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CA's Indie Film Fest Promises to Be the Best Yet

By Andrea A. Firth



Program Director Beau Behan at last year's opening night Photo Doug Kohen

"In the 14 years that the California Independent Film Festival has been held, this is our best film line up yet," says CAIFF Program Director Beau Behan. "I can't pick one single favorite, there so many really fine films in the program."

The Festival received over 400 entries from which the judges have chosen the best feature films (11), documentaries (7), and short films (23) to be screened over the course of the seven-day festival to be held from February 10th through the 16th. Three Oscar-nominated films will be shown, including the opening night feature, *Monsieur Lazhar*, which will screen at the Sundance Film Festival just days before it airs in Moraga.

The CAIFF, which moved to Lamorinda three years ago, first launched at the Orinda Theatre in 2010, then moved to the New Rheem Theatre in Moraga last year. This year the Festival will screen films in both locations. The opening weekend events and closing night will be held at the Rheem in Moraga. And the festival schedule from Monday (2/13) through Wednesday (2/15) will be shown at alternate times at both the Rheem and Orinda Theatres to give movie-goers more options.

Like previous years, the festival will include a host of day and evening screenings and social events. See the sidebar for Festival highlights. Go to the Festival website for show times and ticket details, www.caiff.org.

2012 CAIFF-Not to be Missed

Iron Filmmaker is Back

Registration is open for the 2012 Iron Filmmaker Competition, a favorite among Lamorinda's filmmakers who have garnered top honors in the past two years. Once again contestants will have 24 hours to create a three-minute short film including all of the "secret ingredients" that contestants will be given at the contest kickoff on Saturday, January 28th at 10:00 a.m. the Rheem Theatre. Completed films must be submitted by 11:00 a.m. the next day. All of the films will be shown on the big screen at the Rheem Theatre on Sunday, February 12th starting at 11:00 a.m., and the winners will be announced at the conclusion. For more information and to register go to www.caiff.org.

Celebrity Watch

Look for veteran actor Burt Young (remember the rough-edged, unshaven brother-in-law Pauly that he portrayed in the film classic *Rocky*?) who will be at the Rheem Theatre on Saturday, February 11th for an 8:00 p.m. screening of the film followed by a Q&A session. The evening kicks off at 5:30 p.m. with an award ceremony (don't forget your red carpet apparel) where Young will receive the CAIFF's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Oscar winner Margaret O'Brien, who played Tootie, Judy Garland's younger sister in the movie *Meet Me in St. Louis*, will make a guest appearance at the Orinda Theatre on Wednesday, February 15th for a special screening of 1949 version of *Little Women* (she played Beth.) And on the closing evening of the Festival the next night, February 16th, O'Brien will be at the Rheem Theatre for a screening of *Meet Me in St. Louis* when she will be awarded the 2012 CAIFF Diamond Award.

A native of Glendale, CA, veteran actor Jon Gries has appeared in a number of feature films including *Real Genius*, *Running Scared*, *Get Shorty*, *Jackpot*, and *The Astronaut Farmer*. Jon is perhaps most recently best known for his role of Uncle Rico in *Napoleon Dynamite*, in which he was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award. Gries

will honored at the screening of Five Time Champion opening night, February 10th.

Family Day at the Rheem Theatre

On the Saturday of the Festival's opening weekend (2/11) two sessions of children's film programming, a short followed by a feature, will be screened at the Rheem starting in the morning at 10:00 a.m., and again in the afternoon starting at 12:30 p.m.

Short Film Lovers, Come See Sapporo

The CAIFF continues its connection with the Sapporo International Short Film Fest. Winning shorts from the Sapporo Festival held in the fall will be screened at the Rheem Theatre on Sunday (2/12) and Monday (2/13).

Seminar-How to Maximize Your Film Audition, with Joie Landeaux Saturday, February 11th, 10:00 a.m to 12:30 p.m. and again from 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Rheem Theatre

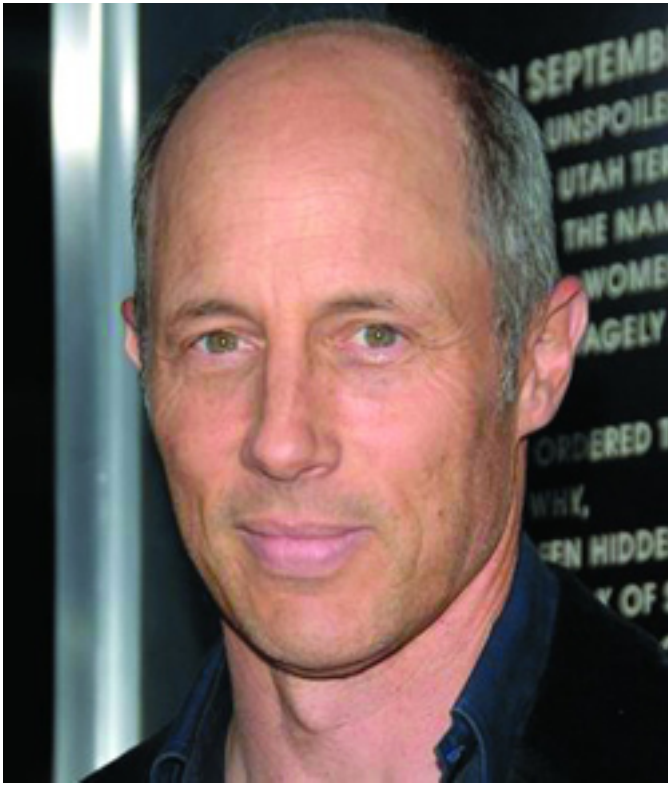
Film and theatre director, acting coach and instructor, Joie Landeaux will teach aspiring actors how to professionally audition to get a call back and role. Break a leg. Space is limited, go to www.CAIFF.org to register.



Burt Young



Margaret O'Brien in Meet Me in St. Louis



Jon Gries

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