



Presented by: Cinema/Chicago
30 East Adams, Suite 800
Chicago, Illinois 60603
Tel: 312-683-0121 • Fax: 312-683-0122
www.chicagofilmfestival.com

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Lisa Dell

312-683-0121 x125

lisa@chicagofilmfestival.com

Brie Dorsey

213-280-0465

bdorsey@mercuryllc.com

51ST CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL REVEALS ITS COMPETITION WINNERS AT AWARDS NIGHT

Films From Around The World Competed for the Gold and Silver Hugo

*Festival Celebrates Midwest Premiere of "Where To Invade Next" with
Founder's Award Honor for Director Michael Moore*

(CHICAGO, Oct 23, 2015) - **Michael Kutza**, Founder & Artistic Director of the Chicago International Film Festival, Programming Director **Mimi Plauché**, and Programmers **Anthony Kaufman** and **Camille Lugan** and Competitions Coordinator **Sam Flancher** proudly announce the winners of the 51st Chicago International Film Festival Competitions.

Hosted by Managing Director **Vivian Teng**, the Awards Ceremony was held Friday, October 23 at 8:30pm and was held at The Peninsula (108 E. Superior, Chicago). Awards were presented in the following categories: International Feature Film Competition, New Directors Competition, Documentary Competition, Roger Ebert Award, Chicago Award, Q-Hugo Award, and Short Films. Award Nights was sponsored by *Michigan Avenue Magazine* and Wintrust Community Banks.

Top honors went to: Philippe Claudel's powerful **A Childhood** (France), winner of both the Gold Hugo for Best Film and the Silver Hugo for Best Actor (for first-time child actors Alexi Mathieu and Jules Gauzelin); Pengfei Song's illuminating ode to modern Chinese society, **Underground Fragrance** (China, France), winner of the New Directors Competition Gold Hugo; Pablo Larraín's profound story of revenge and compassion, **The Club** (Chile), winner of three Festival awards; and João Pedro Plácido's sensitive depiction of a rural Portuguese farming village **Volta à Terra**, winner of the Gold Hugo for best documentary.

Complete details of the winners listed below.

Past award winners have gone on to win Oscars® and Golden Globe® awards, among other notable recognitions. Awards Night is a night for the 51st Chicago International Film Festival juries, filmmakers and guests to come together and celebrate.

Founder's Award

The Founder's Award is given to that one film across all categories that captures the spirit of the Chicago International Film Festival for its unique and innovative approach to the art of the moving image.

Founder's Award:

Where To Invade Next

Country: USA

Director: Michael Moore

The 51st Chicago International Film Festival presented Director Michael Moore with the Founder's Award for his film *Where To Invade Next*. "Chicago is the Capitol of the Midwest and I just won the Founder's Award here," said Michael Moore.

International Film Competition

Representing a wide variety of styles and genres, these works compete for the Festival's highest honor, the Gold Hugo, a symbol of discovery.

Gold Hugo, Best Film:

A Childhood

Country: France

Director: Philippe Claudel

The winner of the 51st Chicago International film Festival's International Competition for the Best Picture goes to *A Childhood* directed by Philippe Claudel for this emotionally powerful insight into dysfunctional family life in a working class French neighborhood, which relies on the strength of two half brothers, surviving pain and poverty.

Silver Hugo, Special Jury Prize:

Paulina

Country: Argentina, Brazil

Director: Santiago Mitre

A beautifully realized film from Argentina which poses complex political questions that sidestep easy moralizing, causing us to stop and consider how far we would go to preserve our own sense of moral justice.

Silver Hugo, Best Director:

The Club

Country: Chile

Director: Pablo Larrain

For masterful direction of actors and assured handling of suspense which stares into the abyss of human depravity.

Silver Hugo, Best Male Actor:

Alexi Mathieu, Jules Gauzelin (*A Childhood*)

Country: France

Director: Philippe Claudel

The winner for Best Actor goes to the two child actors, Alexi Mathieu and Jules Gauzelin, in director Philippe Claudel's *A Childhood* who as half brothers deliver amazingly believable first time performances revealing how children must play adults to survive their brutal upbringing.

Silver Hugo, Best Female Actor:

Lizzie Brochere (*Full Contact*)

Country: Netherlands, Croatia

Director: David Verbeek

Lizzie Brochere is a compelling talent with qualities of an innocent gamine and sultry seducer in her multi-faceted performance as a nightclub pole dancer in a Nevada military environment to a luggage-processing clerk in a French airport.

