



## **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS AT THE 2007 SILVER LAKE FILM FESTIVAL**

**\*\*\*Highlights include long-lost silent film classic “Beyond the Rocks” featuring Gloria Swanson and Rudolph Valentino\*\*\***

**\*\*\*Ramblin’ Jack Elliot featured in both documentary film and “live onstage!”\*\*\*  
plus many more!**

LOS ANGELES, CA (April 20, 2007) The 7<sup>th</sup> annual Silver Lake Film Festival – Los Angeles’ leading independent-alternative film and arts festival – has selected a wide scope of unique film titles showcasing various styles that reflect the nature of the festival’s eclectic programming. Selections include an exploration of how cinema and architecture are finding common ground; a documentary – and live performance by national treasure Ramblin’ Jack Elliot; a “re-purposed” feature film starring an early performance by Vince Vaughn; the latest feature by San Francisco’s leading indie filmmaker Rob Nilsson; and, the Silent Film Heritage program, an annual homage to Silver Lake’s unique role in the development of American cinema.

From May 3<sup>rd</sup> until May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2007, Silver Lake Film Festival will screen more than 200 narrative and documentary features, and short films and videos. The West Coast premiere of “Fay Grim,” the latest film by director Hal Hartley, starring Parker Posey and Jeff Goldblum, has been tapped for the Opening Night Gala. Jonathan Dayton and Valerie Faris, co-directors of “Little Miss Sunshine,” are among this year’s festival honorees. Its parallel MusicFest, featuring music documentaries and live musical performances, will be presented for the first time by ASCAP and will showcase leading recording acts performing live in an intimate club setting, including the legendary Circle Jerks as well as Dengue Fever, 400 Blows. Sea Wolf and The Bird and The Bee.

**Detailed descriptions follow. Screening times/dates available online at [www.silverlakefilmfestival.org](http://www.silverlakefilmfestival.org).**

**THE ANNA CABRINI CHRONICLES** (USA 2006) - Written, directed and animated by Tawd B. Dorenfeld, the film follows four main characters: Anna, Brooke, Jonathan and Merrick. Three of them — brutally kill themselves. Brooke Caldner battles with theological dichotomies and body image. Unable to accept his homosexuality, Jonathan succumbs to a fragmentation of his sexual desires and ultimately of his person. Twelve-year-old Venice Beach skater Merrick decides the only escape from his hopeless family life is to end his own. The film’s narrator, Anna Cabrini, lives on but never ceases to grapple with her childhood trauma and the loss of her subjects whose lives she recorded. Dorenfeld delves deep into the

psychoses each possess through shooting with all kinds of different techniques, from 16mm, to digital, to stop-motion and hand-drawn animation, to layering composite shots on top of one another. The themes and images of the film stay with you, whether you like it not, and force you to rethink your ideas over depression, isolation and suicide. Though treated frankly, the subject of suicide is never exploited and indeed, Dorenfeld's activism to prevent suicide is at the core of all his work.

**THE BALLAD OF RAMBLIN' JACK (USA) – film screening and live musical performance** - With the help of her mother, family, friends, and fellow musicians, director Aiyana Elliott reaches for her father, legendary cowboy troubadour, Ramblin' Jack Elliott. She explores who he is and how he got there, working back and forth between archival and contemporary footage. Born in 1932 in Brooklyn, busking through the South and West in the early 50s, a year with Woody Guthrie, six years flatpicking in Europe, a triumphant return to Greenwich Village in the early 60s, mentoring Bob Dylan, then life on the road, from gig to gig, singing and telling stories. Now in his 75th year, Ramblin' Jack is experiencing a career renaissance of late with his new Grammy-award nominated album "I Stand Alone," featuring Lucinda Williams, Flea, David Hidalgo (Los Lobos), Nels Cline (Wilco, Geraldine Fibbers), Corin Tucker (Sleater-Kinney), and DJ Bonebrake (X, the Knitters) which was released by Silver Lake's own ANTI Records. THE BALLAD OF RAMBLIN' JACK was the Winner of the Special Jury Prize at the 2000 Sundance Film Festival as well as the Winner of the Producers Award at the 2001 Independent Spirit Awards. Starring Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Kris Kristofferson, D.A. Pennebaker, Dave Van Ronk, Arlo Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Alan Lomax

Ramblin' Jack will perform live after the screening of THE BALLAD OF RAMBLIN JACK. Also, both filmmaker and her father will be on hand in person for an audience Q&A.

