

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 27, 2009



**Art Gallery of Hamilton and Festitalia join forces to present
Hamilton's own International Film Festival:
Francis Ford Coppola's *Tetro*, Matteo Garrone's *Gomorrah*,
and Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck's *Sugar* included in line up**

Eight internationally-acclaimed recent releases. Four screenings celebrating Canadian films. Special selections for children. Screenings of short-format films by local filmmakers and musicians. A Festival Vibe Lounge at the Gallery. Parties featuring performances by Sophia Perlman and The Sicilian Jazz Project.

From **Wednesday, September 23rd through Sunday, September 27th, 2009**, the **AGH Festitalia International Film Festival** features twelve films for adults and two screenings for children and families. The festival will screen at three venues: Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas (Jackson Square, 2 King Street West, downtown Hamilton); Westdale Theatre (1014 King Street West, Hamilton); and Art Gallery of Hamilton, Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Pavilion (123 King Street West, downtown Hamilton).

Festival Partners are: Cineplex Media, The Hamilton Spectator, L.I.U.N.A. Local 837, RBC Royal Bank, Turkstra Lumber and Upper James Toyota.

The AGH Festitalia International Film Festival offers four programming platforms:

1. Part of ***Vista Italia***, the Art Gallery of Hamilton's year-long celebration of Italian arts and culture presented by TD Bank Financial Group, this film festival component includes films specially selected for Hamilton's Italian community and fans of Italian cinema at Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas. Films include ***Quiet Chaos (Caos calmo)***; ***Valentino: The Last Emperor***; ***Gomorrah***; ***Il Divo***; and ***Tetro***. Short-format films by local filmmakers and musicians will screen before each feature.
2. A selection of **international films** includes some of the world's best-regarded recent films at Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas: ***The Pool***; ***Sugar***; and ***Séraphine***. Short-format films by local filmmakers and musicians will screen before each feature.
3. **The Hamilton Spectator presents CineKids**, two screenings for children and families at the Art Gallery of Hamilton: ***Finn on the Fly***; and ***It's An Animation Celebration!***, a selection of classic and recent short animated films from Canada and the United States
4. **The Spotlight Series** presents four screenings at Westdale Theatre, showcasing critically-acclaimed Canadian films, including: ***Amal***; ***My Winnipeg***; ***The Stone Angel***; and ***Fugitive Pieces***.

The Festival will include two parties at the Art Gallery of Hamilton: the **Opening Party** (Wednesday, September 23rd from 8 pm to 12 midnight) featuring a performance by jazz vocalist Sophia Perlman and special guest Darcy Hepner and the **Friday Night Festival Party** (Friday, September 25th from 8 pm to 12 midnight) featuring a performance by The Sicilian Jazz Project.

Film lovers are encouraged to meet up at the **Festival Vibe Lounge**, located in the AGH Lobby, Wednesday and Friday – 5 pm until midnight and Thursday and Saturday – 5 pm until 9:30 pm. Cash bar available.

Individual tickets for films screened at Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas and Westdale Theatre are \$10. Tickets to The Hamilton Spectator CineKids screenings are \$5 each. Tickets for the Opening Party and Friday Night Festival Party are \$50 each. A Festival Pass – which includes a ticket to each of the eight films screened at Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas as well as one ticket to both the Opening Party and Friday Night Festival Party – is available for \$125. Tickets are presently available for purchase on line at www.artgalleryofhamilton.com.

“For a number of years, Festitalia has included a single film screening as part of our month-long celebration,” says Matt Moccio, Vice Chair of Festitalia, and Chair of the AGH Festitalia International Film Festival committee. “Festitalia was pleased to partner with the Art Gallery of Hamilton to reach new audiences and give our Italian community even more opportunities to experience the gems of modern Italian cinema.”

“We’ve long had the pleasure of working closely with Festitalia and members of the Italian community in Hamilton,” remarks AGH President and CEO Louise Dompierre. “Along with sharing a love for art and culture, we’ve also found we have an appreciation of fine cinema in common. The Gallery has been filling a demand for high-quality film in this city for ten years now, and this International Film Festival builds on this relationship we’ve nurtured with our filmgoers. We’re proud to present a high-quality selection of international films for our international audience.”

For further Art Gallery of Hamilton Festitalia International Film Festival information, including individual film descriptions and trailers, please visit www.artgalleryofhamilton.com.

The Art Gallery of Hamilton Festitalia International Film Festival is grateful for the support of its Friends: Cable 14; The Department of Canadian Heritage (Government of Canada); Empire Theatres; Fenian Films; Hamilton Film and Television Office; Movieola; TLN Telelatino; Westdale Theatre; Film Circuit, A Division of the Toronto International Film Festival, and The City of Hamilton.

