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Big Sky Documentary Film Festival announces opening movie, retrospective directors

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

The Big Sky Documentary Film Festival has announced its opening night film and the filmmakers selected for its retrospectives.

The festival, set for Feb. 17-26, features 150 nonfiction films from across the world at venues in Missoula, the Wilma Theater, the Roxy Theater, the Silver Theatre and the Missoula Hellgate Elks Lodge.



The free Feb. 17 opener presented in partnership with HBO is *Bright Lights: Starring Carrie Fisher and Debbie Reynolds.*

According to a press release, the film is â??an intimate portrait of Hollywood royalty, in all its eccentricity. At 83 years old, grand dame Reynolds (star of *Singinâ?? in the Rain*) still performs a

Vegas act dressed in gold lamÃ© at the risk of her health, and her daughter, Fisher (of *Star Wars* fame) is helpless to react in the face of her motherâ??s determination that â??the show must go on.â?•

Bright Lights gives us a rare peek into the normal lives of two very different yet intertwined Hollywood starlets, a truly human story that will have you laughing in one moment and tug at your heartstrings in the next,â?• festival director Rachel Gregg said in a news release.

The Big Sky retrospectives, a regular festival feature, examine the careers of influential documentary filmmakers.

This year, theyâ??ve picked Daniel Junge. He won an Academy Award for the 2012 short *Saving Face.* The film, co-directed with Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, focuses on a plastic surgeon in Pakistan who helps women disfigured in acid attacks. He won the South by Southwest Grand Jury award in 2009 for *They Killed Sister Dorothy,* which examined the murder of an Ohio nun in the Amazon.

Closer to Montana, Junge directed 2015â??s *Being Evel,* about the Butte-born daredevil legend Evel Knievel.

The other retrospective package is billed as the most expansive ever done at Big Sky. It examines the work of EyeSteel Films, a Montreal collective that has covered topics around the world.

Last yearâ??s festival-goers may have caught *Chameleon,* by collective member Ryan Mullins. The film took viewers inside the world of Anas, a Ghanaian investigative journalist whose deep-cover techniques merge spycraft and advocacy.

The 2017 festival the Big Sky DocShop, a film forum with panels, workshops and the Big Sky Pitch for works in progress.

The forum this year will highlight aspects in the rapidly growing medium of short film, such as conceiving, funding, producing and distributing.

DocShop will include panels and workshops with Vice, ITVS, The Atlantic, ESPN, Film Collaborative, and Tribeca Film Institute among other film industry experts, as well as master classes with the 2017 BSDFF retrospective artists.

The official selections and the schedule will be announced mid-January. Sales for tickets and passes as well as DocShop registration open in late January. For more information, go to *bigskyfilmfest.org.*

(Source:http://missoulian.com)

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