

## Preview: Final Four Nights of 2015 Chicago Critics Film Festival

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on May 4, 2015 - 3:35pm

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CHICAGO – As the Chicago Critics Film Festival (CCFF) – a film festival as programmed by the members of the Chicago Film Critics Association – heads into its last four nights, the variety and depth of the films that are being screened continues to astound and entertain. It all takes place at the Music Box Theatre in Chicago, May 4 through 7, 2015.

HollywoodChicago.com contributors Nick Allen and Patrick McDonald have been sampling the best of the festival, and offer this preview of the final four nights of films. Each capsule is designated with NA (Nick Allen) or PM (Patrick McDonald) – to indicate the author – or encapsulates the official synopsis from the festival.



'Quitters' Screens on Monday, May 4th, at the Chicago Critics Film Festival

*Photo credit: Chicago Critics Film Festival*

The CCFF Closing Night films are the 2015 Sundance hits “Me and Earl and the Dying Girl” and “The Overnight,” screening on Thursday, May 7th, 2015. For ticket information regarding all shows, [click here](#). [18]

### ”Shorts Program #2”

“Pink Grapefruit” – A young married couple brings two of their single friends out to Palm Springs for a long weekend. It does not go as planned. Directed by Michael Mohan.

“9:55 – 11:05 Ingrid Ekman Bergsgatan 4B” – 67-year-old Ingrid has decided to deal with cancer on her own. She retreats from the outside world and it retreats from her. Directed by Cristine Berglund and Sophie Vucovic.

“Boxeadora” – One woman defies Fidel Castro’s ban on female boxing to follow her dream of Olympic glory and become Cuba’s first female boxer. Directed by Meg Smaker.

“Volta” – A mother and daughter start out from downtown Athens and head to the northern suburbs of the city. Nina thinks she’s going on a walk. Directed by Stella Kyriakopoulos.

“The Little Deputy” – Trevor tries to have his photo taken with his father. Written and Directed by Trevor Anderson.

“A Blue Room” – A man wakes up in a blue room. He’s stuck inside. He can’t escape. A window is the only way to connect to the outside world. Directed by Thomasz Siwinski. (CCFF Synopsis)

Monday, 5/4, 5pm

#### **“Quitters”**

Writer/director Noah Pritzker crafts a dry comedy about not fitting in with family or friends in his feature debut, which was nominated for the Grand Jury Award at the past South-by-Southwest film festival. Featuring an ensemble that includes Mira Sorvino, Kara Hayward (“Moonrise Kingdom”), Saffron Burrows, Scott Lawrence and Kieran Culkin, the film challenges the tone expected for a teenage rebellion, and is primed to inspire lively film-lover debate when it makes its Chicago premiere on Monday night. (NA)

Director Noah Pritzker will be in attendance.

Monday, 5/4, 7pm

#### **”Heaven Knows What”**

Directed by Josh and Benny Safdie, “Heaven Knows What” blends fiction, formalism and raw documentary as it follows a young heroin addict (Arielle Holmes), as she searches for a twisted romance connection on the streets of New York. The film is based on Holmes’ soon-to-be-published memoir “Mad Love in New York City.” Co-starring Caleb Landry-Jones, and also features street legend Buddy Duress and gore rap phenom Necro. (PM)

Monday, 5/4, 9pm

#### **”Blind”**

In Ingrid’s dreams she can see the way the world around her looks – her husband’s office, their favorite restaurant, her memories. It’s when Ingrid awakes each morning, and opens her eyes, that she remembers she’s blind. With her life suddenly and dramatically changed, Ingrid has retreated to the safety of her apartment where she can feel in control, letting her imagination become her reality, and where her deepest fantasies, desires, and fears provide a constant internal monologue. Ingrid has invented her own world to substitute for the one she has lost, but how can she make sense of all that is happening to her, and who can she trust? (CCFF Synopsis)

Tuesday, 5/5, 5pm

#### **”Drunk Stoned Brilliant Dead: The Story of National Lampoon”**





Familiar Faces in 'Drunk Stoned Brilliant Dead: The Story of National Lampoon'

*Photo credit: Chicago Critics Film Festival*

If you enjoyed the American comedy of the last 40 years – Saturday Night Live, the “Vacation” movies, John Hughes, Judd Apatow, etc. – then pretty much all of it has roots in a humor magazine that began in 1970, National Lampoon. From the beginnings at Harvard University, through The Second City Chicago influence and Saturday Night Live, the must-see “Drunk Stoned Brilliant Dead” chronicles the lives and adventures of the contributors to this legendary comedy juggernaut – including Doug Kenney, John Belushi, Chevy Chase, Michael O’Donoghue, Chris Miller, P.J. O’Rourke, John Hughes and Al Jean. It was the best of times, it was the blurst of times (“stupid monkey”!). (PM)

Director Douglas Tirola will appear at the screening.

