

Via Zoom: REELING39 LGBTQ+ Fest Opener is 'Firebird' with Tom Prior

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on September 22, 2021 - 11:19am

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CHICAGO – Opening Night is near – Thursday, September 23rd, 2021 – for the 39th edition of Chicago's REELING film festival, an International LGBTQ+ showcase. The Opening film is "Firebird," a based-on-truth gay love story set in Cold War Russia. It features actor Tom Prior, who co-wrote the film with director Peeter Rebane. For more info and tickets, click [REELING39](#) [26].

Prior is Sergey, a private in the Soviet Air Force. He works in a flight group with pilot and officer Roman (Oleg Zagorodnii) and is a confidant of a woman officer Luisa (Diana Pozharskaya). When Roman and Sergey begin a love affair, the opportunity for blackmail and expulsion floats to the surface. To divert attention, Roman woos and marries Luisa, casting a pall over all the relationships. The film is based on a true story.



REELING39 Opens with 'Firebird'

Photo credit: [REELINGFilmFestival.org](#)

"What really fascinated me about this story is how could such a relationship have existed in the Soviet Air Force at the time, at the height of

the Cold War?,” said director Peeter Rebane in an email. “It seemed almost impossible and fantastical, but as we researched and confidentially interviewed some other men who served in the Soviet Army in the 1970s, we discovered a fascinating secret subculture.”

As a preview to REELING39 Opening Night, Patrick McDonald of HollywoodChicago.com interviewed lead actor and co-writer Tom Prior via Zoom.

In Part One, Tom Prior talks about developing the story and positioning himself in the Cold War era Soviet Union ...

In Part Two, a broader view of LGBTQ+ issues ...

The trailer for REELING39 ...

The 39th edition of REELING International LBGTQ+ Film Festival runs from September 23rd through October 3rd, 2021. The Opening Night film – screening 7pm at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 North Southport Avenue, Chicago – is “Firebird,” featuring Tom Prior, Oleg Zagorodnii, Diana Pozharskaya, Nicholas Woodeson and Henessi Schmidt. Written by Peeter Rebane and Tom Prior. Directed by Peter Rebane. For complete REELING info, click REELINGFilmFestival.org [27].



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