



Programmers' Screening Day

Saturday May 6th
Dunamaise Arts
Centre & ODEON,
Portlaoise



Amanda

Italy 2022

93 mins DCP Colour

Director: Carolina Cavalli

Producers: Anna Maria Morelli,
Antonio Celsi, Mario Gianani, Lorenzo
Gangarossa, Moreno Zani, Malcom
Pagani

Screenplay: Carolina Cavalli

Cinematography: Lorenzo Levrini

Editing: Babak Jalali

Sound: Roberto Gambotto Remorino,
Alessandro Bonfanti, Alessandro
Fusaroli

Music: Niccolò Contessa

Cast: Benedetta Porcaroli, Galatea
Bellugi, Giovanna Mezzogiorno,
Michele Bravi

Carolina Cavalli (born Milan) is an actress, writer and director, working in the Italian and English languages. Her credits include writing and co-directing the series *Mi hanno sputato nel milkshake* (20–) and co-writing the screenplay for the series *Zero* (21). *Amanda* (22) is her feature debut.



This playful and remarkably assured debut from writer-director Carolina Cavalli is a quirky character study of a young woman who, despite having everything going for her on the surface, struggles to make connections with others her age.

Born into an upper-class family with a doting mother who foots the bill for her indolent lifestyle, 24-year-old Amanda (emerging talent Benedetta Porcaroli) spends time avoiding work and haunting the local cinemathèque in Turin, where she looks for boyfriends but only finds “weird” misfits who mirror her own social situation of being alone every Saturday night.

Amanda is lonely but manages to push others away with her awkward and combative personality. She tags along, uninvited, to her much-older housekeeper’s family picnics and encourages her school-aged niece to rebel against her mother — Amanda’s more responsible and long-suffering older sister, Marina. When Amanda discovers that Rebecca, whom Amanda was close to as a toddler, is back in town, she makes it her mission to convince Marina they are still best-friend material.

Initially, Amanda and Rebecca do not seem to have much in common anymore. The latter became a popular high-school athlete and has since studied to become a lawyer. Yet Rebecca’s sudden homebound lethargy puts Amanda in the unique position of being comparatively high-functioning, imbuing her small daily dramas and outings with a sense of purpose. Cavalli’s sharp dialogue and Lorenzo Levrini’s stylish cinematography — isolating shots and bold alternating colour palettes — capture the zeitgeist of cultural irreverence and the underlying thrum of anxiety particular to Gen Z. The result is a film that feels completely modern while evoking the energy of youth-centred New Wave cinemas. – *Toronto International Film Festival 2022*

Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret.

USA 2023

106 mins DCP Colour

Director: Kelly Fremon Craig

Producers: James L. Brooks, Julie Ansell, Richard Sakai, Kelly Fremon Craig, Judy Blume, Amy Lorraine Brooks, Aldric La'auli Porter

Screenplay: Kelly Fremon Craig

Cinematography: Tim Ives

Editing: Oona Flaherty, Nick Moore

Sound: Mike Cavell, Kellen Bloomer

Music: Hans Zimmer

Cast: Rachel McAdams, Kathy Bates, Abby Ryder Fortson

Kelly Fremon Craig (born California, 1981) is a writer, director and producer who graduated from the University of California Irvine with a degree in English Literature. She made her directing debut with *The Edge of Seventeen* (16), for which she received a Directors Guild of America nomination for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in First-Time Feature Film. *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret?* is her second feature.



Margaret Simon, the 11-year old New Jersey tween experiencing the first pangs of adolescence comes to vivid life on the big screen in this fresh, funny adaptation of Judy Blume's classic 1970 novel.

Abby Ryder Fortson gives a star-making performance as young Margaret, coping not only with the onset of puberty but also grappling with her religious identity. Writer/director Kelly Fremon Craig (*The Edge of Seventeen*), faithfully captures the book's defining moments while also freshening the material with new touches.

