

# Crossing the Screen

**The International Film Festival returns to Eastbourne this March.**

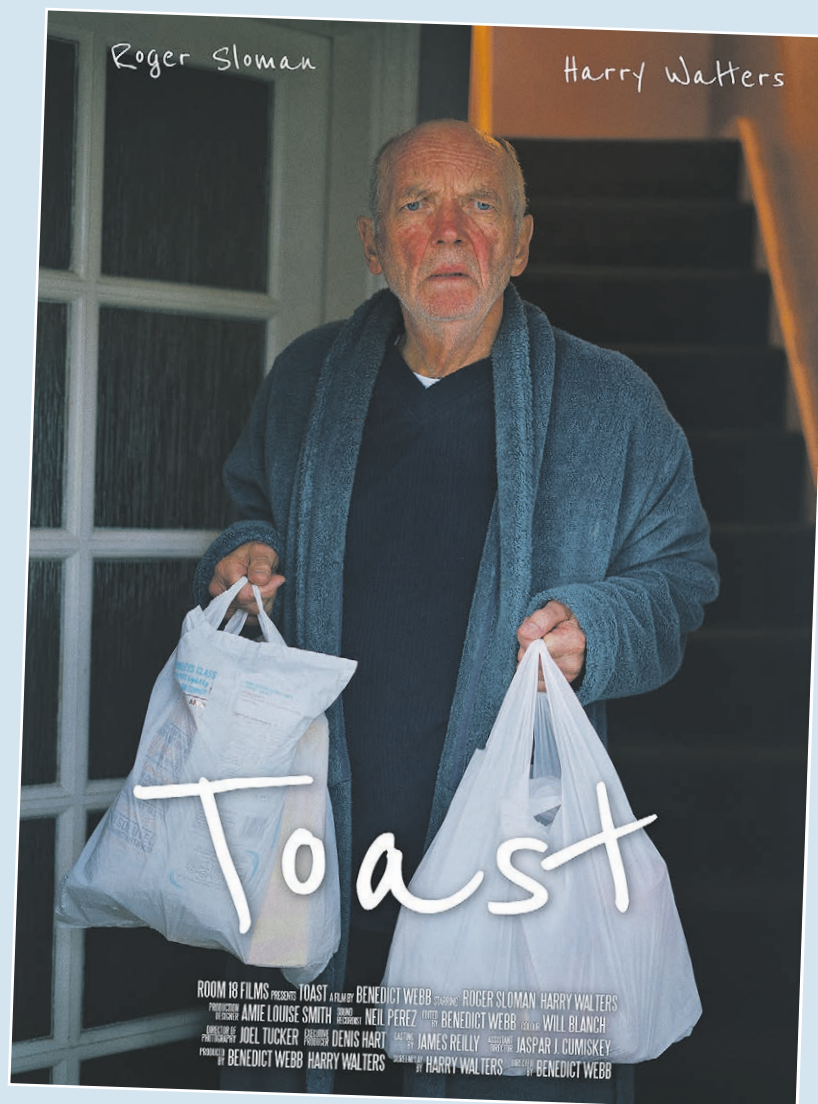
By **Melita Cameron-Wood**

**Founded by Domenico Della Valle and Manfredi Mancuso in 2015, Crossing The Screen International Film Festival, will be held at the Grove Theatre from 3rd to 5th March 2023. A wide array of films, ranging from shorts to narrative features and documentaries, will be screened this year.**

“The coming edition of the film festival really reflects the times we are living through,” Della Valle comments. “Some films cover the war in Ukraine or environmental challenges like climate change, while others focus on gender-related identity struggles. Immigration is also a big topic this year. But overall, one feeling that really emerges from the submissions we’ve received — particularly those from Africa and the Middle East — is that people want to be free to express themselves on a different level. There is a lot going on in the world at the moment, and the filmmakers seem to have picked up on this urgency to be free.”

Once again, submissions came pouring in from all four corners of the globe, offering local audiences the chance to explore narratives that they would otherwise be unlikely to see onscreen. One such example is **Goom Bu Nuul (Black tumour)**, a Senegalese documentary that showcases the 23-year-old director Babacar Sougou’s early memories of Mbeubeuss landfill, a sprawling dumpsite located next to his childhood home outside Dakar. Similarly, **Cycle**, a disturbing and thought-provoking film by award-winning Indian director Devashish Makhija, examines another topic rarely seen in film — the dilemma of the absence of systemic justice in tribal communities.

Alongside many international films, the festival also celebrates Sussex productions, such as **Toast**, a short film directed by Benedict Webb, a successful 22-year-old Portsmouth-based director and writer. This film will be competing against other local films in the category of Best Sussex Short Film. Another contender for the prize is **ELEVATE**. This short film, set in an Eastbourne yoga studio, was directed by professional actor



Christien Anholt (*The Relic Hunter, The Laureate* and Franco Zeffirelli’s *Hamlet*) and produced by Daniel Fathers, a local Hollywood star, who recently played Osfar in *The Witcher: Blood Origin*, which will go live on Netflix on Christmas Day.

The festival — the fruit of the unrelenting dedication of Della Valle, Mancuso and their team of volunteers — promises to bring people together through the power and joy of storytelling.

[www.crossingthescreen.org](http://www.crossingthescreen.org)

Tickets available from:  
[www.filmfreeway.com/Crossingthescreen/tickets](http://www.filmfreeway.com/Crossingthescreen/tickets)

