BROOKLYN FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES
FEATURE FILM LINE-UP FOR 17th ANNUAL EDITION:
FORMULA
MAY 30 - JUNE 8, 2014

Opening Night Films:
World Premiere of Intimate Semaphores by T.J. Misny

Kate Lyn Sheil in Intimate Semaphore’s “Helberger in Paradise.” Credit: T.J. Misny.

and

New York Premiere of I Believe in Unicorns by Leah Meyerhoff

Natalia Dyer & Peter Vack in I Believe in Unicorns. Credit: Chloe Aftel.

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, May 8, 2014 – Brooklyn Film Festival (BFF), the largest and longest running festival in Brooklyn and the oldest international competitive festival in New York, is proud to announce its feature film line-up for its 2014 festival, themed FORMULA, comprised of bold, brave and unique indie films and new discoveries, many from first-time feature filmmakers from Brooklyn and beyond. The event will run from May 30 through June 8 in Williamsburg at indieScreen (289 Kent Avenue) and Windmill Studios NYC (287 Kent Avenue). The festival will present over 100 film premieres from around the world, selected from over 2,000 submissions. Tickets will be available soon for advanced purchase online. For more information, visit: http://www.brooklynfilmfestival.org/festival/.

Narrative Features highlights include the World Premiere of Brooklyn filmmakers Alexis and Bodine Boling’s Sci-Fi drama *Movement and Location*, which is Seed & Spark’s first narrative feature film to go from crowdfunding to festival premiere, and the World Premiere of Brendan Gibbons’ Occupy Wall Street comedy *Preoccupied*. From outside the USA, the festival will present the New York Premiere of BFF alumni Wojtek Smarzowski’s Polish box-office smash *Traffic Department*, and Slamdance award winner’s *Rezeta* and *Copenhagen*.

The Documentary Features line-up highlights include the New York Premiere of *Born to Fly*, Catherine Gund’s portrait of Brooklyn-based choreographer Elizabeth Streb; the New York Premiere of *Who Took Johnny* by Suki Hawley, Michael Galinsky and David Beilinson - 2011 BFF alumni for *Battle from Brooklyn*, and fresh off their Hot Docs premieres in Canada, the U.S. Premieres of Tony Shaff’s *Hotline* and Nantenaina Lova’s *The Malagasy Way*. For the first time, BFF will also present awards in a Documentary Shorts competition.

BFF Executive Director Marco Ursino said of the 2014 edition, “Our theme this year deals with an enigma: Is there a winning Formula to communicate with the audience and ultimately create a successful independent film? We ponder this complex question by thinking about the chemistry that might ultimately achieve such a formula. Do formulas apply exclusively to big budget filmmaking, are there formulas for independent filmmakers, and is there such a thing as formula-free filmmaking? How does a project preserve its independent spirit when the story is told by adopting proven storytelling formulas? And what has the independent film movement done in recent years to adapt new methods of filmmaking? We encourage our filmmakers, audiences, industry guests, Brooklyn, all New Yorkers and the rest of the world to stir the ingredients in this potent and perplexing formula.”

BFF will award the winners with prizes totaling over $50,000 in film services and products. Prizes include a seven-day theatrical release at indieScreen for the Best Narrative Feature and Best Documentary award winners, and for the first time as well for the Best Narrative Short and Best Documentary Short.

BFF’s prestigious alumni have gone on to garner both critical acclaim and nationwide distribution. A record number of films from the 2013 edition went on to receive U.S. theatrical releases. These include Jeremy O’Keefe’s Best Narrative Feature Winner *Somewhere Slow*, Nathan Silver’s *Soft in the Head*, and Jeffrey Karoff’s *Cavedigger*, which went on to receive a 2014 Oscar Nomination for Best Documentary Short. Other BFF alumni include: Suki Hawley and Michael Galinsky’s *Battle for Brooklyn* (shortlisted for a 2011 Academy Award nomination); Katie Dellamaggiore’s *Brooklyn Castle* (2013 nationwide broadcast on PBS’
P.O.V.); and Kelly Anderson’s *My Brooklyn* (a successful DIY release in 2013), amongst many more. Numerous films from the Brooklyn Film Festival have gone on to be nominated for and win awards by both the American and British Academy Awards.

