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Feature

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OVER 300 INDIES TO DEBUT AT NYIIFV FESTIVAL

The New York International Independent Film and Video Festival returns to Manhattan for eight days of screenings, premieres, music performances, panels and parties. The opening-night action begins with a kick-off party at 7 p.m. April 28 at Club Spirit. The festival runs through May 5 with showings at the Village East Cinemas. The festival will showcase a diverse range of films from all over the world.

"We are really excited about our line-up," said Stuart Alson, the founded and executive producer of the festival. "The festival represents a new wave of up-and-coming independent filmmakers and offers a unique opportunity for artists, industry professionals, delegates and attendees to mingle without the pretentiousness."

The festival will feature more than 300 worldwide film submissions. The assortment of talent includes a host of visually engaging features. Submissions range from the absurdist to the musical, including *United*, a music video that shows a handful of children fighting for their rights and winning not through violence, but through the spirit of friendship. Directed by 19-year-old Taron Lexton, the short features cameo appearances from soul legend Isaac Hayes and actresses Jenna Elfman and Erika Christensen. Also featured is *The Moment*, a film that brings together all aspects of the life in the electronic music scene. It stars Bjork, Moby, Tori Amos and the Beastie Boys.

Some features have already gained recognition: *Charlie the Ox* centers on the story of a dimwitted safecracker who is double-crossed by a group of bank robbers. Directed by Sundance Award-Winner Scott Smith, the film won recognition at the Telluride Indie Film Festival and was the recipient of the Cinequest's Maverick Spirit Award.

Horror fans can find reason to attend with *Xtacy*, a horror/thriller inspired by Edgar Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart*, directed by and starring Tom DeGrazia. Some might also be intrigued by Jimmy Aquino and Julie Blanciak appearing in *The Burdens of a Collective Existence*, a comedic horror film about the absurdities of human existence.

Australian themes are abound in the festival, with at least three feature submissions. *The Chase Is On*, edited by Oscar-winner Aran D'Souza, promises to be an engaging ride,

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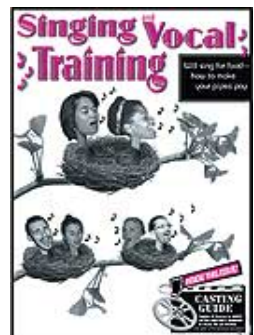
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its filmmakers said. *Troy's Story*, a film exploring the real-life adventures of Australian motorcycle sensation Troy Bayliss, is narrated by Ewan McGregor, a self-confessed Troy Bayliss fan. *The Crop* is an Australian tongue-in-cheek feature film about a night club owner, Ronald "Blade" Gillette who has debts to pay and crooked cops to evade. The film stars George Elliot, Rhys Muldoon and Holly Brisley.

Following suit in action fashion, *Richard Heat* features the story of a city cop who works his way up the justice ladder, only to meet with danger when he goes up against Giovanni and Donnelly, two big-time mobsters determined to control the same city.

Other submissions include films focusing on cultural and ethnic difference: *Caminos* is a film about Naoko, who recalls her last journey through life with Daniel, a Mexican traveling in Japan during the soccer World Cup. Meanwhile, *Manhattan Confidential*, a newly discovered East Village masterpiece about nine Manhattan-based, seven-year, interlocking love affairs, pits "old" New York against "new" New York. *Il Sopranista (The Sopranist)*, an award-winning Italian short film concerning faith and opera and set in present-day Italy, shows a culture that is slowly vanishing.

Enlivening the line-up is *Vinsanity*, an award-winning one-man comedic performance starring Vince August which includes one of the artist's performances at The World Famous Laugh Factory in New York's Time Square. And an alluring tagline should prompt some to see George Clooney's production of *The Big Empty*, a bittersweet tale about Alice, her vagina and the infinite nature of the tundra, starring Selma Blair.

The festival also features a slate of fresh documentaries from award-winning filmmakers. *Showtime at the Hippodrome*, directed by Oscar Winner William Whiteford, highlights the rebirth of Baltimore's legendary Hippodrome Theatre. *A Daughter's Touch*, an award winning tale about post-partum depression and a woman on the brink, falls in line with *Comfortably Numb*, a riveting short, illustrates the devastating effects of psychiatric drugs that are prescribed to millions of children. Other popular artistic documentaries include *Behind the Artist: Michael Godard* and *Planetarium*. *Behind the Artist* reveals details surrounding the tragic life of best-selling artist—Michael Godard. It features interviews with Vince Neil of Motley Crue, Dishwalla and Alter Bridge. *Planetarium*, yet another award-winning documentary, follows an artist as he takes his painting around the globe, visiting 35 exotic locations, including Machu Picchu, the pyramids, Stonehenge, Central Africa, New York, and China's Great Wall.

Tickets for film screenings are priced at \$10 and can be purchased online at www.ticketweb.com or by calling 866-468-7619. All films showing at noon, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. are free Monday through Friday. Opening night tickets are priced at \$20 and should be purchased in advance through TicketWeb. VIP passes also will be available.

Schedule and film descriptions are available online at



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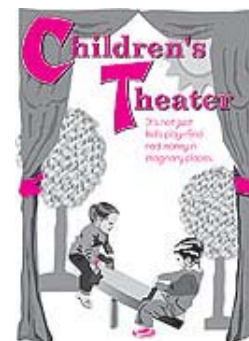
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www.nyfilmvideo.com. The New York International Music Festival and New York International Art Festival, sister festivals to the New York Independent Film and Video Festival, will be running concurrently.

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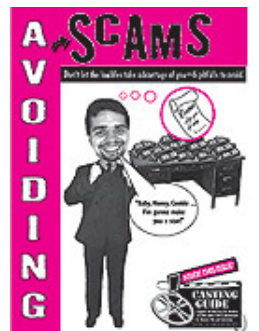
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