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PALM SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Fest wraps today; ticket sales up



Director Yasemin Samdereli (left) and Palm Springs International Film Festival Director Darryl Macdonald pause on the red carpet at Palm Springs High School before a screening of Samdereli's film "Almanya, Welcome to Germany." CRYSTAL CHATHAM/THE DESERT SUN

By Bruce Fessier
The Desert Sun

PALM SPRINGS — "A Separation," the Iranian 2012 Golden Globe winner for Best Foreign Language Film, solidified its position as the Oscar favorite Sunday at the Palm Springs International Film Festival awards luncheon.

"Starbuck," a warm and humorous story of a sperm donor who surreptitiously bonds with many of the offspring suing to discover his identity, won the Audience Award for Best Narrative Feature, topping Belgium's "Come As You Are."

"A Separation," which has won many critics awards for Best Foreign Language Film, and the Los Angeles Film Critics Award for

MORE INSIDE AND ONLINE

- See who won what and what's playing today during the "Best of the Fest." **Page A10.**
- Author reads from book after screening **Page B1**
- Check out photo galleries from the festival online at **mydesert.com/photos.**

Best Original Screenplay, won the FIPRESCI international critics' Best Actress Award for its lead actresses, Leila Hatami, Sareh Bayat and Sarina Farhadi.

The film narrative isn't female-driven, but the critics overlooked its male leads, Peyman Moadi and Shahab Hosseini, in favor of Matthias Schoenaerts, who won the Best Ac- **Please see FEST, A10**



Festival stars take home Globes

The Palm Springs International Film Festival continued its streak of predicting other awards Sunday night, as honorees George Clooney, Michelle Williams, Octavia Spencer and others took home Golden Globes. **B6**

Octavia Spencer

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY



Cora Crawford, 78, lives in one of six original houses in Desert Highland neighborhood in Palm Springs. The retired educator has earned honors for her civil right advocacy. RICHARD LUI/THE DESERT SUN

By Maricar Mendoza
The Desert Sun

Keeping the DREAM alive

Longtime valley woman moved by King to serve

MORE INSIDE: 1968 Olympian and activist John Carlos talks about meeting Martin Luther King Jr. and its effect on his life. **Page B1**

PALM SPRINGS — Cora Crawford's home isn't a landmark or even a historic site, but in many ways it's the heart of the Desert Highland Estates neighborhood.

And on this day in particular, the 50-year-old home stands as a symbol of the neighborhood's beginning and Crawford's resolve, fueled by the successes of civil rights advocates before her, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"I saw what happened to Martin Luther King on this black-and-white TV we had, and I just decided to try to do something for my people," she said.

Today marks the annual commemoration of King's life and work, which communities nationwide celebrate. For Crawford, her celebration starts at home.

Crawford, 79, left east Texas for Palm Springs in 1951 with promises of better opportunities for African-Americans like herself and her husband, Samuel.

But seven years later, the couple were forced out of their rented **Please see DREAM, A10**

Suspect in homeless deaths an ex-Marine

Desert Sun wire services

YORBA LINDA — A prosecutor will announce as early as Tuesday whether he'll seek the death penalty for a former Marine suspected of randomly stabbing to death unarmed homeless men.

Itzcoatl Ocampo, 23, of Yorba Linda, was chased by bystanders Friday and subsequently arrested following the most recent stabbing death in the parking lot of a Carl's Jr. fast-food restaurant in Anaheim. On Saturday, Ocampo remained in custody without bail and is expected in court on Tuesday.

The killing of John Berry, was the fourth stabbing death of a homeless man within several miles of Orange County since Dec. 20. Local police departments and the FBI formed a task force to find and capture the killer.

The motive for the killings, which began on Dec. 20 and sent fear through the homeless community, remained a mystery Sunday, but relatives and friends said the 23-year-old former Marine was distraught upon his return from combat service in Iraq.

"When he came back from Iraq he was sick," said his uncle, Ifrain Gonzalez.

For the last year, he had been telling relatives that he was seeing and hearing things, Gonzalez said. The last time Gonzalez saw his nephew was at a Dec. 24 Christmas Eve party. Ocampo, he said, had told a cousin: "I did something terrible, but don't worry."

It was four days after the killings had begun.

Brian Doyle, a friend from high school, said that Ocampo told him he had been kicked out of the military. A Marine Corps representative could not be reached Saturday for confirmation, and Anaheim police declined to discuss Ocampo's military service.