After last year's successful "Expand Your View" campaign, **TBWA** returns as a sponsor for BFF with a brand new promotional campaign to be announced soon. "TBWA partners with Brooklyn Film Festival because we support creativity and giving filmmakers a platform to feature their disruptive ideas, creativity and perspective not necessarily following any mainstream rules," said Lizzie Dewhurst, TBWA Communications Manager. "Expand Your View" was recognized by the prestigious Webby Awards with two 2014 nominations on the categories of Social: Best Use of Video and Mobile & Apps: Integrated Mobile Experience.

For the third year in a row, the festival will continue its **BFF Exchange** aimed ultimately at connecting filmmakers with film distributors. BFF Exchange will be staged at indieScreen on June 7, and will feature a pitch session and a "distribution" panel. On Saturday, May 31 at indieScreen, BFF will present the **10th annual kidsfilmfest**, which aims to discover, expose and promote children's filmmakers while drawing worldwide attention to Brooklyn.

Brooklyn Film Festival thanks its generous **Sponsors** this year, including:

**Presenting Sponsors:** indieScreen, Windmill Studios, WNET New York Public Media, WNYC Radio

**Supporting Sponsors:** Eurochannel, VER, TBWA, Yelp, Panavision, Final Cut, Sound Lounge

**Official Sponsors:** Sierra Nevada, Dark Horse Wines, MPE, Lentini

**Award Sponsors:** Panavision, indieScreen, Windmill Studios, AbelCine, Xeno Lights, Cinecall, Film Friends, Mik Cribben Steady-cam, Media Services.

**Narrative Features (in alphabetical order):**

*Copenhagen* (Canada) Dir. Mark Raso – New York Premiere
(Winner - Audience Award at the 2014 Slamdance Film Festival)
After weeks of traveling through Europe the immature William finds himself at a crossroads in Copenhagen. Not just another European city, Copenhagen is also the birthplace of his father. When the youthful Effy befriends the older William they set off on an adventure to find William’s grandfather. Effy’s mix of youthful exuberance and wisdom challenges William unlike any woman ever has. As the attraction builds and William truly connects with someone for the first time in his life, he must come to grips with destabilizing elements of his family’s sordid past.

*The Girls on Liberty Street* (USA) Dir. John Rangel – East Coast Premiere
(Official Selection, Chicago International Film Festival)
Her boyfriend is pulling away. Her sister is growing up too fast. Her brother is falling under a bad influence. Her friends have plans that don't include her. With one week before she ships off
for basic training, Brianna finds herself trying to make sure home will be the same place when she returns.

**I Believe in Unicorns (USA) Dir. Leah Meyerhoff – New York Premiere**  
(Nominated, SXSW Grand Jury Award, Narrative Feature. Winner - Grand Jury Prize Atlanta Film Festival BFF Alumni for Twitch and Team Queen)  
A road trip through the stunning and complex landscape of troubled young love. Davina is an imaginative and strong-willed teenage girl who often escapes into a beautifully twisted fantasy life. Having grown up quickly as the sole caretaker of her disabled mother, she looks for salvation in a new relationship with an older boy. Davina is swept into a whirlwind of romance and adventure, but the enchantment of her new relationship quickly fades when Sterling’s volatile side begins to emerge.

**The Impeccables [Kusursuzlar] (Turkey) Dir. Ramin Matin – U.S. Premiere**  
(Winner – Best Film, Best Director & Special Jury Award at Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival)  
Two sisters in their early thirties find themselves isolated in the Aegean summer cottage of their childhood, where they must deal with their uneasy sibling relationship and confront their devastating recent past.

**Intimate Semaphores (USA) - Dir. T.J. Misny - World Premiere**  
A collection of three short stories. Each story is a surreal and darkly comic exploration of creative expression and how our artistic impulses have the power to unite us or alienate us. "Helberger In Paradise" stars Kate Lyn Sheil as a New Yorker who returns to her hometown to make good on an anarchistic promise to a deceased lover. "High And Dry" stars Ariane Labed as a privileged street photographer who suspects that her declining eyesight might have disturbing psychological implications. In "The Crumb of It," a struggling comedian (Jocelin Donahue) and rising star pastry chef (Chioke Nassor) find that their creative pursuits threaten to sabotage their new relationship.

