

Queer Films Return To The Crest For The 26th Year

by Chris Narloch

SIGLFF comes back to the Crest the second weekend of October and brings with it a new name for Sacramento's annual queer film festival. The new branding is only one of several developments that should make this year's event even more of a must-see than usual.

The Sacramento International Gay & Lesbian Film Festival (SIGLFF) has changed its moniker to the Sacramento International LGBTQ Film Festival in order to better reflect who we are as a community.

What won't change is the level of cinematic quality that attendees of the Festival have come to expect, and additionally, this year's slate of films is likely the most ambitious in the history of SIGLFF,

comic appeal for audiences of all ages, genders, and orientations.

That same evening, the Festival will present the first of the weekend's two mixed shorts programs, which are always popular, crowd-pleasing events. (The second mixed shorts program will be shown on Sunday afternoon.)

The next evening, Saturday, Oct. 14, will find the Festival showcasing both its

Complications ensue as they try to navigate their respective cultures.

After Louie, an engaging inter-generational love story starring Alan Cumming, Zachary



The Festival concludes on Sunday evening, Oct. 15, with another not-to-be-missed documentary, *The Lavender Scare*, which tells the McCarthy-era story of an unrelenting campaign by the federal government to identify and fire all employees suspected of being homosexual. Josh Howard, the director of *The Lavender Scare*, will be in attendance at the screening, and festival organizers are thrilled to close SIGLFF26 with this timely and important film.

"As a State employee, I am so happy to be living and working in the liberal and accepting state of California," said SIGLFF Board Chair Michael Dennis. "*The Lavender Scare* is critically important to Sacramento audiences."

For all these wonderful, essential films, Festival patrons can give thanks to Kevin Schaub, this year's Programming Chair, for his input in helping to select the finest queer movies around.

Schaub has joined forces with SIGLFF for the first time this year, and he brings years of experience with San Francisco's Frameline film festival, which is the largest LGBTQ arts event in the world.

"I think audiences are really going to be knocked out by the programs at this year's Festival," said Schaub. "And new this year,



A Muslim lesbian from Chicago falls in love with a female wrestler in *Signature Move*.

with more programs over its three days than ever before.

Famous names (and faces) such as Alan Cumming, Margaret Cho, Laura Linney and Armistead Maupin will grace the Crest Theatre's historic big screen during this year's Festival, and organizers have also promised surprise guests and participating filmmakers will be in attendance that weekend.

In all, eight separate programs comprised of six feature-length films and 16 short films will be showcased this October, and variety is the name of the game.

"For 26 years SIGLFF has brought quality films that explore the LGBTQ culture," said Jennifer Hatton, SIGLFF Board Member and Programmer. "This year is no different, from comedies and documentaries to character-driven dramas, SIGLFF continues to enrich the Sacramento Valley with films that both inform and inspire. It's a wonderful community-building event that everyone I know looks forward to year after year."

The Festival opens on Friday evening, Oct. 13, with *Alaska Is a Drag*, in which writer-director Shaz Bennett has expanded her own short film into a rousing and crowd-pleasing full-length feature that is described as the queer lovechild of *Rocky* and *Hedwig*.

Bennett will be in attendance on Opening Night for a post-screening Q&A after *Alaska Is a Drag*, a movie that should have universal

'unofficial' men's and 'unofficial' women's features, in back-to-back programs at the Crest.

Signature Move, directed by Jennifer Reeder and starring the sexy and talented

Booth, Wilson Cruz and with Mx. Justin Vivian Bond, is the second feature on Saturday night.

SIGLFF26 also has three fascinating documentaries this year, including *The*



Wes Hurley's *Rusalka* is part of SIGLFF's Friday night shorts program

Fawzia Mirza, is first up this evening, with local Sacramento comedienne Elisia Gonzales performing a short stand-up comedy set prior to the film.

Signature Move is the story of two first generation immigrant women whose one-night stand turns into something more.

Untold Tales of Armistead Maupin, a terrific tribute to the author of the beloved *Tales of the City* series of novels.

Lovers of non-fiction films should also enjoy *The Death and Life of Marsha P. Johnson*, which looks at the legacy and mysterious death of a transgender pioneer.

our Audience Awards carry cash prizes for the winning filmmakers (\$750 for Best Feature and \$500 for Best Short Film). Your votes really count so come out to the Crest and enjoy these great films together, as a community."

For more Festival information and tickets, visit www.siglff.org.