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INTERNATIONAL

Film News

Posted: Thu., Dec. 2, 2010, 12:00pm PT

Sundance premieres announces narratives, docs

Kevin Smith, Morgan Spurlock among featured filmmakers

By JUSTIN CHANG

Kevin Smith's "Red State," J.C. Chandor's "Margin Call," Dito Montiel's "The Son of No One," George Ratliff's "Salvation Boulevard," Eugene Jarecki's "Reagan," Steve James' "The Interrupters" and Morgan Spurlock's "The Greatest Movie Ever Sold" are among the films set to make their world premieres at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival.

The fest, which unspools Jan. 20-30 in Park City, Utah, completed its lineup announcement Thursday by unveiling its Premieres, Documentary Premieres, Next, Spotlight, Park City at Midnight and New Frontier sections, although fest director John Cooper said there would likely be a few late additions over the next few weeks.

Generally reserved for the festival's biggest names and buzziest titles, the starry Premieres slate will feature performances by actors including John C. Reilly, Sigourney Weaver, Greg Kinnear, Laura Linney, Kevin Spacey, Paul Bettany, Pierce Brosnan, Jennifer Connelly, Ed Harris and Ray Liotta.

While Premieres typically accounts for much of the festival's sales activity, two films will arrive in Park City with distribution already in place, both via Fox Searchlight: Miguel Arteta's "Cedar Rapids," starring Ed Helms as a small-town insurance salesman en route to the titular Iowa city, and Tom McCarthy's "Win Win," in which Paul Giamatti plays an attorney who doubles as a high school wrestling coach.

One high-profile title hunting for a buyer is Smith's fundamentalism-skewering horror pic "Red State." Festgoers will be curious to see whether Smith follows through on his suggestion in an earlier podcast that, were "Red State" to play at Sundance, he would publicly hand-pick the distributor right on the spot. ("Might even bring up a professional auctioneer to make it fun and unintelligible," he said.)

Other Premieres entries likely to drum up interest include Mark Pellington's "I Melt With You," starring Thomas Jane, Jeremy Piven, Rob Lowe and Christian McKay; Jesse Peretz's "My Idiot Brother," with Paul Rudd as a pot dealer; David Mackenzie's "Perfect Sense," a love story featuring Ewan McGregor and Eva Green; Lee Tamahori's "The Devil's Double," with Dominic Cooper and Ludivine Sagnier; Jacob Aaron Estes' dark comedy "The Details," with Tobey Maguire and Elizabeth Banks; and Jim Kohlberg's "The Music Never Stopped," starring J.K. Simmons, which will receive a Salt Lake City gala on Jan. 21.

Montiel's "The Son of No One," with Channing Tatum (who also starred in the helmer's two previous pics), Al Pacino and Juliette Binoche, has been



Kevin Smith's "Red State" is among this year's premieres. • [Sundance Competition: List](#)



Stanley Tucci stars in J.C. Chandor's "Margin Call"



"Perfect Sense" stars Ewan McGregor.



Steve James' "The Interrupters" is among the documentary premieres.

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selected as the fest's closing-night film.

In the most significant change to the fest's lineup, Sundance will debut a Documentary Premieres category (announced last month by festival topper Robert Redford), designed primarily to showcase nonfiction work by established filmmakers.

"The competition was meant to draw attention to first, second and sometimes third films. But as the documentary industry has grown, where do you put filmmakers like Morgan Spurlock?" Cooper said, noting that some filmmakers had told him they had grown weary of attending the awards show for the third or fourth time.

"We need take them out of that competition and make room for some newcomers, he said. "Which is the fun part for us."

In addition to the James, Jarecki and Spurlock entries, Documentary Premieres includes Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato's "Becoming Chaz"; Liz Garbus' "Bobby Fischer Against the World"; Pamela Yates' "Granito"; Jimm Whitaker's "Rebirth"; and Paul Mariano and Kurt Norton's "These Amazing Shadows."

