

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Media Contact: Heather Waters
Direct: 404-281-3748
heather@richmondfilmfestival.com

The Richmond International Film Festival Announces 2015 Official Selection Line-Up and Event Schedule

More than 120 films from over 25 countries to be screened over four days

OTHER COMMUNITY EVENTS PLANNED; SWEDISH FILMS IN SPOTLIGHT

Richmond, Va. – Jan. 15, 2015 – The Richmond International Film Festival (RIFF), a four-day cavalcade of more than 120 award-winning films from six continents – from Ecuador to Ethiopia, Australia to Sweden – will kick off on Thursday, February 26 with the screening of feature, short, documentary and animated films throughout the day at Richmond’s historic Byrd Theatre as well as a full afternoon and evening lineup of movies at Bow Tie Movieland.

The opening night of films includes the screening of *Wish You Well*, a coming-of-age drama set in 1940s Virginia written by best-selling author David Baldacci and starring Josh Lucas and Oscar-winner Ellen Burstyn. Baldacci and the film’s producers will participate in a question-and-answer session following the showing of the film.

The festival will continue over the next three days with screenings at the Byrd, the Virginia Historical Society, and Bow Tie Criterion Cinemas.

Swedish Imports

New this year, RIFF is teaming up with producing sponsor, Swedish Match, a Sweden-based tobacco company with U.S. headquarters in Richmond, to bring patrons a Swedish film spotlight and community outreach during the festival. Through the spotlight, patrons will experience a taste of Swedish lifestyle, arts and culture.

Swedish films included in the spotlight are this year’s Golden Globe nominated *Force Majeure*, which is also Sweden’s official Oscar entry for consideration of Best Foreign Language Film of the year. The film is directed by Ruben Ostlund and stars Johannes Kuhnke. *Force Majeure* debuts opening night at Movieland with a Swedish mixer to take place prior to the screening. The second Swedish spotlight film is the best-selling adaptation, *The 100 Year Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared* directed by Felix Herngren and starring Sweden’s funniest man, Robert Gustafsson, which plays at the Byrd Theatre on Sunday afternoon.

Closing out Sunday afternoon is the world premiere of *Living in a Food Desert*, a feature documentary directed by Jesse Vaughan that takes an inside look at the food desert crisis affecting hundreds of thousands in Virginia. The film features Mount Olive Baptist Church, FeedMore, Tricycle Gardens, Lynchburg Grows, Shalom Farms and Renew Richmond with interviews that include Leslie Van Horn, First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe, Delegate Delores

McQuinn, Dr. Jewel Hairston, Douglas Pick, John Lewis, Sally Schwitters, Daron Chavis, and others. Produced by Jesse Vaughan and Cedric Owens for Virginia State University's College of Agriculture.

A sample of other features and shorts in festival competition are:

- *Sewing Hope*, a feature documentary narrated by Forest Whitaker that follows a Ugandan Nun who has dedicated her life to helping women terrorized by Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army
- *Salgan & Salgan*, a feature documentary, which profiles legendary tango pianist, Horatio Salgan
- *Wildlike*, directed and written by Frank Hall Green and starring Bruce Greenwood (*Star Trek, I Robot, Déjà vu*), Ann Dowd (*Compliance, Side Effects, Marley & Me, Garden State*), Ella Purnell (*Maleficent, Never Let Me Go, Kick-Ass 2*), Brian Geraghty (*The Hurt Locker, Flight, Jarhead, Bobby*), Nolan Gerard Funk (*House at the End of the Street, X-Men 2*), and Diane Farr (*Numb3rs, About Cherry*)
- *The Japanese Dog*, Romania's official Oscar entry for consideration of Best Foreign Language Film of the year, directed by Tudor Cristian Jurgiu.
- *Des Eclats de Verre*, Sundance Grand Prize Jury and Audience Award winner and this year's Best Short Winner at the Toronto International Film and Video Festival
- *Audience of One* directed by KARP and starring Taylor Gray (*Star Wars Rebels, Thunderstruck*) and Spencer Daniels (*Star Trek, The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*)
- *Imagine*, directed by Jonathan Steven Green and Jahanara Saleh and starring Scott Wolfe (*Party of Five, White Squall*)
- *Love They Nature*, narrated by Liam Neeson
- *Someone You Love: The HPV Epidemic*, narrated by Vanessa Williams
- *Blood and Circumstance*, a film recently shot in Virginia.

Festival Awards

Capping off the festival on Sunday, March 1 will be the annual Red Carpet Awards where prizes selected by the Grand Jury and audience will be awarded in various categories. Held at the Byrd Theatre, the red carpet opens at 6:15 p.m. followed by the ceremony at 7 p.m. This event, along with all film screenings and community events, are open to the public. Dress for the red carpets is upscale casual to black tie.

Other Events

Other events during festival week include Q&As with visiting filmmakers, various industry panels, the annual Balliceaux mixer, educational forums, the youth outreach day, the RIFF annual RVA Music Showcase where Richmond's best musicians perform and come together with filmmakers at the Broadberry, and the new FLOW Collective, a creative inspirational series that includes engaging presentations from prominent artists, individuals, and heads of industry, along with breakout sessions incorporating the concept of creative flow in a variety of disciplines.

RIFF is a competitive and spirited festival designed to honor true film artists, and help cultivate future artists. Through its film productions and outreach efforts, the festival provides a collaborative platform between local filmmakers and other filmmakers from around the world.

The festival is sponsored by Swedish Match, the Virginia Film Office, PBS/WCVE, Balliceaux, Sifter, the Virginia Historical Society, Shamin Hotels and others.

To view a full schedule of this year's films and events, visit www.rvafilmfestival.com.

For press images or further info, email info@richmondfilmfestival.com or Heather Waters, RIFF's Founder & Producer, at heather@richmondfilmfestival.com. Advance tickets go on sale January 15 via the website or at the ticket line: (804) 219-0675.

3126 W. Cary St, #605, Richmond, VA 23221
www.rvafilmfestival.com

#