The father of the man suspected of killing homeless men in Southern California is himself homeless and says his son last week **Please see KILLINGS, A10**

Cruise ship captain's conduct questioned

The captain of the cruise ship that ran aground Friday night near an Italian island, killing at least five people, was detained for questioning by the Italian police on charges of

manslaughter, failure to offer assistance and abandonment of the ship.

Rescue workers extracted three survivors and two bodies from the wreckage on Sunday. **Page A3**



GOOD MORNING

Who are you wearing?

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- | | | | |
|---------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Advice | B11 | Lottery | B7 |
| Bridge | B11 | Movies | B9 |
| Classified | B2 | Obituaries | B7 |
| Comics | B10 | Opinion | B8 |
| Crossword | B11 | Sudoku | B11 |
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INSIDE TODAY'S PAPER

HUNTSMAN DROPS OUT OF GOP RACE

Campaign officials for former Utah governor Jon Huntsman say he will withdraw his bid for the Republican presidential nomination today and throw his support behind front-runner and former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney. **A2**



ACTIVE ACTIVITIES

Valley residents stopped to check their blood pressures, get a quick workout and more during Humana Day on Sunday at the La Quinta farmers market. **B1**

Reverse Mortgage



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DREAM

Continued from A1

house in Section 14 — a 640-acre portion of the city that is now the site of the Spa Resort Casino and the Palm Springs Convention Center — and found it hard to get a loan to buy a new home.

For two years, they made do with a military-barracks-turned-apartment-complex owned by Palm Springs pioneer Lawrence Crossley, one of the first African-Americans to live in Palm Springs when he arrived in 1924.

Crawford was a stay-at-home mom at the time, and her husband poured concrete

for a living.

"Every time I got a penny, I saved it," she said. And those pennies paid off.

The Crawfords finally obtained a loan — they had to go to Banning for it, she recalled—and in 1960, the couple bought a lot off Las Vegas Road and built the house she's called home ever since.

The home, still decorated with original 1960s-era plastic, polyester and velour furniture with visible wear expected of a home used for family gatherings, is one of six original homes of Desert Highland Estates, a predominantly black neighborhood.

One of her first achievements as a new resident back then was getting gas lines to the neighborhood so residents could afford to heat their homes.

Of her most vivid memories at the home, however, was hearing about King's death in 1968.

"The kids were in the den watching TV, and one of them mentioned Dr. King was killed," Crawford said.

After that, Crawford said, she was inspired to go back to school and learn enough to help her community.

She earned bachelor's and master's degrees in education from California State University, San Bernardino. While her first job in the desert was as a housekeeper, she had a long career as an educator, starting as a teacher's assistant at the College of the Desert and later becoming the lead teacher at the Palm Springs Child Care & Development Center, which she led as director for nearly 20 years.

She served as a substitute in the Palm Springs Unified School District until 2009.

"I know I couldn't do what he had done, but I wanted to help do something with the little knowledge I had to help my people," Crawford said.

From at-risk youth to single moms, fellow churchgoers and educators, Crawford has touched lives, all documented by the awards, plaques and proclamations from city and county leaders that cover the walls of her home. The accolades are only rivaled by family photos.

"All we can do, any one of

us in this country, is do our bit. We are not Martin Luther King ... but Cora has done her bit," said Joseph Beaver, executive director of the Black Historical and Cultural Society of the Coachella Valley who has known Crawford for more than two decades.

Crawford was recently honored by the Palm Springs Human Rights Commission for her community involvement and civil rights advocacy throughout the years.

Her descendants — Crawford has five children, nine grandchildren, a dozen great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild — haven't let Crawford's flame fade either.

Jarvis Crawford is the manager of the James O. Jessie Highland Unity Center and was among the organizers of Sunday's 27th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration Celebration, an event that began one year before the day became a national holiday.

"It's meant to bring awareness out about how Martin Luther King touched us here in the Coachella Valley," Jarvis Crawford said. "Being far from a big city, we wanted to show residents of the valley that those issues blacks had to deal with out there were the same as the blacks here in the desert had to deal with like my grandmother."

The surroundings of Crawford's home may have changed, but it still reflects Crawford's appreciation for her heritage.

Just the road alone bears meaning as it is now named Rosa Parks Road, after another civil rights activist with strong ties to King's mission.

Now Crawford's teal-trimmed white home faces a sleek, slate-colored building known as Rosa Parks Apartments, a Coachella Valley Housing Coalition facility that is home to multiracial low-income families.

Its large banner announces in bold red typeface that it's leasing units and can be seen from Crawford's living room window.

