ROME INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL
RIFF AWARDS 2026

Punk State and Destroy All Girls open the 25th Edition

PUNK STATE, THE DEBUT FEATURE BY LORIS DI PASQUALE, OPENS THE FESTIVAL ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27 AT PALAZZO SAN LORENZO IN ROME

DESTROY ALL GIRLS BY ERIN VASSILOPOULOS MAKES ITS ITALIAN PREMIERE ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28 AT NUOVO CINEMA AQUILA AND LAUNCHES THE INTERNATIONAL LINE-UP OF THE FEATURE FILM COMPETITION

Punk State, the debut feature by Loris Di Pasquale, will open the 25th edition of RIFF Awards – Rome Independent Film Festival, taking place in Rome from November 27 to December 4, 2026. Following its world premiere at the 2026 Pesaro Film Festival (in the Italian Debuts section), the film will be presented on Friday, November 27 at 7:45 p.m. at Palazzo San Lorenzo, with the director and cast in attendance. The screening will be preceded by a live performance by Punkcake, the Italian punk-rock band that wrote "Buongiorno," the song featured in the film's closing credits. Destroy All Girls will have its Italian premiere on Saturday, November 28 at 8:00 p.m. at Nuovo Cinema Aquila, with director Erin Vassilopoulos in attendance, opening the international programme of the feature film competition. The US film had its world premiere at the Locarno Film Festival in the Cineasti del Presente (Filmmakers of the Present) section.

In Punk State, seven people are selected to attend the most exclusive event of the moment: a mysterious show that could shake each of their lives. Awaiting them, motionless in the auditorium, are three masked men dressed in paramilitary clothing. As the evening unfolds, the performance becomes a violent ritual in which the participants' lives and the forces that have shaped them are laid bare, culminating in a reckoning as cruel as it is violent. On November 27, director, screenwriter and producer Loris Di Pasquale will attend, alongside actresses and producers Alessia Bellotto and Alma Noce, producer Mario Pannarale, and cast members Antonio Balbi, Riccardo Colasuonno, Elisabetta De Vito, Filippo Gattuso Diacoianni, Gianfilippo Grasso, Sebastien Halnaut, Daphne Scoccia and Simone Zambelli.

In Destroy All Girls, Alex Martínez escapes a stifling home and joins a group of street skaters. At first, as she makes her way through New York armed only with her skates and a video camera, everything seems easy. But when identity and family collide, she is forced to confront the one thing she cannot escape: herself. The cast includes Ani Mesa-Perez, Gil Perez-Abraham and Dominic Bruce. American director Erin Vassilopoulos will attend the November 28 screening.

Punk State by Loris Di Pasquale and Destroy All Girls by Erin Vassilopoulos open the feature film competition, followed by Aurora by Georgi Stoev and Nikola Boshnakov, Il cacciatore di mosche by Emiliano Ferrera, Murkiness by Bartosz Szyszko, A Marte by Francisco Valdez, Il destino dell'ape by Toni Trupia, Thanks for Nothing by Stella Marie Markert, and 80 BPM by Grigory Kalinin. Alongside the feature film competition award, RIFF will also present awards for Italian and international documentaries and short films, student short films, animation and works in the (r)evolution AI section. The awards ceremony will take place on Friday, December 4 at Nuovo Cinema Aquila in Rome.

The jury for the festival's 25th edition comprises Barbara Busso (production manager); Cristian Casella (entrepreneur, producer and publisher); Giancarlo Chetta (specialist in audiovisual management and co-productions); Mario Colamarino (president of the "Mario Mieli" Homosexual Cultural Association); Benjamin Minot (director and filmmaker); Fabio Mazzeo (architect and interior designer); Rafaël (artist and experimental filmmaker); and Alessandro Rossetto (director, screenwriter and producer).

This year, alongside the audience jury, RIFF Awards 2026 will also welcome "The Women Exhibitors' Choice – The Jury by MEDIA Salles," an initiative promoted by MEDIA Salles featuring a jury of European women cinema exhibitors and programmers. The initiative was established to promote gender equality and raise the profile of films by women in theatrical distribution. Its three jury members are Stefania Corvi of CineTeatro Supercinema in Ceprano, Diane Gabrysiak of Ciné Lumière – Institut français du Royaume-Uni, and Silvia Salvetti of Cinema Teatro Lux in Busto Arsizio.

Organised by Associazione Culturale RIFF, the Festival is held with the financial support and patronage of the Directorate-General for Cinema of the Italian Ministry of Culture and the Lazio Region – Regional Directorate for Presidential Affairs, Tourism, Cinema, Audiovisual and Sport.

Press Materials

https://riff.it/media-room/sala-stampa/

Film Trailers on YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/@RIFFit

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