Silver Plaque, Best Ensemble:

The Club

Country: Chile

Director: Pablo Larrain

The Jury award for Best Actor Ensemble is awarded to *The Club* for this incredibly powerful assemblage of great Chilean actors.

Silver Plaque, Best Cinematography:

Frank Van den Eeden (*Full Contact*)

Country: Netherlands, Croatia

Director: David Verbeek

Directed by David Verbeek, Frank Vanden Eeden's powerful imagery speaks to what great motion pictures strive for with expertly realized light, camera motion and framing.

Silver Plaque for Best Screenplay:

Writers Guillermo Calderon, Daniel Villalobos, Pablo Larrain (*The Club*)

Country: Chile

Director: Pablo Larrain

The winner for Best Screenplay goes to *The Club* from Chile, written by Guillermo Calderon, Daniel Villalobos and director Pablo Larrain, for delivering a truly profound reality of revenge and compassion.

Silver Plaque for Best Art Direction:

Toma Baqueni (*My Golden Days*)

Country: France

Director: Arnaud Desplechin

Production designer, Toma Baqueni and his team reveal lushly realized worlds in director Arnaud Deapchelin's film with a precise sense of style and realism covering periods of over 50 years from Russia, Eastern Europe, Tajikistan, and Paris.

New Directors Competition

This selection of first and second feature films receiving their U.S. premieres in Chicago celebrates the spirit of discovery and innovation upon which the Festival was founded.

Gold Hugo:

Underground Fragrance

Country: China, France

Director: Pengfei Song

The Gold Hugo goes to *Underground Fragrance* (China), director Pengfei Song's illuminating ode to modern Chinese society. Two couples navigate through a world in transition, striving to locate stability within the rapidly evolving spaces. There's a Chaplinesque physicality to the blinded man's plight, dodging obstacles in his path while stumbling into a poignant romance worthy of "City Lights."

Silver Hugo:

Sparrows

Country: Iceland, Denmark

Director: Runar Runarsson

The Silver Hugo goes to *Sparrows* (Iceland), which explores arrested lives in a deceptively tranquil community. Ethereal imagery is juxtaposed with acts of shocking violence, creating an indelible portrait of lost innocence. Director Runar Runarsson elicits superb performances from his actors, who brought their fractured father-son dynamic to vivid life.

Roger Ebert Award: *The Roger Ebert Award will be presented annually to an emerging filmmaker whose film presents a fresh and uncompromising vision. Films competing in the Festival's New Directors Competition are eligible for this award.*

Nahid

Country: Iran

Director: Ida Panahandeh

The Roger Ebert Award goes to *Nahid* (Iran), where we follow a strong-willed woman as she attempts to escape the narrow confines of her societally imposed trap. Director Ida Panahandeh pulls no false punches in her portrayal of an uncompromisingly difficult character. To paraphrase Roger's review of another acclaimed Iranian film, *A Separation*, she may be tending against our own sympathies, but we understand why she does so and may be correct to do so.

Documentary Competition

This selection of international documentaries competing for the Gold Hugo go beyond the headlines in telling those true stories that surprise, entertain and challenge us.

Gold Hugo:

Volta à Terra

Country: Portugal, Switzerland

Director: João Pedro Plácido

For a film that interweaves aesthetic rigor with sensitive observation, agrarian portraiture with an investment in individual experience, that moved us by its intimacy with its subjects, an ambitious audio-visual presentation, and a dual sense of time-li-ness and time-less-ness, the Gold Hugo goes to *Volta à Terra* by João Pedro Plácido.

Silver Hugo:

In The Underground

Country: China

Director: Song Zhantao

For a film that is both intensely experiential and emotionally insightful, that manages to honor and explore both the underground terrain of labor and the above ground human dramas of the domestic sphere, the Silver Hugo goes to *In the Underground* by Song Zhantao.

Gold Plaque Special Mention:

Time Suspended (Tiempo Suspendido)

Country: Mexico, Argentina

Director: Natalia Bruschtein

We'd like to make special mention of a film that combines archival with vérité footage to explore the tension between trauma and memory through the experience of a compelling individual who confronted political dictatorship and memory loss. The Jury's Special Mention goes to *Time Suspended (Tiempo Suspendido)* by Natalia Bruschtein.

