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Miami Film Festival unveils this year's lineup

By Rene Rodriguez

rrodriguez@MiamiHerald.com



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Tilda Swinton and Tom Hiddleston play centuries-old vampires in love in director Jim Jarmusch's "Only Lovers Left Alive," one of the highlights of this year's festival.

New movies starring Shirley MacLaine, Tilda Swinton, Christopher Plummer and Andy Garcia are among the highlights of the 31st Miami International Film Festival, running March 7-16.

Miami Dade College, which presents the annual event, revealed this year's lineup at a press conference on Tuesday. The festival will kick off with the North American premiere of *Elsa & Fred*, Michael Radford's English-language remake of the 2008 Argentine film about an elderly couple (MacLaine and Plummer) who rediscover their passion for life.

Closing night will bring the world premiere of *Rob the Mob*, director Raymond de Felitta's crime drama about a pair of thieves who decide to rip off the Mafia, starring Garcia, Michael Pitt (*Boardwalk Empire*), Ray Romano and Cathy Moriarty.

Actor-director John Turturro will be the recipient of this year's Career Achievement Tribute, which includes a screening of his latest film, *Fading Gigolo*, in which he plays a man considering a career as a male escort. Woody Allen co-stars as his manager, and Sharon Stone and Sofia Vergara are among his potential clients.

Ten films from Latin America, Spain and Portugal will compete for the \$40,000 Knight Competition, sponsored by the James L. and John S. Knight Foundation. Making their world premieres in this category are Mexican writer-director Marcelo Tobar's *Asteroid*, about a woman trying to reconcile with her estranged brother, and the thriller *Memories of the Desert* (*Romance policial*), from Brazilian filmmaker Jorge Duran. North American premieres include Argentina's *Natural Sciences*, about an adolescent girl who lives in the wintry mountains and sets out on a quest to find the father she's never met, and *The Seventh Floor* (*Séptimo*), about an Argentine father (Ricardo Darin) frantically searching for his children — who disappeared while descending the stairs of their apartment building.

Also in the competition is *All About the Feathers*, a comedy about a Costa Rican security guard who wants to get into cockfighting. The movie, which is making its U.S. premiere, was the winner of last year's Encuentros program at the festival, which awards \$10,000 to aspiring and first-time filmmakers to help them finish their projects.

"[Director] Neto Villalobos was able to use that money to finish the sound and post-production on his movie, and since then it has already played in Toronto and San Sebastian," said festival director Jaie Laplante, 44. "This is my fourth year as the festival's director, and I'm really proud of how we have developed certain programs and reimagined other ones to attract different types of audiences to come see films."

One category that is expanding this year is Lee Schrager's Culinary Cinema, which will offer festivalgoers food-themed movies (including Belgium's Brasserie Romantique and France's Le Chef) then head to a nearby restaurant after the screening for a meal specially prepared by a chef to go along with the movie.

Other festival highlights:

- *Supermensch: The Legend of Shep Gordon*, a documentary about the maverick entertainment manager whose clients included everyone from Pink Floyd to Alice Cooper to Emeril Lagasse, directed by comedian Mike Myers (*Wayne's World*).
- *Only Lovers Left Alive*, director Jim Jarmusch's tale of the love affair between two centuries-old vampires (Swinton and Tom Hiddleston).
- *The Sacrament*, the latest by minimalist horror filmmaker Ti West (*The Innkeepers*), about two journalists in search of their missing sister.
- *The Immigrant*, director James Gray's study of a woman (Marion Cotillard) who is forced into prostitution by a charming devil (Joaquin Phoenix).
- *Locations: Looking for Rusty James*, Chilean director Alberto Fuguet's reminiscence about Francis Ford Coppola's 1983 forgotten classic *Rumble Fish* and how the movie affected South America.
- *Whitey: United States of America v. James J. Bulger*, a documentary of corruption in the highest levels of law enforcement from director Joe Berlinger (*Paradise Lost*).
- *Against the Clock*, a work-in-progress presentation by filmmaker Bent-Jorgen Perlmutt featuring clips and discussion of his upcoming documentary focusing on Cuba's underground drag racing community.

The festival will feature special programming blocks focusing on filmmaking from China, Mexico and Germany, as well as a 45th anniversary screening of *Midnight Cowboy*. Screenings will take place at various venues around Miami and Miami Beach, including the Gusman Center for the Performing Arts, the Regal South Beach, O Cinema, the Miami Beach Cinematheque and other venues. Tickets for Film Society members will go on sale Feb. 7. Tickets for the general public will be available Feb. 14. For a complete festival lineup, visit miamifilmfestival.com