"It blocks my view of the mountains," she said, laughing, "but that's OK."

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KILLINGS

Continued from A1

showed him a picture of one victim as a warning of the danger of being on the streets.

Refugio Ocampo, 49, also told The Associated Press on Sunday that his son came back a changed man after serving with the Marines in Iraq, expressing disillusionment and becoming ever darker as he struggled to find his way as a civilian.

The father said he lost his job and home, and ended up living under a bridge before finding shelter in the cab of a broken-down big-rig he is helping repair.

His 23-year-old son, Itzcoatl Ocampo, was arrested Friday in connection with the serial killings of four homeless men since late December.

Refugio Ocampo said that on Jan. 11 his son came to him with a picture of the first victim, who was killed on Dec. 20.

"This is what's happening," the father quoted his son as saying.

"He was very worried

about me. I told him, 'Don't worry. I'm a survivor. Nothing will happen to me. I will find something. Count on it,'" the father said.

Refugio Ocampo and his youngest son, Mixcoatl, 17, both described a physical condition Itzcoatl suffered in which his hands shook and he suffered headaches. Medical treatments helped until he started drinking heavily, both said.

A neighbor who is a Vietnam veteran and the father both tried to push Itzcoatl to get treatment at a Veterans hospital, but he refused. Refugio Ocampo said he wanted his son to get psychological treatment as well.

"He started talking about stuff that didn't make any sense, that the end of the world was going to happen," he said.

Refugio Ocampo said investigators came to him on Friday night and showed him surveillance photos from a crime scene, but he did not recognize his son as the person in the images.

"If he did it, it wasn't right, obviously. But there's something wrong with him," Refugio Ocampo said.

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FEST

Continued from A1

tor FIPRESCI Award for his role as a troubled testosterone addict in "Bullhead."

The 12-day festival wraps today with screenings of most of the audience and critics' award winners, plus other audience favorites.

Executive Director Darryl Macdonald said audience balloting skewed "more highly favorable across the board than in recent years."

Record-setting

He also said attendance was ahead of last year's record of 132,000, even though there were 10 to 15 fewer screenings than last year at the request of theater operators seeking to increase customer service.

Platinum Passes sold out, but fewer were made available because more of the more expensive Concierge and Benefactor passes were sold. Macdonald said individual ticket sales were up dramatically.

The 220 actors, directors, writers and producers in attendance also represented more filmmakers than at any previous festival.

David VanderWal, a star of "Old Goats," which gets another screening today, flew to Palm Springs from Seattle at his own expense because he said his director told him "this is a good festival" and he needed him at the Q&As after the Friday and Sunday screenings.

Festival-goers said they noticed longer lines but complimented the smooth operation, which Macdonald credited largely to training for volunteers made possible by a \$25,000 Auenberger Foundation grant.

"I think it's wonderful," said Tom Sheridan, a Walnut Creek resident wearing a cap sporting film festival pins since 2008. "It's very accessible as far as the location of the theaters and the parking and the ease of getting in and out—as opposed to a major city (festival). If you like foreign films, this is a wonderful opportunity."

Carol Skinner, an independent art house exhibitor in Boise, Idaho, who has attended all 23 Palm Springs festivals, said she saw several films she'd like to book at her theater, including "Starbuck" and "If I Were You," the Marcia Gay Harden vehicle that earned one of 10 audience favorite honorable mentions for Best Narrative Feature.

"Starbuck" and the runner-up in that category, "Come As You Are," are both seeking U.S. distribution deals, which Skinner said she'd need to screen the movies.

More distributors

The festival attracted a stronger distributor presence than in the past, but it doesn't draw acquisition people like more industry-oriented festivals, such as Sundance and Toronto. That's one of the things that makes Palm Springs attractive to small distributors like Oliver Ike of Seventh Art Releasing, which focuses on



"Starbuck" COURTESY PHOTO

AWARD WINNERS

Mercedes-Benz Audience Award Best Narrative Feature:

"Starbuck," Canada, directed by Ken Scott

Runner-up: "Come As You Are," Belgium, by Geoffrey Enthoven

Audience Award Best Documentary Feature:

Tie: "The Girls in the Band," U.S., by Judy Chaikin and "Wish Me Away," U.S., by Bobbi Birleffii and Beverly Kopf

FIPRESCI Award for Best Foreign Language Film:

"The Turin Horse," Hungary, by Béla Tarr

FIPRESCI Award for Best Actor:

