
Brazil Festival Matures: 329 Films from 66 Countries

Contributed by Newsroom
Thursday, 21 October 2004

The 28th annual São Paulo International Film Festival opens today. By choosing the Cine Ipiranga for the opening ceremony the Film Festival makes its intentions clear.

Opened in 1943 by the renowned architect Rino Levi, the Cine Ipiranga is one of the biggest and oldest cinemas in São Paulo, with its 1130 seating capability.

It is located near the famous Avenida São João and Ipiranga, immortalized in the song "Sampa" by Caetano Veloso, who also directs one of the segments of the film Bem-Vindo a São Paulo/ Welcome to São Paulo, that unites 18 different visions of 18 different filmmakers, including names such as Wolfgang Becker and Maria Medeiros.

Caetano also signs the "Concrete" segment, produced by the Festival, and interprets the chronics in the film.

Wim Wenders is also one of the favorites of the Festival, winning twice the Public's Award; first with Wings of Desire in the 12th edition, then with The Soul of a Man, part of The Blues series, in the 27th Festival.

As a contribution to the revitalization of downtown São Paulo the old Cine Olido has been included in the screening places chosen by the Festival. The cinema has recently been remodeled.

Each year the Festival holds an irreverent opening night. In the 19th edition, it was at the "Vão Livre do Masp", at open sky, with the presence of Pedro Almodóvar, the Spaniard who previewed his The Flower of My Secret.

In the 24th Festival, the opening was held at the Sala São Paulo with the screening of Word and Utopia by the Portuguese Manoel de Oliveira, who will be present at this year Festival with The Fifth Empire – Yesterday as Today.

In two occasions the Festival was opened with a concert: in the 25th edition with the No Smoking Orchestra, which has the director Emir Kusturica as a member, and the 26th edition with the Leningrado Cowboys, frequently associated with Finnish filmmakers Aki and Mika Kaurismäki.

Info

The 28th São Paulo International Film Festival will feature 329 films (268 feature films and 61 shorts) from over 66 countries.

From the 22nd of October to November 4th, 19 cinemas around town will participate in the Festival. During the two weeks of the Festival, exhibitions, book premières, performances and shows will take place.

This year highlights are the retrospectives of Abbas Kiarostami (Iran), Guy Maddin (Canada) and Amos Gitai (Israel), who designed the artwork of this edition.

Over one hundred professionals of the film industry will join the Festival.

Among them are Jerzy Stuhr (Poland) who'll participate with two films (acting in one and directing the other), Jane Birkin (concluding the Festival with a concert at the Sesc Pinheiros) and the DJ Joakim (France) who'll play live during the screening of The Fall of the House of Usher (1928).

Opening

The opening film will be Wim Wenders' *Land of Plenty*. The film tells the story of a Vietnam War veteran who, with his niece, travels to New York to investigate the injury of a homeless middle-eastern. On their way there they redeem values lost during the attacks of September 11th.

Retrospectives

Amos Gitai, known for his strongly political films about the Israeli society and their conflicts with Palestine, will present a photographic retrospective at the Fundação Armando Álvares Penteado (FAAP).

This show was originally presented at the Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris) in 2003, with huge success.

Gitai, the author of over 40 films, achieved great notoriety in Brazil with his latest productions, all shown at previous Festival's: *Kadosh* (1999), *Kippur* (2000), *Eden* (2001), *Kedma* (2002), *Alila* (2003) and also a short-film included in September 11th . *Kedma* won the Critics prize of the 26th Festival.

Kiarostami, a canon of contemporary Iranian film, will hold a practical film workshop. He will also present some photographs at FAAP. Two of his most recent feature films, *Five* and *10 on ten*, will be in the program as well.

Gitai and Kiarostami are also the theme of two separate books which will be released during the Festival by the publishers Cosac Naify, in association with FAAP and the São Paulo International Film Festival.

The third retrospective pays homage to the Canadian Guy Maddin, considered one of the key players of the new underground contemporary cinema, frequently being compared to David Lynch and his contemporary David Cronenberg.

Since 1986 Maddin has produced over 20 films, influenced by the aesthetics of F. W. Murnau and Fritz Lang.

His films feature unusual scripts exploring sexuality and the grotesque. His latest, *The Saddest Music in the World* (2003), was shown in the 27th edition of the Festival.

Gathering Point

The gathering point of this years Festival will be the former Cine Astor, located inside the Conjunto Nacional.

The space, which has been projected by Carla Caffé and lightened by Betty Prado, will have a kiosk by Café do Ponto, and will host debates with directors, actors and film professionals.

On the 27th of October a series of film books, by the Imprensa Oficial publishers and edited by the film critic Rubens Ewald Filho, will be released. A stand of Imprensa Oficial can be found in the lounge as well.

The Lounge will be open from 10am to 11pm, during all the Festival.

The poster

During the Festival all the previous posters will be shown in the Lounge. 28 back lights will feature all different versions created throughout the years. Quanta Productions and LPL Lightning Productions support the exhibition.

This editions' poster was designed by the Israeli filmmaker Amos Gitai, who directed *Kedma* (2002) and *Promised Land* (2004). In former years great filmmakers such as Aleksandr Sokúrov, Michelangelo Antonioni, Federico Fellini, Abbas Kiarostami, Takeshi Kitano, Akira Kurosawa and Emir Kusturica, and artists such as Angeli, Guto Lacaz and Tomie Ohtake have created the commemorative posters.

Amir Admoni designed this years' teaser and the composer André Abujamra created the soundtrack.

Deals, Prices

The information stand of the Festival is located in the Conjunto Nacional and has been open since the 11th of October from 12am to 6pm.

Individual tickets cost R\$ 11,00 for Mondays to Thursdays, and R\$ 13,00 for Fridays to Sundays.

Combos of 20 tickets cost R\$ 100,00 and for 40 tickets R\$ 185,00.

The full-time permanent costs R\$ 290,00 and special (which is for sessions before 5:55pm) costs R\$ 90,00. 200 packages of each kind will be available.

Clients of the ClubeFolha (individuals) have 15% discount at the full-time permanent and special combos.

The 4th Year of the Youth Festival, that gives priority and free tickets to high-school students and school appointments, will be extended to two daily sessions, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon.

New services will be integrated at the Festival Gathering Point, in the former Cine Astor, next to the Cinearte, which was gently granted by the Alvorada Cinematográfica.

Sponsors and Circuit

The 28th São Paulo International Film Festival is sponsored by Petrobras Distribuidora; co-sponsored by Microsoft; supported by FAAP; promotions by Folha de S. Paulo and Sesc São Paulo; cultural grants by Governo Federal, Lei de Incentivo à Cultura, Secretaria de Estado de Cultura, Secretaria de Estado de Educação, Governo do Estado de São Paulo and Secretaria Municipal da Cultura; institutional grants by São Paulo 450 anos, Imprensa Oficial and Anhembi Turismo e Eventos; and colaborations by Café do Ponto, Crowne Plaza and Cinemark.

The Festival will be screened at Cinearte, Cineclub Directv, Cinemark Santa Cruz, Cine Morumbi Shopping, Cinesesc, Espaço Unibanco, FAAP – Fundação Armando Álvares Penteado, Sala Cinemateca, Sala UOL de Cinema e Unibanco Artplex. Free sessions will be held at the Centro Cultural São Paulo, CEU Curuçá, Cine Olido, MIS – Museu da Imagem e Som and Vão Livre do MASP.

For more info: www.mostra.org.