Q Hugo Award

Chosen from the Festival's OUT-Look program, the winners of this award exhibit new artistic perspectives on sexuality and identity.

Gold Q Hugo:

Carol

Country: USA

Director: Todd Haynes

For its cinematic perfection.

Silver Q Hugo:

Henry Gamble's Birthday Party

Country: USA

Director: Stephen Cone

For its beautifully acted, intelligently directed, richly nuanced approach to the troubled relations between religion and sexuality.

Chicago Award

Chicago Plaque

Radical Grace

Country: USA

Director: Rebecca Parrish

Among the many worthy candidates of films made by Chicago- and Illinois-based filmmakers, the jury chose to recognize this unique film, which celebrates the bravery, devotion, and social engagement of the nuns on the bus. *Radical Grace* chronicles the individual stories of an extraordinary group of Catholic nuns and their collective movement to stand up for values of equality and justice in the face of a hierarchy deeply resistant to change. The humanistic filmmaking of *Radical Grace* is both timely and timeless and reminds us of both the power of documentary cinema and the possibility that compassion and human dignity may prevail in our world.

Short Film Awards

Gold Hugo, Live Action:

Leidi

Country: Colombia, UK

Director: Simón Mesa Soto

Leidi is a reminder that great short films tell stories that are just the right size. A character study set in a broad urban landscape framed by mountains, this portrait of a day in the life of a teenage mother in Medellin, Colombia immerses the audience in its heroine's concerns and yearnings. Simón Mesa Soto's sensitive direction gives weight to the subtle and meaning to the unspoken.

Silver Hugo, Live Action:

The Exquisite Corpus

Country: Austria

Director: Peter Tscherkassky

With *Exquisite Corpus*, experimental filmmaker Peter Tscherkassky takes viewers on an odyssey into the dark subconscious of film. Orchestrating layers of footage from old nudist films, skin flicks, and pornographic cheapies, he has created what can only be described as a mesmerizing nightmare of erotic possibilities.

Gold Plaque, Live Action:

One-minded

Country: South Korea

Director: Sébastien Simon and Forest Ian Estler

Forest Ian Estler and Sébastien Simon's playful and boldly original *One-Mined* frames the relationship between two young roommates in Seoul from a genuinely unique point-of-view: that of their oscillating fan, locked in a perpetual back-and-forth pan across their apartment.

Silver Plaque, Live Action:

Over

Country: UK

Director: Jörn Threlfall

The aftermath of a death is presented in disconnected pieces in Jörn Threlfall's *over*, a film that puts a seemingly clinical style to humane ends, offering insight into our own short-sightedness in matters of genuine tragedy.

Silver Plaque, Live Action:

Ramona

Country: Romania

Director: Andrei Cretulescu

Immediately riveting, Andrei Cretulescu's *Ramona* presents an enigmatic, gruesome revenge spree in long, wordless takes—a drive through a nightscape of violence and mystery that is stark and tantalizing as the classic Bauhaus song that plays over its end credits.

Silver Hugo, Documentary:

Santa Cruz del Islote

Country: US, Colombia

Director: Luke Lorentzen

This film balances a quiet and hypnotic lull of the ocean with charming moments of everyday life on the island. The cinematography captures the beauty of the island poised between its present and future. Story development is engaging and the technical challenges of production illustrate the depth of talent the filmmakers possess. However the story isn't overworked. There's enough room to wander with it and enjoy the scenery while getting a sense of the underlying concern starting to developing the next generation.

Gold Plaque, Documentary:

A Tale of Love, Madness and Death

Country: Chile

Director: Mijael Bustos Gutiérrez

The filmmaker presents a strong character by approaching a very difficult subject matter with empathy and visual sensibility. His simple though compelling, balanced and innovative storytelling makes the film an important voice in understanding schizophrenia and showing its many facets.

Silver Hugo, Animated:

Sunday Lunch

Country: France

Director: Céline Devaux

For its dynamic animation and explosion of the humor and horror found in the mundane subtleties of family life, love, and comforting, predictable dysfunction.

Gold Plaque, Animated:

The Same River Twice

Country: USA

Director: Weijia Ma

... a family history in five succinct, interlocking acts told with beautiful subtlety, imaginative animation, and a distinctly charming personality.

