

AFI FEST 2004

AFI LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

NOV 4-14

PRESENTED BY



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AFI FEST 2004 PRESENTED BY AUDI ANNOUNCES SIX GALAS

ALSO ANNOUNCED IS A TRIBUTE TO PEDRO ALMODÓVAR

Kevin Spacey, Kate Bosworth, Zhang Yimou, Ziyi Zhang, Andy Lau, Takeshi Kaneshiro, Pedro Almodóvar, Gael Garcia Bernal, Michael Radford, Al Pacino, Jeremy Irons, Jean-Pierre Jeunet, Audrey Tautou, Alejandro Amenábar and Javier Bardem are among those scheduled to attend.

OPENING NIGHT GALA:

US PREMIERE OF KEVIN SPACEY'S BEYOND THE SEA

CENTERPIECE GALA

MICHAEL RADFORD'S THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

CLOSING NIGHT GALA:

US PREMIERE OF ALEJANDRO AMENÁBAR'S THE SEA INSIDE

OTHER GALA PRESENTATIONS:

PEDRO ALMODÓVAR'S BAD EDUCATION

ZHANG YIMOU'S HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS

NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE OF JEAN-PIERRE JEUNET'S A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT

September 23, 2004 (Los Angeles)— AFI FEST 2004 presented by Audi—the 18th AFI Los Angeles International Film Festival—today announced its red-carpet gala presentations.

Los Angeles' longest-running film festival opens on November 4, 2004, with the US Premiere of BEYOND THE SEA, directed by and starring Kevin Spacey. The Centerpiece Gala will be THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, directed by Michael Radford. The Festival's Closing Night Gala on

November 14, 2004, will be the US Premiere of THE SEA INSIDE, directed by Alejandro Amenábar.

The other Gala Presentations are HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS, directed by Zhang Yimou, and the North American Premiere of A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT, directed by Jean-Pierre Jeunet.

AFI FEST 2004 also announced a Tribute and Retrospective of Academy Award®-winning and internationally acclaimed filmmaker Pedro Almodóvar. As part of the Tribute, AFI FEST 2004 will include a Gala Presentation of BAD EDUCATION.

“We have more red-carpet galas than ever before at AFI FEST,” commented Nancy Collet, Director of Programming. “This breadth of anticipated international titles—from China, Spain, France, the UK and the US—seems especially appropriate in our first year aligned with the AFM.”

Thursday, November 4 - ArcLight Hollywood’s Cinerama Dome

AFI FEST 2004 presented by Audi kicks off with the US Premiere of Kevin Spacey’s **BEYOND THE SEA**.

"I can't think of a better launch for BEYOND THE SEA than to open AFI's film festival in November," says Spacey. "All of us involved in the making of the film are so pleased to bring Bobby Darin's story to such a well respected and attended event. We are delighted to be given such a honored slot as to open the festival. We thank AFI for having asked us."

BEYOND THE SEA is directed by Academy Award® winner Kevin Spacey and stars Kate Bosworth, John Goodman, Bob Hoskins and Brenda Blethyn. This inspiring and uplifting film is a rags to riches story of popular crooner Bobby Darin. Told through his own eyes, the film recounts Darin's life, from the threatening childhood illness that gave him a life expectancy of 15 years of age and damaged his heart forever, to his rise in the music and film industry. By the end of his short career, he had more hits in more genres than any other music artist except Elvis Presley and Ray Charles (Lions Gate Films).

The Opening Night Film and Gala are presented by Audi of America, with support from the Hollywood Sign Trust.

Saturday, November 6 – ArcLight Hollywood’s Cinerama Dome

HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS is directed by Zhang Yimou and stars Ziyi Zhang, Takeshi Kaneshiro and Andy Lau. In this latest film from master filmmaker Zhang Yimou (HERO), HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS explores the conflict between honor and desire in an exquisite combination of romantic melodrama and high operatic tragedy that features erotic dance and virtuoso martial arts fighting. Two policemen (Andy Lau and Takeshi Kaneshiro) are on the hunt for the outlawed revolutionary group called Flying Daggers. They plan to win the confidence of the blind daughter of the group's slain chief and then destroy the group's new leaders. This visual treat was a hit at Cannes and features action and emotion to stunning effect (Sony Pictures Classics).

Tuesday, November 9 – ArcLight Hollywood’s Cinerama Dome

The Centerpiece Gala Presentation will be THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, directed by Michael Radford and starring Al Pacino, Jeremy Irons, Joseph Fiennes and Lynn Collins. THE MERCHANT OF VENICE was adapted by Michael Radford (IL POSTINO) from Shakespeare’s play. The film is set in 16th century Venice, and centers around love, lust, money, deceit, hatred and revenge. A young man Bassanio (Joseph Fiennes) is in need of funds to woo a wealthy heiress named Portia (Lynn Collins). He turns to Antonio (Jeremy Irons). Antonio then turns to Shylock (Al Pacino) for a loan, believing that once his merchant ship returns he will be able to pay Shylock back. A classic play interpreted by an A-list cast (Sony Pictures Classics)*
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE is presented by Philips Electronics

Wednesday, November 10 – Grauman’s Chinese Theatre

A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT (North American Premiere) is directed by Jean-Pierre Jeunet and stars Audrey Tautou and Gaspard Ulliel. From the director and star of AMÉLIE (Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Audrey Tautou) comes a very different love story, A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT, based on the acclaimed novel by Sébastien Japrisot. The film is set in France near the end of World War I, in the deadly trenches of the Somme, in the gilded Parisian halls of power and in the modest home of an indomitable provincial girl. It tells the story of this young woman’s relentless, moving and sometimes comic search for her fiancé, who has disappeared. He is one of five French Soldiers believed to have been court-martialed under mysterious circumstances and pushed out of an allied trench into an almost-certain death in no man’s land. What follows is an investigation into the arbitrary nature of secrecy, the absurdity of war and the enduring passion, intuition and tenacity of the human heart (Warner Independent Pictures).

