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Local documentary to play at Sarasota Film Festival

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"The Observer and the Observed," a feature-length documentary filmed entirely in Sarasota, will be shown in this year's Sarasota

Film Festival.

The festival runs through April 17.

The film features Sarasota artists from a wide range of styles, media and backgrounds, including students from Ringling College of Art

and Design. They create art in reaction to four local families with children facing mental health and behavioral challenges. The families range from a single mother with an only son to a blended family of 15 including

biological, adopted and foster children. More on the film, including a preview, is available at www.ObserverMovie.com.

The screenings will be held at Regal Hollywood 20, 1993 Main St., Sarasota, Saturday, April 9, at

6:30 p.m., and Sunday, April 11, at 6 p.m. Tickets are available at the box office or online at www.SarasotaFilmFestival.com.

Immediately following each screening, there will be a Q&A session with

the director and some of the film's subjects. In addition, selected artworks from the documentary will be on display.

The film offers viewers a chance to gain a new

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perspective by seeing children's mental health through art. The hope is that the film will spark a dialog in the community about issues of diversity, mental health and stigma.

"The Observer and the Observed" project culminated with a public exhibition at Art Center Sarasota in which each family was represented in four unique works of art, reminding the audience that each person has an individual point of view. The documentary challenges viewers

to reconsider their own assumptions about children and families who may be different from themselves.

The project and film were organized by the Sarasota Partnership for Children's Mental Health with a grant from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health

Services Administration.

Brad Bryan, a graduate of New College of Florida, filmed and edited the documentary throughout 2010. "The Observer and the Observed" is his first feature-length documentary and his first film to be accepted into a festival.