Tuesday, 5/5, 7pm

### **”The Connection”**

A stylish, 70’s-period crime thriller inspired by true events, Cédric Jimenez’s film tells the story of real-life Marseilles magistrate Pierre Michel (Jean Dujardin) and his relentless crusade to dismantle the most notorious drug smuggling operation in history – the French Connection. In his crosshairs is charismatic and wealthy kingpin, Gatean “Tany” Zampa (Gilles Lellouche), who runs the largest underground heroin trade into the States. Though the tenacious Michel and a task force of elite cops who will stop at nothing – including boldly orchestrated drug raids, devastating arrests, and exacting interrogations – to ensure the crime ring’s demise, Zampa’s “La French” always seems one step ahead. As La French mounts its retaliation, Michel will be forced to make the most difficult decision of his life – to continue waging his war or ensuring his family’s safety, before it’s too late. (CCFF Synopsis)

Tuesday, 5/5, 9:30pm

### **”The Second Mother”**

When Val (Regina Casé) left her home to work thousands of miles away in Sao Paulo as a live-in housekeeper for Fabinho (Michel Joelsas), she maintained the guilt of leaving her young daughter Jessica behind with relatives. 13 years later, the teenage Jessica (Camila Márdila) shows up at the household, and her presence throws into the unspoken class barriers within Fabinho’s home structure into disarray. Directed by Anna Muylaert. (CCFF Synopsis)

Wednesday, 5/6, 5pm

### **”The End of the Tour”**



'The End of the Tour,' Directed by James Ponsoldt

*Photo credit: Chicago Critics Film Festival*

Based on David Lipsky's critically acclaimed memoir "Although Of Course You End Up Becoming Yourself: A Road Trip with David Foster Wallace," this is the story of a five-day 1996 interview between Rolling Stone reporter and novelist Lipsky (Jesse Eisenberg) and acclaimed writer David Foster Wallace (Jason Segel) following the publication of Wallace's groundbreaking epic novel, Infinite Jest. A tenuous-ye-intense relationship develops between journalist and subject as the two men bob and weave, sharing laughs and revealing hidden frailties – but it's never clear how truthful they're being with each other. (CCFF Synopsis)

Director James Ponsoldt and featured actor Joan Cusack will appear at the screening.

Wednesday, 5/6, 7pm

### **"Night Owls"**

Adam Pally ("The Mindy Project" and "Happy Endings") and actress Rosa Salazar ("Insurgent") spar off in this twisting comedy from director Charles Hood, set over the course of one night. Both provide promising turns as characters who meet by strange circumstance and discover bizarre connections, while initially despising each other. This is the indie version of "Waiting for Godot," if one of them was trying to keep the other awake after a mysterious drug overdose – and that's just the beginning. (NA)

Wednesday, 5/6, 10pm

### **CLOSING NIGHT "The Overnight"**

Alex (Adam Scott), Emily (Taylor Schilling), and their son, RJ (R.J. Hermes) have recently moved from Seattle to the Eastside of Los Angeles. Feeling lost in a new city, and desperate to find new friends, they meet Kurt (Jason Schwartzman) at the neighborhood park – and gladly agree to join his family for pizza night at Kurt's home. But after the kids go to bed, the family "playdate" becomes increasingly more revealing. (CCFF Synopsis)

Director Patrick Brice will appear at the screening.

Thursday, 5/7, 6pm

### **CLOSING NIGHT "Me and Earl and the Dying Girl"**





'Me and Earl and the Dying Girl' is the Closing Night Film

Photo credit: Chicago Critics Film Festival

This year's "Whiplash" - a winner of both the Audience Award and Jury Prize at the most recent Sundance Film Festival - is the perfect closer to the Chicago Critics Film Festival, considering the rampant cinephilia credibility that distinguishes it. In a pitch, it's a coming-of-age movie about a teenage film director befriendng an girl who is indeed dying, but this future indie sensation aims higher than just being the hip version of "The Fault in Our Stars." Here's the first movie to mix a sickness dramedy with heavy film title puns and Werner Herzog shout-outs, and one that became an overnight success at Sundance partly because of those elements (performances from Thomas Mann, Olivia Cooke, RJ Cyler, Nick Offerman, Connie Britton, Molly Shannon and Jon Bernthal don't hurt either). Brace yourself for this movie's approaching domination of the indie film summer, and be one of the very first to see it this Thursday, the final screening of the 2015 CCFF. (NA)

Director Alfonso Gomez-Rejon will appear at the screening.

Thursday, 5/7, 8:30pm

The 2015 Chicago Critics Film Festival will take place May 1st - May 7th, at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 North Southport, Chicago. [Click here](#) [19] for film schedules and information. [Click here](#) [18] to purchase tickets and passes.



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