

2008 TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL OVERVIEW:

SPEED RACER ZOOMS INTO 2008 TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL



EMILE HIRSCH as Speed Racer in the Mach 5, in a scene from Warner Bros. Pictures' and Village Roadshow Pictures' action adventure "Speed Racer," distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures. Photo courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures

Cast & Credits

Christina Ricci
Matthew Fox
Emile Hirsch
Susan Sarandon
John Goodman

Program Notes

Action. Born to race cars, Speed Racer (Emile Hirsch) is aggressive, instinctive and, most of all, fearless. His only real competition is the memory of the brother he idolized-the legendary Rex Racer, whose death in a race has left behind a legacy that Speed is driven to fulfill. Speed is loyal to the family racing business, led by his father, Pops Racer (John Goodman), the designer of Speed's thundering Mach 5. When Speed turns down a lucrative and tempting offer from Royalton Industries, he not only infuriates the company's maniacal owner (Roger Allam) but uncovers a terrible secret-some of the biggest races are being fixed by a handful of ruthless moguls who manipulate the top drivers to boost profits. If Speed won't drive for Royalton, Royalton will see to it that the Mach 5 never crosses another finish line. The only way for Speed to save his family's business and the sport he loves is to beat Royalton at his own game. With the support of his family and his loyal girlfriend, Trixie (Christina Ricci), Speed teams with his one-time rival-the mysterious Racer X (Matthew Fox)-to win the race that had taken his brother's life: the death-defying, cross-country rally known as The Crucible.

--- Courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures / Village Road



**These are the most important and groundbreaking films that are
“must-see” at this year’s 2008 Tribeca Film Festival**

Aquarium

(Genenet al Asmak)

In Arabic with English subtitles.



[World Narrative Feature Competition]

[AQUAR] | 2008 | 111 min | Feature Narrative

Directed by: Yousry Nasrallah

Interests: Drama, Islam, Politics, Social Issues

Cast & Credits

Director: Yousry Nasrallah

Hend Sabri

Amr Waked

Gamil Ratib

Bassem Samra

Ahmed El Fishawy

Samah Anwar

Program Notes

An anesthesiologist who listens to his patients mumbling under sedation and a late night talk show host (Hend Sabri) whose callers reveal secrets are the yearning

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principals of *The Aquarium*, an ambitious examination of repression--both sexual and political--in Cairo today. Youssef is a hotshot anesthesiologist who often sleeps in his car for privacy.

Laila (Hend Sabri) is the careerist host of a late night radio call-in show. These two members of Cairo's elite, lost souls traveling parallel paths of longing and disconnection, are the principal fish in Yousry Nasrallah's *The Aquarium*, a meditation on the intellectual capital of the Middle East, now bent under the sway of repression in all its forms. There is an aquarium in *The Aquarium*--the one in Cairo's landmark grotto gardens. Youssef circles the gardens endlessly, but he's never gone inside. As he explains to Laila, it seems to him the kind of place you enter knowing you will never leave. This motion-around, but never into--accurately describes Youssef and Laila's identically arm's length approaches to their lives and to their city. Government corruption and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism are given the same sidelong glance as the characters' more intimate troubles--Laila's inability to buck her class-conscious mother or let herself fall in love and Youssef's fraught relationship with his father, who is dying slowly and painfully. But the metaphor of the aquarium is only one of Nasrallah's narrative strategies in this poetic and multilayered film. Brechtian interstitials break up the action, with actors stepping out of incidental roles to give context to their characters and hypothesize Laila or Youssef's true motivations. A fairy tale Laila makes up gets its own stylized depiction. And Nasrallah shoots *The Aquarium* in long and glacial takes, imbuing the movie with a stillness that borders on the inert. Only in the final frames does this aesthetic choice reveal a political intent: *The Aquarium* closes on a claustrophobic shot of protesters, the camera poised, for once, in the middle of the action.

Baghdad High

(Baghdad High)

In Arabic with English subtitles.



