24th Brooklyn Film Festival “The Clearing”

140 Film Premieres Playing from June 4-13
Indoor and Online

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, April 20, 2021 - Brooklyn Film Festival (BFF), New York’s longest running international, competitive film festival, is proud to announce its 24th annual installment themed, “The Clearing.” BFF will be staged online via the festival website from June 4-13, and in-person at Windmill Studios in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, from June 5-13. The 2021 film lineup will include 140 film premieres, which will be viewable online 24/7, for the entire 10-day period. At Windmill Studios, BFF will screen a shorter version of the lineup, to create longer intermissions, and ultimately safer festival operations. The film schedule will be available soon on BFF’s website.

BFF, a Canadian Screen Award qualifying festival, received 2,615 films from 91 Countries and will select 140 film premieres programmed into 33 different, two-hour program blocks. Features will play alone (each film is considered one program). Shorts are grouped together by category and direction (i.e. five short narratives by female filmmakers are considered one program).

BFF divides films into six categories: Feature Narrative, Documentary Feature, Short Narrative, Short Documentary, Experimental, and Animation. BFF’s selection criteria, a 24-year-old set of rules, constitutes the true festival trademark: participating films cannot be older than two years; films are selected from submissions only; all selected films participate in the awards competition. The smallest film can win the top festival award: The Grand Chameleon.

The video server will be hosted by CineSend. Other than the film screenings, BFF will offer parallel events such as pre-recorded filmmaker
introductions and Q&A sessions on BFF’s website. Live interviews and get-togethers will be staged on Facebook and other social media.

BFF Executive Director Marco Ursino said of the 24th edition, “‘The Clearing’ is our 2021 theme. New York residents are getting vaccinated in large numbers and are diligently observing the city rules regarding safe distancing and mask wearing. Cinemas are re-opening with new, safer policies and criteria. Because of this, we feel a sweet sense of optimism, as if we were experiencing a slow awakening from a one-year hibernation. That is why BFF is ready to show indie films to live audiences. Considering the amazing success of last year’s virtual festival, BFF will offer the full lineup online, again this year. ‘The Clearing’ is about safe distancing also from all the accumulated pain and anger of the past year, and is about getting re-acquainted with life’s important values. Fundamentally, ‘The Clearing’ is a message of hope that we want to spread, while trying to leave the ‘Covid tunnel’ behind us.”

BFF’s list of sponsors for 2021 includes ALL ARTS, created by The WNET Group, Havas NY, Brooklyn Film Society, Windmill Studios, PRG, Sobre Vista Resort, Blue Table Post, Xeno Lights, AbelCine, Be Electric, Final Draft, MPE, Yelp, Big Screen Plaza, Broadway Stages, Media Services, Papapietro Perry, and Noble Jewelry.

For the first time working with BFF, Havas New York will create the 24th BFF promotional campaign. Dan Lucey, Chief Creative Officer of Havas New York, said, “In a year that was stranger than fiction, with the most unimaginable script, we couldn’t be happier to partner with the Brooklyn Film Festival, and look forward to a brighter 2021.”

BFF is also happy to announce that the 17th Annual KidsFilmFest will be staged online together with BFF’s programs, and be available for the entire festival, June 4-13. KidsFilmFest will present two programs of films, tailored for young viewers: age 3 to 7, and 8 to 15. The films are all rated "G," and consists of numerous animated shorts, documentaries and narrative films.

About the Programmers

BFF’s Feature Narrative programmer is Brazilian-born-turned-New-York filmmaker **Emilia Ferreira**. Her debut feature, “The Unattainable Story,” premiered at the New Directors Competition at the Mostra–São Paulo International Film Festival. She was the feature programmer for the narrative section of the 20th Brooklyn Film Festival and an advocate for
women in film as the co-founder of WIFT/Brazil. The Feature Documentary programmer is Brandon Harrison, a graduate of the UCLA School of Film and Television who previously programmed short docs for BFF. Natalie Gee, a multiple short film producer, leads BFF’s Short Narrative category. Mara Bresnahan is the Short Documentary programmer, who currently serves as the festival director for the Boston ReelAbilities Film Festival and as a lead programmer for the Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival. Sarah Bex Rice, the Experimental programmer, is a media archivist, writer and video artist that has worked in many different capacities with filmmakers and festivals both local and worldwide, including the Edinburgh Film Festival, Glasgow Film Festival and Indie Street Film Festival. Julia Cowle, BFF’s Animation programmer and KidsFilmFest director, is an independent filmmaker, illustrator, animator and comedy writer.

About BFF

The organizers of the Brooklyn Film Festival 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 and to encourage the rights of all Brooklyn residents to access and experience the power of independent filmmaking; to promote artistic excellence and the creative freedom of artists without censure. BFF, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

For more info about the festival, please visit: https://www.brooklynfilmfestival.org.

For more information about KidsFilmFest, visit: https://www.kidsfilmfest.org.

For BFF press inquiries and interview requests with Executive Director Marco Ursino and Festival Programmers, contact: Lisa King, BFF PR Manager, at 646-234-5080 or lisa@wbff.org.

For inquiries about KidsFilmFest, contact: Julia Cowle at julia@wbff.org.