

Galway Film Fleadh soars to new heights as line-up is announced

The 19th Galway Film Fleadh will take place from July 10-15 and will offer film lovers a weeklong programme of events which include world premieres, classic screenings, Irish and international documentaries, features and shorts.

Leading the way in the international features programme and opening the Galway Film Fleadh is **Red Like the Sky**, a beautiful film set in Tuscany in Italy in 1971 which tells the moving true story of a blind child who fights against everything and everyone to achieve his dreams. The film is inspired by the true story of Mirco Mencacci, one of the most gifted Italian sound editors of all time. **Seraphim Falls**, a taut psychological thriller, starring Pierce Brosnan and Liam Neeson which is set in the breathtaking landscape of the Wild West will close the Festival.

Set in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales, **And When Did You Last See Your Father** is a funny and sad exploration of the emotional ties that bind father and son, a film that boasts brilliant performances from Colin Firth and Jim Broadbent. **House of Sand** tells the story of a woman who along with her mother is taken in 1910 to a far away desert by her husband. When he dies, they are forced to spend the next 59 years of their lives hopelessly trying to escape from their arid surroundings. **Exit** is a non stop thriller where an innocent man is framed for a crime he didn't commit and has to find the killer before he is captured. Angelina Jolie's performance in the powerful **A Mighty Heart** is a career best. She plays real-life journalist Marianne Pearl, whose husband was kidnapped by terrorists while they were in Pakistan. The film follows the human fallout that dominated the press headlines in 2002. **Away from Her** is a beautiful moving love story which deals with the difficulties and trauma facing couples when a long term partner begins to suffer gradual memory loss.

Others to note include: **How is Your Fish Today, A Thousand Kisses, Interview, The Paper Will be Blue, Black Sheep, Ghosts, My Son and The Singer.**

The Galway Film Fleadh has long been a passionate supporter of films made in Ireland and in 2007 will showcase an eclectic range of Irish cinematic treats. Special mention must be given to **Garage** which comes straight to Galway following its premiere in the 2007 Cannes Film Festival. The film is a tragic comedy which stars Pat Shortt and is set in the world of petrol stations where the owner of the garage searches for intimacy during the course of a life changing summer. **Puffball**, a tense supernatural thriller from legendary filmmaker Nic Roeg, is the story of the powerful forces unleashed through one chance event and seen through the eyes of four generations of women.

Starring Colm Meaney, **Kings**, directed by Tommy Collins is a touching film which tells the story of a group of Irish speaking men from Connemara who emigrated from Ireland to London in the late seventies but who never made it home.

One not to miss is **Tonight is Cancelled**, directed by Brendan Grant which is set in Post War Kosovo where a young woman struggles to get life to live up to her expectations. **Bitterness** is a debut film of new Irish talent, Brian Launders which tells the humorous story of Francis whose life is consumed with bitterness since he was jilted at the altar.

A must for all parents of teenagers is Marian Quinn's debut feature film **32A** which tells the story of the confusing "in between" time of a girl's life when she is no longer a child but she is not yet a woman. An innovative section in this year's festival is "Wild Cards" where a selection of new films from emerging filmmakers who have sought to make films outside of traditional funding sources in Ireland will be screened. An event not to be missed is the 30th anniversary screening of Bob Quinn's seminal drama **Poitin**, featuring a digitally restored print and a new score by Bill Whelan.

This year's selection of documentaries is amongst the strongest the Fleadh has ever hosted. Narrated by Nicole Kidman, **God Grew Tired of Us** explores the indomitable spirit of three "Lost Boys" from Sudan who leave their homeland, triumph over insurmountable adversities and move to America. **The War Tapes**, is a film with a difference as it is the first war movie to be filmed by soldiers on the front line in Iraq. Disillusioned with America's occupation in Iraq, the soldiers bypass the Pentagon supervised media to candidly share their experience of life in Iraq. The Clash's Joe Strummer's life, music and politics are the subject of Julian Temple's documentary, **The Future is Unwritten**. Lovers of jazz should definitely watch **Music Inn**, one of the best made documentaries on this classical American art form. **Manufacturing Dissent** is a documentary that seeks to separate fact, fiction and legend. It is an exploration of filmmaker Michael Moore's "truthfulness" in his films and a statement on the freedom of speech.

Blending beauty and humour with tragedy and loss, **The Cats of Mirikani** is an intimate exploration of the lingering wounds of war. The film is a heart warming affirmation of humanity and will appeal to lovers of peace, art and cats. **John and Jane** follows the stories of six call agents that answer American 1-800 numbers in a Mumbai Call centre. The film raises disturbing questions about the nature of personal identity and what it means to be Indian in a 21st century globalised world. **I'm A Sex Addict** is a comic reconstruction of autobiographical filmmaker Caveh Zahedi ten year struggle with sex addiction and is one of his most ambitious, hilarious confessions yet. Others to note include **My Kid Could Paint That**, **Artic Tale**, **Leaving Transylvania** and **Kabul Transit**.

Fionnula Flanagan is the subject of this year's Irish tribute and will be "In Conversation" with Lelia Doolan on Saturday 14 July. The Fleadh will honour the accomplishments of the actor Jeremy Irons whose performances in films such as **Lolita**, **Swann in Love** and **Dead Ringers** have been immense. Jeremy Irons will take part in a public interview on Sunday 15 July. Terry George, one of one Ireland's most successful screenwriters and whose works include **Hotel Rwanda** and **In the Name of the Father** will be the subject of the 2007 Screenwriters Tribute while Volker Schlöndorff (Strike, The Tin Drum, Swann in Love) is the focus of the Fleadh's Director Tribute.

Building on the success of last year, Out on Film will screen a selection of gay, lesbian and transgender films which will raise issues of contemporary relevance such as gay and lesbian parenthood and gay marriage as well as re-addressing classical themes such as coming-of-age/coming out, gender identity.

This year's focus country is Poland and the festival will screen classic and contemporary films directed by renowned Polish directors such as Kieslowski, Polanski, Wajda and Fabicki.

The Galway Film Fleadh has a long tradition of hosting thought provoking debates and this year in association with MOJO (Miscarriages of Justice Organisation) will host a debate entitled **Is there Life after Life?** The debate which will take place on Wednesday July 11 in the Town Hall Main will discuss the problems faced by the unjustly convicted upon release after serving life sentences and will include world renowned Paddy Hill (Birmingham Six), Gerry Conlon (Guildford Four) and Sunny Jacobs, all who were wrongly convicted of crimes they didn't commit.

The shorts programme will showcase an exciting mix of short films, documentaries and animation and this year over seventy Irish shorts will screen in competition during the Festival. These shorts will be competing for the prestigious awards of Best Irish Short, Best First Irish Short, Best Short Documentary and Best Short Animation. Filmmakers will also compete for the prestigious Stella Artois Pitching Award.

Tickets for all events can be bought from the Galway Film Fleadh Box Office (Tel 091 569777) which is located in the Galway Town Hall.

**The Full Festival Programme is available on
www.galwayfilmfleadh.com**