**IRISH SCREEN AMERICA LAUNCHES 2016 PROGRAM**

Irish Screen America, the annual festival that acts as a transatlantic bridge between the thriving Irish film industry and American audiences, has revealed its program for its 2016 event. Presented with the support of Glucksman House Ireland, the bi-coastal festival will feature premieres of new Irish films, television series and short films. With the Emerald Isle ever punching above its weight in the arts – the Irish industry accrued an impressive nine Oscar nominations in various categories last year – Irish Screen America has cherry picked an impressive program of features for New York audiences, that have so far only bowed at tent pole fests such as Sundance and Toronto, or domestically in Ireland.

Among the festival’s special guests will be ‘accidental activist’ and renowned drag queen Panti Bliss, figurehead of last year’s equal marriage referendum in Ireland. **Ms. Panti Bliss** will open the festival as the star of the documentary, **The Queen of Ireland**, a film that is equal parts an intimate portrait of the performer’s life and a stirring record of an historic vote. On hand for the audience Q+A will also be the film’s director Conor Horgan (One Hundred Mornings).

Other features playing the festival include the kidnapping thriller ***Tiger Raid*** about two Irish mercenaries in Iraq; and the Dutch/Irish co-production ***Mammal***, a tense relationship drama starring Academy-nominated actress Rachel Griffiths (*Six Feet Under, Muriel’s Wedding*).

Covering the full scope of the Irish audio-visual industry, the festival will debut the first two episodes in a new Irish television series called ***Can’t Cope, Won’t Cope*** – a show written, directed and produced by women, about the lifestyle and relationships of two out-of-control, twenty-something Irish girls. Written by  Stefanie Preissner, the show stars Seána Kerslake (*A Date for Mad Mary*) and Nika McGuigan (*Philomena*). Director Cathy Brady and producer Ailish McElmeel, will be present to discuss the making of the show and the female diversification of Irish entertainment.

Co-hosted by **Women in Film and Television Ireland**, the festival will host a panel discussion called **Stories from the Field** featuring Irish professionals working in the fields of film development, distribution and marketing in the U.S.

Rounding things out are two programs of **short films** – one featuring shorts made in Ireland and another showcasing work by Irish filmmakers in New York, including the short ***We Have Each Other*** by the Oscar-nominated writer/director Naomi Sheridan.

The Irish Screen America festival runs from **Friday Sept. 30th to Sunday October Sunday 2nd at NYU’s Cantor Film Center**. To see the full schedule and to purchase tickets, visit [www.irishscreenamerica.com](http://www.irishscreenamerica.com).

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New York Schedule

Fri Sep 30

5:00 PM

**Opening Night Reception**

Opening Night reception with guests Ms. Panti Bliss and director Conor Horgan. Sponsored by Glucksman Ireland House and Irish Arts Center.

7:30 PM

**Queen Of Ireland**

The film follows Ireland’s most famous drag queen and accidental LGBTQ activist, Ms. Panti Bliss, during the lead up to the historic same-sex marriage referendum in Ireland.

Q&A with Panti and director Conor Horgan (One Hundred Mornings).

Saturday Oct 1

4:00 PM

**Stories From The Field**

Irish women working in the entertainment industry discuss how they get things done. Presented by the Irish and New York branches of Women in Film and Television.

6:00 PM

**Tiger Raid**

Two mercenaries ride a wave of pitch-black camraderies as they travel through the desert night on their way to carry out a kidnapping in Iraq.

8:00 PM

**Can't Cope Won't Cope**

Fueled by mad nights out and bolstered by a sense of entitlement, two Cork twentysomethings are running away from the reality that’s hurtling toward them.

A new darkly comic drama series from Irish broadcaster RTE 2, starring Seana Kerslake and Nika McGuigan, written by Stefanie Preissner, directed by Cathy Brady and produced by Ailish McElmeel. With cast & crew in attendance.

Sun Oct 2

4:00 PM

**Mammal**

A woman, played by Rachel Griffiths (*Brothers and Sisters, Muriel’s Wedding*) who has lost her son develops an unorthodox relationship with a homeless youth, played by Barry Keoghan (*’71, Dunkirk*).

6:00 PM

**New York Irish Shorts Showcase**

Featuring shorts from Irish filmmakers working and living in New York. Features: *Eggs and Soldiers, Narcan, We Have Each Other, Ducks of 1916* (Q&A with filmmakers)

8:00 PM

**Irish Shorts Program**

A collection of this year's best short films from Ireland including *Between Us, The Captors, The Party, My Life for Ireland, Adulting* and *Big Bird.*

**ENDS**

High res images available at [www.irishscreenamerica.com/press](http://www.irishscreenamerica.com/press).

Festival trailer available at <http://bit.ly/2bD0w6c>.

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