[World Documentary Feature Competition]

[BHIGH] | 2008 | 82 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Ivan O'Mahoney and Laura Winter

Interests: Documentary, Female Directors, Middle Eastern, Politics, Social Issues, Teens, War, Youth

Cast & Credits

Director: Ivan O'Mahoney and Laura Winter

Program Notes

Four classmates (Kurd, Christian, Shiite, and Sunni/Shiite) in Baghdad are given cameras to document their last year in high school, resulting in a rare firsthand view of what it's like growing up where sectarian violence rages right outside the classroom window.

Ball Don't Lie

(Ball Don't Lie)



[BALLD] | 2008 | 102 min | Feature Narrative

Directed by: Brin Hill

Interests: *ESPN*, Adaptation, Drama, Hip Hop, Returning Filmmaker, Social Issues, Sports, Teens, Urban, Youth

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Cast & Credits

Director: Brin Hill
Chris "Ludacris" Bridges
Nick Cannon
Rosanna Arquette
Emilie de Ravin
Harold Perrineau
Grayson "The Professor" Boucher

Program Notes

An urban coming-of-age story that follows Sticky, a talented streetballer (Grayson Boucher) who overcomes his troubled past through his passion for the game. Based on the popular novel, *Ball Don't Lie* features Ludacris, Rosanna Arquette, and Nick Cannon. Brin Hill returns to the Tribeca Film Festival (his short *Morning Breath* screened at the first Festival in 2002) with his first feature film, an urban coming-of-age tale about a young streetballer who struggles with his past as he faces an uncertain future. Lead by bright newcomers Kim Hidalgo and real-life basketball player Grayson Boucher, the film sports an impressive all-star ensemble cast, including Chris "Ludacris" Bridges, Rosanna Arquette, Emilie de Ravin, Harold Perrineau, and Nick Cannon. The film follows Sticky (Boucher), a skinny high school junior who has enormous basketball talent but also the burden of emotional scarring from an early tragedy, a callous foster care system, and obsessive-compulsive disorder that vanishes only when he's on the court. The story plays out over course of one day, as Sticky plays ball at Lincoln Rec, the legendary Venice Beach court where he is the only white guy. It's a volatile place filled with shattered dreams and where fisticuffs are the norm. That night, Sticky plans to meet up with his girlfriend, Anh-thu (Hidalgo), for her birthday. With little money in his pocket, he stresses out over buying her a present that will impress and makes a choice that could have a lasting impact on the rest of their lives. Based on the popular novel of the same name by Matt de la Peña (who cowrote the screenplay with Hill), *Ball Don't Lie* is a unique, authentic basketball film. Hill brilliantly weaves the narrative through a series of flashbacks that reveal the many layers of Sticky's troubled childhood. In the end, it's his love of basketball, his amazing hoops skills, and his unlikely mentors that help him overcome his lifelong sense of isolation. With the ball in his hands, Sticky transcends his limitations.

Charly

(Charly)
In French with English subtitles.
[Feature Narrative] [The Milky Way](#)



[CHARL] | 2007 | 95 min | Feature Narrative

Directed by: Isild Le Besco

North American Premiere

Interests: Coming of Age, Female Directors, Returning Filmmaker, Teens, Youth

Cast & Credits

Director: Isild Le Besco
Julie-Marie Parmentier
Kolia Litscher

Program Notes

Tramping toward the sea, 14-year-old Nicolas crosses paths with Charly, a tough girl who takes him into her mobile home, where an unusual domestic arrangement evolves. As in her brilliant debut *½ Price* (TFF '04), Le Besco movingly depicts a world without adults.

Celia the Queen

(Celia the Queen)
In English, Spanish with English subtitles.



[CELIA] | 2008 | 84 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Mario de Varona and Joe Cardona

World Premiere

Interests: Documentary, Latin American, Music, Politics, Women

www.celiathequeen.com

Cast & Credits

Director: Mario de Varona and Joe Cardona
Christina Christian

Program Notes

¡Azúcar! The voice of Celia Cruz, arguably the most influential woman in Cuban music, symbolized the soul of a nation and forced down barriers of racism and sexism. She radiates on screen as her legacy is revisited in this intimate and inspiring documentary.

