



Coast to Coast, Eight Great Fests

Angelus, Big Bear, DC Shorts, Moondance, Rome, Palm Springs Shorts, Stony Brook and Woods Hole Film Festivals

STONY BROOK FILM FESTIVAL

FOR THE NOVICES AND THE BATTLE-SCARRED University film festivals rarely get as much attention as the one held at Long Island's Stony Brook University. For its 13th annual event, held July 17 - 26, 2008, the Stony Brook Film Festival played host to both first-time moviemakers and experienced players alike. Actress-turned-director Mary Stuart Masterson was on hand to present her directorial debut, *The Cake Eaters*, and took home the jury's Best Feature award. Together with the movie's screenwriter and star, Jayce Bartok, she mingled with guests at the Passholder/Filmmaker Reception, an event fest founder Alan Inkle calls this year's highlight.

Kristina Goda's *Children of Glory*, co-written by Joe Eszterhas (the notorious screenwriter's first film since 1998), won over the audience to take home the award for Best Feature while *The Stone Angel*, featuring Ellen Burstyn and Ellen Page, won the Achievement in Filmmaking award for writer-director Kari Skogland.

"We want to continue to have a large pool of films to draw from," notes Inkle. "Our goal is to be on indie filmmakers' short list of festivals not to miss."

www.stonybrookfilmfestival.com

—MALLORY POTOSKY

WOODS HOLE FILM FESTIVAL

FINDING ISSUE WITH THE ST short drive from Boston, Massachusetts' Cape Cod place for a film festival. Laster, executive director of the Woods Hole Film Festival. Six began Project Green attendees the opportunity to see a movie in the crisp, by wind and other

"Because of the of the festival, our like an event the Junge, who won

Mary Stuart Masterson
Stony Brook Film Festival



The audience gathers for a screening at the Woods Hole Film Festival.

Award from the Audience and took home a juried prize for Best Documentary for *They Killed Sister Dorothy*. The true story of Sister Dorothy Stang's murder in the Brazilian Amazon brought out audience members who were "incredibly passionate about the issues and, subsequently, about our film," says Junge. "I also credit the organizers for bringing together some very reputable people for a panel around the content of the film."

www.woodsholefilmfestival.org

—MALLORY POTOSKY

BIG BEAR LAKE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

KEEPING MOVIE MAKERS FOCUSED—AND WELL-FED Ideally, all available energy would be directed toward the movies at a festival. But there's much more to be considered—a fact clearly recognized by programming director Monika Skerbelis and the rest of the staff responsible for the 2008 Big Bear Lake International Film Festival, which was held September 11-14, 2008. "We provide networking

DC SHORTS FILM FESTIVAL

POLITICS AS USUAL IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL For the fifth annual DC Shorts Film Festival, which took place September 11-18 in Washington, DC, festival director Jon Gann and his staff looked toward the impending presidential election for inspiration, deciding to run a smear-free, democratic festival. By using a unique phone-based ballot system, attendees got a chance to voice their opinions following each movie showcase.

This innovation is another way that DC Shorts aims to unite attendees and moviemakers. "Each event is an opportunity for filmmakers to connect with the audience, industry pros and each other," explains Gann. "Some of our parties are for filmmakers only, so they have a chance to socialize with each other; other parties are open to the public to encourage an exchange with the people who appreciate the short film."

Casey Stangl, whose *CU@EDs* took home an Audience Award, was appreciative of another bonus for moviemakers: "I was impressed at receiving written feedback.

Very few festivals provide that."
www.dcsHORTS.com
—ANDREW GNERRE