Sunday, November 14 - ArcLight Hollywood’s Cinerama Dome

The Festival will close with the US Premiere of Alejandro Amenábar’s THE SEA INSIDE.

THE SEA INSIDE is directed and co-written by Alejandro Amenábar (THE OTHERS, OPEN YOUR EYES) and starring Javier Bardem, Belen Rueda and Lola Duenas. This is the true story of Spaniard Ramon Sampedro (Javier Bardem), who fought for 30 years in favor of euthanasia and his own right to die with dignity. Two women enter his life, and, instead of changing his life, their own lives are changed in the process. This beautifully rendered film tells of Sampedro’s poignant fight for dignity, showcasing Javier Bardem’s extraordinary range as an actor (Fine Line Features).

Sunday, November 7 – ArcLight Hollywood’s Cinerama Dome

AFI FEST presents a Gala Presentation of Pedro Almodóvar’s BAD EDUCATION as part of the filmmaker Tribute and Retrospective.

BAD EDUCATION is written and directed by Almodóvar and stars Gael García Bernal and Fele Martinez. Two kids, Ignacio and Enrique, discover love, cinema and fear in a religious school at the start of the ‘60s. Father Manolo, the school principal and their literature teacher, is witness to and part of these discoveries. These three characters meet twice again, at the end of the ‘70s and in the ‘80s when they must confront the past (Sony Pictures Classics).

Monday, November 8 – ArcLight Hollywood

AFI FEST 2004 will present a Tribute to the Academy Award®-winning and internationally acclaimed writer/director of BAD EDUCATION, whose credits include ALL ABOUT MY MOTHER, KIKA, MATADOR, TALK TO HER, TIE ME UP! TIE ME DOWN! and WOMEN ON THE VERGE OF A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN.

The evening will feature film clips, anecdotes and a lively on-stage conversation with this celebrated international filmmaker in a very rare Los Angeles appearance.

For Festival ticket sales and information, please call 1.866.AFI FEST or visit the AFI FEST Web site at www.AFI.com.

Now in its 18th year, AFI FEST presented by Audi—the AFI Los Angeles International Film Festival—is the longest-running film festival in Los Angeles and one of the most influential film festivals in North America. A program of the American Film Institute, AFI FEST spans 10 days each November, featuring international competitions of new feature films, documentaries and shorts from emerging filmmakers, global showcases of the latest work from the great film masters and nightly red-carpet gala premieres.

Beginning this year, AFI FEST 2004 presented by Audi (November 4 - 14) and the 2004 American Film Market (November 3 - 10) have established a strategic alliance creating a formidable festival/market combination—the only one of its kind in North America—which will dramatically deepen the well of cultural and commercial possibilities for participants at both events. For more information on AFM, visit www.americanfilmmarket.com.

AFI FEST 2004 is sponsored in part by Audi of America, American Airlines, ArcLight Hollywood, Absolut Raspberri Vodka, Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, Philips Electronics, BEST BUY and Eastman Kodak Company.

AFI FEST 2004 presented by Audi is supported in part by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, as well as the City of Los Angeles, Cultural Affairs Department of Los Angeles and the Hollywood Sign Trust. AFI FEST 2004 presented by Audi is proud to continue its collaborative partnership with the Skirball Cultural Center. Made in Germany is made possible through the cooperation and support of the German Film Services + Marketing GMBH. New Faces In European Cinema is made possible through the cooperation and support of the European Film Promotion.

Audi of America is headquartered in Auburn Hills, Michigan, and markets performance-oriented European luxury vehicles: the sporty A4 sedan, A4 Avant and A4 Cabriolet models - the perfect union of power and control; the everyday sports car in the form of the S4 sedan, S4 Avant and S4 Cabriolet; the birth of Audi's sports car tradition - the TT Coupe and Roadster; the broad range of bold A6 sedans - the beautiful A6 Avant and the versatile

allroad quattro; and the most progressive premium luxury car, the A8 in both extended and normal wheelbase versions. For more information about additional Audi-related events and corporate news, visit www.audiusa.com.

AFI advances film, television and other forms of the moving image through innovation in education and the recognition of excellence. AFI trains the next generation of filmmakers at its world-renowned Conservatory, maintains America's film heritage through the *AFI Catalog of Feature Films* and explores new digital technologies in moviemaking through AFI's New Media Ventures. As the largest nonprofit exhibitor in the US, AFI ON SCREEN offers year-round programming at the ArcLight Hollywood and the annual AFI FEST presented by Audi—the Los Angeles International Film Festival; at the AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center in Silver Spring, Maryland—including the annual SILVERDOCS: AFI/Discovery Channel Documentary Festival—and at the AFI National Film Theater at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. The annual almanac for the 21st century, AFI AWARDS honors the most outstanding motion pictures and television programs of the year, while **AFI's 100 Years . . .** series has ignited extraordinary public interest in classic American movies. And, during the past 32 years, AFI's Life Achievement Award has become the highest honor for a career in film. Additional information about AFI is available at AFI.com.

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