

# “Kids” & “Despicable” Bookend Los Angeles Film Festival Lineup

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by Brian Brooks (May 4, 2010)

UPDATED 2:38pm EDT: Over 200 features, shorts and music videos are on tap for the 2010 Los Angeles Film Festival, taking place at [its new home](#) at L.A. LIVE in downtown Los Angeles. Focus Features' Sundance 2010 feature "The Kids Are All Right" will open the event June 17 at the Premiere Theater at Regal Cinemas L.A. LIVE Stadium 14, by Lisa Cholodenko.

The film revolves around Nic and Jules (Annette Benning and Julianne Moore) who live with their teenage children in an L.A. bungalow. As their daughter Joni prepares for college, her younger brother pesters her for a big favor—help him find their biological father. Against her better judgment, she makes a call to the sperm bank; the bank, in turn, calls Paul (Mark Ruffalo) and asks him if he's willing to meet his daughter. He agrees, and a complicated new chapter begins for the family.



A scene from Lisa Cholodenko's "The Kids Are All Right." Image courtesy of Focus Features.

This year's lineup includes a greater number of world, North American or U.S. premieres, which LAFF festival director Rebecca Yeldham and Artistic Director David Ansen told indieWIRE was by chance. "There are more premieres than in years past. That wasn't intentional, but was a result of the submissions we received and our desire to program the best films." Yeldham said LAFF will continue this year spotlighting "the strongest" selections from top festivals around the world such as Sundance, Rotterdam and Berlin. Ansen added that the competition is more international this year, comprising about half the overall total number of slots, and women directors represent fifty percent of the number as well. Additional titles will be announced in the coming weeks, with five or more films joining the 86 features unveiled today.

Universal Pictures' world debut of the 3-D feature "Despicable Me" will close out LAFF, which is organized by Film Independent, on June 27 at the Nokia Theatre L.A. Live. Directed by Chris Renaud and Pierre Coffin and starring Steve Carell, Jason Segel, Russell Brand, Kristen Wiig and more, the film centers on super-villains Gru (voiced by Carell) who is planning the biggest heist in the history of the world - to steal the moon. Surrounded by an army of mischievous little yellow minions and armed with his arsenal of shrink rays, freeze rays, and battle-ready vehicles, Gru vanquishes all who stand in his way. One day, however, he encounters three girls who look at him as a potential dad. Universal opens the film nationwide July 9th.

"We like the idea of 'Despicable Me' closing since it's irreverent yet splashy and funny. It fits our [sentiment]," said Yeldham. Both Ansen and Yeldham said the festival is offered more studio fare than is actually programmed, adding that they are able to be selective. "We look at the context of the entire festival and see how they fit with the overall program."

This year's festival will include a selection of Gala Screenings, replacing the traditional Centerpiece. Sony Pictures Classics' "Animal Kingdom," directed by David Michod; Fox Searchlight's "Cyrus," directed by Jay & Mark Duplass; the world premiere of "Mahler on the Couch," directed by Percy and Felix Adlon; the North American premiere of "Revolucion," a series of short films directed by Mariana Chenillo, Fernando Eimbcke, Amat Escalante, Gael Garcia Bernal, Rodrigo Garcia, Diego Luna, Gerardo Naranjo, Rodrigo Pia, Carlos Reygadas, and Patricia Riggan; and Paramount Vantage's "Waiting for Superman," directed by Davis Guggenheim are among the spotlight screenings at the early summer fest. "We wanted to have five galas as opposed to one Centerpiece, and they're all reflective of the overall festival," said Yeldham.

In addition to "Revolucion," LAFF will continue its initiative last year spotlighting work from Garcia-Bernal and Luna's Ambulante Film Festival in Mexico, saying the program fits the event well. "That was a great partnership and after last year, everyone thought, 'why does this have to be a one off?'" said Yeldham.

In other highlights, LAFF will host an "invitation-only" world premiere of Summit's "The Twilight Saga: Eclipse" on June 24th. The film is directed by David Slade and stars Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson, Taylor Lautner, Ashley Greene, Billy Burke, Peter Facinelli, Elizabeth Reaser, Nikki Reed, Kellan Lutz, Jackson Rathbone, and Dakota Fanning. The latest installment of the wildly popular franchise opens nationwide June 30th.

Also on tap is last year's winner of the "Netflix FIND Your Voice Film Competition." The winning project, "The Wheeler Boys" written and directed by Philip G. Flores, was developed through Film Independent over the past year and will screen as a world premiere at the Los Angeles Film Festival.

"The Los Angeles Film Festival is always an amazing time for us because we can build on our year-round work of cultivating the careers of artists and providing them with a unique platform to showcase their films."

commented Film Independent Executive Director Dawn Hudson in a statement. "It's also a fabulous way to bring together the industry, filmmakers, and film lovers to celebrate the diverse arts scene that Los Angeles has to offer." In addition to the annual LAFF, Film Independent hosts the annual Spirit Awards as well as year-round artist development programs and exhibition events.

[The 2010 Los Angeles Film Festival roster with credits and other information provided by the festival.](#)

**Opening Night Film:** "The Kids Are All Right," Lisa Cholodenko (Focus Features)

**Closing Night Film:** "Despicable Me," Chris Renaud, Pierre Coffin (Universal Pictures) - World Premiere

**Narrative Competition (9):** The Narrative Competition winner is determined by a panel of jurors, and films in this section are also eligible for the Audience Award for Best Narrative Feature.

"Dog Sweat," Hossein Keshavarz - Iran - World Premiere

"A Family," Pernille Fischer Christensen - Denmark - North American Premiere

"Hello Lonesome," Adam Reid - World Premiere

"The New Year," Brett Haley

"Of Love and Other Demons," Hilda Hidalgo - Costa Rica/Colombia - North American Premiere

"Orly," Angela Schanelec - Germany/France - North American Premiere

"Parade," Isao Yukisada - Japan - North American Premiere

"Upstate," Katherine Nolfi, Andrew Luis - World Premiere

"The Wolf Knife," Laurel Nakadate - World Premiere

[Additional Competition, Gala Screenings and Other Sections on Next Page]

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