



## PRESS RELEASE

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## The 26<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Gay & Lesbian Film Festival's Winning Films

**HARTFORD, Conn. – June 14, 2013** – The 26<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Gay & Lesbian Film Festival concluded a successful nine-day run on June 8, with a sold-out show at Spotlight Theatres at Front Street and a closing night party at the Connecticut Science Center that included special appearances by film producers, directors and actors. Opening night crowd pleaser **G.B.F.** took the top spot for the Audience Award for a feature film. Audience Awards are based on ballots cast by people who attend festival screenings.

“The planning committee is very pleased that the films we showed throughout the festival really resonated with our audiences and scored high marks in the balloting,” said Shane Engstrom, festival director. “That tells us that we picked the right films and delivered a great festival experience.”

Here is the lineup of award-winning films:

### Best Feature - Audience Award

Winner – **G.B.F.**

Runner Up – **Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?**

Special Mention – **Laurence Anyways**

### Best Documentary - Audience Award

Winner – **The Rugby Player**

Runner Up – **Taking A Chance On God**

Special Mention – **I Am Divine**

### Best Short - Jury Award

Winner – **I Don't Want to Go Back Alone (Eu Não Quero Voltar Sozinho)**

Runner Up – **Polaroid Girl**

Special Mention – **Dirty Talk**

### Director's Award

**Heather Tobin** (Route of Acceptance)

**G.B.F.** is an outrageously funny comedy about three high school mean girls who are desperate to get their hands on the latest fashion accessory – the G.B.F, or gay best friend. From Taiwan, **Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?** tracks the ups and downs of a thirtysomething married man as he tries to choose between an openly gay life and the comfortable life he's built with his wife and child. **Laurence Anyways** follows the lives of Laurence and the woman he loves after revealing that he is transgender and needs to live life as a woman.

In the Best Documentary category, the Audience Award went to **The Rugby Player**, which explores the lives of Mark Bingham, one of the heroic passengers on United Flight 93 on 9/11, and his mother, Alice Hoagland, a former United Airlines flight attendant. The film reveals a unique bond between mother and son that was ultimately strengthened by tragedy. **Taking a Chance on God** chronicles the extraordinary life and legacy of 85-year-old John McNeill - gay Catholic priest, founder of the LGBT

spiritual movement, and pioneering voice of gay liberation. *I am Divine* is a riveting profile of Harris Glenn Milstead, the humble, bullied Baltimore youth who defied the odds to achieve international fame as drag icon and movie star Divine.

The Jury Award for Best Short Film went to the Brazilian film *I Don't Want to Go Back Alone (Eu Não Quero Voltar Sozinho)*, which tells the sweet story of a blind high school boy who falls in love with the new boy in his class. *Polaroid Girl* explores the budding romance between a cutting edge artist/photographer and the woman who runs a camera and photo supply store. In *Dirty Talk*, two best friends talk over lunch about a hot date and discover that it really is a small world after all.

This year's Director's Award went to Heather Tobin, director of *Route of Acceptance*, one of the two closing night films. It tells three stories, each of which shows how a young woman's life might turn out depending on which college she decides to attend. The Director's Award is awarded to the director whose work and spirit most elevated the festival experience for the audience. Engstrom said that he and the committee decided to honor Tobin with the award for a number of reasons. In addition to the originality and quality of her filmmaking, she really embraced the festival audience in a captivating question and answer session, and continued to engage the audience throughout the evening at the closing night party.

"Heather really captured the spirit of the festival and went out of her way – all the way from Toronto -- to bring it to another level. There's no doubt that she'll be making more great films and we wanted to recognize her for that," Engstrom said.

**Out Film CT**, which organizes the festival, is a nonprofit cultural organization dedicated to presenting outstanding LGBT cinema and other theatrical events throughout the year, culminating in the nine-day Connecticut Gay & Lesbian Film Festival. Connecticut's longest-running film festival holds a special place in our state's cultural landscape, bringing the community together to introduce, celebrate and rediscover the ideas and values that make the LGBT community unique. Out Film CT also presents the EROS Film Festival each fall, and in 2013 it launched the First Thursdays Cinema series, with screenings at Cinestudio on the first Thursday of the month, which will resume in September. [www.outfilmct.org](http://www.outfilmct.org)

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