

Here's what's playing at the 2017 Miami Film Festival



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Actor Richard Gere will kick off the 34th Miami Film Festival by attending a screening of his new film “Norman: The Moderate Rise and Tragic Fall of a Political Fixer,” a drama about a New York City slickster co-starring Charlotte Gainsbourg, Michael Sheen and Steve Buscemi.

The lineup of this year’s festival was unveiled Thursday by Miami Dade College, which presents the annual event. 131 feature-length and short films from 40 countries will be screened March 3-12 at various venues around the city.

Among the world premieres:

- “A Change of Heart,” a made-in-Miami comedy co-starring Gloria Estefan, Jim Belushi and Aimee Teegarden, directed by filmmaker/choreographer Kenny Ortega (“Hocus Pocus,” “High School Musical”).
- “Billy Boy,” the story of a troubled young man at a crossroad in his life, starring and written by Miami native Blake Jenner (“Everybody Wants Some!!”).
- “Hot Girls Wanted: Turned On,” an episode of the upcoming Netflix series inspired by the 2015 documentary “Hot Girls Wanted,” an exploration of Miami’s amateur porn industry, by actress/filmmaker Rashida Jones and former Miami Herald staffers Jill Bauer and Ronna Gradus.
- “The Lost Brother” (“El otro hermano”), the latest from Uruguayan director Adrián Caetano, starring Leonardo Sbaraglia and Daniel Hendler.

The closing night attraction will be the Spanish comedy “For Your Own Good” (“Es por tu bien”), starring Javier Cámara, Roberto Álamo and José Coronado as three over-protective dads who disapprove of their daughters’ boyfriends. Edward James Olmos will attend the screening of “Monday Nights at Seven,” about a single father trying to overcome his past, which Olmos acts in and produced.

Other high-profile movies screening at the festival include:

- “It’s Only the End of the World,” writer-director Xavier Dolan’s controversial drama about a rocky family reunion, which drew boos from critics when it premiered at the Cannes Film Festival, then went on to win the jury’s Grand Prize.
- “Their Finest,” starring Gemma Arterton and Sam Claflin as members of a British movie crew making a propaganda film after World War II, directed by Lone Scherfig (“An Education”).

- “Last Days in Havana,” the latest from Cuban director Fernando Pérez, whose previous movie “Life Is To Whistle” became the first Cuban film screened at the festival in 2000, resulting in protests.
- “The Unknown Girl,” the story of a doctor trying to uncover the identity of a patient who died after refusing treatment, from filmmaking brothers Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne (“The Kid with a Bike”).
- “The Bar,” a dark comedy about a group of strangers trapped inside a bar, directed by Spanish wildman Álex de la Iglesia, whose previous film “My Big Night” opened last year’s festival.

As previously announced, this year’s festival will spotlight women directors with 15 films, including two world premieres.

Special events including “An Evening with Rossy de Palma,” a conversation between the iconic Spanish actress, a staple of director Pedro Almodovar movies, and artist Jessica Mitrani; “Straight Out of Miami,” a discussion with Rakontur media studio’s Billy Corben and Alfred Spellman “The U,” “Cocaine Cowboys”), including clips from their latest film “A Sunny Place for Shady People”; and Oscar-winning director David Frankel (“The Devil Wears Prada” will pair up with first-time filmmaker Xavier Manrique (“Chronically Metropolitan”) in a panel discussion about the process of producing, directing and distributing a feature film.

Tickets for the opening and closing night galas and select special events are available now via the festival’s website. Tickets for all screenings will go on sale Feb. 3 to Miami Film Society members and Feb. 10 to the general public. Watch festival director Jaie Laplante’s video unveiling of this year’s program below:

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