Noncompeting documentaries had previously been accommodated in Spotlight, now the domain of what the fest calls "cinema we love," and consists mainly of highlights from other major festivals. Included in the 2011 batch are fall fest hits "In a Better World," "Incendies," "Meek's Cutoff" and "Submarine."

Introduced earlier this year, Next will continue its mission to present innovative work done on a shoestring. Director of programming Trevor Groth said the 2011 batch is notable for "a real creativity in visual style. They don't fall into the traps of low-budget filmmaking. There's very inventive visual storytelling."

Fest will also unveil its Native Showcase, screening work from the Sundance Institute's Native American and Indigenous program. Slate consists of a shorts program and one feature, Billy Luther's "Grab." Another Native American-directed entry, Inupiaq-language feature "On the Ice," will play in the dramatic competition.

PREMIERES

The films in this section are world premieres and, unless otherwise noted, are from the U.S.

- **"Cedar Rapids"** - Directed by Miguel Arteta, written by Phil Johnston. The story of a naive Wisconsin man who travels to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to attend a regional insurance conference. Stars Ed Helms, John C. Reilly, Anne Heche, Isiah Whitlock Jr., Alia Shawkat, Sigourney Weaver. A Fox Searchlight release.
- **"The Convincer"** - Directed by Jill Sprecher, written by Jill and Karen Sprecher. About an insurance salesman who gets caught up in a caper involving a rare musical instrument. Toplines Greg Kinnear, Alan Arkin, Billy Crudup, David Harbour.
- **"The Details"** - Directed and written by Jacob Aaron Estes. In which a young couple's domestic tensions are aggravated by a pest problem. With Tobey Maguire, Elizabeth Banks, Laura Linney, Ray Liotta, Dennis Haysbert.
- **"The Devil's Double"** (Belgium) - Directed by Lee Tamahori, written by Michael Thomas. A look inside the House of Saddam through one man's eyes. Features Dominic Cooper, Ludivine Sagnier, Mimoun Oaissa, Raad Rawi, Philip Quast.
- **"I Melt With You"** (Canada-U.S.) - Directed by Mark Pellington, written by Glenn Porter, based on a story by Porter and Pellington. Concerns four friends examining the choices they've made over the past 25 years. Stars Thomas Jane, Jeremy Piven, Rob Lowe, Christian McKay, Carla Gugino.
- **"Life in a Day"** (U.K.) - Directed by Kevin Macdonald. A global experiment to create the world's largest user-generated feature film, culled from footage shot on July 24.
- **"Margin Call"** - Directed and written by J.C. Chandor. A drama set over a 24-hour period in an investment bank, during the early stages of the 2008 financial crisis. Stars Kevin Spacey, Paul Bettany, Jeremy Irons, Zachary Quinto, Stanley Tucci.
- **"The Music Never Stopped"** - Directed by Jim Kohlberg, written by Gwyn Lurie and Gary Marks, based on the story "The Last Hippie" by Oliver Sacks. About a father's struggle to bond with his son, who suffers from a brain tumor that prevents him from forming new memories. With J.K. Simmons, Julia Ormond, Cara Seymour, Lou Taylor Pucci, Mia Maestro. Salt Lake City gala.
- **"My Idiot Brother"** - Directed by Jesse Peretz, written by Evgenia Peretz and David Schisgall. A



Jason Eisener's 'Hobo With a Shotgun' will premiere during Park City at Midnight.

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man moves in with each of his three sisters after serving time for selling pot. Stars Paul Rudd, Elizabeth Banks, Zoey Deschanel, Emily Mortimer.

