



## **SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST ANNOUNCES TERRENCE MALICK'S SONG TO SONG TO OPEN SXSW FILM FESTIVAL 2017**

**Early Fest Highlights include *American Gods*, *Small Town Crime* and *Signature Move***

**Austin, Texas, January 5, 2017** - South by Southwest® (SXSW®) Conference and Festivals (March 10-19, 2017) announced the World Premiere of celebrated director Terrence Malick's *Song To Song* as its Opening Night Film to screen on Friday March 10th, 2017.

SXSW also divulged select titles to premiere at the 2017 event, showcasing the diverse range of styles that together embody the unique spirit of SXSW culture. Festival highlights announced today include Eshom and Ian Nelms' hybrid action thriller with dark humor, *Small Town Crime*, Jeff Malmberg and Chris Shellen's lyrical portrait of a tiny hill town in Tuscany, *Spettacolo*, second feature after their award-winning *Marwencol*; first time filmmaker Jennifer Reeder's coming-of-age Muslim melodrama *Signature Move* starring Fawzia Mirza, and Latin American phenomenon René Pérez Joglar's chronicle of his global exploration of his genetic roots in *Residente*.

In our highly successful Episodic section we will be featuring the world premiere of Neil Gaiman's *American Gods*, directed by David Slade. The first of many projects in SXSW Film's new VR/AR strand is Viacom NEXT's *The Melody of Dust*, an invitation inside the tortured mind of an artist.

"Terrence Malick is a world class revered cinematic poet. His work is a treasure trove of talented actors and vision. Set in the Austin music scene, *Song to Song* couldn't be a more perfect Opening Night film for SXSW," said Janet Pierson, Director of Film. "While these titles are just a taste of what SXSW 2017 will offer, they reflect the range of work we are known for, from newcomers and auteurs to pop entertainment in traditional cinema, episodics and now VR."

The complete film festival lineup will be announced Tuesday, January 31st, with the exception of Midnighter features, which will be revealed with the Short Film and VR Program on Tuesday, February 7th.

The 2017 SXSW Film Festival will feature:

***American Gods*** (World Premiere)

Director: David Slade, Screenwriters/Showrunners: Bryan Fuller, Michael Green

Adapted from Neil Gaiman's award-winning novel, *American Gods* follows Shadow Moon (Ricky Whittle) and Mr. Wednesday (Ian McShane) in a magical world where a battle is brewing between the Old Gods and the New Gods.

***The Melody of Dust*** (World Premiere)

Director: Viacom NEXT

A musical journey for the HTC Vive. Explore a mysterious world where every object contains a unique melody. Featuring original musical compositions by Hot Sugar, this experience brings you inside the tortured mind of a musician.

***Residente*** (World Premiere)

Director: René Pérez Joglar

After taking a DNA test, Latin America's most decorated artist - Rene Perez (AKA Residente), embarks on a global adventure, to trace the footsteps of his ancestors and record his latest album.

***Signature Move*** (World Premiere)

Director: Jennifer Reeder, Screenwriters: Fawzia Mirza, Lisa Donato

A secret new romance with Alma forces Zaynab to confront her complicated relationship with her recently widowed mother. In this coming-of-age Muslim melodrama, Zaynab copes by taking up Lucha-style wrestling.

*Cast: Fawzia Mirza, Shabana Azmi, Sari Sanchez, Audrey Francis, Charin Alvarez, Mark Hood, Molly Brennan*

***Small Town Crime*** (World Premiere)

Directors/Screenwriters: Eshom Nelms, Ian Nelms

Ex-cop, Mike Kendall, finds the body of a young woman and, in an act of self-redemption, becomes hellbent on finding the killer. While his uncouth, quirky detective style helps break the case, his dogged determination puts his family in danger.

*Cast: John Hawkes, Anthony Anderson, Octavia Spencer, Robert Forster, Clifton Collins, Jr.*

***Song To Song*** (World Premiere)

Director: Terrence Malick

In this modern love story set against the Austin, Texas music scene, two entangled couples -- struggling songwriters Faye and BV, and music mogul Cook and the waitress whom he ensnares -- chase success through a rock 'n' roll landscape of seduction and betrayal.

*Cast: Rooney Mara, Ryan Gosling, Michael Fassbender, Natalie Portman*

**Spettacolo** (World Premiere)

Directors: Jeff Malmberg, Chris Shellen, Screenwriter: Chris Shellen

For the past 50 years, the villagers of a tiny hill town in Tuscany have turned their lives into a play that the entire town writes and performs. "Spettacolo" is a portrait of this tradition through the eyes of the last man trying to keep it alive.

**Film Stills, Headshots can be found at:** <http://fif.sxsw.com/media>

Now in its 24th year, SXSW Film brings together creatives of all stripes over nine days to experience a diverse lineup and access to thousands of Conference sessions with visionaries from all corners of the entertainment and media industries. Previously announced Keynotes and Featured Speakers include **Lee Daniels, Gareth Edwards, Kathryn Hahn, Cheryl Boone Isaacs, Jill Soloway** and more.

New for 2017, the Interactive, Film, and Music badges will now include expanded access to more of the SXSW Conference & Festivals experience. Attendees will still receive primary entry to programming associated with their badge-type, but can now enjoy secondary access to most other SXSW events. SXSW's next registration deadline is January 13, 2017 at 11:59pm PT. Early registrants benefit from discounted rates.

SXSW dedicates itself to helping creative people achieve their goals. Founded in 1987 in Austin, Texas, SXSW is best known for its conference and festivals that celebrate the convergence of the interactive, film and music industries. The event, an essential destination for global professionals, features sessions, showcases, screenings, exhibitions, and a variety of networking opportunities. SXSW proves that the most unexpected discoveries happen when diverse topics and people come together. SXSW 2017 will take place March 10-19, 2017.

SXSW is proud to be an official qualifying festival for the Academy Awards® Short Film Competition. The Best Narrative Short, Best Documentary Short and Best Animated Short winners become eligible for the Academy Awards.

SXSW 2017 is sponsored by Esurance, Mazda, Monster Energy, Bud Light, Capital One, McDonald's, The Austin Chronicle, and Sonicbids.

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**Press Credentials:** We are accepting applications for 2017 SXSW Press Credentials at [sxsw.com/press](http://sxsw.com/press). The deadline to apply is Wednesday, February 8th, and walk-up requests will not be granted. Media approved for credentials will receive access to the limited block of hotel rooms held for Press at the discounted conference rates. Rooms are sold on a 'first come, first served basis'. The earlier you apply, the better your selection of hotel rooms.

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