Beat: Entertainment

Richard Gere will open the 34th edition of Miami Film Festival

Miami Film Festival on March 3

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USPA NEWS - Acclaimed box office star, producer, and humanitarian Richard Gere will open the 34th edition of Miami Dade College´s (MDC) renowned Miami Film Festival on March 3, followed by an Opening Night Gala screening of his new film, Norman

“Richard Gere began his career with brave choices that catapulted him into stardom, and after nearly 40 years of acclaimed performances, his most recent acting has demonstrated a new force ““ deeper, more personal and even more profound,“ said Festival director Jaie Laplante. “With Joseph Cedar´s brilliant take on power and responsibility in today´s political arena, Gere creates one of his most indelible characters with Norman Oppenheimer. It is an honor to have both Richard Gere and Joseph Cedar present Norman, which will be one of 2017´s most talked-about films, to open the 34th Miami Film Festival.“

In all, the Festival will present 131 feature narratives, feature documentaries, and short films from 40 countries, including 22 world and international premieres, in the 34th annual edition of the internationally acclaimed event, which runs until March 12, 2017. Thirty-six of the films are directed or co-directed by women filmmakers.

The Festival will close with an Awards Night Gala screening of the International premiere of For Your Own Good from Spain, starring José Coronado, Javier CÃ¡mara and Roberto Alamo followed by the EL COTO RIOJA Awards Night Party at Miami´s Centro Cultural Español.

Among the Festival´s many highlights will be an evening with Spanish actress and fashion icon Rossy de Palma as part of the CINEDWNTWN Gala events at Miami´s historic Olympia Theater, presented by Miami Downtown Development Authority. Artist Jessica Mitrani will lead an on-stage conversation with de Palma about her film work, including her collaborations with Pedro Almodóvar on films such as the current hit Julieta, and Mitrani´s own collaboration with de Palma on the short film “Travelling Lady“, which will also screen at the Gala. The evening is presented in collaboration with Faena Arts and The Screening Room.

Notable world premieres include the Emilio Estefan produced A Change of Heart, filmed in Miami and starring Gloria Estefan, Aimee Teegarden, Virginia Madsen, Jim Belushi and William Levy, directed by High School Musical´s Kenny Ortega. Cannes Film Festival alumnus, Uruguayan-Argentine director AdriÃ¡n Caetano, who competed in Cannes in 2006 with Chronicle of an Escape, will debut his new film The Lost Brother (El otro hermano), starring Leonardo Sbaraglia and Daniel Hendler. These films join the previously announced world premiere of Miami-born Blake Jenner“˜s feature film screenwriting debut Billy Boy, in which he stars with “Supergirl“ “˜s Melissa Benoist.

Former Miami Herald writer Jill Bauer and former staff photographer Ronna Gradus will return to the Festival with a new Netflix series (based on their 2015 feature documentary), Hot Girls Wanted: Turned On. They´ll be joined by celebrated actor, producer, screenwriter and now documentary director Rashida Jones, for a screening and discussion of the “Woman on Top“ episode, directed by Jones. Hot Girls Wanted: Turned On launches this Spring on Netflix.

Also visiting this year´s Festival is legendary actor and producer Edward James Olmos, who will be presenting (along with director Marty Sader) his new co-production, in which he also stars, Monday Nights at Seven.

Two revered directors will receive spotlight MARQUEE EVENINGS. Romanian-French director Radu Mihaileanu, winner of Miami Film Festival´s Audience Award in 1999 for Train of Life, will present the North American premiere of The History of Love, a sweeping adaptation of the bestselling novel by Nicole Krauss about Polish-Jewish sweethearts separated during WW2, starring Derek Jacobi, Elliott Gould, and Gemma Arterton.

Danish filmmaker Lone Scherfig, whose outstanding credits include Oscar-nominated An Education, Italian for Beginners, One Day and The Riot Club, will present her touching and hilarious new United Kingdom production, Their Finest, starring Gemma Arterton, in addition to Sam Claflin, Bill Nighy, Jeremy Irons, Richard E. Grant and Jack Huston.As always, Miamians will play a dominant role in the Festival program. Oscar winning director David Frankel and first-time director Xavier Manrique“”both long-time Miami

residents“”will talk about the process of developing, producing and directing a debut feature film in the panel discussion Learn From The Best:

An Oscar-Winning Mentor. Alfred Spellman and Billy Corben of Rakontur will preview clips from their upcoming works, A Sunny Place for Shady People and the new “Cocaine Cowboys“ mini-series, in an extended discussion with Festival programmer Thom Powers billed as Straight Out Of Miami.

Documentarians Dennis Scholl and Marlon Johnson will world premiere Symphony in D, about MIT composer Tod Machover“˜s commission to create a new symphony in Detroit. Machover is now actively involved in Project 305, the New World Symphony´s upcoming musical collaboration with MIT.

Miami natives Yara Travieso and Jonathan David Kane will present the Florida premiere of their “live film“ project, La Medea, an interactive project filmed just last weekend in New York City. Ultra Music Festival´s headliner Dubfire will attend a world premiere documentary about his own meteoric rise in the EDM world in Dubfire: Above Ground Level, and Miami born and raised documentarian David Borenstein presents the North American premiere of Dream Empire, based on his personal experience of being a “white monkey“ in the center of the Chongqing, China real estate boom.

Cuba and the Caribbean are also prominently featured in the Festival program. Austin Peters´ Give Me Future: Major Lazer in Cuba which explores electronic dancehall superband Major Lazer´s groundbreaking 2015 Havana concert, will unspool in Miami Knight Documentary Achievement Award Competition. Veteran director Fernando Perez´s latest work, Last Days in Havana (Ãšltimos días en la Habana), will receive its North American premiere in the Festival´s signature Knight Competition, as will Carlos Lechuga´s Santa & Andres (Santa y Andrés), which has yet to be screened in Cuba due to controversy.

The Bahamas will send a world premiere to Miami: Kareem Mortimer´s Cargo. Haitian stories figure prominently in Serenade for Haiti by director Owsley Brown; Claudia Sainte-Luce´s The Empty Box, starring Jimmy Jean-Louis (one of three films the Haitian star has in this year´s Festival); Miami filmmaker Dudley Alexis will appear with a special presentation of his documentary Liberty in a Soup, about the Haitian New Year´s tradition of the “Soup Joumou“, a symbol of freedom for the Haitian people; and a Special Presentation of Participant Media´s Death by a Thousand Cuts, a co-production with Dominican Republic.

About Miami Dade College´s Miami Film Festival

Celebrating its 34th anniversary March 3 ““ 12, 2017, Miami Dade College´s Miami Film Festival (MDC) is considered the preeminent film festival for showcasing Ibero-American cinema in the U.S., and a major launch pad for all international and documentary cinema. The annual Festival, produced and presented by Miami Dade College, attracts more than 60,000 audience members and more than 400 filmmakers, producers, talent and industry professionals. It is the only major festival housed within a college or university. In the last five years, the Festival has screened films from more than 60 countries, including 300 World, International, North American, U.S. and East Coast Premieres.

The Festival´s special focus on Ibero-American cinema has made the Festival a natural gateway for the discovery of new talent from this diverse territory. The Festival also offers unparalleled educational opportunities to film students and the community at large. Additionally, every October, the Festival hosts a mid-season festival titled GEMS, showcasing the season´s finest new cinematic works. Major sponsors of the 2017 Festival include Knight Foundation, The Related Group and Miami-Dade County. For more information, visit www.miamifilmfestival.com or call 305-237-FILM (3456).

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