Brilliant in support of Fortson are Rachel McAdams and Benny Safdie as Margaret's loving, complicated parents, and a heart-warming and hilarious Kathy Bates as her grandmother Sylvia.

Margaret's story of longing and self-discovery has resonated with generations of readers. With this luminous adaptation, she stands poised to repeat the feat and capture the hearts of filmgoers.

- *San Francisco International Film Festival 2023*

"... destined to become a classic. Based on – but not entirely wedded to – Judy Blume's seminal 1970 novel of the same name, the film is an entertaining comedy that also happens to be a stunning evocation of the fear and yearning that come with standing on the precipice of adulthood." – *The Guardian*

Come Back Anytime

Japan 2021

81 mins DCP Colour

Director: John Daschbach

Producer: Wataru Yamamoto

Cinematography: John Daschbach

Editing: John Daschbach

Sound: John Daschbach

Music: Michael Shaieb

Featuring: Masamoto and Kazuko Ueda

John Daschbach is a Tokyo-based American filmmaker who fell in love with film at the Dartmouth College Film Society while growing up in Hanover, New Hampshire. After studying literature in college, he started film editing while studying with legendary editor, Ralph Rosenblum at Columbia University. After embracing the digital revolution of the late 90s, he started to make his own independent films, and editing those of others. *Come Back Anytime* is his second feature, but his first documentary and cinematography credit.



The Japanese Film Festival Ireland 2023 is in full swing and I was lucky enough to see several films that will be a part of the festival this year. One such film was *Come Back Anytime*. This documentary centres around a small ramen restaurant, Bizentei, in Tokyo that has been open for decades. The film follows the couple who runs it and the loyal community of customers that they have nurtured over the decades they have been open.

Come Back Anytime is a charming and deliciously sentimental story about two people who have built an incredible life together. Throughout the film, the directors interview both Masamoto Ueda and his wife Kazuko. They tell anecdotes that include how they met and married at a young age and how Masamoto's flirtations with gambling almost cost them dearly. They have lived a life together which culminated with them finding this intimate ramen restaurant. The film is then populated with the loyal customers of Masamoto, who feel more like a community he is in charge of.

They each have their own personal tale about how they met him. The stories range from how he set up a couple, to how he helped a customer get through an emotionally turbulent time in her life. They're all sweet and at times quite emotional, as Bizentei is a beacon for them all.

I would be remiss if I didn't talk about the food. Which looks fantastic by the way, Masamoto is a master of his craft and it's a treat to watch him work. He is also quite humble, speaking on what he does as nothing special. He's a self-proclaimed amateur, but I would say watching this film is like watching a master amateur. After all, he does so much incredible work to keep himself busy and to ensure his customers are well-fed.

The structure of the film is broken down into seasons. It's nothing new as a framing device, beginning in Spring and ending in Winter. However, I will say what makes this work so well is how much the film endeared me to its cast. I cared about Masamoto and Kazuko and when Winter came, I found myself worried about the future. I found myself wanting to see him go on forever, but I knew he deserved rest.

Come Back Anytime is a film that I absolutely loved, and I will definitely be coming back for seconds. - Scannain

Harka

France, Luxembourg, Tunisia,
Belgium 2022

88 mins DCP Colour

Director: Lotfy Nathan

Producers: Julie Viez, Alex Hughes,
Lotfy Nathan, Riccardo Maddalosso,
Eugene Kotlyarenko, Nicole Romano,
Tariq Merhab, Maurice Fadida

Screenplay: Lotfy Nathan

Cinematography: Maximilian Pittner

Editing: Sophie Corra, Thomas Niles

Sound: Philippe Deschamps, Bruno
Ehlinger

Music: Eli Keszler

Cast: Adam Bessa, Najib Allagui,
Salima Maatoug, Ikbal Harbi, Khaled
Brahmi

Lotfy Nathan (born USA, 1976) is of Egyptian descent and grew up in the United States. In 2013, he received the Emerging Artist of the Year award. awarded by HBO for its documentary *12 O'Clock Boys*, which screened extensively at international festivals. His first fiction feature *Harka* premiered in the *Un Certain Regard* strand of the 2022 Cannes Film Festival, where it won a Best Performance award.



