

## NIGHTLIFE

Sting to do two shows at Tower Theater. **20**

## THEATER

"Our Class" at the Wilma Theater. **22**

## ART

Roberta Eisenberg retrospective. **25**

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# Weekend

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# A FEAST OF FILM

**THE 20TH PHILADELPHIA  
FILM FESTIVAL  
IS IN FULL  
SWING.  
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REVIEWS ON  
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## For 20 years, the Philadelphia Film Festival has sparkled. This year's edition brings the founder back to town for discussions.

By Steven Rea  
INQUIRER MOVIE CRITIC

**W**ay back in another millennium — 1992, to be exact — a cineaste by the name of Linda Blackaby, with support from International House, launched the Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema.

There were growing pains over the years — new organizers and artistic directors (exit Blackaby), and then a name change, but the good news is that Philadelphians have been blessed with an ambitious, adventurous film festival for 20 years now.

Philadelphia Film Festival 20 — a seriously inspired two-week affair that started Thursday night with *Like Crazy*, the roller-coaster love story with a star-making turn from Felicity Jones — celebrates the festival's traditions, and looks to its future, too. Andrew Greenblatt, PFF's executive director, invited Blackaby back to coprogram and lead discussions on a documentary slate.

Artistic director Michael Lerman and his team dreamed up a terrific "From the Vaults" series: movies from (mostly) the early '90s, several paired with new work by the same filmmakers. Revisit Lars von Trier's *Europa* (1991), the Danish iconoclast's post-World War II espionage reverie, and then see his daunting masterwork, *Melancholia* — a study of depression and doom that won Kirsten Dunst the best-actress prize at Cannes in May.

David Cronenberg's *Naked Lunch* (1991) takes a surrealistically subjective look at William Burroughs, while *A Dangerous Method*, straight from the Toronto Film Festival, finds Cronenberg in more restrained mode, exploring the inner

demons of psychotherapy pioneers Sigmund Freud (Viggo Mortensen) and Carl Jung (Michael Fassbender).

Speaking of Cannes and Toronto, Greenblatt, Lerman, and company pulled off a string of coups, nabbing some of the strongest work from these top-tier fetes (and also from Sundance and New York): *The Artist*, Michel Hazanavicius's much-buzzed homage to the black-and-white silents; *The Descendants*, Alexander Payne's funny, perceptive portrait of a husband and father (George Clooney) trying to cope with a wife in a coma and two messed-up daughters; *My Week With Marilyn*, with Michelle Williams channeling Marilyn Monroe; and *Shame*, a study in sex addiction from Hunger director Steve McQueen, starring *Hunger*'s (and *A Dangerous Method*'s) Fassbender.

The documentary sidebar is likewise strong, and includes Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky's *Paradise Lost* trilogy — chilling accounts of three Arkansas teens convicted in the murder of three children. *Paradise Lost 3: Purgatory* ends with the exoneration and release of the trio just months ago, after 18 years behind bars.

Another doc, *Race to the Bottom of the Earth* in the "Greater Philadelphia" sidebar, follows local coffee purveyor and world adventurer Todd Carmichael — a founder of the La Colombe roastery — as he treks solo across 700 miles of Antarctica, toward the South Pole.

The Philly-centric program also boasts films on Dr. Albert Barnes (*The Collector*) and local pugilist Joe Frazier (*Joe Frazier: When the Smoke Clears*), among narrative and nonfiction pieces.

Wim Wenders fans will have a

chance to see *Pina*, the German director's doc about modern dance god Pina Bausch, in 3-D — an opportunity that area audiences will NOT have once the film starts its regular run at the Ritz theaters. (The PFF screening is at the Rave with 3-D systems; the Ritz chain doesn't have 3-D.)

*Jiro Dreams of Sushi*, about Jiro Ono, Tokyo's master chef, is among Lerman's favorite docs. And *Scenes of a Crime*, an investigation into police interrogation tactics, is one of Greenblatt's.

And both he and Lerman have nothing but praise for *Being Elmo: A Puppeteer's Journey*, about Kevin Clash, who brings the *Sesame Street* star to life. Greenblatt: "A fantastic journey with a very happy ending!" Lerman: "And Elmo's coming, which is maybe the thing I'm most excited about!"

