



ROGERS & COWAN

(THIS ANNOUNCEMENT IS EMBARGOED UNTIL 8:00 P.M. EST TONIGHT.)

National/Entertainment/Trade Press

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**The 27th Annual Miami International Film Festival
Honors the Best Selections in World and Florida Cinema
at Annual Awards Night Ceremony**

Lola, No One Knows About Persian Cats, To the Sea, Undertow and Sins of My Father capture top Grand Jury Prizes and Audience Awards; Roberto Cicutto, president of Rome's world-famous Cinecittà Studios, debuts the Cineuropa Prize for Best European Film

Miami, FL – March 13, 2010 — Organizers of the 27th Annual Miami International Film Festival, presented and produced by Miami Dade College, capped 10 days of 115 films from 45 countries with the Awards Night Ceremony tonight at the Gusman Center for the Performing Arts. A special screening of Best Foreign Film Oscar winner *The Secret in Their Eyes (El secreto de sus ojos)* followed the ceremony.

Both juried and audience awards were presented in the following competition categories: World, Ibero-American, DOX (documentary), Cutting the Edge, Shorts, Diesel Online Shorts and Florida Focus. Corporate presenters and partners included American Airlines, Cineuropa.org, Diesel, Eastman Kodak Company, Film Florida, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Jordan Alexander Ressler Charitable Fund, the Miami Coalition for the Homeless, Miami Dade College and SomosTV/VeneMovies.

NEW COMPETITIONS AND AWARDS

Two new competition and award categories were introduced this year by Artistic Director Tiziana Finzi: the Cineuropa Prize for Best European Film, sponsored by Cineuropa.org, an arm of the European Union's Media Programme, which provides European filmmakers with government funding for film production; and, Diesel Online Shorts, a viewer-driven award sponsored by the Italian clothing and accessories fashion house. Nominees were available for viewing at miffdieseltv.com or filmannex.com.

GRAND JURY PRIZES & AUDIENCE AWARDS

The festival's top competition categories offered a Grand Jury Prize selected by a committee of international entertainment industry professionals, as well as an Audience Award selected by festival goers that is co-sponsored by American Airlines and SomosTV/VeneMovies.

The complete list of winners in all categories follows:

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WORLD COMPETITION

This category celebrates the works of up-and-coming filmmakers from around the globe. One of the 12 films in this competition will win a Grand Jury Prize in the amount of \$25,000 USD from the Miami-based John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. One film will win the Audience Award, co-sponsored by American Airlines and SomosTV/VeneMovies.

Grand Jury Prize:

Lola by **Brillante Mendoza** (France/Philippines, 2009)

(A \$25,000 USD cash prize awarded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation)

Starring Philippine cinema icon Anita Linda, this is the daunting story of two elderly women implicated in a robbery-homicide involving their respective grandsons: one the victim, the other the accused. Mendoza offers an earnest, compassionate study of forgiveness and redemption in the aftermath of an everyday killing in a poverty-stricken Filipino community.

Special Jury Mention 1:

Medal of Honor (Medalia de Onoare) by **Calin Peter Netzer** (Germany/Romania, 2009)

Romanian director Calin Peter Netzer again delves into his native country's post-Ceauçescu woes. This drama depicts the story of 75-year-old Ion, who reevaluates his life when he receives a decoration for a WWII act of heroism he hardly remembers.

Special Jury Mention 2:

No One Knows About Persian Cats (Kasi az gorbeyeh irani khabar nadareh) by **Bahman Ghobadi** (Iran, 2009)

Veteran director Bahman Ghobadi's biting exposé of Iran's myriad social and economic restrictions chronicles the struggle of two teenagers to form a band in Tehran's outlawed, underground indie rock scene and secure visas to perform in London.

Audience Award:

No One Knows About Persian Cats (Kasi az gorbeyeh irani khabar nadareh) by **Bahman Ghobadi** (Iran, 2009)

(A symbolic prize co-sponsored by American Airlines and SomosTV/VeneMovies)

IBERO-AMERICAN COMPETITION

This category, a specialty of the Miami International Film Festival, presents the feature films by first-, second- and third-time directors from Spain, Portugal and Latin America. One of the 12 films in this competition will win a Grand Jury Prize in the amount of \$25,000 USD from the Miami-based John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. One film will win the Audience Award, co-sponsored by American Airlines and SomosTV/VeneMovies.

Grand Jury Prize:

To the Sea (Alamar) by **Pedro González-Rubio** (Mexico, 2009)

(A \$25,000 USD cash prize awarded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation)

A straightforward account of a Mexican fisherman who romances an Italian tourist. When the relationship ends, she returns to Rome with their child. The son later reunites with his father and they embark upon a heart-warming journey at sea. This feature debut from Pedro González-Rubio balances delicately between documentary and fiction.

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Audience Award:

***Undertow (Contracorriente)* by Javier Fuentes-León (Peru/Colombia/France/Germany, 2009)**

(A symbolic prize co-sponsored by American Airlines and SomosTV/VeneMovies)

An unusual Peruvian ghost story about a married fisherman and his secret lover (played by popular Colombian actor Manolo Cardona). When the boyfriend drowns, his ghost returns demanding his body receive a proper burial. The tormented fisherman struggles to balance his wishes with the community's rigid traditions.