Chevolution

(Chevolution)

In English, Spanish with English subtitles.



[CHEVO] | 2008 | 90 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Luis Lopez and Trisha Ziff

World Premiere

Interests: Art/Literature, Documentary, Latin American, Politics

Cast & Credits

Director: Luis Lopez and Trisha Ziff

Gerry Adams

Jon Lee Anderson

Antonio Banderas

Shepard Fairey

Gael García Bernal

Tom Morello

Program Notes

How did the iconic image of Che Guevara end up on beer bottles and bikinis? This inquiry into the ethics and aesthetics of appropriation investigates how the enduring symbol of Cuba's revolution skyrocketed to fame and was ultimately devoured by its own worst enemy: capitalism.

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The Chicken, the Fish and the King Crab

(El pollo, el pez y el cangrejo real)
In Spanish with English subtitles.



[CHICK] | 2007 | 86 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Gema Martinez and José Luis López-Linares

North American Premiere

Interests: *ESPN*, Documentary, Food

www.zebraproductions.com

Cast & Credits

Director: Gema Martinez and José Luis López-Linares

Jesús Almagro

Pedro Larumbe

Alberto Chicote

Sven Erik Renaa

Serge Vieira

Jose Maria Arzak

Program Notes

Famed Spanish chef Jesús Almagro permits cameras to follow his preparations for the "Bocuse d'Or" cooking contest, pitting him against 23 international contenders for the title of "World's Best Chef." Thrilling, captivating... and mouthwatering.

Confessionsofa Ex-Doofus-ItchyFooted Mutha

(Confessionsofa Ex-Doofus-ItchyFooted Mutha)



[CONFE] | 2008 | 99 min | Feature Narrative

World Premiere

Interests: African American, New York, Returning Filmmaker

Cast & Credits

Melvin Van Peebles
Stephanie Weeks
Mario Van Peebles
Glen Turner
Teddy Hayes
Alfred Preisser

Program Notes

Melvin Van Peebles, still our most playfully inventive filmmaker after nearly 50 years, returns with a boisterous adventure that ranges from Harlem to the high seas, following the exploits of a man (MVP, natch) who's always on the move--but always returns to New York.

Donkey in Lahore

(Donkey in Lahore)

In English, Urdu, Arabic, Punjabi with English subtitles.



[World Documentary Feature Competition]

[DONKE] | 2007 | 117 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Faramarz K-Rahber

North American Premiere

Interests: Documentary, Islam, Religion, Romance, Social Issues

<http://www.donkeyinlahore.com>

Cast & Credits

Director: Faramarz K-Rahber

Aamir (Brian)

Amber

Program Notes

An unusual love story that follows the quixotic courtship of Brian, an ex-goth puppeteer from Australia, and Amber, the traditional Muslim girl he met and fell in love with in Pakistan. Can this unlikely couple survive the challenges they are about face?

Elite Squad

(Tropa de Elite)

In Portuguese with English subtitles.



[Spotlight]

[ELITE] | 2007 | 101 min | Feature Narrative

Directed by: José Padilha

North American Premiere

Interests: Adaptation, Crime, Drugs, Latino, Politics, Social Issues, Thriller, Violence, War

Cast & Credits

Director: José Padilha

Wagner Moura

Andre Ramiro

Caio Junqueira

Milhem Cortaz

Fernanda Machado

Maria Ribeiro

Program Notes

Fresh from its Golden Bear win at Berlin, and one of Brazil's most controversial films, Elite Squad is a searing look at the corruption of the special police force in the volatile slums of Rio. As one cop desperately tries to get out, two naive recruits see if they have what it takes to get in.