Founded in 1914, the **Art Gallery of Hamilton** is Canada’s seventh largest public art gallery (and Ontario’s third largest), owns one of the country’s best art collections, welcomes over 160,000 visitors per year, and hosts an extensive programme of exhibitions, educational programmes, performances, talks, literary events, and film screenings.

For 34 years, a dedicated group of volunteers has worked diligently to present the gift of Italian culture to the residents of Hamilton and beyond through a one-month celebration called **Festitalia**. Every September, the Festitalia committee works with local organizations to coordinate a popular series of Regional Club dinners, fashion events, annual mass, literary readings, bocce and soccer tournaments, concerts, and film nights.

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For more information about the **Art Gallery of Hamilton Festitalia International Film Festival**, please contact:

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Backgrounder

AGH Festitalia International Film Festival Screening and Event Schedule and Film Descriptions

Calendar of Events:

Feature Films at Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas	FILM ONE 6:45 pm	FILM TWO 9:15 pm	EVENT at AGH 8 pm -12 am
Wednesday, September 23	<i>The Pool</i>	<i>Quiet Chaos</i>	Opening Party
Thursday, September 24	<i>Valentino: The Last Emporer</i>	<i>Gomorra</i>	
Friday, September 25	<i>Il Divo</i>	<i>Sugar</i>	Friday Night Festival Party
Saturday, September 26	<i>Tetro</i>	<i>S�raphine</i>	

Spotlight Series at Westdale Theatre	Matin�e ONE 1:30 pm	Matin�e TWO 4:30 pm
Saturday, September 26	<i>Amal</i>	<i>My Winnipeg</i>
Sunday, September 27	<i>The Stone Angel</i>	<i>Fugitive Pieces</i>

The Hamilton Spectator CineKids at AGH	1:00 pm	3:00 pm
Sunday, September 27	<i>Finn on the Fly</i>	Animation Celebration!

Wednesday, September 23rd

The Pool

6:45 pm at Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas (Jackson Square, 2 King Street West, downtown Hamilton); a short-format film by local filmmakers and musicians will screen before this feature.

Director Chris Smith, USA, 2009, 98 min., Hindi, with English subtitles. Rated PG.

A film that quietly evokes life on the margins, *The Pool* tells the story of poor, illiterate teenager Venkatesh (Venkatesh Chavan) who scrapes together a meager existence by working at the local hotel and selling plastic bags with his much younger pal Jhangir (Jhangir Badshah). Together, they dream of the luxurious life represented by a swimming pool they spot hidden behind a villa's walls. One day, the pool's owner (Bollywood star Nana Patekar, *Salaam Bombay*) spots Venkatesh and hires him as his yard boy. Venkatesh accepts the job in order to get closer to the coveted pool, but he

soon develops a cross-caste friendship with the owner's rebellious daughter Ayesha (Ayesha Mohan), a member of India's leisure class.

Presented by Turkstra Lumber.

Opening Party

8 pm – 12 midnight at the Art Gallery of Hamilton (123 King Street West, downtown Hamilton)

Party ticketholders receive a complimentary drink ticket, hors d'oeuvres, DJ entertainment and a performance by jazz vocalist Sophia Perlman and Darcy Hepner from 8:30 pm. Perlman has performed with notable Canadian jazz musicians including Adrean Farrugia, Terry Clarke, Jeff Healey, The Bob Brough Quartet, Richard Whiteman, Brandi Disterheft, Richard Underhill, The Toronto Jazz Orchestra, Ravi Nairmpally, Kieran Overs, and the Top Brass Orchestra, and has appeared regularly with the seven-piece swing band The Vipers at Toronto's Reservoir Lounge.

Wednesday, September 23rd (cont.)

Quiet Chaos (Caos calmo)

9:15 pm at Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas (Jackson Square, 2 King Street West, downtown Hamilton); a short-format film by local filmmakers and musicians will screen before this feature.

Director Antonello Grimaldi, Italy/UK, 2008, 112 min., Italian and French, with English subtitles. Rated 18A.

Pietro is a happily married, successful executive and father of a 10-year old daughter, Claudia. One day, after saving two women from drowning, he arrives home to discover his wife has suddenly died. Now Pietro has to take care of his daughter. When he drives Claudia to school soon after, he decides to wait for her all day in front of the school. Soon that's what he does every day.

"...a gentler, deceptively simple drama looking at life as much as death. Beautifully modulated, fluidly told film expresses pain with warm understatement..." – Jay Weissberg, *Variety*

Thursday, September 24th

Valentino: The Last Emperor

6:45 pm at Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas (Jackson Square, 2 King Street West, downtown Hamilton); a short-format film by local filmmakers and musicians will screen before this feature.

Director Matt Tyrnauer, USA, 2008, 96 min. Rated PG.

