HOLLYWOODGLEE, LLC
1226 N Salsipuedes Unit C 1(805)704-5994 |https://hollywoodglee.com Larry@HollywoodGlee.com



Santa Barbara Wraps 34th Edition of Its International Film Festival

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

The 34th Santa Barbara International Film Festival (SBIFF) presented by UGG has come and gone. With its many tributes, panels, forums, educational and free community programs, and films, this yearâ??s festival offered a little something for everyone.



Lynda Weinman, left, and Mimi deGruy attend the Opening Night Gala during the 34th Santa Barbar

The festival opened with one of the most emotionally riveting first night films in recent memory as SBIFF Board member, Mimi deGruy, unveiled her film *Deep Diving: The Life and Time s of Mike deGruy* featuring her deceased husbandâ??s treasure trove of underwater footage as well as delving into his passion and activism for the dark ocean water and its inhabitants.

Without missing a beat, the Breakfast Club (the nickname given by SBIFF Director Roger Durling for the first movies of the day starting at 8:00 AM) kicked off with *The Biggest Little Farm,* a beautifully constructed documentary that follows a young couple, John Chester, a writer and filmmaker, and his wife, Molly, a culinary writer, as they make the transition from urbanites to traditional farmers. *The Biggest Little Farm* was one of the festival darlings.



Birds of Passage

A personal favorite film of mine this year was the tragic, genre-bending *Birds of Passage*, a cartel film on the Northern Colombian Wayuu tribes in the late 1960â??s and 1970â??s. Filmmakers Cristina Gallego and Ciro Guerra weave together a tapestry of cultural artifacts with a Shakespearean-style delivery that accentuates the early beginnings of cartel life.

Yet, one of the most mesmerizing aspects of the festival was contained in the Nordic Cinema Sidebar. Harking back to Lars von Trier and Thomas Vinterbergâ??s Dogme 95, a film movement orchestrated to compete with Hollywoodâ??s domination of the industry, that focused filmmakers on story, acting and theme and away from special effects and â??MTV style editing.â?• Their efforts seem to have come to fruition with *In Love and War*, winner of the coveted Audience Award for this year as well as winner of the formidable Nordic Cinema Competition.

First-time, feature-length, movie-maker/director, Vanessa Filho traveled in from Paris, France, with her deep, introspective work, *Angel Face*, featuring Marion Cotillard. A delightful presence at this yearâ??s festival, Filho also participated in the Women Directors Forum, in addition to walking the red carpet at the Outstanding Performer of the Year tribute. I had the good fortune to sit with Filho in the Hotel Santa Barbaraâ??s Garden Room shortly after her arrival for a brief interview.

https://hollywoodglee.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/vanessa-vilho.mp4

Unfortunately, the one that got away*, A Seed for Change,* from one-man production team, Alexandros Ikonomidis, was a film about his experience in dealing with the financial crisis of 2008 and its life-altering, economic fallout. Due to pressing circumstances I could not attend screenings for this selection. However, I did communicate with Ikonomidis, albeit too late to see his film and its overriding themes of self-sufficiency and survival.



Rami Malek speaks onstage at the Outstanding Performer Award tribute during 34th Santa Barbara

In addition to the traditional Opening Night and Closing Night Films, SBIFF has loaded several tributes into its Phase 2 Oscar cannon. This year had Rami Malek as its Outstanding Performer of the Year recognizing his portrayal of Freddie Mercury in *Bohemian Rhapsody*. Malek is sweeping award ceremonies thus far and continues to be the front-runner for a Best Actor Oscar from the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Science later this month. We shall see!

Next yearâ??s dates have been announced for January 15 -25, 2020, along with all festival award winners.

Until next year, Iâ??ll see you at the movies!

Category

1. #SBIFF
2. Santa Barbara International Film Festival

Tags

1. Angel Face

Date Created
February 10, 2019
Author
hollywoodglee