

HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

THE 2026 HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES EAST COAST PREMIERE OF I PLAY ROCKY AS OPENING NIGHT FILM

Festival to Honor Bob Balaban with the Lifetime Achievement Award
Phil Lord and Chris Miller with the Achievement in Directing Award
Jordan Firstman with the FLYTE Breakthrough Director Award
Anthony Ippolito and Rosalind Eleazar with the FLYTE Breakthrough Performer Awards

Spotlight Films to include BUNKER, CLUB KID, THE MAN I LOVE, MISTY GREEN and
A TALENT FOR MURDER

Festival to Feature Five World Premieres including BARBIZON, THE DRUG IN OUR POCKET,
KINGDOM FUNGI, MAMAN BIBI COCO and NOT DEAD YET

BLEEDING HEARTS to Screen with a Special Performance by Chaparelle

34th Annual Festival Running October 2-12, 2026

All Images available [HERE](#)

East Hampton, NY — [August 25, 2026] — The Hamptons International Film Festival (HIFF), presented by Artemis Rising Foundation, today announced its Opening Night selection (sponsored by Audi), the East Coast Premiere of Peter Farrelly's **I PLAY ROCKY**, screening Friday, October 2, with star Anthony Ippolito in attendance. An electrifying true story about an unknown actor with an unshakable belief that he wasn't just meant to write Rocky—he was meant to be Rocky Balboa. Told “no” at every turn, Sylvester Stallone bets everything on himself, holding the line on playing the lead against seemingly impossible odds. The result is the ultimate underdog story behind the ultimate underdog movie. The film also stars Matt Dillon, AnnaSophia Robb, P.J. Byrne, Toby Kebbell, Tracy Letts, Jay Duplass, Stephan James and Kiki Seto. Ippolito will also receive one of the festival's **FLYTE Breakthrough Performer Awards**.

The 34th edition of the festival, running October 2–12, 2026, will also feature a robust lineup of Centerpiece, Spotlight, narrative, documentary and short film screenings, alongside distinguished tributes to artists and additional programming celebrating the best of contemporary cinema.

Academy Award nominee **Bob Balaban** will receive the festival's **Lifetime Achievement Award**, presented Sunday, October 11, sponsored by UBS. A longtime East End resident and HamptonsFilm Board Member, Balaban has built a prolific career across film and television, with credits including GOSFORD PARK, MOONRISE KINGDOM, BEST IN SHOW, FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION and CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND. In addition to his celebrated

work as an actor, Balaban has directed films including **BERNARD AND DORIS**, **THE EXONERATED**, **GEORGIA O'KEEFE** and **THE LAST GOOD TIME**, which received the HIFF Audience Award in 1994.

The festival will also honor Academy Award-winning filmmakers **Phil Lord** and **Chris Miller** with the **Achievement in Directing Award** for their work on **PROJECT HAIL MARY**, the 2026 blockbuster starring Ryan Gosling, Sandra Hüller and James Ortiz. The film is Amazon MGM Studios' highest-grossing film of all time and had the second-biggest domestic opening weekend for a non-franchise, original live-action film. Longtime collaborators Lord and Miller began their directing partnership with **CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS**, followed by hits including **21 JUMP STREET**, **22 JUMP STREET** and **THE LEGO MOVIE**. They have also collaborated as screenwriters and producers on **SPIDER-MAN: INTO THE SPIDER-VERSE**, **SPIDER-MAN: BEYOND THE SPIDER-VERSE** and more. Lord and Miller will join the festival on Saturday, October 3, for a special conversation.

The festival will present Jordan Firstman's **CLUB KID** in its Spotlight section on Thursday, October 8, in East Hampton. In addition to directing, Firstman also wrote, produced and starred in the film. Starring alongside Firstman are Reggie Absolom, Diego Calva, Cara Delevingne, Kirby Howell-Baptiste and Colleen Camp. Following its Cannes premiere, the film was met with adoration and high praise from both critics and consumers alike, with many calling the film Firstman's breakthrough performance both in front of and behind the camera. The film will be accompanied by a post-screening conversation with Firstman, who will also receive the festival's **FLYTE Breakthrough Director Award**. Eva Victor was honored with the Breakthrough Artist Award at the 2025 festival.

Rosalind Eleazar will also receive one of the festival's **FLYTE Breakthrough Performer Awards** for her performance in **MISTY GREEN** on Wednesday, October 7. Directed by Chris Rock, Eleazar stars alongside Rock, Adam Driver, Daniel Kaluuya, and Anna Kendrick. Eleazar's performance has already received early praise and excitement, with many already predicting her as a standout of the season. The film will screen in the festival's Spotlight section. Previous recipients of the Breakthrough Performer Award include Stephanie Hsu, Emma Stone, Mahershala Ali, Jessica Chastain, Taraji P. Henson, Lupita Nyong'o, Adam Driver, Brie Larson, Timothée Chalamet, Riz Ahmed, Hong Chau, and more. Additional actors who have received this honor include Michael B. Jordan, Oscar Isaac, Alexander Skarsgård, David Oyelowo, Miles Teller, Kaitlyn Dever, Emily Blunt, and Elizabeth Moss.