Matthias Schoenaerts for his role in "Bullhead," Belgium

FIPRESCI Award for Best Actress:

The ensemble female cast Leila Hatami, Sareh Bayat and Sarina Farhadi, from "A Separation," Iran

New Voices/New Visions Award:

for international talent making their feature film debut with the film without U.S. distribution: Zuzana Liová, Slovak Republic, "The House"

The John Schlesinger Award:

for a first-time documentary filmmaker: Tatiana Huezo Sanchez, "The Tiniest Place," Mexico

HP Bridging the Borders Award:

presented by Cinema Without Borders and Hewlett Packard, for the film best exemplifying art that promotes bringing the people of our world closer together: "Terraferma," Italy, directed by Emanuele Crialese

Runner-up:

"Le Havre," Finland, by Aki Kaurismäki

documentary films.

"It's tough for us at Sundance," he said. "We can talk to filmmakers easier here."

Ike, a juror for the John Schlesinger Award for best first documentary, helped select Mexican director Tatiana Huezo Sanchez for "The Tiniest Place" in a competition of 12 documentaries but also liked "The First Position: A Ballet Documentary" and "Unfinished Space." He was preparing to meet Greg McClatchy, producer of the compelling "Bert Stern: Original Madman," after the awards brunch.

McClatchy said his sales agent told him Palm Springs was an important festival to seek a U.S. distributor.

Another distributor, Paul Hudson of Outsider Pictures, said Palm Springs was well organized for the industry and filmgoers.

"I was impressed with the films," said Hudson, who was primarily seeking films for the Latin American market. "None of the films were bad."

Bruce Fessler can be reached at (760) 778-4522 or bruce.fessler@thedesertsun.com

BEST OF FEST SCHEDULE

- 9 a.m., Regal: "The Story of Film," (Hours 1-4, 240 min.)
- 9 a.m., Regal: "The Story of Film," (Hours 9-12, 240 min.)
- 9:30 a.m., Regal: "Terraferma," (88 min.)
- 10 a.m., Camelot: "Monsieur Lazhar," (94 min.)
- 10 a.m., Camelot: "Michel Petruccianni" (102 min.)
- 10 a.m., Regal: "Simon and the Oaks" (122 min.)
- 10:30 a.m., Camelot: "Shakespeare High" (81 min.)
- 10:30 a.m., Regal: "Diana Vreeland: The Eye Has To Travel" (86 min.)
- 11 a.m., Regal: "First Position: A Ballet Documentary" (90 min.)
- 11:30 a.m., Regal: "The Tiniest Place" (104 min.)
- 12:30 p.m., Camelot: "Come As You Are" (115 min.)
- 12:30 p.m., Regal: "Cloudburst" (93 min.)
- 1 p.m., Camelot: "The Perfect Stranger" (92 min.)
- 1 p.m., Regal: "Almanya, Welcome to Germany" (97 min.)
- 1:30 p.m., Camelot: "Escort in Love" (95 min.)
- 1:30 p.m., Regal: "Headhunters" (100 min.)
- 2 p.m., Regal: "If I Were You" (115 min.)
- 2 p.m. Regal, "The Story of Film" (Hours 5-8) (240 min.)
- 2 p.m., Regal: "The Story of Film" (Hours 13-15) (180 min.)
- 2:30 p.m., Regal: "Carol Channing: Larger Than Life" (88 min.)
- 3 p.m., Regal: "The House" (97 min.)
- 3:45 p.m., Camelot: "Edwin Boyd" (105 min.)
- 4 p.m., Camelot: "Follow Me: The Yoni Netanyahu Story" (84 min.)
- 4 p.m., Regal: "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (107 min.)
- 4:30 p.m., Camelot: "The Girls in the Band" (83 min.)
- 4:30 p.m., Regal: "Guilty" (101 min.)
- 4:45 p.m., Regal: "A Simple Life" (119 min.)
- 5 p.m., Regal: "Old Goats" (93 min.)
- 5:30 p.m., Regal: "Rumble of the Stones" (100 min.)
- 6 p.m., Camelot: "Mulberry Child" (85 min.)
- 7 p.m., Camelot: "Vito," (93 min.)
- 7 p.m., Regal: "Wish Me Away" (96 min.)
- 7:30 p.m., Camelot: "Starbuck" (109 min.)
- 7:30 p.m., Regal: "Wunderkinder" (96 min.)
- 7:45 p.m., Regal: "The Turin Horse" (146 min.)
- 8 p.m., Regal: "SuperClásico" (99 min.)