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### **Winners Announced for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Stony Brook Film Festival presented by Island Federal Credit Union**

July 29, 2017, Stony Brook, NY—The 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Stony Brook Film Festival presented by Island Federal Credit Union, July 20-29, had the largest attendance in the history of the Festival. Film passes sold out early in the ten-day run, screenings sold out, and stand-by lines were common many nights at Staller Center's 1,000 seat Main Stage theatre. Many filmmakers accepted invitations to support their films—including actors, producers, writers and crew. Films were screened from Armenia, Bulgaria, England, France, Germany, Israel, Latvia, Netherlands, Spain and USA, with filmmakers attending. In addition, films from Finland, Iran, Italy, Norway and Sweden were in the mix.

Alan Inkles, founder and director of the Stony Brook Film Festival said, "It truly was a magical year where almost every feature and shorts filmmaker attended their screenings to represent their films and host Q & As. When we add in the sales agents and distributors that attended, we saw our Filmmaker Lounge humming with energy and interaction among filmmakers, talent and industry. As for the films we showed, the audience scores were the best in our 22 years. Great films, great guests and packed houses nightly. It's what I envisioned for Stony Brook when we started this festival and it was certainly achieved this year."

Awards were presented by John Anderson, film critic and Master of Ceremonies, a long time MC for the awards reception.

#### **2017 Jury Award - Best Feature**

##### ***The Sounding***

United States - 93 min

Directed by Catherine Eaton.

Written by Bryan Delaney and Catherine Eaton.

With Catherine Eaton, Teddy Sears, Harris Yulin, Frankie Faison and David Furr.

Writer-Director-Actress Catherine Eaton gives a stunning performance as Liv, a mysterious woman residing on an island off the coast of Maine who has chosen to remain silent for years. When she suffers a terrible loss, Liv suddenly begins to speak as she weaves a language out of Shakespeare's words. After a series of events result in her being committed to a psychiatric hospital, Liv becomes a full-blown rebel, fighting for both her voice and her freedom. A powerful, uplifting drama.

Produced by Catherine Eaton, Caitlin Gold, Veronique Huyghebaert, Alik Paraschis and Jessica Vale.

Edited by Marco Perez. Director of Photography: David Kruta. From Corsetless Productions.

#### **2017 Audience Choice - Best Feature (tie)**

##### ***Fanny's Journey***

France, Belgium - 94 min

Directed by Lola Doillon. Written by Fanny Ben-Ami, Lola Doillon, Anne Peyrègne.

With Léonie Souchaud and Cécile De France.

In French with subtitles

In 1943, after avoiding the authorities with other Jewish children in France for three years, 13-year-old Fanny and her sisters are quickly sent to an Italian foster home. When the Nazis arrive in Italy, their caretakers plan an escape to Switzerland. Suddenly left on their own, eleven children do the impossible. Based on a true story, this moving tale of bravery, strength, and survival features exceptional performances by the young cast.

Produced by Saga Blanchard, Marie de Lussigny. Edited by Valérie Deseine. Director of Photography: Pierre Cottereau. A David-Films, Scope Pictures, France 2 Cinéma, Rhône-Alpes Cinéma, and Ce Qui Me Meut Motion Pictures production. From Menemsha Films.

**2017 Audience Choice - Best Feature (tie)**

***To the Edge of the Sky***

World Premiere - United States - 118 min

Directed by Todd Wider and Jedd Wider.

How far would you go to save your son's life? *To the Edge of the Sky* follows four families as they fight the FDA to gain access to a potentially lifesaving drug for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, a fatal disease their sons suffer from and the number one genetic killer of boys in the world. With a promising drug on the horizon, we witness the transformation of the mothers of four boys into "the rogue moms" as they become political activists and heroes during their righteous battle against time and the FDA. A challenging and uplifting documentary from Long Island brothers Todd and Jedd Wider (*Client 9, God Knows Where I Am*).

Produced by Brian Ariotti. Edited by Mona Davis and Colin Nusbaum. Director of Photography: Gerardo Puglia. A Wider Film Projects film.