Also screening in the Spotlight section are the U.S. Premiere of Florian Zeller's **BUNKER**, starring Javier Bardem and Penélope Cruz; Ira Sachs' **THE MAN I LOVE**, starring Rami Malek, Tom Sturridge, and Rebecca Hall; and the East Coast Premiere of Anton Corbijn's **A TALENT FOR MURDER**, starring Helen Mirren, Alden Ehrenreich and Olivia Cooke.

The festival is proud to announce five World Premieres this year, including Jake Silbermann's **BARBIZON**, starring Erica Pappas, Jake Silbermann, Michael DeGrandpre and McKenna Parsons; Anne Sundberg's documentary **THE DRUG IN OUR POCKET**; Josh Thompson's documentary **KINGDOM FUNGI**; Célia Millat and Bastien Garcia's **MAMAN BIBI COCO**, starring Millat and Garcia; and Eric Weber and Nick Weber's **NOT DEAD YET**, starring Richard Kind, Paul Raci, Polly Draper, Tovah Feldshuh, Toby Huss, Seth Herzog, Ed German and Bill Smitrovich.

The festival will feature the East Coast Premiere of Andrew Morgan's **BLEEDING HEARTS**, which follows real-life couple Zella Day and Jesse Woods, the musicians behind the emerging band Chaparelle, and will feature a post-screening performance by the band at Stephen Talkhouse on Friday, October 9. Tickets for the performance are available [here](#).

"This year's program brings together an exciting range of films, from highly anticipated premieres and ambitious new work to distinctive discoveries from emerging filmmakers. Across our narrative, documentary and Spotlight selections, we're seeing bold storytelling, singular perspectives and films that will spark conversation long after the screenings. We're thrilled with the breadth and depth of this year's lineup and look forward to sharing these films with audiences throughout the Hamptons," said David Nugent, Chief Creative Officer of HamptonsFilm.

"For more than three decades, HamptonsFilm has been a place where audiences come together to discover great films and celebrate the artists who make them," said Executive Director Bob Feinberg. "This year, we're especially proud to welcome Bob Balaban, Phil Lord and Chris Miller, and Jordan Firstman, whose work has made such a lasting impact on audiences. We look forward to bringing filmmakers and film lovers together once again and creating the kind of shared experiences that make this festival so special to our community," said Executive Director Bob Feinberg.

The 34th annual Hamptons International Film Festival will run October 2-12, 2026, with screenings and events taking place across the Hamptons. HIFF thanks this year's festival sponsors: Presenting Sponsor Artemis Rising Foundation; Premier Sponsor Audi (official vehicle); Lead sponsor Flyte (official air travel partner); Signature Sponsors Luminara Napa Valley and Hamptons Magazine; Premium Contributing Sponsors Netflix, Shadowbox Studios, Assemble Media, Lismore Road, AlmaMatcha, UBS, Twomey Latham, Sotheby's International realty, and Hampton Jitney; Official Media Partners *WNBC*, *The Express News Group*, *The Atlantic*, *Long Island Broadcasting (WEHM, WBAZ & WBEA)*, *Dan's Papers*, *Now Voyager*, and *The Gotham/Filmmaker Magazine*; Contributing Sponsors Discover Long Island, The Hedges Inn, The Maidstone, Regal Cinemas, Southampton Playhouse, Wolffer Estate, Dos Hombres Tequila and 91 East, Guild Hall, Lion's Nook, Nick & Toni's, NYWIFT, Primo Aperitivo, Serafina, Stony Brook Southampton hospital, The White Room Gallery.

Foundation supporters include New York State Council on the Arts and Suffolk County. For more information, please visit www.hamptonsfilmfest.org.

2026 Hamptons International Film Festival Lineup:

OPENING NIGHT FILM

Sponsored by Audi

I PLAY ROCKY

East Coast Premiere

dir. Peter Farrelly, (USA), 2026

The film is an electrifying true story about an unknown actor with an unshakable belief that he wasn't just meant to write Rocky—he was meant to be Rocky Balboa. Told "no" at every turn, Sylvester Stallone (Anthony Ippolito) bets everything on himself, holding the line on playing the

lead against seemingly impossible odds. The result is the ultimate underdog story behind the ultimate underdog movie.

SPOTLIGHT FILMS

Sponsored by Audi

BUNKER

U.S. Premiere

dir. Florian Zeller (France/Spain), 2026

When an architect accepts a morally ambiguous project — building a survivalist bunker for a tech billionaire — his wife begins to question their marriage after 17 years together. Bunker is a dramatic thriller that examines the emotional and moral challenges faced by a couple as the anxieties of an increasingly uncertain world begin to reshape their marriage, exploring the fears, doubts, and ethical dilemmas that define our time.