THE JORDAN ALEXANDER RESSLER SCREENWRITING AWARD (Ibero-American Competition)

This special category and award recognizes and supports young people as they embark on their careers as professional screenwriters. It was created by the South Florida family of Jordan Alexander Ressler, an aspiring screenwriter who died at age 23, before he realized his dream. This Grand Jury Prize in the amount of \$5,000 USD will be awarded to a screenwriter or screenwriters of a feature film in the Ibero-American Competition by the Jordan Alexander Ressler Charitable Fund.

Grand Jury Prize:

***The Last Summer of La Boyita (El último verano de La Boyita)* by Julia Solomonoff (Argentina/Spain/France, 2009)**

(A \$5,000 USD cash prize awarded by the Jordan Alexander Ressler Charitable Fund)

Derived from Argentine writer-director Julia Solomonoff's childhood experiences, this gentle coming-of-age tale involves two sisters in conflict and their bubble-shaped family camping trailer, "La Boyita." During a summer trip to a rural Pampas farm, the youngest confronts her impending adulthood and encounters sexual curiosities amid the bulls and the fields.

DOX COMPETITION

This category presents some of the world's most provocative documentary feature films that examine social issues, diverse cultures, icons and inspiring people and events. One of the nine (9) films in this competition will win a Grand Jury Prize in the amount of \$25,000 USD from Miami Dade College. One film will win the Audience Award, co-sponsored by American Airlines and SomosTV/VeneMovies.

Grand Jury Prize:

***Sins of My Father (Pecados de mi padre)* by Nicolás Entel (Argentina/Colombia, 2009)**

(A \$25,000 USD cash prize awarded by Miami Dade College)

In 1993, Colombia's most brutal and notorious drug lord was murdered in Medellín, and his son fled to Buenos Aires to escape a dubious legacy. Years later, filmmaker Nicolás Entel captures the powerful and historic moment when Pablo Escobar's eldest son finally comes forward to tell his father's story.

Special Jury Mention:

***Kawase-san* by Cristián Leighton (Chile, 2009)**

A meditative portrait of Japanese film director Naomi Kawase by documentarian Cristián Leighton. The young Chilean obsesses over her works, which compels him to visit Japan to uncover who it really is that tells such intimate, disturbing stories. While actively seeking to understand her, Leighton ponders his own identity as well.

Audience Award:

***Sins of My Father (Pecados de mi padre)* by Nicolás Entel (Argentina/Colombia, 2009)**

(A symbolic prize co-sponsored by American Airlines and SomosTV/VeneMovies)

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CUTTING THE EDGE & CUTTING THE EDGE VIDEO ART COMPETITION

This category presents a selection of provocative feature films and stirring visual presentations that are guaranteed to test emotional limits and take viewers to the extreme. The Grand Jury Prize winner will be selected from among the five (5) feature films in the Cutting the Edge Competition, the six (6) features in the Cutting the Edge Video Art Competition and the six (6) shorts in the Cutting the Edge Video Art Competition. This competition offers only a symbolic Grand Jury Prize awarded by Miami Dade College; it does not offer an Audience Award.

Grand Jury Prize:

***Peppermint* by Pipilotti Rist** (Switzerland/Austria, 2009) (a Cutting the Edge Feature Film)
(A symbolic prize sponsored by Miami Dade College)

Swiss video-art *wunderkind* Pipilotti Rist makes her feature debut with this quirky, psychedelic fantasy tale in hypnotic primary colors which introduces a redheaded young woman – a mix of both Pippi Longstocking and Pollyanna – who exuberantly brings girlish good will and the determination to live without fear to an uncomprehending world.

Special Jury Mention:

***Nora* by Alla Kovgan and David Hinton** (USA, 2009) (a Cutting the Edge Video Art Film)

SHORTS COMPETITION

This category features the latest works from independent shorts filmmakers from around the world. The Grand Jury Prize winner will be selected from among the six (6) film shorts in Competition 1 and the seven (7) film shorts in Competition 2. This competition offers only a symbolic Grand Jury Prize sponsored by Miami Dade College; it does not offer an Audience Award.

Grand Jury Prize:

***Believe* by Paul Wright** (Scotland/UK, 2009) (a nominee from Shorts Competition 2)
(A symbolic prize sponsored by Miami Dade College)

(New in 2010) DIESEL ONLINE SHORTS COMPETITION

This new competition category, a collaboration between the Miami International Film Festival and global fashion and entertainment brand Diesel, offers a forum to present and promote innovative short films (10 minutes in length or less) from fashion-forward filmmakers in the U.S. and around the world. One of the 27 entries will win a symbolic Grand Jury Prize, and one will win the symbolic Audience Award. Winners and nominees are available for viewing on miffdieseltv.com and filmannex.com.