**Menthol (USA) Dir. Micah Van Hove – New York Premiere**  
(Official Selection, Santa Barbara International Film Festival)  
Four male twenty-somethings spend 24 hours reliving their high school glory days. The drugs, video games, and boozing end in a moment of terrible violence, forcing them to bury their guilt in this bleak and unflinching portrait of 21st Century nihilism.

**Movement and Location (USA) Dir. Alexis Boling - World Premiere**  
(Seed & Spark’s first narrative feature film to go from crowdfunding to festival premiere.)  
Kim Getty is an immigrant from 400 years in the future, sent back in time to live out an easier life in Brooklyn. It’s a one-way trip of difficult isolation, but in the three years since she landed, Kim has built a life that feels almost satisfying. She has a full time job, shares an apartment with a roommate, and is falling in love. But when she stumbles on a teenage girl who is also from the future, Kim’s remade sense of self is tested.

**My Blind Heart [Mein Blindes Herz] (Austria) Dir. Peter Brunner – East Coast Premiere**  
(Nominated, Tiger Award, Rotterdam International Film Festival)
Kurt suffers from the rare Marfan syndrome and is almost blind. After killing his mother, he goes on a journey where the boundaries between perpetrator and victim are blurred. Haunted by her calls, Kurt leaves his assisted living home in distress. Taking to the streets, he meets Conny, a 13-year-old runaway from a broken home. She readily participates in Kurt's protest against his body, not knowing what moves him or into which abyss his journey is leading.

*Paradise Cruise* (Israel) Dir. Matan Guggenheim – U.S. Premiere (Winner, Audience Award at Israel Film Festival in Paris, BFF Alumni for Crickets)
Dora spends her time photographing Israeli military funerals and commemoration ceremonies. She is trying to capture the face of a soldier that haunts her. When she meets Yossi, a rebellious young man just out of military service, they begin to fall in love. They have an unwritten contract to never speak of their past. But they cannot escape, and their love is put to the ultimate test in this neo-noir drama.

*Preoccupied* (USA) Dir. Brendan Gibbons - World Premiere
Two New York investment bankers attempt to shut down the Occupy Wall Street protests of 2011, creating their own counter movement called Bankers Unite. But if this is what the 'One Percent' looks like, it may be time to get out of the market.

*Rezeta* (Mexico) Dir. Gerardo Gatica – East Coast Premiere (Winner – Grand Jury Prize, Best Narrative Feature at Slamdance Film Festival)
Rezeta is a 21-year-old model born in Albania who arrives in Mexico after making a living out of her beauty all around the globe. She soon meets Alex, a tattooed musician who cleans up the trailer where she waits during a commercial photo shoot. They quickly become friends, and then their relationship becomes something more. This is the story of their complicated romance, set against a backdrop of bands, parties and everyday life in modern Mexico.

*Traffic Department [Drogówka]* (Poland) Dir. Wojtek Smarzowski – New York Premiere (Winner – Best Supporting Actor & Best Screenplay at Polish Film Awards, BFF Alumni for Rose and The Dark House)
Seven friends, officers of the Warsaw’s traffic police department, are leading seemingly fulfilled lives. They work together, party together, together they play jokes, cut small deals and sport fast cars. Their small world gets rocked when one of them is found murdered. Sargent Król becomes a chief suspect in the case. He manages to escape arrest and as a fugitive tries to prove his innocence. Slowly he begins to uncover a corruption scheme, which points towards high circles of authority in police and politics.