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Faubourg Tremé: The Untold Story of Black New Orleans

(Faubourg Tremé: The Untold Story of Black New Orleans)



[FAUBO] | 2008 | 68 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Dawn Logsdon and Lolis Eric Elie

World Premiere

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Interests: African American, Documentary, Social Issues

www.tremedoc.com

Cast & Credits

Director: Dawn Logsdon and Lolis Eric Elie
Glen David Andrews
Lenwood Sloan
Eric Foner
Brenda Marie Osbey
Irving Trevigne
John Hope Franklin

Program Notes

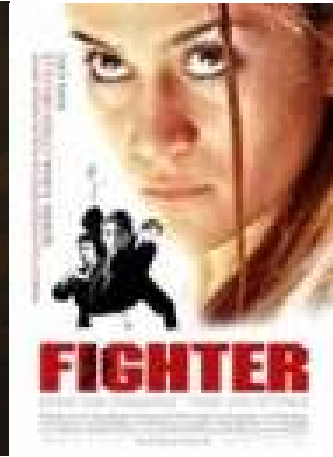
Faubourg Tremé is a first-person documentary by New Orleans natives Dawn Logsdon and Lolis Eric Elie. Drawing on several years of pre-Hurricane Katrina footage, the film brings alive the history of Black New Orleans through an in-depth look at one historic neighborhood, the Faubourg Tremé. Executive produced by Wynton Marsalis and Stanley Nelson, the film follows journalist and first-time filmmaker Lolis Eric Elie, who sets out to renovate his 19th-century house in this now deteriorating neighborhood. Drawn to the architecture and its mix of old and new, Elie soon finds that the history of this place is the real story. This once vibrant neighborhood, he learns, was in fact the center of African American economic independence and political activism from slavery through Reconstruction, Jim Crow, and the civil rights struggles of the 1960s. In recent years, the Faubourg Tremé, now more often referred to as the Sixth Ward, has suffered from blight, drugs, and crime, and even more recently was devastated by the wrath of Hurricane Katrina—the effects of which we see here in heartbreaking detail. Yet Logsdon and Elie bring an insightful perspective to the retelling of this community's past, particularly through its literary and musical artifacts. The result is a fresh approach to historical documentary storytelling. The filmmakers interview prominent historians to elucidate the facts, but mostly what we hear and see is the music, dance, poetry, and voices of contemporary residents. We meet people several years before Hurricane Katrina and follow their stories through the storm's aftermath. We come to understand that, just as it has in the past, this deeply rooted community is determined to rebuild and to persevere.

— Nancy Schafer

Fighter

(Fighter)

In Danish, Turkish with English subtitles.



[FIGHT] | 2007 | 100 min | Feature Narrative

Directed by: Natasha Arthy

North American Premiere

Interests: *ESPN*, Action, Drama, Female Directors, Islam, Sports, Women, Youth

www.fighter-filmen.dk

Cast & Credits

Director: Natasha Arthy

Semra Turan

Nima Nabipour

Behrouz Banissi

Cyron Bjørn Melville

Program Notes

This high-energy martial arts drama chronicles a driven high school student caught between the expectations of her traditional Turkish family and her kung fu dreams. With slickly choreographed fight scenes, Fighter is an empowering story that culminates with an emotional punch.

Football Under Cover

(Football Under Cover)

In German, English, Farsi with English subtitles.



[Showcase]

[FOOTB] | 2007 | 86 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Ayat Najafi and David Assmann

U.S. Premiere

Interests: *ESPN*, Middle Eastern, Sports

Cast & Credits

Director: Ayat Najafi and David Assmann

Niloofar Basir

Narmila Fathi

Sanna El-Agha alias "Susu"

"Paraskevi Boras alias "Paros"

"Marlene Assmann"

Hueseyin Karaduman

Program Notes

When the members of a Berlin women's football team (we call it "soccer") learn to their surprise that they have counterparts in Iran, but that those women have never been allowed to play an actual game, they set out for Tehran to make the impossible happen.

Going on 13

(Going on 13)

In English, Spanish, Hindi with English subtitles.



[GOING] | 2008 | 86 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Kristy Guevara-Flanagan and Dawn Valadez

World Premiere

Interests: African American, Coming of Age, Documentary, Female Directors, Latino, Social Issues, Teens, Women, Youth

www.goingon13movie.com

Cast & Credits

Director: Kristy Guevara-Flanagan and Dawn Valadez

Ariana

Esmeralda

Isha

Rosie

Program Notes

Ariana, Isha, Rose, and Esme are young girls who are followed for four years as they navigate the precarious path to womanhood and, in Valadez' and Guevara-Flanagan's expert hands, breathe new life into the coming-of-age story.