It was approximately 11:30am on the 17th of December, 2010, when Mohamed Bouazizi – better known to his friends as Basbousa – set himself on fire. He would die two weeks later in hospital. By then his desperate action would have inspired thousands to join the Tunisian revolution and contributed to the broader movement which became known as the Arab Spring.

One man who took notice of Basbousa's act was US filmmaker Lotfy Nathan, who was inspired to explore that kind of poverty and the despair it causes in this film. Here we follow Ali, who makes his living, as many people do, by selling gasoline without a permit. He dreams of a better life in Europe, though he's warned that people are just as miserable there. Young, smart and ambitious, he's unwilling to accept the prevailing wisdom that it's better to accept one's lot. Hearing stories in the media about Tunisians who have died trying to cross the Mediterranean in small boats, his youngest sister worries about what he might do, dreams about him drowning.

Things come to a head when his ailing father finally succumbs to illness, leaving the family with significant debts. That younger sister is still a child; the older one can barely bring in enough money to feed them. Anxious to protect them, Ali tries everything to find a job. Many of the people he meets are sympathetic but simply unable to help him. Others point out bitterly that everyone has problems. Then there are those with wealth and power who simply will not deign to talk to him, living a separate life behind walls and gates and guards.

There is a story they tell in the region, delivered to us as the film opens. They say that in the barrenness of the nearby desert, a lake once appeared overnight, seemingly miraculous. People were delighted and loved to swim in it. Later, they learned that it was full of run-off from a phosphate mine. The water turned black. Hope is present here, but events always seem to take a turn for the worse.

Despite the grinding pressure of such poverty, Nathan has succeeded in creating a film which is full of incident and personality, vibrant and alive. There are good performances all round, but Bessa is mesmerising. Intense and vital throughout, Ali is never a stereotypical victim but always someone alert to what's going on around him, striving to take control of his fate. This not only makes the film an involving experience but serves as a warning – if a man like this cannot find justice, what hope is there for anyone else?

- *Eye For Film*

Love According To Dalva

Belgium, France 2022

83 mins DCP Colour

Director: Emmanuelle Nicot

Producers: Julie Esparbes, Delphine Schmit

Script: Emmanuelle Nicot

Cinematography: Caroline Guimbal

Editing: Suzana Pedro

Sound: Fabrice Osinski, Valérie Ledocte, Aline Gavroy

Music: Frédéric Alvarez

Cast: Zelda Samson, Alexis Manenti, Fanta Guirassy, Marie Denardnaud, Jean-Louis Coulloc'h

Emmanuelle Nicot (born Sedan, France, 1985) graduated from IAD (Belgium) with her short film *RAE*, which was very successfully in various film festivals. In 2016 she directed *Snatched*, which was shown at more than sixty festivals (including the Angers European First Film Festival) and won 17 awards. *Dalva* is her first feature. Also a casting director, Emmanuelle specialises in open-call castings, a true passion of hers that she also expresses in her own films.



"I'm not a girl, I'm a woman," are the stabbing words spoken by Dalva (Zelda Samson), a 12-year-old who wears heavy makeup, scrapes her hair into a bun and dresses in middle-aged women's clothes. The film opens with officers taking Dalva's father Jacques (Jean-Louis Coulloc'h) away. The camera resists lingering on Jacques, clutching onto Dalva's gaze and capturing every flinch and tear of pain.

Enraged and confused as to why she's been ripped away from her father and placed into a temporary care home, Dalva initially refuses to comply with her new social worker Jayden (Alexis Manenti). She demands to be reunited with her father, who she only refers to by his first name, and the film unpacks the complexity of controlling relationships through Dalva's eventual interactions with Jayden.

