

# KALLISTA

Marketing & Publicity

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## **THREE VEILS, MY UNCLE RAFAEL, THE LAST TIGHTROPE DANCER IN ARMENIA AND BOLIS take home top honors at the 14th Annual Arpa International Film Festival**

Hollywood, CA - The 14th Arpa International Film Festival (AFFMA.org) presented by AT&T YP concluded this year's festival on Saturday (9/24) with a screening of FIVE MINARETS IN NEW YORK followed by a gala reception at the Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood. This year's festival drew record attendance during its 3 days of screenings, Q&As, receptions and awards. Taking top honors were THREE VEILS, MY UNCLE RAFAEL, THE LAST TIGHTROPE DANCER IN ARMENIA and BOLIS.

Arpa International Film Fest director Alex Kalognomos added "We are proud to be among one of Los Angeles' longest running film festivals. This year's festival broke previous years' attendance records with more Angelenos discovering our unique and diverse program of worldwide films that both impact and entertain. We look forward to celebrating our momentous 15th year in 2012 and have already begun preparations."

The **BEST PICTURE** honor this year went to Rolla Selbak's drama, **THREE VEILS**.

"We had an amazing L.A premier of THREE VEILS. We thank the sold-out audience and Arpa International Film Fest organizers Alex Kalognomos and Armen Toumajan and jury for awarding us BEST FEATURE FILM." added Selbak.

**BEST DIRECTOR** and **BEST SCREENPLAY** kudos went to director Marc Fusco and writers Scott Yagemann and Vahik Pirhamzei for their comedy **MY UNCLE RAFAEL**.

Pirhamzei also received the festival's 2011 **Breakthrough Performance Award** for his starring role in the film. Arman Yeritsyan and Inna Sahakyan's **THE LAST TIGHTROPE DANCER IN ARMENIA** was given the award for **BEST DOCUMENTARY** with Eric Nazarian's **BOLIS** winning **BEST SHORT FILM**.

For the first time in its history, the festival handed out a cash award for BEST SCREENPLAY to MY UNCLE RAFAEL scribes Yagemann and Pirhamzei. The festival hopes to usher in cash award incentives to other winners beginning with its 15th annual celebration next year.

Previously announced, the festival's prestigious **AT&T AWARD FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP AWARD** went to the compelling documentary "**Marion Stoddart: The work of 1000**" by Susan Edwards. The film chronicles the advocate Marion Stoddart who lived next to one of America's most polluted rivers and transformed herself from a 1960s housewife to a citizen leader and environmental hero honored by the United Nations.

Accepting the **ARMIN T. WEGNER HUMANITARIAN AWARD** was documentary filmmaker and producer Bryan Single on behalf of his acclaimed **CHILDREN OF WAR**. The documentary, set in Uganda, had its world premiere last fall at the United Nations in New York.

The winners were chosen from a jury of distinguished entertainment industry professionals which included CAA reps **Ara Keshishian** and **Jeff Speich** and marketing executive/producer **Owen Ward**.

LIST OF WINNERS:

BEST PICTURE:

THREE VEILS (L.A. premiere)

USA

Director: Rolla Selbak

Producer: Ahmad Zahra

Writer: Rolla Selbak

Three Veils is a film about three young Middle-Eastern women living in the U.S., each with her own personal story. Leila is engaged to be married, however as the wedding night approaches, she becomes less and less sure of how her life is playing out. Amira is a very devout Muslim, but is dealing with her deep repressions about her intimate feelings toward women. Nikki is acting out her promiscuity as she battles her own demons after a tragic death in the family. As the film progresses, all three stories unfold and blend into each other as connections are revealed between the three women.

BEST SCREENPLAY/BEST DIRECTOR:

MY UNCLE RAFAEL (North American premiere)

USA

Director: Marc Fusco

Producers: Michael Garrity, Vahik Pirhamzei

Writers: Scott Yagemann, Vahik Pirhamzei

A desperate TV producer convinces an old Armenian Uncle to star in a new reality show. Cultures collide when Uncle Rafael is thrown into the Schumacher family household where he has one week to save a broken and dysfunctional American family from falling apart. The only rule - everyone must follow his rules. Starring Vahik Pirhamzei, John Michael Higgins, Missi Pyle, Anthony Clark, Rachel Blanchard, Joe Lo Truglio, Anahid Avanesian, Carly Chaikin, Sage Ryan, Ursula Taherian, and Lupe Ontiveros.