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Good Boy

(Bom Garoto)

In Portuguese with English subtitles.



[Short Student Competition]

[SOFFT] | 2008 | 12 min | Short Narrative

Directed by: Davyde Wachell

World Premiere

Interests: Drama, Family Issues

www.davyde.com

Cast & Credits

Director: Davyde Wachell

Wallace Coutinho

Marilia Coelho

Jaqueline Macóeh

Diego Ferreira

Juan Lima

Lauro Albuquerque

Program Notes

Surviving the slums of Rio is a challenge for a boy and his mom in Good Boy (Bom Garoto).

Gotta Dance

(Gotta Dance)



[GOTTA] | 2008 | 95 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Dori Berinstein

World Premiere

Interests: *ESPN*, Aging, Dance, Documentary, Female Directors, Hip Hop, Returning Filmmaker, Sports

www.gottadancethemovie.com

Cast & Credits

Director: Dori Berinstein
The NETSational Dance Team

Program Notes

Festival vet Berinstein (ShowBusiness, TFF '05) tells the inspirational story of the New Jersey NETSational, the NBA's first senior citizen hiphop dance team. Against all odds, these energetic and dedicated seniors prove that even in their golden years, they've just Gotta Dance!

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Gunnin' for That #1 Spot

(Gunnin' for That #1 Spot)



[GUNNI] | 2007 | 90 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Adam Yauch

World Premiere

Interests: *ESPN*, *NYcomp*, African American, Documentary, Hip Hop, Music, Sports, Teens, Youth

Cast & Credits

Director: Adam Yauch
Jerryd Bayless
Michael Beasley
Tyreke Evans
Donte Green
Brandon Jennings
Kevin Love
Kyle Singler
Lance Stephenson

Program Notes

Throughout the year, in parks and playgrounds around the country, boys of all ages try to show each other up on the blacktop, invoking the likes of Michael, Magic, LeBron, and Kobe. Some of them possess a talent that rises above the others, and united with unparalleled determination, focus, and strength of will, they go on to excel

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in high school, becoming potential stars of tomorrow. In the fall of 2006, 24 of these top prospects were brought together at one of the most legendary courts in America: Rucker Park. A slab of asphalt painted green and red-surrounded by rundown bleachers in an otherwise nondescript part of Harlem-has been the proving ground for many of the most legendary professional players in history, from Dr. J and Earl "The Pearl" Monroe to Wilt Chamberlain and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. Beastie Boy Adam Yauch combines two of his favorite things in his first non-concert feature documentary: the excitement of street basketball and some slammin' hip-hop tracks. Put them both on the most legendary court in New York, and you get Yauch's super-charged love letter to the game. In *Gunnin' for That #1 Spot*, Yauch applies his signature stylistic visual flourishes to the stories of eight of the top ballers (several of whom are already making even bigger names for themselves in the NCAA) participating in the first "Elite 24" all-star game. The film is a celebration of their talent and dedication and a showcase of their awe-inspiring skills-and thanks to Yauch's own filmmaking gifts, the audience gets to sit courtside for all of the incredible alley oops and no-look passes.

--- *Aaron Dobbs*

Harvest 3000 Years

(Mirt Sost Shi Amit)

In Amharic with English subtitles.



[HARVE] | 1975 | 137 min | Feature Narrative

Directed by: Haile Gerima

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None Premiere

Interests: African, Drama, Social Issues

Cast & Credits

Director: Haile Gerima

Kasu Asfaw

Worke Kasa

Melaku Makonen

Adane Melaku

Hareg-Weyn Tafere

Program Notes

Martin Scorsese, who chose this masterpiece of African cinema as one of the initial projects for his World Cinema Foundation, has said the film "has a particular kind of urgency which few pictures possess. This is the story of an entire people, and its collective longing for justice and good faith."

