

TALKING PICTURES:

TELLING IT LIKE IT IS

Four directors of official Foreign Language Oscar® submissions offer candid views on their careers, their work and the ways in which their films reflect current events and issues in their home countries.

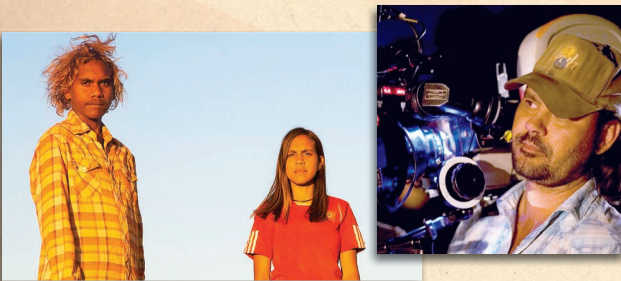
Sunday, January 10, 10:00 a.m. Cranberry Raisinets® Palm Canyon Theatre

Long known for being the only place to see a majority of the official Foreign Language Oscar® submissions outside of the Academy screening room, the Palm Springs International Film Festival joins forces with *Variety* to present this candid panel discussion featuring a number of the top directors working in the current cinema. Each of them has won multiple awards on the festival trail this year, and each of them is a vital force in contemporary filmmaking, with a distinctive approach to storytelling that could revitalize the way cinematic stories are told.

Moderating the panel will be *Variety* film critic and features editor **Peter Debruge**. Participating filmmakers include:



Ursula Meier has been hailed as one of the brightest lights of the emergent European film scene, having won Best Film and Best Screenplay on her home turf as well as a French Caesar nomination for her first film *Home*, after having won awards at Clermont-Ferrand and Creteil for her previous short films.



Warwick Thornton arrives as one of the most heralded young directors of our time, having won the Camera d'Or at Cannes this year as well as awards for best film, director, and screenplay at the Australian Film Awards for his highly regarded debut feature, *Samson & Delilah*. His previous shorts won awards at both the AFI and Berlin film festivals.



Felix van Groeningen is considered one of the pioneers of the Belgian New Wave. Following his critically and publicly well-received features *Steve + Sky* and *With Friends Like These*, van Groeningen directed and cowrote *The Misfortunates*, which received a Special Mention for the CICA Award at Cannes and is now Belgium's Foreign Language Oscar® submission.



Yaron Shani and **Scandar Copti** have garnered serious acclaim for their powerful feature film debut, Israel's Oscar® submission *Ajami*. Plaudits so far include five awards from the Israeli Film Academy (including best director, screenplay, and film), a Camera d'Or Special Mention from Cannes, and three top prizes (including the Audience Award) from the Thessaloniki Film Festival.

TALKING PICTURES: CONTENDERS

New to the Festival this year, our “Contenders” series focuses on the films and filmmakers emerging as front-runners in the run-up to the Academy Awards®.

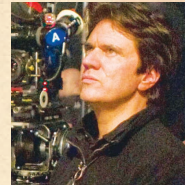
Each program in the series will feature a screening of the film under consideration, and be followed by an in-depth, onstage interview with the director of the film, moderated by a major film critic or film journalist.

THE CONTENDERS: ROB MARSHALL

NINE

Wednesday, January 6, 10:00 a.m., Regal Cinemas

Exploding onto the screen with the exuberance of a dazzling, psychedelic hallucination, Rob Marshall's newest musical concoction, *Nine*, weds music and magic in an adaptation of Federico Fellini's seminal '60s hit *8½*, which portrayed a dissolute Italian director confronting a creative and personal crisis as he prepares to mount his latest film. Featuring a staggeringly talented cast of previous Oscar® winners and nominees, Marshall repeats the huge success he met with in his 2002 hit, *Chicago*, winner of six Oscars® including Best Picture. Breathing new life into the movie musical genre while utilizing all the tricks of his previous trade as a six-time Tony-nominated stage director and choreographer, Marshall stands alone as a filmmaker as adept at evoking great performances from his actors as he is at staging breathtakingly razzle-dazzle musical numbers.



VARIETY



THE CONTENDERS: LEE DANIELS

PRECIOUS: BASED ON THE NOVEL 'PUSH' BY SAPHIRE

Moderated by Adam B. Vary, staff writer at *Entertainment Weekly* and EW.com.

Wednesday, January 6, 1:00 p.m., Regal Cinemas

Since its emergence and triumph at the Sundance Film Festival last January, *Precious* has become that rare phenomenon: an indie crossover hit that has captivated critics and filmgoers in equal measure. The film went on to win major awards at a number of key festivals (including Toronto, Deauville, and San Sebastian) and has received multiple awards and nominations ranging from Golden Globes and the Independent Spirit Awards to the Screen Actors Guild and the National Board of Review. All this, plus a phenomenal box office return. The film, which tells the story of a badly abused, overweight girl who learns to rise above her situation in life with the help of two strong women, is handled with an adroit and masterful command of cinematic skills by Lee Daniels, who literally makes the material sing, turning this searing human story into a soul-lifting, triumphal paean to the power of the human spirit.



Entertainment
WEEKLY
EW.com



THE CONTENDERS: LONE SCHERFIG

AN EDUCATION

Saturday, January 16, 1:00 p.m., Regal Cinemas

Since her auspicious emergence on the international film scene in 2000 with the surprise hit *Italian for Beginners*, Lone Scherfig has captivated audiences and critics alike with her ability to master both subtle characterization and unforced plotting. *Italian* and her subsequent hit, *Wilbur Wants to Kill Himself*, won major awards at festivals from Berlin to the Hamptons. Her striking new film, *An Education*, has been a huge success since its first screenings at Sundance, where it won the Audience Award for World Cinema and has gone on to win multiple nominations (including best picture) from the Broadcast Film Critics Awards and the British Independent Film Awards, along with a Golden Globe nod and Best Actress honors from the National Board of Review. With *An Education* widely touted as a front-runner for nominations in the best picture and director categories at the Oscars®, Lone Scherfig is a filmmaker whose time has definitely arrived.



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