*Victoriana* (USA) Dir. Jadrien Steele – East Coast Premiere (Winner – New Vision Award at Cinequest San Jose Film Festival, BFF Alumni for Just Make Believe)
When Sophie Becker convinces her husband Tim, a struggling author, to invest her inheritance in a Victorian townhouse in Brooklyn, what begins as a classic American dream turns into a Dostoyevskian nightmare. After Sophie is involved in a fatal accident, the couple is faced with financial ruin, and must make a fateful decision that not only attracts the attention of the police, but also reveals long-hidden truths about themselves and their marriage.
**Documentary Features (in alphabetical order):**

*Born to Fly* (USA) Dir. Catherine Gund – New York Premiere  
(BORN TO FLY will have a week-long theatrical release starting Sept. 10 at Film Forum.  
***All full reviews and interviews are embargoed till the theatrical release***)

Born to Fly harnesses the thrill and energy of Elizabeth Streb's Brooklyn-based STREB Extreme Action Company. Inter-cutting archival footage from decades of STREB performances with verité moments between Streb, her partner Laura and their collaborators, the documentary follows Streb over the course of a year as she reflects on her influences, evolution, and inventions, all while preparing for her greatest public performance.

*Boy Saloum* (France) Dir. Audrey Gallet – U.S. Premiere  
They are thirty years old. They have fire in their bellies. They have charisma. In 2011, a few young Senegalese rappers created a social movement called Y'en A Marre (Enough Is Enough). Little did they know that their protest against an oppressive regime would bring about an epic encounter with history. Boy Saloum is their story, an intimate portrait of Senegalese culture as a country fights for its rights.

*Glena* (USA) Dir. Alan Luebke – New York Premiere  
(Nominated, Grand Jury Prize, Best Documentary Feature at Slamdance Film Festival)  
Glena was living the American Dream: successful career, two happy children, long-term relationship, and a beautiful family home. Then one day, with no background or training, she decided to give cage fighting a try.

*Hotline* (USA) Dir. Tony Shaff – U.S. Premiere  
(Official Selection, Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, 2013 BFF Exchange Pitch Panel alumni)  
'Hotline' is a feature-length documentary about the intense connections made between strangers over the telephone, and explores these anonymous conversations that people are often too hesitant to have with those closest to them. From crisis centers to psychics and sex workers, this documentary eavesdrops on the inner-workings of hotlines and puts faces to the voice on the other end of the line.

*Jeepney* (Philippines/USA) Dir. Esy Casey – East Coast Premiere  
(Nominated, Jury Award, Best Documentary at San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival)  
JEEPNEY visualizes the richly diverse cultural and social climate of the Philippines through its most popular form of mass transportation: vividly decorated ex-WWII military jeeps. The film follows jeepney artists, drivers, and passengers, whose stories take place amidst nationwide protest against oil price hikes that pressure drivers to work overseas to earn a living.

(Official Selection, Hot Docs Canadian International Film Festival)  
The Malagasy Way is a poetic, proverb-packed tour of an alternative way of life central to Madagascar's culture and society. Rejecting the waste and overconsumption that plague Western nations, the film examines how the people of Madagascar have embraced a conservationist
lifestyle of recycling, repurposing and self-reliance in the midst of a global economic crisis, using ingenuity, not underdevelopment, as their inspiration.

No Burqas Behind Bars (Sweden) Dir. Nima Sarvestani – East Coast Premiere  
(Nominated, Dragon Award, Best Nordic Documentary, Göteborg Film Festival)  
Takhar Prison. 40 women. 34 children. Four cells. No burqas. This documentary takes viewers inside one of the world's most restricted environments: an Afghan women's prison. Through the prisoners' own stories, it explore how 'moral crimes' are used to control women in post-Taliban Afghanistan, a society where women are normally faceless.

Unplugged [Anplagd] (Serbia/Montenegro/Finland) Dir. Mladen Kovacevic – East Coast Premiere  
'Unplugged' is an existential allegory about music played on tree leaves, humorously rattling between the most primitive of instruments and the most universal escapism of music. Music has rarely been so offbeat.

Who Took Johnny (USA) Dir. David Beilinson, Suki Hawley and Michael Galinsky – New York Premiere  
(Winner, Jury Award at Chicago Underground Film Festival & Special Jury Award at Newport Beach Film Festival. 2011 BFF Alumni, Battle for Brooklyn)  
Who Took Johnny examines the infamous thirty-year-old cold case behind the disappearance of Iowa paperboy Johnny Gosch, the first missing child to appear on a milk carton. It traces the heartbreaking story of Johnny's mother, Noreen Gosch, and her relentless quest to find the truth about what happened to her son when he never returned from his morning paper route.