Hotel Gramercy Park

(Hotel Gramercy Park)



[HOTEL] | 2008 | 80 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Douglas Kieve

World Premiere

Interests: Art/Literature, Documentary, Family Issues, History, New York

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Cast & Credits

Director: Douglas Keeve
Ian Schrager
Debbie Harry
Karl Lagerfeld
Julian Schnabel
Paris Hilton

Program Notes

Keeve explores the family drama of the longtime owners of this infamous hotel--once a drug-fueled haven for the likes of Bowie and Blondie--as they prepare to turn it over to hotelier Ian Schrager. Is the transformation a redefinition of cool or the demise of a New York icon?

I Am Because We Are

(I Am Because We Are)
In English, Chichewa with English subtitles.



[IAMBE] | 2008 | 85 min | Feature Documentary

World Premiere

Interests: African, Documentary, Health Issues, Social Issues, Women

www.iambecauseweare.com

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Cast & Credits

Dr. Jeffrey Sachs
Desmond Tutu
Bill Clinton
Dr. Paul Farmer
Dr. Matthews Chikaonda
Madonna

Program Notes

Executive producer Madonna exposes the tragic stories of the millions of Malawi children orphaned by AIDS, offering both a call to action and a revelatory personal journey. Featuring interviews with Bill Clinton and Desmond Tutu, the film is a testament to survival, change, and hope.

Kassim The Dream

(Kassim The Dream)



[World Documentary Feature Competition]

[KASSI] | 2008 | 86 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Kief Davidson

World Premiere

Interests: *ESPN*, African, Documentary, Politics, Returning Filmmaker, Sports, War

www.kassimthedream.com

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Cast & Credits

Director: Kief Davidson

Program Notes

Kassim "The Dream" Ouma went from Ugandan child soldier to world champion boxer. In this gripping tale of survival and determination, Kassim proves that even against all odds, a man can achieve his dreams and turn tragedy into inspiration.

Kicking It

(Kicking It)



[KICKI] | 2008 | 98 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Susan Koch and Jeff Werner

New York Premiere

Interests: *ESPN*, Documentary, Social Issues, Sports

www.kickingitthefilm.com

Cast & Credits

Director: Susan Koch and Jeff Werner
Colin Farrell

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Program Notes

All athletes are invested in the games they play, but none more than those in Kicking It, a look at the 2006 Homeless World Cup. For these guys, it's about more than national pride. Narrated by Colin Farrell.

Lake City

(Lake City)



[Encounters]

[LAKEC] | 2008 | 92 min | Feature Narrative

Directed by: Perry Moore and Hunter Hill

World Premiere

Interests: Drama, Drugs, Family Issues, Suspense

Cast & Credits

Director: Perry Moore and Hunter Hill

Sissy Spacek

Troy Garity

Rebecca Romijn

Dave Matthews

Drea de Matteo

Keith Carradine

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Program Notes

When her family is threatened by violent criminals, a mother and son must reconcile the past in order to save their home. Powerful performances by Sissy Spacek and Troy Garity highlight this potent drama, also featuring Dave Matthews and Rebecca Romijn.

Little Minx Exquisite Corpse: Rope a Dope

(Little Minx Exquisite Corpse: Rope a Dope)



[SDEAL] | 2008 | 6 min | Short Narrative

World Premiere

Interests: Drama, Experimental

<http://littleminx.tv>

Cast & Credits

Gina Williams
Jason Cuadra
Ismael Cornier
Angel Gonzales

Program Notes

Kick some butt in Little Minx Exquisite Corpse: Rope a Dope.

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Lou Reed's Berlin

(Lou Reed's Berlin)



[LOURE] | 2007 | 81 min | Feature Documentary

Directed by: Julian Schnabel

New York Premiere

Interests: Music, New York

www.berlinthefilm.com

Cast & Credits

Director: Julian Schnabel

Lou Reed

Sharon Jones

Antony

Emmanuelle Seigner

Program Notes

In 2006, artist/filmmaker Julian Schnabel took to the stage at St. Ann's Warehouse in Brooklyn to introduce a concert 33 years in the making: Lou Reed, playing his Berlin song cycle live for the first time. It was worth the wait.

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