
20th Philadelphia Film Festival is a Wrap!

The milestone Anniversary year featured 147 films,
including 122 narratives and documentaries hailing from 34 countries.

Among the genres and categories covered were New French, Spanish Language, Sports in Motion, World Narratives, American Independents, Greater Filmadelphia – a series which showcased films with a local connection – and many more.

(PHILADELPHIA, PA) November 4, 2011 – The 20th Philadelphia Film Festival (PFF) concluded its 15-day Anniversary celebration with Jury Prize award ceremony and Gala screening of **Alexander Payne's *The Descendants*** on Saturday, October 29 at the Annenberg Center's Zellerbach Theater. Payne's international festival favorite served as a bookend to the October 20 – November 3 event, which opened with Sundance Grand Jury Prize (Dramatic) Winner ***Like Crazy***, featuring an appearance and post-screening Q&A session with Director Drake Doremus and Lead Actress Felicity Jones. Closing festivities were followed by 5 more days of guests and screenings to wrap up a Festival with a rich 20-year history of showcasing films from around the world.

Jury Award winners include:

Best Narrative Feature

Grand Jury Prize – *Policeman*; Director Nadav Lapid

Special Jury Prize for Originality of Vision - *OK, Enough, Goodbye*; Directors Rania Attieh and Daniel Garcia

Best Documentary

Grand Jury Prize - *Where Soliders Come From*; Director Heather Courtney

Greater Filmadelphia Award for Best Local Film

Grand Jury Prize - *Race to the Bottom of the Earth*; Director Michele Loschiavo and Nancy Glass

Honorable Mention - *Joe Frazier: When the Smoke Clears*; Director Mike Todd

Best Short Film

Grand Jury Prize - *Water Lillies in Bloom*; Director Emil Stang Lund

Honorable Mention - *We're Leaving*; Zachary Treitz

Special Jury Prize for Writing – *Pioneer*; Director David Lowrey

Additional Awards include:

Archie Award for Best First-time Director

Michael; Director Markus Scleinzer

Audience Award, presented by Amtrak

Staging Hope; Director Bil Yoelin

The Festival included a wide variety of sold-out screenings, including such highly anticipated films as *Shame*, *Medineras*, *Streets*, *A Dangerous Method*, *Thin Ice*, *Melancholia*, *The Kid With A Bike*, *Pina*, *Martha Marcy May Marlene*, *Perfect Sense*, and *Habemus Papam*. Other highlights of the Festival included a variety of very special guests joining in the 20th Anniversary celebration. This year, the Festival was proud to welcome Kevin Clash and America's most beloved puppet, Elmo; subjects of the documentary *Being Elmo: A Puppeteer's Journey*.

Philadelphia director Jonathan Demme was in attendance for his new documentary *I'm Carolyn Parker: the Good, the Mad, and the Beautiful*, preceded by a retrospective 20th Anniversary screening of *Silence of the Lambs* later in the festival, as were writer/director Peter Berg and author Buzz Bissinger, who presented a special screening of *Friday Night Lights*, followed by an engaging 30-minute conversation afterwards. Guests with a local connection also included boxer Chuck Wepner of *The Real Rocky* and producers Melissa Fitzgerald and Katy Fox of *Staging Hope*. All in all, the Festival again hosted more than 100 filmmakers and industry professionals, many of whom hosted engaging post-screening Q&A sessions or participated on energetic and informative panel discussions.

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About the Philadelphia Film Society

The Philadelphia Film Society is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit arts organization that values film as a unique form of artistic expression and as a reflection of cultural, social, and economic diversity. It is the mission of the Philadelphia Film Society to promote film as a powerful means for strengthening community education, understanding, and engagement. PFS achieves its mission through various year-round film events, including the annual Philadelphia Film Festival, and the filmadelphiaEXPERIENCE screening series, which serves to extend the Philadelphia Film Festival throughout the year. For more information about the Philadelphia Film Festival and the Philadelphia Film Society, please visit www.filmadelphia.org