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CAIFF 2013: An Impressive Lineup

By Sophie Braccini



Opening night movie "Le Week-End" Photos provided

During four short days in November, the Rheem and Orinda theaters will be non-stop dream machines where 11 feature films, five compilations of short films, and five documentaries, many of them already internationally acclaimed, will be presented during the 19th California Independent Film Festival (CAIFF). Those who love 'indies' can consider themselves booked from 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 7 to 9 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 10.

"We are quite proud of our lineup," says CAIFF Association president and founder Derek Zemrak. "Each year as the notoriety of the festival grows we present more major films. Our opening film, 'Le Week-End' just opened with rave reviews at the Toronto Chicago International Film Festivals. It will be this film's west coast premiere."

Zemrak says that the emotional and funny British movie is a perfect film for the opening, adding that this year's feature films have screened at the most prestigious film festivals in Cannes, Berlin, Sundance, Tribeca, Palm Springs and Toronto. "We feel fortunate to be able to screen these films here. This means a lot to us to be able to bring such high caliber movies to Lamorinda," he adds.

The lineup is a result of a full year of work. "Our committee reviews films from January to August and grades them on eight different criteria," explains Zemrak. "We basically watch films all year long to put our festival together." This year 300 films were submitted to CAIFF, a much lower number than the 1,000 it received in its first year, which is a very good sign according to Zemrak. "The more we become recognized, the more people self-select," he says. "We get less submissions, but from more well-known directors and actors, and the quality has been improving non-stop."

A festival is also about partying. The opening and closing nights are fun social events, one in Moraga and one in Orinda, where supporters of CAIFFA gather and cheer. On Saturday night partying will go until dawn in Orinda's Theatre Square, starting with the screening of "American Pie," preceded by a Q&A with Thomas Ian Nicholas who plays Kevin Myers in the iconic 1999 movie.

The last event, before closing night and the projection of the comedy thriller "Jackpot," will address the important topic of bullying in school. "We are presenting five films (documentary, feature and shorts) on that theme," says Zemrak. "On Sunday the 10th at 1:30 a.m., we'll have a Q&A with Moraga Superintendent Bruce Burns before the screening of the powerful documentary 'The Bully.'"

Information and tickets are available at caiff.org, or at the Rheem and Orinda theaters, for members only until Oct. 13, then afterward to the general public.

Feature films:

- "Le Week-End" - British comedy (Opening night)
- "Along the Roadside" - road comedy from Montenegro to California
- "Bluebird" - American, Swedish drama
- "Broken" - British drama
- "Coldwater" - American drama
- "Garibaldi's Lovers" - Swiss/Italian comedy
- "G.B.F." - American drama
- "Key of Life" - Japanese comedy
- "Love or Whatever" - American comedy
- "Wet Behind the Ears" - American comedy
- "Jackpot" - Norwegian thriller/comedy (Closing night)

Documentaries:

- "Desert Runners"
- "We the Owners"
- "A River Changes Course"
- "Valentine Road"
- "The Bully"



"A River Changes Course"



"Broken"

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