

Critically Acclaimed 'Canaan Land' Film Screens in Drive-Ins in L.A. and Miami

Richard Rossi's controversial faith-based indie screens in drive-ins in L.A. & Miami. The small film with big buzz stars Rossi and Rebecca Holden. by Amber Cho

MIAMI, FL, USA, December 28, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As prospects for going back to see movies indoors grew dim under shadows of covid-19, pop-up drive-ins spread. Film lovers enjoyed socially distanced movies with dozens of other cars.

"It brings back nostalgia for my childhood, piling a bunch of kids in the back of the family station wagon," Julie Taylor, of Miami said. "Seeing a talked-about new film like '[Canaan Land](#)' before everyone else is exciting."

[Richard Rossi's](#) 'Canaan Land' drew movie fans in their cars to the drive-in screening. The week-long event took place in parking lots in L.A. at an empty lot shared by a theater and a church at Victory and Laurel Canyon Boulevards and Miami at the 36th Street Flea Market for a nightly screenings December 17th through December 23rd. The idea came from the Academy of Motion Pictures. Canaan Land has been submitted as an entry in the Academy Awards and the Academy suggested an addendum for drive-in screenings due to covid.

A small group of 17 protesters from Miami Tabernacle Church held signs invoking the judgment of God against the film for the movie's criticisms of certain preachers.

"Artists may be attacked, criticized, misunderstood, but because they challenge things, their work is unignored," Richard Rossi said.

Based on Richard Rossi's hit novel, Canaan Land is a feature dramatic film warning how televangelists take advantage of those with genuine faith.

Canaan Land pits televangelist, preacher, and phone psychic Brother Billy Gantry (played by writer-director Richard Rossi) with a true believer, Sister Sara Sunday (played by actress-singer Rebecca Holden). While Sara is a devoted and sincere Christian, Brother Gantry's focus is on receiving offerings, donations, and creating a larger ministry. The real action begins when he falls in love with Sara. Will he rediscover true faith? Or will Sister Sara fall into the devil's trap?

The film dramatizes the types of counterfeit tactics used by some popular preachers today,

shedding light on the truth. The lost preacher has a true “come to Jesus moment”, as he falls for Sister Sara, realizing that his con is no longer a game, and there is much more at stake. Exploring themes of deceit, love, faith, and redemption; Canaan Land inspires each viewer to take note of the real purpose of their life and their faith.

Featuring celebrity cameos such as Lynda Carter, Cindy Williams, Sally Kirkland, Dead Kennedys, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, and many more, Canaan Land is praised for being “a religious film for the rest of us”.

Through Richard Rossi’s leadership and direction, Canaan Land is truly breaking the stigma that religious films cannot be entertaining for a secular crowd, while still pursuing religious messaging.

Drive-in screenings were part of the tweaks to Academy Awards Rule Two regarding eligibility, adapting to COVID-related changes in response to theater closures. The Oscars allow films that were no longer able to proceed with a planned theatrical release to qualify if they screened on a streaming or VOD platform first, provided they then screened on the Academy Screening Room members-only streaming service within 60 days thereafter.

The general public was notified through social and conventional media. Cars were charged a flat-rate per car of \$15, and spaced six feet apart. Moviegoers remained inside of their vehicles during the film. The sound for Canaan Land was accessed by patrons in their cars through FM radio.

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The film contains a stellar cast, including cameos from [Oscar](#) Best Actress nominee Sally Kirkland, and Oscar Best Supporting Actor winner Louis Gossett Jr.

Music in the film includes Grammy-winner Jason Crabb, Rebecca Holden, and Grammy-nominated producer Joel Diamond's 'A Much, Much Greater Love,' as well as songs penned and performed by Richard Rossi including 'Canaan Land,' 'Vagabond,' and 'Street Preachin' Man,' and Rebecca Holden's singing the classics 'O Holy Night' and 'I Believe.'

Canaan Land will be streaming in multiple platforms soon.

Some of the film’s proceeds benefit covid relief, and screenings were sponsored by two non-profits, Eternal Grace and Multi-Cultural Community Coalition.

The 93rd Oscars will take place on April 25, 2021.

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