Produced and directed by Matt Tyrnauer, Special Correspondent for *Vanity Fair* magazine, *Valentino: The Last Emperor* provides a first-time glimpse into Valentino's world of bygone glamour. Filmed from June 2005 to July 2007, the crew shot over 250 hours of footage with exclusive, unprecedented access to Valentino and his entourage. The resulting non-fiction film is a portrait of an extra-ordinary partnership, the longest running in fashion, and a dramatic story about a master confronting the final act of his celebrated career.

Gomorra (Gomorra)

9:15 pm at Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas (Jackson Square, 2 King Street West, downtown Hamilton); a short-format film by local filmmakers and musicians will screen before this feature.

Director Matteo Garrone, Italy, 135 min., Italian, with English subtitles. Rated 14A.

Based on Roberto Saviano's bestselling exposé of Italy's most famous Mafia organization, the Neapolitan Camorra, Matteo Garrone's film weaves in and out of five separate narratives, cumulatively building a kaleidoscopic portrait of present-day Naples in the crime-ridden suburbs of Scampia and Secondigliano. Each vignette closely follows the characters' daily routines, presenting a world where relationships are continually shifting and loyalties confused. On the surface, *Gomorrah* simply reflects the gestures and modest aspirations of ordinary people. Yet collectively, these small narratives amount to a devastating indictment of a crime ring that extends to the furthest reaches of society.

Special Presentation, 2008 TIFF.

Friday, September 25th

Il Divo

6:45 pm at Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas (Jackson Square, 2 King Street West, downtown Hamilton); a short-format film by local filmmakers and musicians will screen before this feature.

Director Paolo Sorrentino, Italy/France, 2008, 118 min., Italian, with English subtitles. Rated PG.

Reaching into the turbulent political history of post-war Italy, acclaimed director Paolo Sorrentino crafts a dazzling portrait of one of the country's most complex and dubious political figures of the last fifty years. Giulio Andreotti (Toni Servillo) entered politics in 1946 and went on to lead seven governments, turning his Christian Democratic party into a force that ran Italy in what was essentially a one-party system. During this dark period of murder and assassinations, Andreotti successfully navigates the backroom corridors of command but seems more interested in obtaining power than actually wielding it. Winner Jury Prize Winner, 2008 Cannes Film Festival. Special Presentation, 2008 TIFF.

Presented by Cineplex Media.

Friday Night Festival Party

8 pm – 12 midnight at the Art Gallery of Hamilton (123 King Street West, downtown Hamilton)

Party ticketholders receive a complimentary drink ticket, hors d'oeuvres, DJ entertainment, and a performance by Sicilian Jazz Project from 9:30 pm. Led by award-winning guitarist/composer Michael Occhipinti, the Juno-nominated Sicilian Jazz Project has been dazzling audiences since 2004 with its intriguing mix of Sicilian folk source material and the best elements of modern jazz.

Sugar

9:15 pm at Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas (Jackson Square, 2 King Street West, downtown Hamilton); a short-format film by local filmmakers and musicians will screen before this feature.

Directors Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck, USA, 2008, 114 min., English and Spanish, with English subtitles. Rated 14A.

Miguel "Sugar" Santos (Algenis Pérez Soto) is a Dominican baseball star struggling to make it in the United States and pull himself and his family out of poverty. Travelling from his tight knit community to spring training in Arizona and then to a minor league team in Iowa, he is the proverbial fish out of water. He rooms with a kindly older couple and experiences a faltering romance, but homesickness soon sets in. When a nagging injury puts him on the sidelines for a time, he begins taking a closer look at the world around him and, ultimately, his place within it. 2008 TIFF.

Presented by RBC Royal Bank.

Saturday, September 26th

Spotlight Series: *Amal*

1:30 pm at Westdale Theatre (1014 King Street West, Hamilton)

Director Richie Mehta, Canada, 2007, 101 min. Rated 14A.

In chaotic New Delhi, an aged and seemingly homeless man cheats everyone he meets. When Amal, an auto-rickshaw *wallah*, generously allows him to dodge his fare, both are affected in a way that has far-reaching consequences. This vividly textured portrait of contemporary India is an extraordinarily ambitious and heartfelt debut from first-time director Richie Mehta. Showing us an unvarnished India rich in flavour, *Amal* is a powerful and touching story of one man's decency. 2007 TIFF.

Presented by Upper James Toyota.

Spotlight Series: *My Winnipeg*

4:30 pm at Westdale Theatre (1014 King Street West, Hamilton)

Director Guy Maddin, Canada, 2007, 80 min. Rated 14A.

The latest work from iconoclastic and wholly unique filmmaker Guy Maddin, this documentary (or "docu-fantasia" as Maddin describes it) about his hometown seamlessly blends local myth with childhood trauma. A deliriously layered provocation, *My Winnipeg* is outrageous, informative and wildly entertaining. Winner, Toronto-City Award for Best Feature Film, 2007 TIFF.

