



Press contact:
springerassociatespr
Contact: Gary Springer
Anne Takahashi
212-354-4660
gary@springerassociatespr.com
anne@springerassociatespr.com

FIRST TIME FEST
The Second Time Around
April 3-7, 2014
CELEBRATING FIRST-TIME FILMMAKERS

Announces
2014 JOHN HUSTON AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN CINEMA
Recipient
JULIE TAYMOR

Additional
‘FIRST EXPOSURE’ Filmmakers
Presenting Debut Films By Now Prominent Directors
Appearing In Person
TOM MCCARTHY (*Station Agent*)
LAKE BELL (*In A World*)

(New York, NY March 27, 2014) Tony Award-winning and Academy Award-nominated director **Julie Taymor** will be the ***FIRST TIME FEST'S 2014 John Huston Award For Achievement In Cinema*** recipient, announced FTF Co-Founders Johanna Bennett and Mandy Ward. Ms. Taymor will also be represented in the Fest's 'First Exposure' Retrospective Program where she will attend to present and discuss with the audience her first feature film, ***Titus***.

Presented to an individual who has made a significant contribution to the art of cinema, and whose presence in our community has offered leadership and inspiration to other cinema artists, the John Huston Award for Outstanding Achievement in Cinema is named in honor of one of America's greatest filmmakers.

Julie Taymor is one of the most adventurous directors working today, known for her visionary work on stage and screen. She is a recipient of the MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship and won two Tony Awards – including Best Director – for *The Lion King*, which is the highest grossing Broadway show of all time. Her most recent stage triumph was the production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Theater for a New Audience. Taymor is also an accomplished director of opera, with productions including an astounding realization of Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* (broadcast on PBS) in Matsumoto, Japan; *The Magic Flute* for the Metropolitan Opera and *The Flying Dutchman* and Elliot Goldenthal's *Grendel* for the LA Opera. Taymor made an astonishing debut as a film director with her adaptation of Shakespeare's *Titus* (screening on Friday at FTF),

starring Anthony Hopkins and Jessica Lange, and has directed three other films: *Frida* – the story of Mexican artists Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, starring Salma Hayek and Alfred Molina (which earned six Oscar nominations and won two); *Across the Universe*, a phantasmagorical musical featuring the music of the Beatles that was a Golden Globe nominee for Best Picture; and *The Tempest* – her second reinvention of Shakespeare – starring Helen Mirren as Prospera. With her boundless imagination and originality, she is the ideal recipient of our *John Huston Award for Outstanding Achievement in Cinema*.

Johanna Bennett and Mandy Ward also are pleased to announce two additional participants in the Fest's '**First Exposure**' Retrospective Program Presenting Debut Films By Now Prominent Directors. **Tom McCarthy** will be attending FTF with his first film, *The Station Agent* (also expected to attend are some of his great cast including Michele Williams, Peter Dinklage, Patricia Clarkson, and Bobby Cannavale); and **Lake Bell** will be on hand to discuss with the audience her first directorial effort *In A World* (she starred as well and won the Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award at Sundance for her script).

FIRST TIME FEST is a unique film festival celebrating first-time feature filmmakers. Aimed at discovering and providing exposure for the next generation of great filmmakers from around the world, FTF is a five-day event with a competition section showcasing new and exciting debut films, and a series of screenings and discussions with now-prominent filmmakers presenting their first films and then mentoring the first-timers.

The Second Time Around for *FIRST TIME FEST* is set for April 3 – 7, 2014, and it will be based at NeueHouse (110 East 25th St.). NeueHouse will be the location for panels, workshops, selected film presentations, parties and the filmmaker lounge. Most screenings, including all the competition films, will take place at the AMC Loews Village 7 (11th St. & Third Ave.)

Martin Scorsese, who presented Darren Aronofsky with the first *John Huston Award for Outstanding Achievement in Cinema* last year, stated, "This venture is very very important to encourage young filmmakers."

FTF will present ten **Competition Films**, which will be judged by a panel of industry luminaries and the FTF audience. All of the films in competition at FTF are the very first feature of the writer, director, producer, editor, cinematographer or composer of each film. All competition screenings will be followed by "Hot-Seat" discussions between the jury and filmmakers, and all audience members will vote on the films as well. Together, the jury and audience will ultimately select the Grand Prize winner, which is offered theatrical distribution and international sales representation from the renowned American film distributor, **Cinema Libre Studio**. And with FTF's new relationship with **Scandinavian Locations** - the consortium of Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish and Danish film commissioners - the winning filmmaker will also receive a trip to Norway and Sweden to spend a week at a writer's cottage in Northern Sweden to work on their next project. Scandinavian Locations will also be hosting our Filmmaker Kick-Off event on April 2 at NeueHouse.

Tom McCarthy and **Lake Bell** join *FIRST TIME FEST*'s retrospective series, **First Exposure** which showcases the auspicious and ambitious debuts by artists who went on to become major filmmakers, with personal appearances by the filmmakers. Also appearing this year: our Opening Night director Jennie Livingston presenting *Paris is Burning*, **Albert Maysles** (*Salesman*), **Julie Taymor** (*Titus*), **Michael Moore** (*Roger & Me*), **Kelly Reichardt** (*River of Grass*), Cinematographer **Frederick Elmes** (*Eraserhead*), **James Toback** (*Fingers*), and **Peter Bogdanovich** (*Targets*).

FTF's **Stand Alone** series will feature incredible conversations with **Peter Bogdanovich**, and **Michael Moore**.

Between films, we will be hosting an array of **Industry Panels** with notable producers, financiers, agents, composers, critics and other members of the entertainment industry. Panels at FTF are intimate gatherings between attendees and special guests where questions are encouraged and discussion is lively. Among the panels are "**What's Up, Doc;**" "**Help Me Help You;**" "**Show Me the Money;**" "**We Need a Bigger Boat – producing Independent Cinema;**" "**The Critical Eye;**" "**From Rock to Score**" presented by the Grammys; and "**Sell Baby Sell.**"

A special panel, *Women in Entertainment and Media*, sponsored by the by the Royal Bank of Canada Wealth Management Group, will include **Brooke Shields**, **Daphne Rubin-Vega** and **Carol Alt**.

Johanna Bennett and Mandy Ward are the co-founders of *FIRST TIME FEST*. As an accomplished philanthropist, actor, and social entrepreneur, as well as the daughter of singer Tony Bennett, Johanna Bennett has immersed herself within the entertainment and artistic community her entire life. Mandy Ward has worked in the film industry for the past decade in varied capacities, namely as a film producer of several projects. Mitch Levine, CEO of The Film Festival Group, is producing the festival. Through his company, Mitch offers consulting services and expertise to film festivals, film commissions, distribution companies and filmmakers around the world, and was formerly the CEO and Executive Director of the renowned Palm Springs International Film Festival. The Festival's Director of Programming is David Schwartz, the Chief Curator of Museum of the Moving Image.

Among *FIRST TIME FEST*'s wonderful sponsors and supporters are: NeueHouse, Scandinavian Locations and the Village Voice.

For Tickets, Passes, Program, Schedule and Additional Festival Information - Visit The Festival Website at <http://www.firsttimefest.com>

#