

## FILM FEST

Continued from page 11

has since been back with a documentary, and now she returns in the coveted lead-off spot with *Welcome to Me*, a story of good luck that evolves into a compelling and darkly humorous drama. Featured in the cast are Kristin Wiig, James Marsden, Tim Robbins and Joan Cusack. Director Piven will attend.

Emerman describes it as a “quirky comedy. I don’t know how Kristin Wiig stays straight-faced throughout this movie. I couldn’t imagine being there and not laughing.”

The bookend of the festival will be Baumbach’s *While We’re Young*, an exploration of aging, ambition, and success whose cast includes Amanda Seyfried, Naomi Watts, Ben Stiller, Adam Driver and Charles Grodin.

During the week, such Baumbach films as *Kicking and Screaming*, *The Squid and the Whale* and *Frances Ha* will be screened.

### Festival highlights

At presstime a month away from the festival, it was still evolving, but here are some highlights so far:

- The world premiere of *Any Day*, about an ex-fighter finding redemption from his troubled past, with cast members Kate Walsh and Tom Arnold confirmed to attend.
- A special screening of *The Record Man*, a documentary on Henry Stone and TK Records.
- The return of The Jewish Experience, a collection of



Ben Stiller and Naomi Watts star in *While We’re Young*. Photo provided



Baumbach



Piven

current, cutting-edge Jewish/Israeli-centric films, including two world premieres, an official Oscar submission (*Bulgarian Rhapsody*), and an Ophir (Israel’s equivalent to the Academy Awards) nominee for Best Film (*Is That You?*).

- Coltrane, who grew before our eyes over a 12-year-period in *Boyhood*, will be honored at the festival with its Shooting Star Award.

- In a tribute to the late Michael Clarke Duncan, fondly remembered for an appearance at PBIFF several years ago, there will be a screening of his last movie, *The Challenger*,

### IF YOU GO

Palm Beach Film Festival screenings will be held at Muvico Parisian 20 in West Palm Beach, Cobb Downtown at the Gardens and Cinemark Palace 20 in Boca Raton. Individual tickets and packages ranging from \$175 to \$450 are available. Call 362-0003 or visit [pbiffilmfest.org](http://pbiffilmfest.org).

about a Bronx boxer trying to fight his way to a better life. Writer-director-star Kent Moran will be in attendance and “Michael will be here in spirit,” adds Emerman.

The festival hopes to open its permanent venue in Manalapan’s Plaza del Mar later this year, after sprucing up the theater and making necessary equipment installations. “We will show films there throughout the year,” says Emerman. “It’s a great space. It gives us a home year-round.”

## Fest celebrates 20 years with host of premieres

By Thom Smith

Lights, camera — and lots of action.

But what would you expect at a 20th birthday party for the Palm Beach International Film Festival?

It seems only yesterday the festival took its first cinematic breaths, as organizers and fans held theirs while waiting for a certain director or actor to confirm — sometimes gasping when they did, sometimes crying, sometimes laughing as stories unfolded on screen.

The full breadth of emotions no doubt will be on display March 26 at Muvico Parisian 20 at CityPlace in West Palm Beach as festival President Randi Emerman snaps the clapperboard for *Welcome to Me*. The dark comedy, starring Kristen Wiig, James Marsden, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Tim Robbins and Joan Cusack, was directed by PBIFF veteran Shira Piven. Her first feature, *Fully Loaded*, won “audience favorite” in 2011. An opening party follows at Revolution.

The festival closes April 2 with Noah Baumbach’s *While We’re Young*, starring Ben Stiller and Naomi Watts as a middle-aged couple whose lives are upended by a disarming young couple, played by Amanda Seyfried and Adam Driver.

In between, fans will be

treated to 12 world and 15 U.S. premieres, plus shorts, documentaries, presentations and lots of already and soon-to-be familiar faces.

In the summer of 1974, *Rock Your Baby* sold more than 11 million copies. Recorded at the legendary TK Records in Hialeah, it became the first great disco hit and was *Rolling Stone*’s record of the year. The singer was George McCrae, son of the first African-American cop in West Palm Beach.

On March 28, the festival will screen *The Record Man*, which chronicles TK Records and founder Henry Stone. McCrae will be presented the key to West Palm Beach by Mayor Jeri Muoio. Jimmi Bo Horne, another TK artist, also from West Palm Beach, will perform.

The evening will be a homecoming of sorts for documentary filmmaker Mark Moorman. Before his film *Tom Dowd & the Language of Music* was nominated for a Grammy and *For Once in My Life* won the audience award at SXSW, Moorman was a volunteer with the Palm Beach festival.