It's a fragile subject matter to explore. Nicot previously volunteered at an emergency youth centre, where she learned the story of a six-year-old girl who had lived alone with her father, who sexually abused her.

The characters in *Love According to Dalva* are fictitious, but the story reflects reality. Nicot's debut offers sensitive and intimate insight into the lives experienced by too many. Handled with delicacy and bravery, Nicot has crafted a powerful anatomy of the imprint of sexual abuse. *Love According to Dalva* is a voice for those who can't speak out. – *Little White Lies*

"This deserved award-winner at Cannes last year manages the tricky feat of mining difficult and potentially lurid material without a single exploitative beat." - *The Times UK*

Winner - FIPRSCI Prize for a first feature in the Directors' Fortnight or Critic's Week, Cannes Film Festival 2022

Winner - Audience Award, International Film Festival Rotterdam 2023

Rise

(En Corps)

France, Belgium 2022

117 mins DCP Colour

Director: Cédric Klapisch

Producers: Bruno Levy

Screenplay: Cédric Klapisch, Santiago Amigorena

Cinematography: Alexis Kavyrchine

Editing: Anne-Sophie Bion

Sound: Cyril Moisson, Nicolas Moreau, Cyril Holtz

Music: Hofesh Shechter, Thomas Bangalter

Cast: Marion Barbeau, Hofesh Shechter, Denis Podalydès, Pio Marmaï, François Civil, Muriel Robin

Cédric Klapisch (born Neuilly-sur-Seine, 1961) studied cinema at the University of Paris III and the University of Paris VIII, before completing film school at New York University. After working on numerous short films, he directed *Ce qui me meut* (89), awarded in many festivals and nominated for the Césars. His first feature film, *Riens du tout* (91) was also nominated for a César; a year he directed *Le Péril jeune*, about high school in the mid-70s, for television, but was later released in cinemas. His wildly successful *Spanish Apartment Trilogy* took off in 2002 with *L'Auberge Espagnole*. In 2005, he filmed the sequel *Russian Dolls*, followed by *Chinese Puzzle* in 2012. *Rise* (22) is his latest film.



The English translation of the title of Cédric Klapisch's latest could be a little more evocative. The original French title, *En Corps*, is a kind of double entendre, both something related to the body and also the company of a dance troupe. Appropriately so, as this film is all about the self-discovery journey of Elise (Marion Barbeau), a classical ballet prima donna who struggles to reclaim her place in the dance world after breaking her ankle on stage.

Her affliction is emotional as well as physical; it occurs right after Elise discovers that her dancer boyfriend is cheating on her. When told that she might never perform again, Elise is ready to accept her fate. Nevertheless, while staying at an artists' residency in Brittany as an extra pair of hands in the kitchen, Elise finds her way to healing – both physically and mentally – through mixing with a contemporary dance group.

While the supposed dichotomy between classical ballet and contemporary dance feels naive and rather simplistic, there is a life-affirming quality in how the film captures the recovery process: it is not a solitary act but a communal one, as the healing of Elise's body is made possible only by being among the collective of other creative souls. For a first-time actor in a feature film, Barbeau, a trained ballet dancer in the Paris Opera, gives a beautiful performance that communicates the emotional interiority that exists in the physicality of dancing – bringing to mind Moira Shearer in *The Red Shoes* (1948). Although *Rise* stumbles occasionally in the humour department, Barbeau's presence is nothing short of a star-making turn.