- **"Perfect Sense"** (U.K.) - Directed by David Mackenzie, written by Kim Fupz Aakeson. A love story about two people who fall for each other just as the world begins to fall apart. With Ewan McGregor, Eva Green, Ewen Bremner, Stephen Dillane, Denis Lawson, Connie Nielsen.
- **"Red State"** - Directed and written by Kevin Smith. About a group of misfits encountering extreme fundamentalism in Middle America. Features Michael Parks, Michael Angarano, Kyle Gallner, John Goodman, Melissa Leo.
- **"Salvation Boulevard"** - Directed by George Ratliff, written by Ratliff and Doug Max Stone, based on the novel by Larry Beinhart. The story of a charming evangelical preacher who frames an ex-hippie for a crime. With Pierce Brosnan, Jennifer Connelly, Ed Harris, Greg Kinnear, Marisa Tomei.
- **"The Son of No One"** - Directed and written by Dito Montiel. Drama of two New York men forced to relive two murders they committed as young boys. Stars Channing Tatum, Al Pacino, Katie Holmes, Tracy Morgan, Ray Liotta, Juliette Binoche. Closing-night film.
- **"Win Win"** - Directed and written by Tom McCarthy, based on the story by McCarthy and Joe Tiboni. In which a disheartened attorney who moonlights as a high school wrestling coach stumbles upon a star athlete. Stars Paul Giamatti, Amy Ryan, Bobby Cannavale, Jeffrey Tambor. A Fox Searchlight release.

DOCUMENTARY PREMIERES

The eight films in this section are world premieres and, unless otherwise specified, are from the U.S.

- **"Becoming Chaz"** - Directed by Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato. Concerning Chastity Bono's transition from female to male.
- **"Bobby Fischer Against the World"** - Directed by Liz Garbus. A profile of Bobby Fischer's dramatic journey from chess master to Cold War icon to fugitive.
- **"Granito"** - Directed by Pamela Yates. An examination of Guatemala's turbulent history.
- **"The Greatest Movie Ever Sold"** - Directed by Morgan Spurlock. An inquiry into the forces of branding, advertising and product placement.
- **"The Interrupters"** - Directed by Steve James. A look at ex-gang members who are now protecting their communities from violence.
- **"Reagan"** (U.S.-U.K.) - Directed by Eugene Jarecki. A study of the enigmatic career of the 40th president of the United States.
- **"Rebirth"** - Directed by Jim Whitaker. A mosaic of five individuals whose lives were profoundly altered by 9/11.
- **"These Amazing Shadows"** - Directed by Paul Mariano and Kurt Norton. Concerning the legacy of the National Film Registry.

NEXT

The eight films in this section are world premieres.

- **"Bellflower"** - Directed and written by Evan Glodell. A love story replete with violence, weapons, action and sex. With Glodell, Jessie Wiseman, Tyler Dawson, Rebekah Brandes.
- **"The Lie"** - Directed by Joshua Leonard, written by Leonard, Jeff Feuerzeig, Mark Webber and Jess Weixler, based on the short story by T. Coraghessan Boyle. Concerns a man disappointed with life who tells a lie to avoid going to work. Stars Leonard, Weixler, Webber, Alia Shawkat, Jane Adams, Kelli Garner.
- **"Lord Byron"** - Directed by Zack Godshall, written by Godshall and Ross Brupbacher. About a middle-aged man who's grown tired of his skirt-chasing, pot-smoking way of life. Stars Paul Batiste, Gwendolyn Spradling, Kayla Lemaire.
- **"The Off Hours"** - Directed and written by Megan Griffiths. About the fortuitous meeting between a truck driver and a woman working the night shift at a diner. With Amy Seimetz, Ross Partridge, Scoot McNairy, Lynn Shelton, Bret Roberts, Tony Doupe.
- **"Prairie Love"** - Directed and written by Dusty Bias. In which a mysterious vagrant discovers a nearly frozen local with a pen-pal girlfriend. Stars Jeremy Clark, Holly Lynn Ellis, Garth Blomberg.
- **"Restless City"** - Directed by Andrew Dosunmu, written by Eugene M. Gussenhoven. About an African immigrant living on the fringes of New York. Features Danai Gurira, Anthony Okungbowa, Babs Olusanmokin.
- **"Sound of My Voice"** - Directed by Zal Batmanglij, written by Batmanglij and Brit Marling. In which a young couple infiltrates a cult in the San Fernando Valley. Stars Christopher Denham,

Nicole Vicius, Marling.