More music: A candid documentary, *Nat King Cole: Afraid of the Dark*, is set for March 30 at Muvico Parisian 20. The famous singer’s daughters Timolin and Casey Cole will attend the screening and a reception.

## BOCA FESTIVAL

Continued from page 11

husband, trumpeter Jeffrey Kaye, is artistic director and principal trumpeter of the Symphonia Boca Raton.

For its final day, the festival will feature National Public Radio personality Martin Goldsmith discussing his book, “Alex’s Wake.” Kaye said planners had hoped for a last-minute performance to fill the vacant March 15 spot, but it didn’t happen. Still, she noted, ending the mainstage events with the Beethoven Ninth “is an excellent closing.”

The festival opened March 6 with a screening of the film version of Leonard Bernstein’s musical *West Side Story*, accompanied live by the Festival Orchestra Boca, keeping its original vocals and dialogue intact. It’s something Jamie Bernstein, one of Bernstein’s two daughters, says is “so vibrant when it’s live, even if you aren’t familiar with the musical.”

One of the songs from that show, *Somewhere*, will return on the March 14 concert along with the Beethoven Ninth. Jamie Bernstein, a narrator, writer and broadcaster, gave a talk about her father and his work as a festival preview on March 4.

“He was so multifaceted.



The Young People’s Chorus of New York City will perform Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony on March 14. Photo provided

We all know he was a composer, but he wrote for musical theater, symphonies and ballets... and he was a conductor,” she said. “He was also into education. Everything he did was a form of teaching.”

*West Side Story*, she said, “is an extraordinary work. It is popular for a reason, because it is incredibly sophisticated. It was interesting how my father put music together. He borrowed from the classics. He wanted to take the walls down between the genres.”

Musically, the festival has other important performers, including Sir James Galway, master of the flute, who returns to the festival he helped launch in 2007 for a Mozart gala March 13 that also features pianist and composer Conrad

Tao, who at 13 years old made his debut at the 2008 festival, and violinist Arnaud Sussmann, a Perlman protégé. They’ll also be joined by Kitsopoulos and the Festival Orchestra.

The great banjoist and bluegrass artist Bela Fleck is featured March 7 along with his wife, Abigail Washburn, and on March 8, it’s a dance program called Stars of International Ballet.

While the musical events take place on the amphitheater stage under a large tent, the literary events convene at the Cultural Arts Center on the east end of Mizner Park in the old Cartoon Museum building. The lineup here is impressive, with *New York*

### IF YOU GO

Tickets range from \$15 to \$125 per person and are available at [festivalboca.com](http://festivalboca.com) or by calling (866) 571-2787. The All-Authors pass is \$152 per person or \$244 per person for premium seating.

The festival schedule includes:

#### March 7

3 p.m., *Girl Rising* (documentary film), Cultural Arts Center  
7:30 p.m., Béla Fleck & Abigail Washburn, (banjoists), Amphitheater

#### March 8

4 p.m., Richard Ford, “Let Me Be Frank with You,” Cultural Arts Center  
7 p.m., Stars of International Ballet, Amphitheater

#### March 9

7 p.m., Siddhartha Mukherjee, “The Cancer Puzzle,” Cultural Arts Center

#### March 10

7 p.m., Clive Thompson, “Smarter than You Think: How Technology Is Changing Our Minds for the Better,” Amphitheater

#### March 11

7 p.m., Thomas Friedman, “That Used to Be Us,” Amphitheater

#### March 12

7 p.m., Michael Grunwald, “Saving Paradise,” Cultural Arts Center

#### March 13

4 p.m., Lucinda Franks, “Love and Politics,” Cultural Arts Center  
7:30 p.m., Mozart Gala: James Galway, Conrad Tao and Arnaud Sussmann with Festival Orchestra Boca, Constantine Kitsopoulos, conductor, Amphitheater

#### March 14

7:30 p.m., Beethoven: Symphony No. 9; Young People’s Chorus of New York City, Master Chorale of South Florida and Festival Orchestra Boca, Amphitheater

#### March 15

4 p.m., Martin Goldsmith, “Alex’s Wake,” Cultural Arts Center

*Times* columnist Thomas Friedman (March 11, in the amphitheater), Pulitzer Prize-winning fiction master Richard Ford (March 8), and physician and cancer “biographer” Siddhartha

Mukherjee (March 9).

Also on tap are journalist Lucinda Franks (March 13), technology expert Clive Thompson (March 10) and *Time* correspondent Michael Grunwald (March 12).