CLUB KID

dir. Jordan Firstman (USA), 2026

A hard-partying New York City club promoter (Jordan Firstman) sees his whirlwind lifestyle upended by the arrival of the 10-year-old son he never knew he had.

THE MAN I LOVE

dir. Ira Sachs (USA), 2026

Late 1980s, New York. Jimmy George (Rami Malek), a charismatic Downtown performer, rebels against his own mortality by throwing himself into a new role, a reckless affair, and the embrace of his creative community.

MISTY GREEN

dir. Chris Rock (USA), 2026

Years after her Hollywood breakthrough, a talented actress (Rosalind Wiseman) whose career has stalled fights for her second act.

A TALENT FOR MURDER

East Coast Premiere

dir. Anton Corbijn (UK, Italy), 2026

The film follows a mysterious young man from a New York publisher (Ehrenreich) who is sent to Switzerland to persuade the renowned writer Patricia Highsmith (Mirren) to write one final installment of the Ripley anthology.

VIEWS FROM LONG ISLAND

Sponsored by Stony Brook Southampton Hospital, With Support from the Suffolk County Film Commission

BARBIZON

World Premiere

dir. Jake Silbermann (USA), 2026

A stalled sculptor (Erica Pappas), on the verge of giving up art to study law with her on-again boyfriend, escapes to the Hamptons and takes a job teaching chess to wealthy families.

NOT DEAD YET

World Premiere

dir. Eric Weber and Nick Weber (USA), 2026

Ousted from his agency by a youth-obsessed culture, a veteran ad man (Richard Kind) teams up with a rebellious Hamptons senior breakfast club to launch a bold new venture—proving it's never too late to rewrite your story and start a second act.

AIR, LAND & SEA

Sponsored by Luminara Napa Valley

KINGDOM FUNGI

World Premiere

dir. Josh Thompson (UK), 2026

Set across diverse and changing habitats from England to Chile to Bhutan, KINGDOM FUNGI delves into the extraordinary world of fungi, the ecological processes unfolding beneath our feet, global environmental policy, and the personal stories that drive each character's devotion.

First-time director Josh Thompson follows four dedicated amateur and professional field mycologists whose work is driven by a shared mission to document, educate and protect these remarkable organisms. With exquisite, highly detailed cinematography, KINGDOM FUNGI reveals the impact of the largely under-researched mushroom network that shapes life on Earth in ways we are only just beginning to understand.

WORLD CINEMA DOCUMENTARY

Sponsored by Artemis Rising foundation

BLEEDING HEARTS

East Coast Premiere

dir. Andrew Morgan (USA), 2026

A music-driven love story about real-life couple Zella Day and Jesse Woods, the musicians behind the emerging band Chaparelle. Following their first year together, the film captures the joy and uncertainty of chasing a shared dream while navigating pressures that could spark their breakup—or their breakthrough.

THE DRUG IN OUR POCKET

World Premiere

dir. Anne Sundberg (USA), 2026

THE DRUG IN OUR POCKET examines how smartphones, designed to connect us, have radically reshaped childhood, adolescence, and mental health. Through intimate conversations with young people, parents, and leading experts, the film reveals a generation that is thoughtful, articulate, and increasingly aware of how digital environments shape their attention, emotions, and sense of self.

NARRATIVE COMPETITION

Sponsored by Lismore Road

MAMAN BIBI COCO

World Premiere

dir. Célia Millat, Bastien Garcia (France), 2026

Célia, a mother in her thirties, cares for her son full time. Since her father's recent death, she has been carrying on as if everything were fine. But her daily life is suffocating her: a son who takes up all the space, breastfeeding she can't bring herself to stop, a marriage running out of breath, and a move she is shouldering almost alone. Meeting Jérémy, the father of a child the same age, unsettles this fragile balance. Together they rediscover their shared passion for music, and sensations they thought were gone. Their attraction becomes a catalyst: her son is growing up, her marriage is fading, and Célia no longer wants to live her life on mute. Maman Bibi Coco is the intimate portrait of a woman at a turning point. A film about the vertigo of motherhood, the return of desire, and how hard it is to reinvent yourself once you become a parent.

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ABOUT HAMPTONSFILM

HamptonsFilm, home of the Hamptons International Film Festival (HIFF) was founded in 1992 to celebrate the art of film and to introduce a unique and varied spectrum of international films and filmmakers to our audiences. A non-profit organization with year-round screenings of global narrative and documentary films, an annual Screenwriters Lab, a summer documentary showcase, and extensive educational initiatives, HamptonsFilm offers programs that enlighten, educate, and provide invaluable exposure for filmmakers, while also providing the East End of Long Island with an educational and cultural experience that enriches the lives of its citizens and contributes to the local economy. HIFF, celebrating its 34th year, is an annual premiere film event in New York State, and an intimate showcase of some of the year's best offerings in contemporary cinema from around the world. Awarding prizes to filmmakers in cash and goods and services of over \$130,000 each year, with over \$5 million awarded in competition funds and services over the decades, our program continues to play an important role during awards season. For more information, please visit hamptonsfilmfest.org.

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