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CAIFF Lets You Party with the Stars

By Sophie Braccini



The California Independent Film Festival, opening tomorrow, offers something for everyone. Pictured on the right is founder Derek Zemrak in the new Member and Filmmaker Lounge at Orinda's Theatre Square. Photo Andy Scheck

part in the short film, "Remember to Breathe," will be at the Orinda Theatre. Saturday, Nov. 9 at Moraga's Rheem Theatre.

Many others actors and producers will present their productions at the festival: On Saturday, the star of "G.B. F" Michael J. Willett ("Pop Singer," "United States of Tara") will be in Orinda at 6 p.m.; and director Rosser Goodman ("Love Or Whatever") will be in Orinda with actress Jennifer Elise Cox ("The Brady Bunch Movie," "A Very Brady Sequel," "Web Therapy") at 8 p.m.

Bay Area directors Joel Pincosy ("Goatherder") and Kyle Kerman ("SUX2BME") will participate in a Q&A at 11a.m. Sunday, Nov. 10 at the Orinda Theatre.

There will also be a discussion about bullying in schools led by Bruce Burns, superintendent of the Moraga School District, Heidi Felt, Joaquin Intermediate School counselor, and Kim Parks, dean of The Saklan Middle School following the presentation of the documentary "Bully," and the short music video "Big In L.A." at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 10 at the Rheem Theatre.

Members of the CAIFF Association will also get to meet film professionals throughout the festival in the Celebrity Lounge, located above Barbacoa in Orinda's Theatre Square.

"It's a member's lounge and filmmaker's lounge," says CAIFF founder Derek Zemrak. "It's a place to go before or after the movies, have beer or wine, and a little appetizer, to relax and meet the filmmakers and stars."

Zemrak says a similar lounge existed during the first years of the festival, but he had not found the right place in Lamorinda. This year, the Theatre Square management team gave CAIFF the space above the restaurant to set up the lounge. "At the Rheem it's a little more complicated," says Zemrak. "The lounge is in the lobby, in the alcove areas."

On Friday night, the filmmakers' and CAIFF members' get-together will be in the lounge and on Saturday night people can gather there before the all-night party. CAIFF members get price reductions on films year-round, including at the festival; membership starts at \$55 a year.

For a complete schedule and ticket information, visit caiff.org.

Beginning tomorrow night, Lamorindans will have an opportunity to experience more than 18 feature films and documentaries, as well as 31 short films over the course of three and a half days at the 16th California Independent Film Festival (CAIFF). In addition to seeing wonderful films, CAIFF attendees can meet some of the actors, directors and producers who made them possible.

Thomas Ian Nicholas, who played Kevin in the iconic movie "American Pie" 16 years ago, the year of the first CAIFF, will answer questions prior to the screening of the film on Saturday at the Orinda Theatre. The screening will launch a full night of partying starting at 10 p.m. at Shelbys where Nicholas will be the headline act, with opening performer Johnny Nash. The party is free with any festival movie ticket stub.

On Sunday, at Moraga's Rheem Theatre, the actor will answer questions before the 11 a.m. showing of "Rookie of the Year," the 1993 American sports comedy starring Nicholas who played 12-year-old Henry Rowengartner, signed to play with the Chicago Cubs.

On Friday, Nov. 8 at 6 p.m. Golden Globe nominee and 16th Annual CAIFF Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Lee Meriwether and actress Susan Blakely ("Rich Man, Poor Man," "The Towering Inferno," "The Lord's of Flatbush," "Airport 79"), who won a Golden Globe for her

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