

'The Weasels' Tale': a gift from Argentina celebrates 10 years of IFS



CYNICAL. CHEATING. WICKED. ADORABLES.



GRACIELA OSCAR LUIS MARCOS CLARA NICOLÁS
BORGES MARTÍNEZ BRANDONI MUNDSTOCK LAGO FRANCELLA



THE NEW FILM BY THE ACADEMY AWARD® WINNING DIRECTOR FOR "THE SECRET IN THEIR EYES"
THE WEASELS' TALE
DIRECTED BY JUAN JOSÉ CAMPANELLA

Image provided

By Sophie Braccini

Ten years ago Jo Alice Canterbury from Orinda and Efi Lubliner from Lafayette

invented a local movie distribution system out of their common love of foreign films: the International Film Showcase. This December, they are cel-

brating 10 years of presenting monthly foreign gems to the community by offering a free viewing, online, of the Argentinian thriller/comedy "The Weasels' Tale (El cuento de las Comadrejas)" by Oscar-winning director Juan José Campanella.

Mara Ordaz was a legendary movie star in her time. The Argentinian actress was one of the only two foreign actresses to win an Oscar. Now in her late 70s, the elder diva lives in the decaying glow of her past glory, in a property that, like her, used to be magnificent but is showing the marks of old age. She lives with three male companions: her husband, a former second tier actor, an old screenwriter and a former director. Their peaceful life is disturbed only by their daily bickering and bantering, and the killing of weasels that are pestering their chicken coop; until two unscrupulous real estate developers set their eyes on their property. Thus begins a life-size chess match, with many surprising twists and turns, until the very end.

This movie is Campanella's 11th production and bares the traits of the director's mastery. "The Weasels' Tale" has none of the darkness and complexity of "The Secret In Their Eyes" that earned Argentina its second Oscar in 2009. This movie is humorous, ironic, irreverent, daring at times, with a veil of darkness coming from the frailty of the main protagonists' old age. But if they are old and sometimes vulnerable, the ancient folks are not defenseless. In fact the audience will discover in them resourcefulness, sometimes even deviousness, that is nothing but quite invigorating, especially to a mature audience.

The acting of all the protagonists is world class. Graciela Borges, as Mara, plays her own role somehow. She was

crowned one of the greatest Argentinian actresses of all times. She made her debut at age 14 in 1955 and has enjoyed a long acting career. She plays with such humanity the fallen star who has retained all the narcissism of her past status. She is at the same time unbearable and touchingly vulnerable. The trio of older gentlemen around her are priceless. Barbara and Francisco, the two young protagonists hold their own on par with the rest of the cast.

The movie is an ode to aging without compromising any of one's fighting spirit, whatever it might cost.

This beautiful film is a fitting gift to the community from the IFS. Lubliner and Canterbury say that it is not easy to find good foreign comedy that will appeal to an American audience, and they are sure that this one will. Every year the duo of Lamorindans go to the Palm Springs film festival to see as many as four foreign movies a day and get to meet directors and distributors from all over the world. They relish this decade of cinematographic adventure during which they have built a solid network in the industry and brought gems to the community at the Orinda Theatre.

Now, of course, all is online and attendance on the little screen has not been equivalent to the great following the IFS built at the Orinda Theatre over the years. Lubliner and Canterbury nonetheless decided that the anniversary had to be celebrated and this is why "The Weasels' Tale" is offered online for free to those who send an email to Efi@edcsystem.com to ask for a free pass. The offer is valid during the entire month of December.

The epic Taiwanese movie "Raining in the Mountain" is also available online at <http://internationalshowcase.org/>

One local man's road to prosperity through 'Jeopardy'



Henry Baer on the set of "Jeopardy" with Alex Trebek.

Photo provided

... continued from Page B1

"With the onset of the COVID-19 virus, I did not hear anything. Then this past September, they finally called me and gave me nine days to come down to Los Angeles as a contestant which I immediately agreed to."

Most people would drop everything and pore through the J! Archive which lists every "Jeopardy answer" for the last 37 years but Baer had a prior commitment: "I spent the entire week hiking with a friend so I did not start prepping that hard until the weekend before."

After that, Baer was focused entirely on "Jeopardy" preparation: "I spent about 14 hours a day reading old

'Jeopardy' answers. I figured there was not that much I could learn in three days, but what I got was an understanding of what the responses writers were going for, learning their style and the way they like to hint at things."

Performing in front of a national audience only affected Baer a little. "I think I had stage fright the entire time, though I did get more comfortable as the game went on. I just stayed focused on playing the game and did not think too much about what I was saying or doing. I was just having fun playing the game."

