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Festival de Cine de Trinidad y Tobago

22 SEP, 2017

Film Festival season is here and there are exciting times ahead for film enthusiasts and industry practitioners.

The trinidad + tobago film festival (ttff) recently unveiled its itinerary for a weeklong film festival that will not only showcase and recognise the best films and the best talent in the industry, The festivities will run from September 19 to 26 and will involve activities such as training and outreach across the country to promote the production of local movies.

The line-up for this season is quite impressive with the spotlight on local and regional films, workshops and discussions. Filmgoers can look forward to just about 120 feature-length, short and experimental narrative and documentary films from the Caribbean and its diaspora and contemporary world cinema will be screened including five feature films and more than 30 short and experimental

films from Trinidad and Tobago.

In recognition of National Patriotism Month which is observed in this country from August 31 to September 24, the tfff has partnered with the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts to showcase a day of screenings of local short and feature films. The screenings will be held on Republic Day, September 24, at MovieTowne Port of Spain, San Fernando and Tobago.

Three films on pan are also in the line-up of short and feature films that will screen at this year's Festival. These steelband documentaries are To Be an All Star, birdsong and the James O'Connor's film To Be A Renegade, which captures the story of bp Renegades through an examination of the violent beginnings of pan, the era of change, and its present state as a positive influence in communities, with steelbands now travelling abroad as international ambassadors. The documentary features players, founding members and supporters. Funded by bpTT the documentary seeks to show what it really means to be a Renegade. Both birdsong and To Be An All Star will screen on September 24, as part of the tfff's day-long celebration of local films at MovieTowne.

Woman power

Also on the itinerary is The Power of Women in Film. The tfff has partnered with UN Women and the The University of the West Indies Institute for Gender and Development Studies to host the power of women in film through its "Feminist Cinema" from September 22-24.

Filmmakers can also look forward to discussions on the Orange Economy, Speaking at the launch of the tfff at the Hyatt Regency in Port of Spain, Magella Moreau, tfff director of Public Relations, said women will be celebrated through a day of panels and discussions on short films looking at issues faced by women and girls. She said these films are aimed at giving women a voice and highlight the powerful roles women filmmakers play in advancing the change in dialogue on women issues.

Moreau noted that films are a powerful tool in promoting self-awareness and development. She also said however, that funding continues to be increasingly difficult and noted that there is a lot to be gained in preserving our culture. "We continue to be excited by the quality of films and the work being done by local filmmakers. You have to have passion to do this because it's not easy with the eternal search for funds. It's a real challenge and you have to be crazy or passionate to do it. Films are much more than just films. It's about having a wider voice. It's about preserving our culture, it's about reminding young people about who they are and allowing them to see themselves and then we will understand who we are in all our many dimensions so this is important work," Moreau said.

The Festival will open on September 19 with Green Days by the River and will culminate on September 26 with an award ceremony celebrating the best of the lot across several categories including Best Feature Film, People's Choice and Best Film as Decided by a Youth Jury. The local feature length films to be screened as part of the tfff include Green Days by

the River, Moko Jumbie, The Lies We Tell, Quick Pick and Back to Freeport.

Films being screened at tfff 2017 will be available for viewing on Flow's video on demand (VoD) service. VoD provides Flow customers with a diverse selection of local and Caribbean films, with 100 per cent of all proceeds going directly to the filmmakers.

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Redemption the key in *The Violin Teacher*

The 12th Trinidad & Tobago Film Festival runs until September 26 on two screens in MovieTowne Port of Spain, one in San Fernando, another in Tobago and at the UWI.

Film writer, BC Pires, will be picking a Film of the Day, every day. Pires sat on the first TT Film Fest Jury, wrote the Judge's Report and has been the Youth Jury's mentor since its inception in 2014. A different film will be picked every day, and other worthwhile films mentioned.

Because of the limitations of programming schedules, the film of the day may not necessarily be the "best" one.

The first "film of the day" pick is a bit of a cheat: with three very strong contenders being denied an individual daily pick through the impossibility of scheduling everything good on its own day, rather than leaving one out, here is a trinity of choice for a T&T Film Festival; any one of them could "take win":

The Violin Teacher /Sergio Machado/ 2015/ Brazil / Young Adult Drama/ 100 mins

Portuguese with English subtitles/ Rated 14+

8.30pm, Screen 7, MovieTowne, POS. TT premiere.

An excellent film about the redemptive power of music features very strong performances from a young cast (as well as all the adult roles). The juxtaposition of European classical orchestral music and modern urban poverty in South America itself plays a lead role in a hugely rewarding film.

El Hombre que Cuida (aka *The Watchman*) /Alejandro Andujar/ 2017/ Dominican Republic / Drama/ 87 mins Spanish with English subtitles/ Rated 16+)

6 pm, MovieTowne San Fernando. TT premiere.

An almost perfectly-made film about the difficulties of facing life's challenges alone – or, indeed, as part of an imperfect couple, family or group – is beautifully shot and covers ground that is all too familiar in Trinidad: the seaside resort of the film could be the DDI – the “Down-the-islands” – that is kept swept and polished by the poor so that it may be properly, which is to say, excessively, enjoyed by the rich.

Children of the Mountain /Priscilla Anany/ 2016/ Ghana / Drama/ 100 mins

Twi with English subtitles/ Rated 16+

8.30 pm, MovieTowne San Fernando. TT premiere.

A very Trinidadian film that happens to take place in Accra, the Ghanaian capital, Priscilla Anany's small masterpiece mines unequal power in human relationships and its reliance on superstition to forge a disturbing film about the catch-ass of lives spent in day-to-day poverty and seemingly everlasting ignorance.

FILMS SCREENING TODAY AT THE T&T FILM FESTIVAL

MOVIETOWNE POS SCREEN 7

10.30 am – Adama 85 mins

1 pm – Dreamshire 33 mins

3.30 pm – The Knot 15 mins + Santa and Andres 105 mins

6 pm – El Despertar de las Hormigas 18 mins + Viaje 76 mins

8.30 pm – We Love Moses 15 mins + The Violin Teacher 102 mins

MOVIETOWNE POS SCREEN 8

10.30 am – The Tempest 94 mins

1 pm – Paddlin' Spirit 30 mins + Sound of Silence 87 mins

3.30 pm – E Yobida di Ayera (Yesterday's Rain) 10 mins + Extre Terrestres 113 mins

6 pm – Lipstick under my Burkah 117 mins

8.30 pm- The Weekend 30 mins Q&A + The Lies We Tell 90 mins + Q&A

MOVIETOWNE SAN FERNANDO SCREEN 4

10.30 am – The Tempest 94 mins

3.30 pm – Kafou (Crossroad) 48 mins + Kingston Crossroads 72 mins

6 pm – Short Drop 29 mins + El Hombre qui Cuida (The Watchman) 85 mins

8.30 pm – Charcoal 5 mins + Children of the Mountain 100 mins

MOVIETOWNE TOBAGO

11 am – Centerstitch 10 mins Q&A + Reinbou (Rainbow) 100 mins

6 pm – Carl’s Present 17 mins + Bad Lucky Goat 76 mins

8.30 pm – Big Fish 15 mins + Cargo 105 mins

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