

## Milan Intl Film Festival

November 25, 2008

### Fest Bits | Gotham presenters, YouTubing Sundance and Milan changes

**Sean Penn** and **Sir Ben Kingsley** have been tapped as presenters for the **Gotham Awards**. Penn will present the Gotham Tribute to "Milk's" **Gus Van Sant** while Kingsley will honor his "Elegy" co-star, **Penelope Cruz**.



**YouTube** and **Sundance** are teaming again for "**Project Direct**," an online short film competition. Winner gets a trip to the 2009 fest and a screening at a "non-theatre" festival event. At the end of the submission period, Sundance programmers will trim down the submissions to 10 semifinalists, which will then be voted on by the YouTubers. More info at [youtube.com/projectdirect](http://youtube.com/projectdirect), including an address from "**The Wrestler**" helmer **Darren Aronofsky** filmed at a mysterious forest bunker.

**Milan Intl Film Festival** will now accept indie films for a new competition -- the **Grand Audience Award**, as MIFF calls it. "We want our films to be sold and distributed. With this in mind, I began thinking in reverse -- from the goal of releasing a film to understand the necessary steps," said MIFF founder and director **Andrea Galante**. Info at [www.miff.it](http://www.miff.it).

The **Seattle Intl Film Festival** got a grant from the **Wallace Foundation** to the tune of \$750,000. The cash, to be spent over four years, adds to the \$30 grand they got from **AMPAS**.

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#### ABOUT

**Michael Jones** is the film festival editor at



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- BAFTA/LA British

#### UPCOMING FESTS

##### AFI FEST

Los Angeles, CA  
November 5 - 12, 2008

[LINEUP HERE](#)

##### MAR DEL PLATA FILM FESTIVAL

Mar del Plata, Argentina  
November 6 - 16, 2008

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##### DUBAI INTL FILM FESTIVAL

Dubai, U.A.E.  
December 11 - 18, 2008

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