**BEYOND THE ROCKS – Introduction by Brooke Anderson Young, Gloria Swanson's granddaughter – This entire program is free to the public** - This silent romance was long considered one of the great "lost" films from the Hollywood golden age. Its amazing rediscovery five years ago in a film archive at the Nederlands Filmmuseum in Amsterdam made headlines around the world. The discovery is especially significant because fewer than 20 percent of American silent-era fiction features survive in complete copies. In addition to its remarkable story of survival, the film is unusual in that it features two of the biggest stars – arguably THE biggest stars of their day. Studios in the Silent Era guarded jealously their actors under contract and rarely allowed them to appear with comparable talent from other studios. While technically Valentino received top billing, it's largely acknowledged by critics then and now that this picture is all Swanson's – a vehicle for her considerable charisma. It's been noted that while Swanson's costumes in the film are plentiful and lavish, Valentino's appear a bit shortchanged. The story is based on a novel by famed English novelist Elinor Glynn, whose bestselling novel "It" would become the screenplay that established Clara Bow as the "It Girl." In BEYOND THE ROCKS, Swanson plays Theodora, a young and penniless aristocrat, who marries a much older man, self-made millionaire, so that her father and spinster sisters can live comfortably. Soon after the wedding, she finds herself falling in love with Hector, the Tenth Earl of Bracondale, a playboy she encounters on the social circuit of the very rich -- in the Swiss Alps, Paris, London, and the English countryside. Hector is attracted to her as well. Theodora must choose between love and duty, and then her husband and lover must make their own choices.

**FILM + ARCHITECTURE** - The use of cinematic design tools to create architecture has risen dramatically throughout the architectural profession. The language of cinema is already deeply integrated into almost every level of contemporary social experience; cities today are as often experienced via films and television - even videogames - as they are visited or explored on foot. Now, architects are very often capable filmmakers because of this convergence, even while filmmakers themselves produce imaginative architectural backdrops of their own. This program will explore a variety of ways in which cinematic space and architectural space collide. On view will be the research exhibition "Open House: Architecture and Technology for Intelligent Living." This program will be held at the The Wind Tunnel, Art Center College of Design South Campus in Pasadena.

Panelists: James Clyne, Ryan Church, and Mark Goerner. Clyne, Church, and Goerner are independent production designers and concept artists who have worked on such films as MINORITY REPORT, THE WAR OF THE WORLDS, X-MEN 2 and 3, CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY,

CONSTANTINE, STAR WARS II: THE ATTACK OF THE CLONES, STAR WARS III: REVENGE OF THE WITH, and others. The discussion will revolve around artistic cross-overs between architectural design and cinematic science fiction.

**THE GIFT** (USA) is both a traditional, independent romantic tragedy and a trailblazing experiment in modern technology. It fuses 35mm footage from an unreleased earlier cut made by director Elana Krausz called AT RISK with new footage shot on HD (using both the Sony HDW-F900 and the Canon XL-H1). The original version was a 1994 cautionary tale about infidelity and the spread of HIV starring a then-unknown Vince Vaughn, the late Broadway Tony-nominated actor Daniel McDonald, country star Randy Travis and Ms. Krausz. Many of its observations, fears and anxiety reflect the general hysteria of its time. The new material, shot nearly 15 years later, opens the film up to include a modern perspective, the effects of the disease as it is passed through new generations, and a richer storyline that infuses a sweet lyricism with melodrama and, above all, hope for the future.

**OPENING** (USA) - Directed by Rob Nilsson (2006 Spirit of Silver Lake Award recipient; winner of the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance in 1988 and the Camera D'Or at Cannes in 1979), sizzles with the gripping immediacy of real lives caught in the midst of irrevocable change. An art opening, a real estate developer, a resolute gallery owner and a cataclysmic cyclone form the key coordinates of this dramatic film that reveals in no uncertain terms that we're not in Dorothy's Kansas any more. Martha is an emerging young painter holding her first big exhibition at a gallery in Kansas City's rapidly transforming downtown district. The city's new crop of beautiful people are all in attendance, including Martha's rival, Martha's lover and her lover's unsuspecting husband. Flirtation, gentrification and backroom development deals unfold as egos, ideals, trust and betrayal roil and burst with the tornado's unstoppable force.

**RUTA DEL JACA** (PERU NETHERLANDS USA) The central character in this suspense / drama documentary, Matt Lorenz, is both at once a real-life and fictionalized character. On one level the film documents Lorenz' pursuit of the central mystery in his life – what happened to his parents who disappeared in Peru two decades earlier amid a wave of homegrown Maoist brand of terrorism that gripped the South American nation. We follow his ceremonial mission from the Andean mountains down to the Amazon and get a mysterious and at times bizarre view of today's Peru – a mixture of the familiar – contemporary, homogenized “world culture” - and the tenaciously indigenous culture of Peru. As he repeats the fatal trip his parents made 20 years earlier during the years of the Shining Path movement , we enter along with him a mysterious world of shamans, ayahuasca (a native elixir with hallucinogenic effects) and guinea pigs with healing powers. Along the way we encounter real-life characters. Among these is Sonia Morales, a locally popular singer, specializing in Chica, a kind of Peruvian country music. By the time shootings start, her star had risen spectacularly making her probably the most popular singer of Peru. In the film she is both playing a scripted part but also we're see her own real-life success documented. Now here is the kicker: She indirectly knew Lorenz's parents when she was a child and may provide a clue to their fate. Where Lorenz's true story begins and the script for “Ruta del Jaca” ends is anyone's guess. But it doesn't matter for the film – call it what you may – is a fascinating road trip with a personal and mysterious scrapbook of memories as our guide.

