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The writing debut of actor Blake Jenner will premiere at Miami Film Festival



BY RENE RODRIGUEZ
rodriguez@miamiherald.com

“Billy Boy,” a drama about an 18-year-old delinquent starring, written and produced by Miami native Blake Jenner, will make its world premiere at the Miami Film Festival. The movie will screen as part of the festival’s Jordan Ressler Screenwriting Award competition, which grants a \$10,000 cash prize to writers for their first-produced screenplay.

Organizers of the festival, which is presented by Miami Dade College, announced on Wednesday the other titles that will be competing in the category, including several U.S. and North American premieres:

- “The One-Eyed King” (Spain), writer-director Marc Crehuet’s dark comedy about a young man’s accidental encounter with the police officer who shot his eye out during a street riot;
- “The Summer Is Gone” (China), writer-director Dalei Zhang’s portrait of the Chinese revolution as experienced by a 12-year-old boy in the early 1990s;
- “La Soledad” (Venezuela), a fact-based drama about the search for a treasure hidden inside the walls of a decrepit mansion;
- “Are We Not Cats” (USA), writer-director Xander Robin’s horror-comedy about a man who falls for a woman who shares his love for eating hair;
- “Chronically Metropolitan” (USA), a comedy about a first-time novelist (Shiloh Fernandez) who travels to New York City for a family emergency and discovers his ex-girlfriend is getting married;
- “The Dancer” (France), a biographical study of the tumultuous relationship between the iconic Belle Epoque dancer Loïe Fuller (Soko) and her protégé/rival Isadora Duncan (Lily-Rose Depp);
- “Jeffrey” (Dominican Republic/France), writer-director Yanilys Perez’s story about an 11-year-old street windshield-wiper who dreams of becoming a singer;
- “Without Name” (Ireland), the spooky tale of a land surveyor who gets stranded inside a supernatural forest.

Previous winners of the Jordan Ressler Screenwriting Award include the award-winning "From Afar" and "Theeb." The prize was established by the family of Ressler, a 23-year-old aspiring screenwriter who died in a mountain-climbing accident in 2004.

Jenner, 24, was born and raised in Miami and moved to Los Angeles at the age of 18. He played Ryder Lynn for three seasons on the FOX TV series "Glee," where he met his wife-to-be Melissa Benoist, who played Marley Rose.

"You're The One That I Want" - Glee [Full Performance]



The couple crowd-funded a portion of the budget for the independently-produced "Billy Boy" via Kickstarter in 2013. Last year, Jenner starred in the Richard Linklater ensemble comedy "Everybody Wants Some!!" and played the older brother of the adolescent heroine of "The Edge of Seventeen."

Jenner and Benoist married in 2015. She filed for divorce in December, citing irreconcilable differences. She currently stars in The CW series "Supergirl" and co-stars in "Billy Boy" as a waitress who offers the protagonist a chance to redeem himself.

The 2017 Miami Film Festival runs March 3-12. Tickets go on sale Feb. 3 for Film Society members and Feb. 10 for the general public. The complete festival lineup will be announced later this month.

Rene Rodriguez: 305-376-3611, @ReneMiamiHerald



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