- **"To.get.her"** - Directed and written by Erica Dunton. Five girls come together for one fateful night where anything goes. Features Jazzy De Lissar, Chelsea Logan, Adwoa Aboah, Jami Eaton, Audrey Speicher.

NATIVE SHOWCASE

- **"Grab"** - Directed by Billy Luther. A documentary about three families in the Laguna Pueblo tribe preparing for Grab Day, when they throw groceries from a rooftop to the community waiting below. World premiere.

SPOTLIGHT

- **"Attenberg"** (Greece) - Directed, written by Athina Rachel Tsangari. About a young woman acquiring a new perspective on the mysteries of human nature. With Ariane Labeled, Yorgos Lanthimos, Vangelis Mourikis, Evangelia Randou. U.S. premiere.
- **"Elite Squad 2"** (Brazil) - Directed by Jose Padilha, written by Padilha, Bráulio Mantovani and Rodrigo Pimentel. Rio de Janeiro's special operations police unit battles widespread city corruption in this follow-up to Padilha's "Elite Squad." Features Wagner Moura, Seu Jorge, Taina Muller, Andre Ramiro, Milhem Cortaz. International premiere.
- **"I Saw the Devil"** (South Korea) - directed and written by Kim Jee-woon. A violent revenge thriller about a young secret agent tracking the serial killer who murdered his fiancée. Stars Lee Byung-hun, Choi Min-sik. U.S. premiere, a Magnet release.
- **"In a Better World"** (Denmark) - Directed by Susanne Bier, written by Anders Thomas Jensen, from a story by Bier and Jensen. About the behavioral connections between episodes of schoolyard bullying at home and escalating tribal violence abroad. With Mikael Persbrandt, Trine Dyrholm, Ulrich Thomsen, Markus Rygaard, William Johnk Nielsen. U.S. premiere, a Sony Classics release.
- **"Incendies"** (Canada-France) - Directed Denis Villeneuve, written by Villeneuve with the collaboration of Valerie Beaugrand-Champagne, based on the stage play by Wajdi Mouawad. A detective story whose secrets involve terrorism, rape and genocide in a fictional Middle Eastern country. Stars Lubna Azabal, Melissa Desormeaux-Poulin, Maxim Gaudette, Remy Girard. A Sony Classics release.
- **"Kaboom"** - Directed and written by Gregg Araki. A sci-fi story centered on the sexual awakening of a group of college students. With Thomas Dekker, Haley Bennett, Chris Zylka, Roxane Mesquida, Juno Temple. U.S. premiere, an IFC release.
- **"Letters From the Big Man"** - Directed and written by Christopher Munch. About an artist and government hydrologist surveying a remote part of southwestern Oregon. With Lily Rabe, Jason Butler Harner, Isaac C. Singleton Jr., Jim Cody Williams, Fiona Dourif. World premiere.
- **"Meek's Cutoff"** - Directed by Kelly Reichardt, written by Jon Raymond. A spare Western following three families along the Oregon Trail. Stars Michelle Williams, Paul Dano, Zoe Kazan, Bruce Greenwood, Shirley Henderson.
- **"Old Cats"** (Chile) - Directed and written by Pedro Peirano and Sebastian Silva. About the clash of wills between an old woman battling senility and her hot-tempered daughter. With Belgica Castro, Claudia Celedon, Catalina Saavedra, Alejandro Sieveking.
- **"Submarine"** (U.K.-U.S.) - Directed by Richard Ayoade, written by Ayoade, from the novel by Joe Dunthorne. A coming-of-ager about a 15-year-old trying to save his parents' marriage and lose his virginity before his next birthday. With Craig Roberts, Paddy Considine, Sally Hawkins, Yasmin Paige. U.S. premiere, a Weinstein Co. release.
- **"Uncle Kent"** - Directed by Joe Swanberg, written by Swanberg and Kent Osborne. About a pothead cartoonist in Los Angeles trying to sleep with his visiting houseguest. Stars Osborne. World premiere, an IFC Films release.

