

Curtain rises on the Tribeca Festival, and on New York, too

NEW YORK, June 10, (AP) — The 20th Tribeca Festival is aiming to not just rebuild itself after its 2020 edition was largely scuttled by the pandemic, but to help revitalize its hometown.

This year's Tribeca, which opened Wednesday with Jon M. Chu's adaptation of the Lin-Manuel Miranda musical "In the Heights," will be spread throughout all five boroughs of New York with a mix of in-person and virtual screenings, ultimately culminating in a full-capacity premiere at a newly reopened Radio City Music Hall. For a festival founded in the wake of 9/11, coaxing New York back to life is a familiar role.

"Our founding mission felt more poignant, more important than ever," Jane Rosenthal, who started the festival with Robert De Niro, said in a recent interview. "That original mission of the festival was to use the power of film and storytelling not just to entertain but to rebuild our city - emotionally more than anything else."

Tribeca, which this year is being held two months later than usual, will be one of the biggest film festivals yet this year to go forward with a mostly in-person event. But instead of the usual theaters that are home to the festival, its primary venues this year will be outdoor screenings dispersed around the city. There's still a virtual component to the festival but the emphasis will be the energy generated by perhaps the largest cultural event held in New York in more than a year.

"Eighteen months ago, we all had to isolate," says Rosenthal. "Now that we're coming out of it, I talk to so many people who are in some

ways struggling to come out. It's been interesting the emotional toll this has taken on so many of us, not to mention the families that lost loved ones and all the front-line workers."

Tribeca is part of a wider effort to restore New York's cultural life. Rosenthal has helped lead Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo's "NY PopsUp" program, a series of free pop-up performances running through Labor Day. In just the past week, Bruce Springsteen said that he'll reopen his Broadway show later this month. A massive summer concert in Central Park was announced. And on June 20, the Foo Fighters will reopen Madison Square Garden to concerts after a 15-month shutdown.

Platform

But Tribeca, which includes 56 world premieres and programming across television, videogames, podcasts and virtual reality, had to start planning its 2021 incarnation - its 20th year - last August. Permits needed to be filed. Selections needed to be made. Organizers had to try to guess how health restrictions and vaccinations would evolve as they put the festival together. The rules of the road, as Rosenthal says, kept changing. Ultimately, they gambled that an in-person festival would be possible.

"We said the only way to be sure that our festival is happening is to pursue everything in parallel - to look at outdoor screenings, to look at indoor screenings and to look at a virtual platform," says Cara Cu-

sumano, festival director. "Then as we keep getting closer, we'll understand which of these we need to turn the volume up and down on. The outdoor screenings ended up being the centerpiece."

Films will have fewer showings than normal. Seats will be distanced from one another. But premieres will be rain-or-shine. On Wednesday, Morgan Neville, director of the anticipated "Roadrunner: A Film About Anthony Bourdain," was relieved to see that the forecast had brightened for Friday, the day his film debuts.

Fewer seats mean the Tribeca Festival, which has dropped the "film" from its name this year because of its multimedia program, will hope to sell more virtual tickets, as well as all-access passes starting at \$999. That includes anniversary screenings of "Fargo," "The Royal Tenenbaums," "The Five Heartbeats" and Charlie Chaplin's "The Kid." Steven Soderbergh's "No Sudden Move" will premiere as the festival's centerpiece, playing outdoors in the Battery. Tribeca will also feature programming timed to Juneteenth, and hand an award to Georgia political powerhouse Stacey Abrams.

But the festival is bookended by two marquee events. "In the Heights," one of the summer's most anticipated movies, premiered Wednesday at the United Palace in Washington Heights, as well as in the other boroughs. Though the film has already bowed in Los Angeles and opens imminently in theaters Friday, its arrival in its namesake neighborhood was a special occasion.

Film

Variety



Carrie Underwood performs 'I Wanna Remember' with NEEDTOBREATHE at the CMT Music Awards on May 5, 2021, in Nashville, Tenn. The awards show aired on June 9 with both live and pre-recorded segments. (AP) — See Page 13

Awards

Gladys Knight, H.E.R. perform

Underwood wins at CMT Awards

NEW YORK, June 10, (AP) — Carrie Underwood has another reason to rejoice — she extended her record as the most decorated artist in the history of the CMT Music Awards, thanks to her song "Hallelujah."

The music video for the singer's hit, a collaboration with John Legend, was named video of the year at Wednesday's show, which aired from Nashville, Tennessee.

Underwood, who now has 23 CMT Awards, thanked her die-hard fans while accepting the honor: "You're the reason we're all here doing what we do, doing what we love (and) making music videos."

She also shouted-out Legend, particularly for sending her the song, which appeared on her first holiday album "My Gift."

"Congratulations on what I think is your first CMT Award. Whoa!" she exclaimed.

Though Underwood owned part of the night — she also performed with rock band NEEDTOBREATHE — other female stars, some outside of country music, took over the awards show honoring the year's best country music videos.

Grammy-winning R&B star H.E.R. and fellow guitar slayer Chris Stapleton had the night's best performance. They joined forces for a smoky, thrilling performance of "Hold On," coming off like a veteran duo.