Narrative Shorts:

The 2014 Brooklyn Film Festival will present a selection of short films from some of the finest emerging talents in the world, with films coming from Brazil, Canada, England, Germany, Guadeloupe, The Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Vietnam, and the U.S. with subjects ranging from African child soldiers to Polish hitchhikers to a Russian bathhouse and a brain-eating comedy.

Documentary Shorts:

For the first time, the 2014 Brooklyn Film Festival will present awards in the Documentary Shorts category, with stories coming from Australia, Belgium, China and the U.S. which chronicle everything from Brooklyn’s iconic Domino Sugar Refinery that faces demolition to Brooklyn bakeries affected by gentrification, to a refugee wandering alone 150 kilometers above the arctic circle.

Experimental:

The Experimental competition of the 2014 Brooklyn Film Festival presents a daring selection of films from the vanguard of cinema, with edgy new work made including a scientific tale located deep inside the temporal lobe of the human brain to portraits of street workers in Colombia.
**Animation:**

In past years, some of the Best Animation Award winners at the Brooklyn Film Festival have gone on to win at the British Academy Awards. This year’s selection of films includes a stellar lineup of wildly creative new work from some of the finest animators working today.

**Special Events:**

On Saturday, May 31 from 1:00pm to 3:00pm at indieScreen, BFF will present the **10th annual kidsfilmfest**, which aims to discover, expose and promote children's filmmakers while drawing worldwide attention to Brooklyn. The film program is tailored for children of all ages (films are rated "G"), and consists of numerous short animation, live-action and documentary films. A Q & A with the filmmakers and a filmmaker’s workshop usually follows each program. Line-up to be announced soon at [http://www.kidsfilmfest.org/news/](http://www.kidsfilmfest.org/news/).

For the third year in a row, the festival will continue its **BFF Exchange** project aimed ultimately at connecting filmmakers with film distributors. BFF Exchange will be staged at indieScreen on Saturday, June 7, and will feature a pitch session and a "distribution" panel on each side of a working luncheon. More information at: [http://www.brooklynfilmfestival.org/exchange/](http://www.brooklynfilmfestival.org/exchange/)

**BFF Screening Times:**

**Friday, May 30**
Windmill Studios NYC: 8:00
indieScreen: 8:00

**Saturday, May 31, Saturday, June 7, Sunday, June 1:**
Windmill Studios NYC: 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
indieScreen: 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30

**Monday, June 2 through Friday, June 6:**
Windmill Studios NYC: 6:00, 8:00, 10:00
indieScreen: 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

**Sunday, June 8:**
Windmill Studios NYC: 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00
indieScreen: 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00

**About Brooklyn Film Festival (BFF):**

The organizers of the Brooklyn Film Festival (BFF), have been staging international, competitive film events since 1998. BFF’s mission is to provide a public forum in Brooklyn in order to advance public interest in films and the independent production of films, to draw worldwide attention to Brooklyn as a center for cinema, to encourage the rights of all Brooklyn residents to access and experience the power of independent filmmaking, and to promote artistic excellence and the creative freedom of artists without censure. BFF, inc. is a not-for-profit organization.
For more info about Brooklyn Film Festival, visit http://www.brooklynfilmfestival.org/.

For info about kidsfilmfest, visit http://www.kidsfilmfest.org/news/.

BFF on Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/BrooklynFilmFestival

BFF on Twitter: https://twitter.com/brooklynfest

For info about indieScreen, visit www.indieScreen.com.

For info about Windmill Studios NYC, visit http://windmillstudiosnyc.com/.

Presenting Sponsors:

For Brooklyn Film Festival press inquiries and interview requests with Executive Director Marco Ursino and Programmer Nathan Kensinger, contact: Brian Geldin at (917) 549-2953 or brian@wbff.org.

For Festival Press Accreditation (closing one week before start of BFF), visit: http://www.brooklynfilmfestival.org/press/registration/

All films are embargoed for full reviews. Only capsule reviews, curtain raisers, festival highlights/picks and features are permitted. Interview requests will be passed along to filmmakers.

High-Resolution Film Images available upon request.

For more information and press inquiries on kidsfilmfest, contact: Lisa King at (646)-234-5080 or lisa@kidsfilmfest.org.