- *The Guardian*

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**AMBASSADE
DE FRANCE
EN IRLANDE**
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Sunlight

Ireland 2022

91 mins DCP Colour

Director: Claire Dix

Producer: Roisin Geraghty

Screenplay: Ailbhe Keogan

Cinematography: Narayan van Maele

Editing: Alec Moore, Tony Cranstoun

Sound: Gregory Burrowes, Saoirse Connolly

Music: Matthew Nolan, Stephen Shannon

Cast: Barry Ward, Liam Carney, Maureen Beattie, Mark O'Halloran

Claire Dix (born Bantry) is an award-winning filmmaker in both short fiction and documentary films. Her debut feature documentary *Broken Song* picked up the Audience Award at the Dublin International Film Festival in 2013, and was also nominated for an IFTA. Her short films include *Downpour* (11), *We Are Moving: Memories of Miss Moriarty* (16) and *Take Me Swimming* (17). *Sunlight* is her first fiction feature.



Claire Dix looks at assisted dying through the lens of this darkly comic fiction feature written by *Joyride's* Ailbhe Keogan. It is former documentary maker Dix's debut fiction feature and she sets the bar high, straddling some abrupt tonal shifts as a carer and former drug addict played by Barry Ward struggles to accept the fact that his terminally-ill mentor wants to exit life at a time of his own choosing.

Sunlight is set in Dublin over the course of one day and is effectively a three-hander, with Ward's Leon trying to persuade Iver to reconsider as Maria, on hand to assist, looks on. All three have their back stories and differing perspectives as Iver 'The Viking' wheels around the city's Dolphins Barn area prior to his 'exit'.

Natural sunlight – or the perfect feeling of 'sunlight on your face' – is in limited supply in this lower-budget feature, but Narayan van Maele's camera does all it can to capture that sentiment. His lenswork is one of the film's more potent elements, framing Leon and his struggles.

Even though it clocks in at a trim 90 minutes, Dix and Keogan take a lot on board here. Aspiring musician Leon, captured initially on his keyboard for which he seems to have limited talent, is a recovering heroin addict who is devoted to the man who helped him. We also see Leon practicing with home-made wheelchair ramps for his housing block and running the gamut of drug dealers on the estate before heading to Iver's house on his day off.

As personified by Ward, Leon is a man-child who has seen better days. His boyish, puppy-like qualities are a little confusing for an older man – it's never quite clear whether he's an uncomplicated person or someone with a mental illness. Ward gives him a bad hair-dye and a pudding-bowl haircut, some missing teeth and a poignant air. Iver, meanwhile, is a gruff man in decline, known about town for his Viking re-enactments. And Maria, played crisply and sympathetically by Beattie, has her own story, assuaging her guilt by trying to help Iver through his last hours.

With so many references made to Leon's drug-filled past, it's inevitable that the third act will hang in some way on the choices he makes now under emotional pressure. Keogan's narrative structure is classic, too, as Iver deals with his own regrets.

- *Screen International*

War Pony

USA 2022

115 mins DCP Colour

Directors:: Riley Keough, Gina Gammell

Producers: Willi White, Bert Hamelinck, Ryan Zacarias, Sacha Ben Harroche, Riley Keough, Gina Gammell, Elaine Thomas, Sergey Shtern, Valeriy Abel, Bear Damen, Salim el Arja, Michael Manasseri

Screenplay: Franklin Sioux Bob, Bill Reddy, Riley Keough, Gina Gammell

Cinematography: David Gallego

Editing: Affonso Gonçalves, Eduardo Serrano

Sound: Jeremy Emery, D. Chris Smith

Music: Christopher Stracey, Mato Wayuhi

Cast: Jojo Bapteste Whiting, Ladainian Crazy Thunder

Gina Gammell (born London, 1988) began her career as a producer and director of music videos and ad spots before producing her first feature film in 2017. Actress and director **Riley Keough** (born Los Angeles, 1989) is famous for her roles in *Mad Max: Fury Road* (15), *American Honey* (16) and *The House That Jack Built* (18). Gammell and Keough joined forces in 2017 to found the production company Felix Culpa. Their first joint film project *War Pony* had its world premiere in the Cannes *Un Certain Regard* section, where it won the Caméra d'Or.



