#SBIFF Virtuosos Award

Description

(Credit: YTS Digital)

It was a busy night in Santa Barbara, as the 31st annual **Santa Barbara International Film Festival** feted its **Virtuosos** at the historical **Arlington Theater**. **Elizabeth Banks**, **Paul Dano**, **Oâ??Shea Jackson, Jr**, **GÃ©za RÃ¶hrig**, **Jacob Tremblay**, and **Alicia Vikander** took to the stage for discussions with moderator **Dave Karger** and to be presented with their awards by **Leonard Maltin**.

Joel Edgerton was regrettably unable to attend, but a taped interview with Karger played during his portion of the tribute evening, which was sponsored by **Travel and Leisure**.

With honoree ages ranging from nine to 48, the evening began with Elizabeth Banks, who told the audience that the **LOVE AND MERCY** script was one of only two scripts she has ever fallen in love with (the other was **ZAC AND MIRI MAKE A PORNO**) and the success of the first film as a director, **PITCH PERFECT 2**. Paul Dano followed and talked about the three months of preparing he did with the music of The Beach Boys for LOVE AND MERCY.

After Joel Edgertonâ??s taped conversation played, Oâ??Shea Jackson, Jr explained that it was his fatherâ??s idea that Jackson, Jr play him in **STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON**, not the other way around! He discussed studying screenwriting at USC and how he needed to grow confidence to become an actor. As the audience applauded at the end of his conversation, he exclaimed, â??I feel like The Rock!â??

GÃ©za RÃ¶hrig spoke to Karger about how he had already been a musician, poet, and teacher, and joked that yes, he did expect to one day be sitting on a stage in Santa Barbara accepting an award for acting. Before **SON OF SAUL**, GÃ©za had only acted once before, 25 years ago in a Hungarian mini-series. Next up, Jacob Tremblay charmed the crowd while describing the emotionally stressful **ROOM**. â??If youâ??re an adult or a mom you understand whatâ??s happening, but if youâ??re a kid youâ??re like, â??oh whateverâ??,â?? he said about his viewing experience.

Last to the stage, but certainly not least, Alicia Vikander spoke about how her background in dance has helped her as an actress. She mentioned in particular that it helped her with the physicality of her character in **EX-MACHINA**. She also discussed the challenges of playing such a range of emotions in **THE DANISH GIRL**.

The fourth day of the festival began with a breakfast where filmmakers around the world bonded over bagels and coffee in the **Lobero Courtyard**.

The Lobero also played host to the esteemed writerâ??s and producerâ??s panels. LA Timesâ?? **Glenn Whipp** moderated a panel of producers from some of this yearâ??s most buzzed about movies, **Finola Dwyer** (**BROOKLYN**), **Ed Guiney** (**ROOM**), **Jeremy Kleiner** (**THE BIG SHORT**), **Steve Golin** (**SPOTLIGHT**) and **Mary Parent** (**THE REVENANT**). The panel discussed what makes a good

producer, â??making it workâ?• even under difficult circumstances, and diversity in filmmaking. On the latter, Mary Parent said â??as a woman, Iâ??m thrilled the conversation is happeningâ?•.

Festival goers were then treated to the **â??It Starts With the Scriptâ?•** Writers Panel. IndieWIREâ??s **Anne Thompson** led a conversation with some some of the yearâ??s top screenwriters including **Pete Docter** (**INSIDE OUT**), **Emma Donoghue** (**ROOM**), **Alex Garland** (**EX MACHINA**), **Drew Goddard** (**THE MARTIAN**), **Jonathan Herman** (**STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON**), **Charlie Kaufman** (**ANAMOLISA**), **Phyllis Nagy** (**CAROL**), **Charles Randolph** (**THE BIG SHORT**), and **Josh Singer** (**SPOTLIGHT**). Audiences were captivated by the groupâ??s discussion of the process of giving life to a film, the challenges that arise on the journey to the big screen, and what it takes to succeed.

Throughout the day as well, SBIFF volunteers handed out free popcorn and soda to families and festival goers as they stormed the Arlington Theater to catch two of this past yearâ??s biggest animated hits, **INSIDE OUT** and **MINIONS**, at the community **AppleBox** screenings. (Source: SBIFF Press Office)

(Photo Credit: Larry Gleeson)

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