

There's something to suit all tastes in the Brazilian film festival kicking off tomorrow night says ZOE CHRISTODOULIDES

## Life, art and politics of Brazil

**C**inema magic is about to leave crowds sitting on the edge of their seats as some gritty dramatics give audiences something to ogle at in a Brazilian Film Festival kicking off tomorrow.

This year, the festival includes some diverse and challenging films exhibiting the life, art and politics of Brazil from different angles. Some are quite blithe whereas others penetrate into the darker side of the Brazilian reality. All of them however are rather captivating and extremely interesting to watch. What's more, all films are being screened for free so there's no excuse not to go along.

Starting up tomorrow evening, and following through until November 10, there'll be two film screenings to enjoy each evening. It all kicks off with *Broder* directed by Jeferson De which was released last year. Despite standing as De's debut film, it received the awards for Best Film, Best Music and Best Director at the Gramado Film Festival (2010) and at the Prêmio Contigo Cinema in Brazil (2011), as well as the São Paulo Association of Art Critics Award for Best Film in 2012.

It describes the story of 23-year-old Macu who has lived on the outskirts of São Paulo all his life. During a surprise

birthday party organised by his mother, Dona Sonia, he reencounters two of his childhood buddies who no longer live in the neighbourhood. Jaiminho is now a successful soccer player in Spain and then there's Pibe, who strives to make a living as an insurance salesman. Even though the two friends had previously moved away, they still have unresolved business to take care of in the neighbourhood as a series of critical dramatics play out.

What's particularly interesting is that the film was shot in Capão Redondo, a district where more than 1,100 people were murdered since 2000, but also stands as the home of the most some of the most talented Brazilian artists today.

Top highlights in the days to follow include *Senna*, a film that's slightly different to the rest as it stands as a British documentary film with a Brazilian subject matter. Directed by Asif Kapadia and released in 2010, it should make for a really good watch if you enjoy documentaries that look into the sporting world. Presenting a biography of Brazilian race car driver Ayrton Senna - a three-time Formula One world champion - it virtually takes audiences on a journey as if seated in the race car.

The documentary weaves off-screen interviews into a streamlined voice-over narrative, while

SUNDAY MAIL LIVING

Κυριακή, 4 Νοεμβρίου 2012, p. 17





the camera rarely strays from the racetrack. The film won a BAFTA Film Award in 2012 for Best Documentary Film and Best Editing, the British Independent Film Award for Best Documentary in 2011, the Audience Award for World Cinema Documentary at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival and many more.

Then comes another must see with *Secrets of the Tribe* by famous director, José Padilha released in 2010. In this eye opening documentary, the anthropological field resembles a vipers' nest of ethical breaches and academic backstabbing as an investigation is carried out into several decades of questionable research and behaviour that ultimately rendered Amazonian Brazil's Yanomami tribe – once considered the last, "purest" primitive

society untouched by outside influence – bitterly cynical toward First World interlopers.

Last but not least in our list of highlights comes *Elite Squad* and *Elite Squad: The Enemy Within* (released in 2007 and 2010 respectively), again by the talented Jose Padilha. Perhaps standing as the two best known films in the festival, the sequel is meant to be even better than the first.

The *Elite Squad* is a semi-fictional account of the BOPE, the Special Police Operations Squad of the Rio de Janeiro Military Police. It is an intense and astonishing look at Rio de Janeiro's notorious favelas and presents an intimate look at the city's vast and intricate web of corruption. The *Elite Squad* was an outstanding commercial suc-

cess in 2007 and became a cultural phenomenon in Brazil, having won the Golden Bear at the 2008 Berlin Film Festival among countless other awards.

Then comes *Elite Squad: The Enemy Within*. Having enjoyed public and critical acclaim, *Elite Squad: The Enemy Within* is the all-time largest box office ticket seller and highest-grossing film in Brazil. It has won the Trophy for Best Editing and Best Sound at the 2011 ABC Cinematography Award, the 2011 São Paulo Association of Art Critics Awards for Best Actor and Best Film among countless other awards.

This time round, audiences get to grips with the life of head of Rio's BOPE in a rather daunting tale that takes a look at dangerous enemies and the drama involved in the high profile job.



SUNDAY MAIL LIVING

Κυριακή, 4 Νοεμβρίου 2012, π. 17