**TEN INCH HERO** (USA, 2007) Four friends deal with their love lives and learn about themselves while working in a funky sandwich shop in Santa Cruz. Piper, an accomplished artist, comes to town in search of the child she gave up for adoption years earlier, but is surprised at what she finds. Tish is a dish... and a nymphomaniac, but when will she learn that sex is more than a weapon and find true love? The irreverent and horny Priestly dispenses free-wheeling comic advice to everyone, but how long can he hide his own feelings? Shy Jen watches life pass by, afraid to reach out, except through her e-mail romance with a mysterious stranger. And Trucker, a surfer child of the 60s with an inscrutable past, is the owner that somehow keeps the shop afloat. For this motley crew, the sign out front says it all: “Help Wanted – normal people need not apply.” With poignant humor and heart reminiscent of DINER, THE BREAKFAST CLUB, and MYSTIC PIZZA, the film serves up big fluffy helpings of sex, love and romance while also dealing with more weighty issues like gender roles and violence against women. Starring: Elisabeth Harnois, Clea DuVall, Sean Patrick Flanery, Jensen Ackles, and Danneel Harris. With Alice Krige and John Doe

Special Note: John Doe who plays Trucker is being honored at the festival's Closing Night program.

**WE ARE THE STRANGE** (USA) - Straight from Sundance, a mind-bending excursion into a bizarre, bewitching universe. Blue is a young girl navigating the streets of a terrifying, sinister fantasy world all alone. When she meets Emmm, a fellow lost soul, she joins him on a quest for some ice cream. Upon arriving, they realize the ice cream shop has been taken over by dark forces, and the whole city is teeming with evil. Bizarre monsters surround Blue and Emmm on all sides until Rain, a sadistic hero, arrives to rescue them and exterminate the source of the evil. Director/Producer M dot Strange spent three years painstakingly creating this film, using a range of animation techniques--traditional, stop-motion, computer, and his own unique blend of 8-bit graphics and anime, dubbed "Str8nime." The stunning visuals are complemented by a soundtrack that is both beautiful and harrowing. The end result is a freaky techno-carnival ride that climaxes with a momentous battle between innocence and darkness.

**WET DREAMS** (USA 2006) - This documentary follows super-model/actress Rebecca Romijn("X-Men") and filmmaker Steve Willis as they approach Wet Design, the creators of the Bellagio fountain, with their dream to choreograph a fountain show. Their idea is to create a show to music that "builds" - specifically Ennio Morricone's "Ecstasy of Gold" from THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY. Despite numerous attempts to contact Wet Design, the creator of the fountain, they were unable to reach the firm's founder, Mark Fuller, until Romijn made an on-air plea on "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno." Wet Design engineer Peter Kopik translated Romijn's ideas to a computer system that emulates the fountain, "Virtual WET," and finally to the fountain itself. The final tests at Bellagio proved so successful that the piece was added to the fountain's regular show schedule. Using thousands of cannons shooting water 240 feet, 2.5 million watts of light and 4,000 individually controlled fixtures, the show is, indeed, amazing (if not exactly "green"), and the film a new take on the "let's put on a show" genre.

The 2007 Silver Lake Film Festival is under the direction of Kate Marciniak, Greg Ptacek and Saskia Wilson-Brown and produced by the passion, talent and energy of an extraordinary group of volunteers.

This year's festival is made possible by the generous contributions of our sponsors, including ASCAP, CBS Outdoor, Charter Communications, Crushed Planet, First Independent Pictures, Five Star Theatres The Echo and EchoPlex, Karl Strauss Beer, Kodak, Magnolia Pictures, MusicPlus TV, Mr. T. J. Singh and Trailer Park.

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\*\*\* Artwork and photos are available for download at \*\*\*

For more information on the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Silver Lake Film Festival, please visit:  
<http://www.silverlakefilmfestival.org>.

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## ABOUT SILVER LAKE FILM FESTIVAL

Silver Lake Film Festival, a nonprofit arts organization, was established in 2000 to provide a showcase for truly independent-alternative films in the entertainment capital of the world. Seven years later, the festival has evolved into Los Angeles' leading independent film, music & art festival, and the only major media arts event in the city's hip and burgeoning Eastside, which includes silver lake, Los Feliz, Echo Park, Hollywood and Downtown.