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## Rome Film Festival Lineup Packed With Crowd-Pleasers

Legendary U.S. former basketball coach Phil Jackson will hold onstage chat

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by Nick Vivarelli

ROME – The Rome Film Festival has announced a lineup full of crowd-pleasers, many out of Hollywood, that span a wide range of genres. The fest’s 12th edition opens with Scott Cooper’s brutal Western, “Hostiles.”

Though world premieres are scarce, they include Japanese director Junji Shimizu’s manga pic “Mazinger Z Infinity” (pictured), produced by Toei Animation to mark the 45th anniversary of the “Mazinger” franchise, which has a global following. Its creator, manga artist Go Nagai, will be on hand.

The closer will be the world premiere of Italian title “The Place” by Paolo Genovese, whose “Perfect Strangers” was a mega-hit at the home box office and has sold widely around the world.

Sandwiched in between are lots of Hollywood awards-season hopefuls, including Kathryn Bigelow’s “Detroit,” Craig Gillespie’s “I, Tonya,” Richard Linklater’s “Last Flag Flying,” Steven Soderbergh’s “Logan Lucky,” and Netflix’s “Mudbound” by Dee Rees.

Other standouts set to unspool during the Oct. 26-Nov. 5 event include Janus Metz’ “Borg vs. McEnroe,” Eugene Jarecki’s “Promised Land,” and and Tom Volf’s documentary “Maria by Callas, in Her Own Words,” which is world-premiering.

The first two episodes of Sky’s hotly anticipated TV series “Babylon Berlin” by Tom Tykwer, Henk Handloegten and Achim von Borries will debut in Italy at the fest. The lavish 16-episode series, set in the sophisticated and seamy world of 1920s Berlin, will go out on Netflix in the U.S.

At a packed news conference in Rome on Tuesday, artistic director Antonio Monda called the fest “a showcase in demand” where future awards-season prizewinners screen. Monda, who was appointed in 2015 for a three-year stint, has been re-upped through 2020 after delivering an increase in paid attendance, partly thanks to the beefed-up onstage conversations component, which is called Close Encounters.

This year’s Close Encounters guests will include David Lynch, Xavier Dolan, Jake Gyllenhaal, Ian McKellen, Nanni Moretti, Vanessa Redgrave, Christoph Waltz, composer Michael Nyman, writer Chuck Palahniuk and U.S. basketball coach Phil Jackson, in line with the festival’s multidisciplinary spirit. Lynch will be feted with a lifetime achievement award to be presented by director Paolo Sorrentino.

While the fest itself is not competitive, Trudie Styler will preside over the jury of the **Alice in the City** independent sidebar dedicated to children's films, where Orlando Bloom is expected to present his new film, "Romans," directed by the Shammaian brothers, which is screening as a special event.

Dakota Fanning is also expected to make the trek for the international premiere of "Please Stand By" by Ben Lewin, which will screen in the **Alice in the City** competition.