Contact movie critic Steven Rea at 215-854-5629 or [srea@phillynews.com](mailto:srea@phillynews.com). Read his "On Movies Online," at <http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/onmovies/>

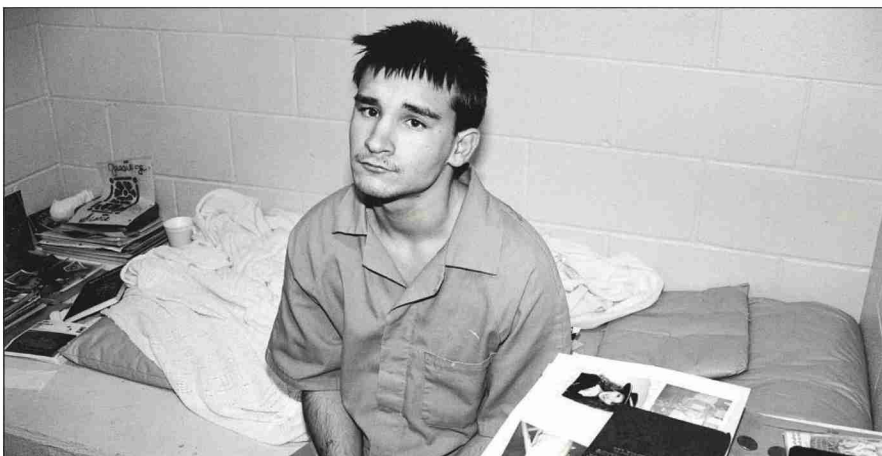
### Philadelphia Film Festival

The 20th-anniversary Philadelphia Film Festival by the Philadelphia Film Society continues through Nov. 3 with screenings at the Rave, International House, Annenberg Center, Bryn Mawr Film Institute, Prince Music Theater, Ritz 5, and Ritz East. Tickets are \$12 for regular screenings; \$6 for weekday matinees; \$50 to \$200 packages. Closing Night Film and Party, Oct. 29, \$20-\$75. Purchase at PFF

Box Office, 2101 Chestnut St., noon-8 p.m. weekdays and noon-5 p.m. Saturdays; at the venue or online at [www.filmadelphia.org/](http://www.filmadelphia.org/).



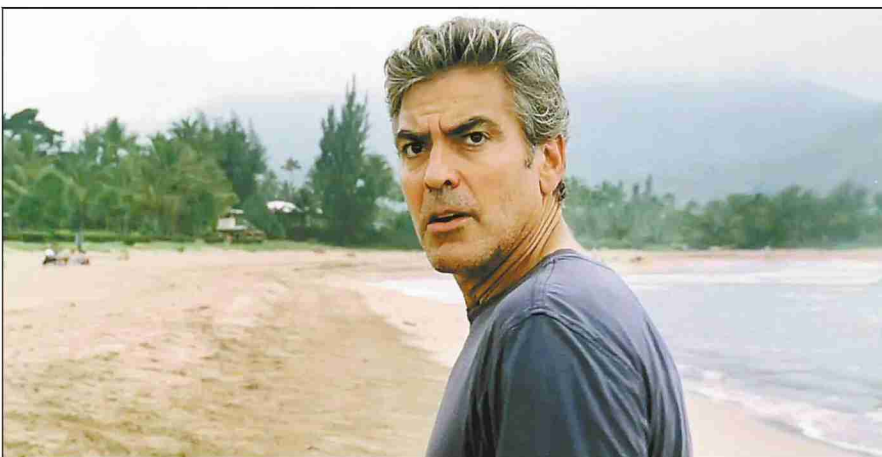
**“My Week With Marilyn”** stars Michelle Williams channeling Monroe.



**The “Paradise Lost”** trilogy tells of the teen trio accused of murder in Arkansas.



Wim Wenders' "Pina," a dance film, will be screened in 3-D for the festival.



In "The Descendants," George Clooney is a man coping with a wife in a coma.



"Being Elmo" tells the story of Kevin Clash, the man behind the puppet.



**“The Artist” is an homage** to silent films. In this scene, Bérénice Bejo.