BEST DOCUMENTARY:

THE LAST TIGHTROPE DANCER IN ARMENIA

Armenia

Directors: Arman Yeritsyan, Inna Sahakyan

Producer: Vardan Hovhannisyan

Writers: Arman Yeritsyan, Inna Sahakyan

Zhora and Knyaz were once the most celebrated masters of tightrope dancing in Armenia. Today, they are the only surviving performers who can keep this ancient art alive against the current of contemporary society, but all their students grow up and find other interests in life. Why is their art not important anymore?

#### BEST SHORT FILM

**BOLIS (WORLD PREMIERE)**

USA, Turkey

Director: Eric Nazarian

Writer: Eric Nazarian

Producers: Huseyin Karabey, Sevil Demirci.

Armenak is a successful oud player who is in Istanbul for the first time for an important musical event. His feelings toward the city, which his Armenian grandfather fled at the tip of the sword in 1915, are very complex. Armenak arrives full of prejudice, expecting to hate the place, but instead finds it very familiar. The decision comes naturally to him to search for his grandfather's old musical instrument shop with only an old photo and a street name. Is it destiny or coincidence that leads him to his destination?

#### SPECIAL AWARDS

**2011 BREAKTHROUGH PERFORMANCE AWARD**

Vahik Pirhamzei for My Uncle Rafael (USA)

**AT&T AWARD FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP**

**MARION STODDART: THE WORK OF 1000 (WEST COAST PREMIERE)**

Director: Susan Edwards - 2011 AT&T Award for Environmental Conservation and Stewardship Recipient

Producer: Dorie Clark

Writer: Susan Edwards

Marion Stoddart lived next to one of America's most polluted rivers and transformed herself from a 1960s housewife to a citizen leader and environmental hero honored by the United Nations. The Work of 1000 is the documentary film chronicling her life, achievements, setbacks, and unwavering belief that one person can make a difference in the world.

**ARMIN T. WEGNER HUMANITARIAN AWARD**

**CHILDREN OF WAR (USA, Uganda)**

Director: Bryan Single - 2011 Armin T. Wegner Award Recipient

Producers: Bryan Single, Farzad Karimi, Timothy Beckett

Associate Producers: Anahid Aramouni Keshishian, Shannon McBrien, Grant Inglett

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## JURY

ARA KESHISHIAN is a Motion Picture Talent agent at Creative Artists Agency (CAA), an entertainment and sports agency based in Los Angeles with offices in Nashville, New York City, London, and Beijing. Keshishian works in the Los Angeles office and represents such actors as Natalie Portman, Antonio Banderas, Édgar Ramírez, Eva Mendes, Jeffrey Wright, Jay Baruchel, Peter Krause, Kerry Washington, Ellen Barkin, and Billy Crudup, among others. Keshishian began his career as an intern in the CAA mailroom in 1997. Keshishian received his JD from Loyola Law School in 1999.

JEFF SPEICH is a Motion Picture Talent agent at Creative Artists Agency (CAA), an entertainment and sports agency based in Los Angeles with offices in Nashville, New York City, London, and Beijing. Speich works in the Los Angeles office and represents many actors, including Robin Wright, Glenn Close, Julianne Moore, Uma Thurman, Zach Quinto, among others. Jeff graduated from University of Southern California and began his career at CAA in 1999.

OWEN WARD served as Vice President, Theatrical Marketing at Lionsgate and has overseen campaigns for films such as Academy Award® winner PRECIOUS, the TYLER PERRY and SAW franchises, and THE EXPENDABLES. He is also an avid producer with a love for independent film, most recently completing a short documentary on the city of West Hollywood.

ARPA FOUNDATION FOR FILM, MUSIC AND ART (AFFMA), a non-profit organization, was founded in 1995 for the purpose of enhancing the Los Angeles community's environment and supporting artists who bridge the cultural divide. AFFMA annually stages concerts, art exhibits, networking events, film benefits and its signature event, Arpa International Film Festival was held from September 22 to 24 in Hollywood, CA. For more information [www.affma.org](http://www.affma.org) <<http://www.affma.org>> or call [323-663-1882](tel:323-663-1882). To send AFFMA a tax-deductible donation, please mail donations to AFFMA - 2919 Maxwell St., Los Angeles, CA 90027. All donations go towards the production of Arpa International Film Festival.

ARMIN T. WEGNER HUMANITARIAN Award is named after German author and human rights activist Armin Theophil Wegner (October 16, 1886 - May 17, 1978).

AT&T REAL YELLOW PAGES and [YP.COM](http://yp.com) presents the festival's third annual AT&T Award for Environmental Conservation and Stewardship. The award highlights the shared commitment between the Festival and its Presenting Sponsor, AT&T YP.com, to foster green initiatives in cinema. Visit [YP.COM](http://yp.com) <<http://yp.com>>, the new [YELLOWPAGES.COM](http://yellowpages.com) <http://yellowpages.com>> website for more information.