The legendary Gladys Knight won over audience members — not wearing masks — during a performance of "Friendship Train" with Mickey Guyton. Part of the show felt dedicated to Black female voices thanks to the top notch performances by Knight, H.E.R. and Guyton, who was nominated for two awards and presented the CMT Equal Play Award to Linda Martell, one of the pioneering Black acts in country music and the first Black woman to perform solo at the Grand

Ole Opry.

Martell had a country hit with the song "Color Me Country" 50 years ago, and she had other songs reach the charts, but she dealt with major hardships. She experienced racism while performing onstage and was shunned by the music industry as a mainstream country performer. Her record label shelved her album and she was prohibited from finding a new deal.

"Hearing Linda sing makes it very clear that she had all the talent to be a huge star but her career was cut short for one reason: the color of her skin," said Guyton, who made history this year as the first solo Black woman nominated for a country Grammy Award.

Success

"I would not be standing here today without you, and none of us would be here without you, so thank you!"

Martell, 86, didn't attend the awards show but CMT aired photos of the icon holding her award and said she was watching the show from her home in South Carolina.

Guyton also hit the stage with BRELAND, the Black singer who has mixed country, trap and R&B music and had a country hit with the platinum success "My Truck."

And the night featured more collaborative performances like it.

Lady A kicked off the show with Carly Pearce and Lindsay Ell, Ingrid Andress sang with pop singer-songwriter JP Saxe, while Miranda Lambert performed with Jack Ingram and Jon Randall.

Hosts Kane Brown and Kelsea Ballerini also performed onstage and won awards.

Brown won male video of the year for "Worship You" and collaborative video of the year

for "Famous Friends" with Chris Young. CMT performance of the year went to Ballerini and Halsey's "The Other Girl" from the 2020 CMT Music Awards.

Gabby Barrett, who was originally supposed to perform at the show but backed out, won female video of the year and the best family feature award went to Taylor Swift's "The Best Day (Taylor's Version)," which was re-released this year and featured home movies starring the pop star, her brother and parents.

Little Big Town's "Wine, Beer, Whiskey" won the night's first award - duo/group video of the year.

"This is awesome. First of all, we're back and making music people," Kimberly Schlapman yelled, referring to the pandemic.

"I know you like drinking songs," Karen Fairchild added.

A list of winners at the 2021 CMT Music Awards:

■ Video of the year: Carrie Underwood and John Legend, "Hallelujah"

■ Female video of the year: Gabby Barrett, "The Good Ones"

■ Male video of the year: Kane Brown, "Worship You"

■ Duo/group video of the year: Little Big Town, "Wine, Beer, Whiskey"

■ Breakthrough video of the year: Dylan Scott, "Nobody"

■ Collaborative video of the year: Chris Young and Kane Brown, "Famous Friends"

■ CMT performance of the year: Kelsea Ballerini and Halsey, "The Other Girl" (from the 2020 CMT Music Awards)

■ Best family feature: Taylor Swift, "The Best Day (Taylor's Version)"

■ CMT Equal Play Award: Linda Martell

LOS ANGELES: Prince Harry

took a break from paternity leave to announce the return of his Invictus Games, which supports the rehab and recovery of wounded veterans.

The Duke of Sussex announced in an Instagram post Wednesday that the Invictus Games will take place in Düsseldorf, Germany, in 2023.

The event — started by Harry in 2014 — is an athletic competition for wounded, sick, and injured veterans and armed forces members.

"It's time to spread the news," he said. "Something big is coming to Germany."

Harry and his wife, Meghan, welcomed their second child, Lilibet "Lili" Diana Mountbatten-Windsor, last week in California. The couple had their first child, Archie Harrison, in 2019.

After Harry's brief message, the video showed footage of a man running through the streets before entering a stadium in Düsseldorf before flashing the dates Sept 9-16.

Harry is bringing the Invictus Games back after he had to cancel the event in 2020 and this year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Invictus Games will return in the Hague, Netherlands, from April 16-22 in 2022, before it heads to Germany the following year. (AP)

ST LOUIS: Actress Ellie Kemper

has apologized for participating in a debutante ball hosted by a St Louis organization that she now says had "an unquestionably racist, sexist and elitist past."

The 41-year-old St Louis native and star of TV's "Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt" was criticized on Twitter after it was revealed that when she was 19, she was named "Queen of Love and Beauty" at St Louis' Ball.

The Organization dates to the late 1800s. It didn't allow Black members until 1979. Daughters of many prominent St Louis families have held the same title as Kemper, whose family founded Commerce Bancshares. Kemper, who rose to fame on TV's "The Office," said on

Instagram that she was unaware at the time of the history of the Organization, but "ignorance is no excuse."

The Organization put out its own statement saying it "acknowledges our past and recognizes the criticism levied our way." The statement said that the organization today "rejects



Kemper



Harry

racism, in any form." (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Chris Harrison, the original host of ABC's "The Bachelor" and its spinoffs, is leaving the long-running franchise.

His departure comes four months after he defended

contestant Rachael Kirkconnell against criticism over 2018 photos showing her at a fraternity formal with an Old South plantation theme.

Harrison is "stepping aside as host of 'The Bachelor' franchise. We are thankful for his many contributions over the past 20 years and wish him all the best

on his new journey," Warner Horizon and ABC Entertainment said in a joint statement Tuesday.

The producer and the network had no further comment, including on a replacement for Harrison. His publicist didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. (AP)