across their hometown to rescue their friend from an old schoolhouse

### **THE LAST SPRING**

Director: Montana Brock

Country: US, Running Time: 4:42 min

A subtle perspective on nature and how distant it can feel due to the sometimes overwhelming industrial industry.

### **LOUISE**

Director: Emily Miller

Country: USA, Running Time: 5:04 min

Louise, and the mysterious events leading up to her funeral.

### **NO NAME**

Director: Alex Poscente

Country: USA, Running Time: 2:13 min

Based off of a poem by Alex Poscente about negative self-image. It is narrative in its story, but avant-garde in its visuals.

### **ONLY CHILD**

Director: Arianna Cadeddu

Country: USA, Running Time: 4:45 min

A classic “monster under my bed” telltale forces a father to confront a traumatic memory. Winner of the Best Narrative award at the 2016 Pegasus Film Festival. 2017 National Young Arts Foundation Merit winner in Cinematic Arts.

### **THE PEGASUS FILM FESTIVAL**

Director: Niloo Jalilvand

Country: USA, Running Time: 2:46 min

Bursting with rising talent, Texas holds a wealth of inspiring and innovative films made by high school filmmakers. At the Pegasus Film Festival, we bring that talent to you.

### **PHONIES**

Director: Alexa May

Country: USA, Running Time: 4:17 min

This film explores the effects and dangers of technology on the current society through the lens of a seventy-year-old grandmother. This film was written, directed, filmed, and edited by one woman wishing to make a difference and inspire other women to become filmmakers.

## **QUEEN KEVIN UIL**

Director: Jessi Stegall

Country: USA, Running Time: 7:46 min

## **TRANSCENDING POLITICS**

Director: Ellery Marshall

Country: USA, Running Time: 2:34 min

The “bathroom bill” is a policy debated in sixteen states that would require all people to use the Restrooms and other facilities of their assigned sex at birth. If it were to pass, how would this bill affect a transgender child in school?

## **Q CINEMA**

### **DEVIL’S PATH**

Director: Matthew Montgomery

Country: USA, Running Time: 87 min

While searching for his missing brother in a remote gay cruising park, Noah (Stephen Twardokus) sets his sights on a handsome stranger (JD Scalzo). When Noah is viciously attacked, he and his new companion escape through the woods with two menacing thugs in hot pursuit. Lost and frightened, they begin to turn on each other and slowly unravel the truth of what’s really going on around them.

## **SONS OF THE FLAG FILM FESTIVAL**

### **ACT OF VALOR (2012)**

Directors: Mike McCoy, Scott Waugh

Country: USA, Running Time: 110 min

Inspired by true events, ACT OF VALOR combines stunning combat sequences, up-to-the minute battlefield technology and heart-pumping emotion for the ultimate action adventure. When the rescue of a kidnapped CIA operative leads to the discovery of a deadly terrorist plot against the U.S., a team of SEALs is dispatched on a worldwide manhunt. As the valiant men of Bandito Platoon race to stop a coordinated attack that could kill and wound thousands of American civilians, they must balance their commitment to country, team and their families back home. Each time they accomplish their mission, a new piece of intelligence reveals another shocking twist to the deadly terror plot, which stretches from Chechnya to the Philippines and from Ukraine to Somalia.

## **SOUTH ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL**

### **THE JOURNEY WITHIN**

Director: Mian Adnan Ahmad

Country: USA, Running Time: 78 min

In a post 9/11 Pakistan faced with challenges of war and conflict, a quest for self-identity leads the inspirational journey of a music show to help reclaim the rich and vast musical heritage of this region. In doing so it has become one of the biggest music initiatives from this side of the world, bringing together unique cultural experiences and genres, including but not limited to folk, sufi, rock, pop and rap music. We experience this important period in music by discovering the show from its humble beginnings, living through its spirit to



reach the heart of the experience, as artists unify eastern and western sounds to make music that will resonate across the globe; impacting all involved and planting the seeds for an ongoing inward reflection towards who we are as individuals and as a people.

### **THIN LINE FILM FESTIVAL**

#### **THE MODERN JUNGLE**

Directors: Charles Fairbanks, Saul Kak

Country: USA, Running Time: 71 min

THE MODERN JUNGLE is a portrait of globalization filtered through the fever dream of a Mexican shaman, Don Juan, who falls under the spell of a pyramid-scheme-marketed nutritional supplement. Juan's neighbor Carmen lives simply, in harmony with the land her martyred husband paid for with his life. The film documents their struggles and encounters with outside forces: from capitalism and commodity fetish, to the culture of cinema, and the directors of this film.

*Preceded by*

#### **BIG PARADISE**

Directors: JP Olsen, Kristen Nutile

Country: USA, Running Time: 10 min

Robert Kidney has been a musical force since the 1970s. His group, The Numbers Band, celebrating its 47th year, has been praised by Rolling Stone's David Fricke and Greil Marcus and called "the greatest band I've ever seen" by Pere Ubu's David Thomas. Despite years of praise by peers, the band remains obscure.

### **WOMEN TEXAS FILM FESTIVAL**

#### **ABDUCTED IN PLAIN SIGHT**

Director: Skye Borgman

Country: USA, Running Time: 91 min

ABDUCTED IN PLAIN SIGHT is a true crime documentary that tells the twisting, turning story of the Broberg's, a naïve, church going Idaho family that fall under the spell of a sociopathic neighbor who will stop at nothing to be with their 12-year-old daughter.

#### **PRESS CONTACT**

John Wildman

Wildworks PR

Festworks.com

[jswildman@hotmail.com](mailto:jswildman@hotmail.com)

323.600.3165