

Preview: Week-One Films at 53rd Chicago International Film Festival

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on October 16, 2017 - 10:53am

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CHICAGO – The 53rd Chicago International Film Festival has kicked off, and the first weekend has already unspooled. But what is coming up for the WEEK ONE as the Festival kicks into gear? HollywoodChicago.com's Patrick McDonald and Jon Lennon Espino preview the films and events to put on your list.

Each review is designated by (JE) Jon Espino and (PM) Patrick McDonald. For a PDF connection to the complete schedule, [click here](#). [16]

BREATHE (Britain)



'Breathe,' Directed by Andy Serkis

Photo credit: Chicago International Film Festival

Master of motion capture Andy Serkis makes his directorial debut in the form of a love story that turns into an inspirational tale. Necessity is the mother of all invention, and this story shows us how Robin (Andrew Garfield) and Diana Cavendish (Claire Foy) turned their love – with the aid of white privilege and wealth – into hope for people with debilitating polio. Garfield delivers a fantastic performance, which is full of nuance, charm and (most importantly) respect. His chemistry with Foy as his wife seems effortless, as they both interact and communicate in such a way that you would genuinely believe they have been married for years. Serkis takes a standard approach to this film, but raises eyebrows with his skillful eye for setting up beautiful shots and attention to detail. He displays great promise as a director, and this debut makes him one to watch. A “Special Presentation” of the Festival. (JE)

Tuesday, 10/17, 8:30pm

LADY BIRD (United States)



'Lady Bird,' Directed by Greta Gerwig

Photo credit: Chicago International Film Festival

Actor Greta Gerwig directs her second film (and first since 2008) and it is a total winner. The film follows a teen through her Senior year of high school in Sacramento, California (Gerwig's home town) in 2002, and unfolds an authentic journey of hopes, heartaches and the yearning to break free from a nest of tangled roots. With a stellar cast, including Saoirse Ronan as the title teen character, the film is nostalgic without feeling nostalgic, and showcases a maturing artist in Gerwig, who proves to be in touch with all the feelings of being human. A "Centerpiece" film at the Festival. (PM)

Wednesday, 10/18, 8pm

BLUEPRINT (United States)



'Blueprint,' Directed by Daryl Wein

Photo credit: Chicago International Film Festival

Part of the “Black Perspectives” program, “Blueprint” is a made-in-Chicago plea to stem the tide of shootings on the South Side, told through the perspective of a character portrayed by prominent Chicago actor Jerod Haynes. He plays a day care worker who is having domestic issues with his girlfriend and daughter, and that unravels further when one of his best friends is killed through a mistaken incident with the police. It’s both an evolution and revolution film, but the revolution is of the soul, and the freeing of one’s self from the trappings of psychological identity. (PM)

Wednesday, 10/18, 1:30pm

PARIS SQUARE (Brazil/Argentina)



'Paris Square,' Directed by Lucia Murat

Photo credit: Chicago International Film Festival

What does the use of violence mean for the spirit of fearfulness? A psychologist finds out when she begins a study of patients in Brazil affected by violence, and a female patient begins to send mixed signals as to what that agenda is for her. Both a clash of wills and a study in duality, the film has many layers and could be assigned an overt symbolic meaning, but it also features amazing performances from the actors portraying the therapist and the patient. (PM)

Thursday 10/19, 1:30pm

SICILIAN GHOST STORY (Italy)



'Sicilian Ghost Story,' Directed by Fabio Grassadonia and Antonio Piazza

Photo credit: Chicago International Film Festival

And they call it puppy love! A 13 year old girl falls for one of her classmates in a small Sicilian village, not knowing he is targeted for kidnap by the local mafia. When he disappears, it is only her will and love that can break the case. This combination of adolescent fantasy and ghastly reality is actually based on a real kidnapping case, but directors Fabio Grassadonia and Antonio Piazza fashion the story through a surreal dream state, and the film has an airy and detached style that counterbalances the brutality of the actual crime. (PM)

Thursday 10/19, 3pm

CREEP 2 (United States)



'Creep 2,' Directed by Patrick Brice

Photo credit: Chicago International Film Festival

We return to our old buddy Aaron (Mark Duplass) as he continues his Craigslist killing streak, except this time our found footage film turns into

a documentary. Sara (Desiree Akhavan) answers an ad, but instead of Aaron getting inside of her head, she proves to be a different type of prey. The first film was a slow-burn, avalanche of uncomfortable moments with sudden jump scares, but “Creep 2” reinvents itself knowing the formula from the first wouldn’t work a second time around. Instead, the horror is toned down and the humor is amped up as we examine a serial killer facing a midlife crisis discovering that all he really needs is genuine human connections. Whether they need to be alive or dead for it is something he still needs to figure out. (JE)

Friday, 10/20, 9:15pm

Saturday, 10/21, 9pm

READ MORE: “5 Ways to Love the 53rd Chicago International Film Festival,” [click here](#). [17] **An interview with Artistic Director Mimi Plauché,** [click here](#). [18] **The Opening Night Red Carpet Slideshow/Interviews of “Marshall,”** [click here](#). [19] **And a “podtalk” with the creators of the film, “Maktub,”** [click here](#). [20]

The 53rd Chicago International Film Festival takes place through October 26th, 2017. [Click here](#) [21] for film schedules, information and to purchase tickets.



[22]

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