PARK CITY AT MIDNIGHT

The eight films in this section are world premieres and, unless otherwise noted, are from the U.S.

- **"The Catechism Cataclysm"** - Directed and written by Todd Rohal. A priest loses interest in the church and tracks down his old classmate, a former metalhead. With Steve Little, Robert Longstreet, Walter Dalton, Miki Ann Maddox, Koko Lanham.
- **"Codependent Lesbian Space Alien Seeks Same"** - Directed and written by Madeleine Olnek. In which a shy greeting-card store employee unknowingly falls for a lesbian space alien. With Lisa Haas, Susan Ziegler, Jackie Monahan, Cynthia Kaplan, Dennis Davis, Alex Karpovsky, Rae C. Wright.
- **"Corman's World: Exploits of a Hollywood Rebel"** - Directed by Alex Stapleton. A portrait of Hollywood's most prolific writer-director-producer.

- **"Hobo With a Shotgun"** (Canada) - Directed by Jason Eisener, written by Johnathan Davies. About a hobo forced into violent action after witnessing a brutal robbery. Stars Rutger Hauer, Molly Dunsworth, Gregory Smith, Brian Downey.
- **"The Oregonian"** - Directed and written by Calvin Lee Reeder. A farm woman survives a car accident and limps into the nightmarish unknown. Features Lindsay Pulsipher, Robert Longstreet, Matt Olsen, Lynne Compton, Barlow Jacobs, Chadwick Brown, Jed Maheu, Roger M. Mayer.
- **"Septien"** - Directed by Michael Tully. The story of a reclusive sports hustler who returns home to his family farm after years of absence. Toplines Robert Longstreet, Onur Tukel, Michael Tully, Rachel Korine, Mark Robinson, John Maringouin.
- **"Troll Hunter"** (Norway) - Directed by Andre Ovredal. In which a group of student filmmakers tangle with a man trying to protect Norway from giant trolls. With Otto Jespersen, Glenn Erland Tosterud, Hans Morten Hansen, Johanna Morch, Tomas Alf Larsen. International premiere.
- **"The Woman"** - Directed by Lucky McKee, written by McKee and Jack Ketchum. Concerns a country lawyer's attempt to "civilize" the last remaining member of a violent clan on the Northeast coast. With Pollyanna McIntosh, Sean Bridgers, Angela Bettis, Lauren Ashley Carter, Zach Rand.

NEW FRONTIER

The five films in this section are world premieres unless otherwise noted.

- **"Jess + Moss"** - Directed by Clay Jeter, written by Clay and Debra Jeter. A series of vignettes involving memories of companionship and sexual awakening shared by two second cousins. With Sarah Hagan, Austin Vickers.
- **"The Mill and the Cross"** (Poland-Sweden) - Directed by Lech Majewski, written by Majewski and Michael Francis Gibson. A blend of painterly compositions and digital effects centered around Peter Brugel's 1564 artwork "The Way to Calvary." Stars Rutger Hauer, Michael York, Charlotte Rampling, Joanna Litwin.
- **"The Nine Muses"** (U.K.) - Directed and written by John Akomfrah. An allegorical fable that filters the history of mass migration to postwar Britain through the prism of Homer's "The Odyssey." North American premiere.
- **"I Women Art Revolution"** - Directed by Lynn Hershman Leeson. A documentary that chronicles the history of women who have used art to fight oppression and protest gender and racial exclusion. U.S. premiere, a Zeitgeist Films release.
- **"The Woods"** - Directed and written by Matthew Lessner. A critique of media technology dependence that follows eight young Americans who move into the woods to start their own utopia. With Justin Phillips, Toby David, Adam Mortemore, Nicola Persky, Chris Edley.

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