Grand Jury Prize:

***Telegastrovizion* by Antanas Janauskas** (Lithuania)
(A symbolic prize sponsored by Diesel and Diesel Box Office)

Audience Award:

***Zombies Vs. Vampires* by Franz Palomares** (USA)
(A symbolic prize co-sponsored by Diesel and Diesel Box Office)

THE FIPRESCI PRIZE

The Munich-based International Federation of Film Critics (*Fédération Internationale de la Presse Cinématographique*, or FIPRESCI), is the world's largest collective of film critics, with members in 46 countries. The FIPRESCI Prize is awarded at film festivals around the world and celebrates a single film selected from the festival's World Competition that promotes film as art and encourages new and young cinema. This is a symbolic prize only.

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The FIPRESCI Prize:

Judge (Tou Xi) by **Liu Jie** (China, 2009)

Caught up in death penalty deliberations, a judge and a convicted criminal both discover that justice is rarely ever a simple matter. Based on true events, this dramatic yarn from writer-director Liu Jie highlights the various legal and personal machinations behind a case as it proceeds through the Chinese justice system.

(New in 2010) THE CINEUROPA PRIZE FOR BEST EUROPEAN FILM

Cineuropa is the European Union's government-sponsored umbrella organization created in 2002 to promote the financing, production and promotion of European films. It is funded by the European Union's Media Programme and the national film boards and film commissions of Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta and Switzerland. This prize is currently presented at the Sarajevo International Film Festival, the Brussels European Film Festival, the Estoril (Portugal) Film Festival and the Lecce (Italy) European Cinema Festival, among others. The Cineuropa Prize will be awarded to a single feature film from among the festival's World and Ibero-American competitions that is a production or co-production by a country participating in the EU's Media Programme. The winning film will be the one that is deemed to be of the highest artistic quality that promotes dialogue about European issues. The symbolic prize, valued at €5,000 Euros, includes free publicity on the organization's website Cineuropa.org, the fastest-growing news and information portal for European filmmakers.

Cineuropa Prize Special Presenter: The Cineuropa Prize will be presented by Roberto Cicutto, president of Cinecittà Holdings, owner and operator of Rome's world-famous Cinecittà Studios, where many of Hollywood's iconic and award-winning films and television programs have been produced, including: *Nine, Angels & Demons, HBO's Rome, Ocean's Twelve, The Passion of the Christ, Gangs of New York, The Talented Mr. Ripley, The English Patient, The Godfather: Part III, The Last Emperor* and *Once Upon a Time in America*.

The Cineuropa Prize:

Ordinary People by **Vladimir Perisic** (France/Switzerland/Serbia/Netherlands, 2009)

War's dehumanizing effects on man is the heart of this feature debut from Serbian writer-director Vladimir Perisic. This devastating day in the life of a young Serbian soldier poignantly chronicles his initiation into the cruel ritual of military killings.

Special Mention:

Medal of Honor (Medalia de Onoare) by **Calin Peter Netzer** (Germany/Romania, 2009)

Romanian director Calin Peter Netzer again delves into his native country's post-Ceauçescu woes. This drama depicts the story of 75-year-old Ion, who reevaluates his life when he receives a decoration for a WWII act of heroism he hardly remembers.

FLORIDA FOCUS COMPETITION

This category was created to encourage and promote the next generation of Florida filmmakers. This category supports high school and college students in Miami Dade County and their short films. The Florida Focus Awards Ceremony was held March 11 at Miami Dade College's Tower Theater.

The awards are sponsored by Film Florida, the not-for-profit trade association that works to promote the creation of film industry jobs and economic incentives that will attract film productions and companies to Florida. Film Florida will present two \$500 USD Sarah Fuller Student Scholarships, one each in the high school and college categories. Winners will also receive \$500 USD worth of film from Eastman Kodak and movie scheduling and budgeting software from Movie Magic.

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And, for the fourth consecutive year, the Miami Coalition for the Homeless is sponsoring three contests, open to Miami-Dade County high school students, designed to bring public attention to the plight of the homeless: an original song, a 30-second public service announcement and a short film. These contests offer symbolic prizes awarded by the Coalition.

FILM FLORIDA AWARD WINNERS:

Best Short Film by a High School Student:

Last Laugh by **David Harrison** (Design & Architecture High School)
(Received a \$500 USD Sarah Fuller Student Scholarship)

Special Jury Mention for a Short Film by a High School Student:

Agyrophobia by **Clara Diez** (Design & Architecture High School)
(A symbolic prize only)

Best Short Film by a College Student:

Blooming Hope by **Marcela Moyana-Rosero** and **Fernando Rosero** (St. Thomas University)
(Received a \$500 USD Sarah Fuller Student Scholarship)

Best Miami Mini Film (no age restrictions):

Where It Stops by **Kyle Shea**
(A symbolic prize only)

MIAMI COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS AWARD WINNERS:

Best Original Song:

Luis Martinez (Miami Senior High School)

Best Public Service Announcement:

Bailey Stasevich (Miami Beach Senior High School)

Best Short Film:

Last Laugh by **David Harrison** (Design & Architecture High School)

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