In the southwestern corner of South Dakota is Pine Ridge, one of America's largest Native American reservations - and one of its most impoverished. Here, the per capita income is less than \$8,000 and the poverty rate sits squarely above 50 per cent. It's a stark and challenging environment, and it's also where Riley Keough and Gina Gammell have set their gritty coming-of-age film, *War Pony*.

The story here centres around two young Lakota boys: 12-year-old Matho and 23-year-old Bill, who attempt to survive and find joy in a place that's essentially devoid of opportunities. Precocious Matho is obsessed with magic, has a crush on a girl from school and loves skateboarding and video games, while Bill is a flirt who loves hip-hop, smoking weed and finding ways to make a quick buck. They're typical boys with typical interests, but beneath this veneer of playfulness and normalcy, they're faced with the systemic issues commonly present on reservations: racism, abuse, drug use, hunger and extreme poverty.

War Pony is at times unflinchingly gritty, reminiscent of other coming-of-age films like *Mid90s* and *Kids* that display the resilience of children dealing with issues way above their paygrade – but that's about as far as the similarities go. Instead of always despairing, or trying to be provocative in its display of troubling behaviour, *War Pony* is brimming with cautious optimism.

There's a feeling that, despite everything, the kids will be alright, thanks to a tightly knit community that's always looking out for its members. And to contrast the darkness, there's ample silliness; Bill becomes fixated on getting into the poodle breeding business, and Matho reckons he can learn how to cast spells. The boys also share their own spiritual visions of bison, a symbol of survival and community to the Lakota people. Their paths cross only briefly at the start before diverging into standalone narratives, but despite having separate arcs, their stories carry equal weight and paint a picture of the ups and downs of contemporary life on a reservation.

And perhaps most importantly, Keough and Gammell were careful not to centre themselves here, instead using the film as an opportunity to amplify the voices of their scriptwriters, Bill Reddy and Franklin Sioux Bob — two Lakota men that Keough met near Pine Ridge in 2016. Every scene is shot in Pine Ridge, and the cast is entirely comprised of first-time actors from that community – and it's these factors that really give the film a raw authenticity rarely found in film depictions of reservation life. – *Time Out*

New Audience Initiative Update and Next Title



In 2022 access>CINEMA introduced a new initiative aimed at providing additional audience development support for network sites around selected cinema releases.

The initiative supports one film title per quarter, which would not normally be chosen widely by members for screening, but that we would like to encourage sites to strongly consider as part of their programmes. By including these films in their schedule, sites will enhance and diversify their cinema offering.

The titles chosen may be a challenging film that's outside of the mainstream but deserving of an audience; a film that tackles distinctively Irish stories or prominently features the Irish language; a film from a country that is rarely represented on Irish screens; or a small, independent film that could benefit from screenings targeting a particular audience.

Under this initiative, in addition to the standard distributors' materials, access>CINEMA provides a tailored marketing pack for each NAI title, which includes templates for social media posts, customised promotional images and videos, insights for targeting potential audiences, and other extra resources that could be beneficial to any network cinemas screening the film.

Sites that screen these films will also be eligible to apply for €100 in additional marketing funding from access>CINEMA, which may be used on promotion of their screening via their channels. Where possible, network-exclusive bonus materials will also be provided, such as recorded Q&As or a relevant short, that may accompany the film.

Today we're confirming that the **Summer 2023** film being supported under this new initiative is **LOVE ACCORDING TO DALVA**, which is available to preview at the Screening Day.

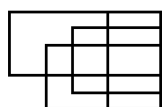
Previous access>CINEMA NAI releases:

Summer 2022: **LEAVE NO TRACES**

Autumn 2022: **RÓISE AND FRANK**

Winter 2022: **RETURN TO DUST**

Spring 2023: **ALL THE BEAUTY AND THE BLOODSHED**



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