



AFI FEST 2019 Announces Documentary Films Section

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

New to AFI FEST this year, the inaugural Documentary Films section presents some of the most engaging and powerful real-life stories depicted in global non-fiction cinema. With subjects and themes both profound and impactful, the section includes two-time Academy Award®-winning director Barbara Kopple's DESERT ONE, a film that revisits the 1980 secret mission by the Army's elite Delta Force to rescue US hostages held captive in Tehran.

Additional documentaries include Academy Award® winner Alex Gibney's CITIZEN K, Ric Burns's OLIVER SACKS: HIS OWN LIFE, Shengze Zhu's WAN MEI XIAN ZAI SHI and more.

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AFI FEST 2019 takes place November 14-21, 2019, at historic theaters in Los Angeles. Screenings, Galas and other events will be held at the TCL Chinese Theatre, the TCL Chinese 6 Theatres and the Hollywood Roosevelt. The full festival lineup and schedule will be unveiled later this month.

DOCUMENTARY FILMS SECTION

BIKRAM: YOGI, GURU, PREDATOR

Capitalizing on yoga's growing popularity, the charismatic Bikram Choudhury, founder of Bikram Yoga, built an empire of yoga studios and teaching programs. Eva Orner's stunning documentary exposes Choudhury's dark secret — he was abusing his position of authority, preying on women and creating a cult-like atmosphere that gave him virtual immunity. DIR Eva Orner. USA

CHEZ JOLIE COIFFURE

Inside a bustling Brussels hair salon, manager Sabine can be seen braiding hair and lending support to a vibrant group of African migrants. In this lovely observational chamber piece, filmmaker Rosine Mbakam offers an affectionate tribute to Sabine and her community. Despite the traumas of migration,

their enduring charm and laughter are testament to human resilience. DIR Rosine Mbakam. SCR Rosine Mbakam. Belgium

CITIZEN K

Hero or villain? Mikhail Khodorkovsky is perhaps a unique blend of both. In this gripping documentary, Academy Award-winning director Alex Gibney charts the fascinating rise and fall of the former Russian oil tycoon whose story bears witness to Putin's ruthlessness and to the changing fortunes of those who dared to oppose him. DIR Alex Gibney. SCR Alex Gibney. FEATURING Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Leonid Nevzlin, Igor Malashenko, Anton Drel, Maria Logan, Alexei Navalny, Tatyana Lysova, Derk Sauer, Vladimir Kara-Murza, Martin Sixsmith, Arkady Ostrovsky. USA

DESERT ONE

Two-time Academy Award®-winning director Barbara Kopple revisits the 1980 secret mission by the Army's elite Delta Force to rescue US hostages held captive in Tehran. Using previously unused archival material and featuring riveting interviews with the principals, Kopple's breathtaking account paints an unforgettable portrait of American heroism and its profound cost. DIR Barbara Kopple. SCR Francisco Bello. FEATURING Jimmy Carter, Ted Koppel, Walter Mondale. USA

THE HUMAN FACTOR

Dror Moreh's (THE GATEKEEPERS) fair-minded and highly dramatic documentary delivers vivid recollections from American diplomatic envoys who have witnessed and shaped the most tenuous negotiations of the Middle East peace process. Their insights into world leaders, including Arafat, Rabin and Clinton, leave a devastating impression about what could have been and still isn't. DIR Dror Moreh. SCR Dror Moreh, Oron Adar. FEATURING Dennis Ross, Martin Indyk, Gamal Helal, Aaron Miller, Daniel Kurtzer, Robert Malley. UK, Israel

I AM NOT ALONE

Capturing the fury, emotion and spontaneous expressions of freedom that overtook the streets of Armenia in 2018, Garin Hovannisian's fascinating eye-witness documentary affords a unique glimpse into a revolution-in-the-making by offering unprecedented access to the grassroots movement that dared to challenge an entrenched regime, as well as the regime's leaders themselves. DIR Garin Hovannisian. SCR Garin Hovannisian. FEATURING Nikol Pashinyan, Serzh Sargsyan, Valeriy Osipyan, Anna Hakobyan, Raffi Hovannisian, Armen Sarkissian, Chalo the Dog. Armenia

OLIVER SACKS: HIS OWN LIFE

Famed neurologist and best-selling author Oliver Sacks (The Man Who Mistook His Wife For a Hat), who died in 2015, led an extraordinary life. Master filmmaker Ric Burns granted intimate access in Sacks' final months, paints a deeply moving portrait that captures his remarkable life and reveals the enormity of his spirit. DIR Ric Burns. USA

PRESENT.PERFECT. (WAN MEI XIAN ZAI SHI)

Winner of the Tiger Award at the Rotterdam Film Festival, Zhu Shengze's found-footage documentary compiles live streaming footage from over 800 hours of material. Its hosts are those with

disabilities, the marginalized and the working-class, who poetically demonstrate the need to seek out or create global communities and the threat this poses to state control. DIR Shengze Zhu. SCR Shengze Zhu. USA, Hong Kong

READY FOR WAR

Andrew Renzi's startling documentary tells the heartbreaking immigration story of veterans of the Armed Services who, after having fought for the U.S. as a path to legal citizenship, find themselves not only without citizenship but being deported instead. For some, in a cruel twist, once in Mexico, the drug cartels pressure them to join their ranks. DIR Andrew Renzi. FEATURING Hector Barajas, Miguel Perez, Nathan Fletcher, Tammy Duckworth, Esperanza Perez. USA

SEARCHING EVA

For 25-year-old Eva, complex emotions surrounding adolescence, family, body, art and sex work are processed publicly through unflinchingly personal photos and writing posted on social media. In an attempt to capture the essence of this elusive personality, Pia Hellenthal's extraordinary feature debut is a cinematic portrait that unfolds as a blitz of sound and image. DIR Pia Hellenthal. SCR Pia Hellenthal, Giorgia Malatrasi. FEATURING Eva Colla. Germany

SOUTH OXFORD, ALL IOWA LAWN TENNIS CLUB, MARAVILLA, SERVE

Filmmaker Darius Clark Monroe returns to the screen with a series of intimate nonfiction shorts exploring America's culture and passion for tennis and handball. Four stories, warmly crafted with both archival and original materials, illustrates the great humanity of society and the powerful, soulful bond we experience through sports. DIR Darius Clark Monroe. FEATURING Richard Northern, Ann Northern, Mark Kuhn, Denise Kuhn, Amanda Perez, Hyacinth Yorke. USA

Featured Photo: Oliver Sacks: His Own Life (Courtesy of AFI.com)



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