**2017 Special Recognition by the Jury - Spirit of Independent Filmmaking**

***Laura Gets a Cat***

United States - 83 min

Written and Directed by Michael Ferrell.

With Dana Brooke, Michael Ferrell, Jason Kravits (*Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*).

Laura is a 30-something unemployed writer living in New York City and struggling with adulthood. She has a 'weekend' boyfriend she can't commit to, friends who seem to have achieved their dreams, and a vivid imaginary life she uses to run away from reality. When she starts a new relationship with a coffee shop barista, real life proves too complicated and she tries to actually run away. Veteran stage actress Dana Brooke shines in this funny, fresh, poignant independent feature.

Produced by Michael Ferrell, Chris Prine and Devin Sanchez. Edited by Chris Prine. Director of Photography: Paul Rondeau. From Living Boy Productions.

**2017 Special Recognition by the Jury - Achievement in Social Impact**

***Purple Dreams***

New York Premiere - United States - 72 min

Directed by Joanne Hock.

This inspirational documentary follows several students from the Northwest School of the Arts, in Charlotte, N.C., after it is chosen to be the first high school permitted to perform the musical *The Color*

*Purple*. From auditions through opening night and beyond, the filmmakers follow these students as they pursue their dreams while struggling with homelessness, low-income neighborhoods, gang-related violence and single-parent households. A behind-the-scenes look at an amazing group of teachers and students who work relentlessly to put on a triumphant musical production that propels them into a world of opportunity they never expected.

Produced by Robin Grey, Sara Patel. Edited by John Disher. Director of Photography: Joanne Hock. From GreyHawk Films.

**2017 Jury Award – Best Short**

***Across the Line***

World Premiere - Israel - 29 min

In Arabic and Hebrew with subtitles

A film by Nadav Shlomo Giladi

A Jewish settler, hurrying home for Shabbat, encounters a stubborn Palestinian hitchhiker.

**2017 Audience Choice Award – Best Short**

***Just, Go!***

Latvia - 11 minutes

A film by Pavels Gumennikovs

In Latvian with subtitles

A young man without legs chases down surprised purse snatchers for the girl he loves.

The Closing Night Awards reception held in Staller Center's Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery was sponsored by HBO. Catering for the reception was provided by The Meadow Club and The Curry Club.

Additional sponsors of the Stony Brook Film Festival presented by Island Federal Credit Union include Campolo, Middleton & McCormick, LLP; HBO; Suffolk County; The Village Voice; and WLIW21.

Media sponsors include Altice Media Solutions, Long Island Pulse magazine, WSHU Public Radio and Times Beacon Record Newspapers.

The Stony Brook Film Festival will announce the start date for 2018 entries later in the year at [www.stonybrookfilmfestival.com](http://www.stonybrookfilmfestival.com).

Staller Center for the Arts on the campus of Stony Brook University presents world-class live performances from October to May, a film series each semester, screenings of the Metropolitan Opera in HD, and hosts Department of Music concerts, including performances by Stony Brook University's Quartet in Residence, The Emerson String Quartet. Staller Center sponsors include Applied DNA Sciences-James A. Hayward; Campolo, Middleton & McCormick, LLP; Friends of Staller Center; Hilton Garden Inn-Stony Brook; Island Federal Credit Union; Jefferson's Ferry; Renaissance Technologies; Stony Brook Medicine; Suffolk County; Teachers Federal Credit Union, WLIW21 and Paul W. Zuccaire Foundation. The Stony Brook Film Festival presented by Island Federal Credit Union is produced by Staller Center for the Arts.

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**Photo: July 29, 2017 Award winners at the Closing Night Awards reception,**

**22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Stony Brook Film Festival presented by Island Federal Credit Union**

***L to R: The Sounding*, Catherine Eaton; *To the Edge of the Sky*, Todd and Jedd Wider; *Laura Gets a Cat*, Michael Ferrell; *Purple Dreams*, Robin Grey; *Across the Line*, Nadav Shlomo Giladi; *Just, Go!* Pavels Gumennikovs Photo credit: Jasna Boudard for the Stony Brook Film Festival**