Silver Plaque, Animated:

Waves '98

Country: Lebanon, Qatar

Director: Ely Dagher

For its quiet bombast and nostalgia explored through a disarming blend of media, emotion, and fantasy.

INTERCOM

One of the longest-running international competitions of its kind, INTERCOM honors a wide range of corporate-sponsored, educational and branded films.

Gold Hugo, Business - Communications

Patrick Frost

Company/Entrant: Seed Audio-Visual Communications

Silver Hugo, Sales & Marketing

Black Ink

Company/Entrant: Kemper Kommunikation GmbH

Gold Plaque, Public Relations

Porsche at Le Mans 2015

Company/Entrant: Kemper Kommunikation GmbH

Gold Plaque, Business - Communications

Argyle Pink Diamonds, Beyond Rare

Company/Entrant: Bengar Films

Silver Plaque, Business - Promotion

Soapbox Race 2015

Company/Entrant: Strange Loop Studios

Silver Plaque, Business - Communications

Australia Post, Privacy and You

Company/Entrant: Bengar Films

Silver Plaque, Educational - Youth Audience

Summiteers

Company/Entrant: Seed Audio-Visual Communications

Certificate of Merit, Sports & Recreation

Spa 2015

Company/Entrant: Kemper Kommunikation GmbH

Certificate of Merit, Science/Research/Technology

Antarctic Edge: 70 Degrees South

Company/Entrant: Rutgers Film Bureau

ABOUT CINEMA/CHICAGO

Cinema/Chicago is a not-for-profit arts and education organization dedicated to encouraging better understanding between cultures and to making a positive contribution to the art form of the moving image. The Chicago International Film Festival is one of the year-round programs presented by Cinema/Chicago, which also include its Television Awards, CineYouth Festival, INTERCOM Competition, International Screenings Program, and Education Program.

Celebrating its 51st anniversary this year, the Chicago International Film Festival is North America's longest-running competitive film festival, running Oct 15-29, 2015 at the AMC River East (322 E. Illinois St, Chicago). Photos and media accreditation may be found at ChicagoFilmFestival.com/press.

This year's Festival slate now includes six World Premieres, 15 North American Premieres, 45 U.S. Premieres, and counting! View the 2015 Festival lineup at ChicagoFilmFestival.com/films. Individual tickets and multi-film passes are now available. The full festival schedule is available at ChicagoFilmFestival.com/schedule.

AWARDS NIGHT SPONSORS

Evening Hosts: Michigan Avenue Magazine and The Peninsula; Lead Partner: Wintrust Community Banks; Evening Partners: Stella Artois, Wansas Tequila, Effen Vodka, and Dark Horse Wine.

FESTIVAL PARTNERS

The 51st Chicago International Film Festival's sponsors include Gold Festival Partners: TIAA-CREF, Columbia College Chicago, Wintrust Community Banks; Official Airline: American Airlines; Headquarters Hotel: JW Marriott Chicago; Silver Festival Partners: Bloomberg, Intersites; Platinum Media Partners: National CineMedia (NCM), JC Decaux, Michigan Avenue Magazine; Gold Media Partners: WTTW11, Time Out Chicago, WBEZ91.5, WXRT-FM, WBBM Newsradio, and The Hollywood Reporter; Bronze Festival Partners: Stella Artois, AARP, Tribune Media; Participating Partners: SundanceNow Doc Club, Whole Foods, Wansas Tequila, Cultivate Studios, Netrix, KIND, OtterBox, Optimus, Sound Investment; Official Vehicle: Volvo; Participating Hotels: Public Chicago, The Whitehall Hotel, theWit and Loews Chicago Hotel; and Cultural Partners: Consulate General of Argentina in Chicago, Consulate General of Italy in Chicago, Italian Cultural Institute of Chicago, Italian Film Commission, Italian Trade Agency, Polish Film Institute, Goethe Institut, Austrian Cultural Forum New York, ANCINE National Cinema Agency of Brazil, and Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest. With Foundation and Government support from the National Endowment of the Arts, Alphawood Foundation Chicago, the Illinois Arts Council, and Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events, and the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation. Additional support provided by Allstate, the Chicago Architecture Biennial, Dark Horse Wine, Effen Vodka, Lavazza, and SkinnyPop.

###