



## PALM BEACH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

ray mickshaw/wireimage

The eighth annual Palm Beach International Film Festival was held April 3-10 in gorgeous Palm Beach, Florida. We at Venice feel it is our obligation to support up-and-coming filmmakers and recognize those who stand out from the crowd. Here are just a few of the names we encountered at Palm Beach, which we would vote to win, place or show in the near future.

In the short film category, NYU student Jason Kofferman's "Polaroid" stood out as an excellent debut, with fine performances from actors Brad Schmidt and Michelle Jonas. Elizabeth Lucas' sweeping musical "Isabella Rico" dazzled with its vibrant score, fluid camera, and phenomenal dancing. **Russell Costanzo's "The Wedding Bout", a fantasy about a prospective bride and groom doing twelve rounds in the ring before the big day, drew some big laughs and kudos for its inventive camerawork.**

In the documentary category, Rick McKay's "Broadway: The Golden Age, by the Legends Who Were There" is a staggering document and testament from over 100 actors including Shirley MacLaine, Carol Burnett, Hume Cronyn, Tammy Grimes, Rosemary Harris, and 95-year old Faye Wray (who attended the festival) who were part of Broadway's pinnacle from the 1930s-60s. Five years in the making, it deservedly won the Audience Award for Best Documentary

Feature. Also of note, Wendy Dent's "Kissed by a Crocodile" exposes the little known world of love and sex on the island of Bali (and was filmed before the terrorist attack of last October), from genuine romance between western women and Balinese men, to gigolo affairs and the "crocodile" mafia of Kuta's infamous nightclub district. Finally, Lorenzo DeStefano's "Los Zafiros (The Sapphires)" profiles Cuba's legendary singing group from the 1960s, and includes extensive interviews with the surviving members.

In the feature film category, John Putch and Rodney Lee Conover's "Bachelor Man", starring David Deluise as a perennial bachelor who struggles with the reality of finding his true love, won the Audience Award for its raucous, hilarious portrayal of the battle between the sexes. Hank Saroyan and Lawrence Toffler's "Five Card Stud" is a touching and charming romantic comedy about two commitment-phobic people who meet, fall in love, and then struggle to fall out of love when it gets too serious. Finally, the closing night film, Alan Rudolph's "The Secret Lives of Dentists", is another of the directors quirky charmers, telling the tale of dysfunctional love between a husband and wife dental team (Campbell Scott and Hope Davis).

Kudos to Randi Emerman, PMK/HBH's Carol Marshall, and Hal Axler for putting together such a stellar festival. We look forward to seeing you all next year!