Tetro

6:45 pm at Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas (Jackson Square, 2 King Street West, downtown Hamilton); a short-format film by local filmmakers and musicians will screen before this feature.

Director Francis Ford Coppola, USA/Spain/Italy, 2009, 126 min. Rated 14A.

Tetro is Francis Ford Coppola's first original screenplay since *The Conversation* and his most personal film yet, arising from memories and emotions from his early life, though totally fictional. It is the bittersweet story of two brothers, of family lost and found and the conflicts and secrets within a highly creative Argentine-Italian family. "Francis Ford Coppola returns to form with his richest, most enrapturing film since *Apocalypse Now*, an elegiac familial drama set in the bohemian Buenos Aires neighbourhood of La Boca. The black-and-white photography alone is as intoxicating as a bottle of the director's finest red." – Aaron Hillis, *The Village Voice*

Presented by L.I.U.N.A. Local 837.

Séraphine

9:15 pm at Empire Jackson Square 6 Cinemas (Jackson Square, 2 King Street West, downtown Hamilton); a short-format film by local filmmakers and musicians will screen before this feature.

Director Martin Provost, France/Belgium, 2009, 121 min., French, with English subtitles. Rated PG.

By day, *Séraphine* is a housekeeper. In her spare time, however, she immerses herself in the wonders of nature, expressing her feelings on canvas. Then new tenants take over the house where she works, and her life takes a turn. A testament to creativity and the resilience of one woman's spirit, *Séraphine* is about the obscure yet endlessly fascinating artist known as *Séraphine de Senlis*, a

simple housekeeper whose brilliantly colourful canvases adorn some of the most famous galleries in the world. Yolande Moreau's performance as Séraphine is a towering accomplishment – she truly becomes the artist onscreen. Special Presentation, 2008 TIFF. Multiple winner, César awards, France.

Sunday, September 27th

The Hamilton Spectator CineKids presents: *Finn on the Fly*

1:00 pm at the Art Gallery of Hamilton (123 King Street West, downtown Hamilton)

Director Mark Jean, Canada, 2009, 100 min. Rated PG.

Recently moved back to Canada from Spain, young Ben is having a hard time making new friends. Treated like an outcast by the kids at his new school, Ben realizes his only companion in the world is his whip-smart dog, Finn. When Finn stumbles upon a neighbour's secret science laboratory, he is accidentally transformed into a human – but he's really still a dog at heart. Ben tries to help Finn adapt to his new body and place in the world. In return, Finn teaches Ben all about "finding his own pack." Best feature film winner, 2009 Sprockets.

Spotlight Series: *The Stone Angel*

1:30 pm at Westdale Theatre (1014 King Street West, Hamilton)

Director Kari Skogland, Canada, 2007, 100 min. Rated 14A.

Now living with her son Marvin (Dylan Baker), elderly Hagar (Ellen Burstyn) bolts from his house, determined to find a seaside home she remembers from her youth. Throughout this journey, we come to know the radiant young woman who is disowned when she marries the rough, bold Bram Shipley (Cole Hauser). In the present, Hagar finds her way to the seashore, but has little time left to amend a lifetime of unacknowledged mistakes. Screen goddess Burstyn gives a tour-de-force performance in this much-anticipated and faithful adaptation of Margaret Laurence's landmark Canadian novel. 2007 TIFF.

The Hamilton Spectator CineKids presents: *It's An Animation Celebration!*

3:00 pm at the Art Gallery of Hamilton (123 King Street West, downtown Hamilton)

A selection of classic and recent short animated films. Rated PG.

This afternoon of animated fun features a selection of classic and recent short animated films from Canada and the United States, including *C-Block*, *Sleeping Betty*, *Runaway*, *The Cat Came Back*, *The Animal Movie*, *The Dingles*, and *Léon in Wintertime*. Big people in the audience will enjoy sharing much loved blasts from their past and the entire family will delight in discovering new favourites from this century.

Spotlight Series: *Fugitive Pieces*

4:30 pm at Westdale Theatre (1014 King Street West, Hamilton)

Director Jeremy Podeswa, Canada/Greece, 2007, 120 min. Rated 14A.

Jeremy Podeswa's powerful adaptation of Anne Michaels's critically acclaimed debut novel, *Fugitive Pieces* was partially filmed in Hamilton and relates a unique story about the Holocaust while meditating on universal themes of loss and hope. The story begins in Poland, where young Jakob narrowly escapes the Nazis and the brutal murder of his entire family. He is saved by Athos and a

close bond develops between the two during their flight to Greece and eventual relocation to Canada. Jakob's past is a shadow that he carries with him into adulthood, ultimately compromising his marriage and affecting his relationships. Over time, however, he embarks – almost accidentally – on a redemptive journey that testifies to the healing power of love. Opening Night Gala, 2007 TIFF.