Ironically, it was not what Baer learned at Caltech that was the ideal preparation for the show. "The things you learn at Caltech and what shows

up on 'Jeopardy' are completely independent of each other, apart from the occasional science question," Baer said. "Actually, what prepared me the most was my participation in Quiz Bowl (a general knowledge game) which I participated in from middle school through college."

The "Jeopardy" staff do their best to make the contestants feel comfortable, even during a pandemic, Baer said: "We all got COVID-19 tests right before the show and temperature checks when we got in. The audience was only made up of other contestants and the crew. They were incredibly sweet people. I was told to bring several changes of clothes but I just brought the two monochromed shirts that I owned and planned to switch back and forth."

The first show began at 9:30 a.m. and there was 20-minute break between games, which was just enough time for Baer to change his shirt.

The interaction with Alex Trebek, the show's longtime host, and the contestants was kept at a minimum, said Baer. "It was kind of surreal. You're waiting for the game to start and Alex just popped out from behind the board as the show began. After each game, he would come over and talk with us about the game we had just played."

Baer had planned to make a round of posts about his upcoming appearance, but when Trebek passed away, Baer 'low keyed it' because "I did not want to play it up at that point,

though I did tell my family, co-workers and close friends."

Baer adjusted in his first game as he was trailing the leader in Double Jeopardy (the last round). "At that point, I realized that I needed to take more chances. When I got the daily double, I bet everything because if I missed that question, there would be no chance I could win so I put it all on the line (successfully). My other strategy was to keep a fast-enough pace to prevent the other players from getting too comfortable."

After two wins and a second-place finish, Baer walked away with a total of \$63,800, before taxes. Baer is keeping his earnings in perspective: "Since I am starting a new job with a small company, I'm just going to be saving the money which will let me focus on my job at this point."

Coincidentally, Baer crossed paths with a player named Gabe Ostler who was waiting for his name to be called: "Gabe graduated from Miramonte and we swam against each other through high school."

After the shows aired, Baer heard from a long-lost relative: "I heard from a second cousin who I had never met and somehow he remembered me from his genealogy research. He told me that I was his grandfather's brother's great grandson. He then sent me an insane amount of genealogy research that I had never seen before."

Classified • Classified • Classified • Classified • Classified • Classified • Classified

Vacation Rental



Pacific Grove Monthly Vacation Rental. Stunning and elegantly furnished historic Storybook home is avail for 1-4 mo rental. The 2BR/2BA is only 1 block from the Monterey Coastal Trail and just minutes to Monterey Bay Aquarium, Pacific Grove Municipal Golf Links, Pebble Beach, Carmel and 17 Mile Dr. Photos available. Call 650-387-8184.

Furniture Restoration

Antique Furniture Restoration
25 years exp. - 925 765 0479
serving Lamorinda - references avail.
www.Cardonarestoration.com

Music Lessons

Fun Piano Lessons
Learn your favorite song! I teach Certificate of Merit. BM & MM in Piano. Lessons in your home. 925-984-8322. lynnf253@gmail.com

House Cleaning

www.totalclean.biz
Serving Lamorinda since 1985. Insured and bonded 376-1004.

\$10 per 1/2" classified ad height.
Email to: classified@lamorindaweekly.com

Insurance

Totalintegrityinsurance.com
20+yr Lamorinda resident. My independent insurance brokerage is here to serve you. Over 100 top carriers = great pricing and coverage for Biz Gen Liability, W Comp, Homes, Auto, Life. Call **Henry at (925) 247-4356** OE90108

Fencing

Custom Quality Fencing
KEN'S REDWOOD FENCING
925-938-9836

- Good Neighbor Fence
- Deer Fencing
- Picket/Split Rail
- RV Gates
- Trellis and Arbors
- Retaining Walls
- Insurance/Storm Repairs

licensed, bonded & insured. CA#667491

Real Estate

NEED TO SELL YOUR HOUSE?
We'll buy "AS IS" condition, all CASH offer, NO closing costs, NO realtor commissions!
Call now: 925-800-7510
info@discoverpropertiesolutions.com
www.discoverpropertiesolutions.com

Handyman

Quetzal Handyman AC Service
NO JOB TOO SMALL
Electrical, plumbing, concrete, driveways & more...
Please call Carlos Toledo 510-689-7490

Rusty Nails Handyman Service
Repair • Restore • Revamp
Call Rusty- (925) 890-1581

Construction

Concept Builders
Remodeling, Home Repair & New Construction
Bonded & Insured. License no. 842563
(925) 283-8122, Cell: (925) 768-4983

Plumbing

WE HOP TO IT!
(925) 377-6600
LeapFrogPlumbing.com

Tile Setting

Baths, Showers, Floors, Walls, Counters
Cliff 510-697-1125