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FESTIVAL 39

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**THE 39TH SAN FRANCISCO JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL TO CLOSE WITH
“THE RED SEA DIVING RESORT” WITH DIRECTOR GIDEON RAFF IN PERSON**

SAN FRANCISCO - The Jewish Film Institute (JFI) announces the 39th San Francisco Jewish Film Festival (SFJFF) will close with **The Red Sea Diving Resort** on **Sunday, July 28, 7:15pm** at the Castro Theatre in San Francisco, with director Gideon Raff in person.

Inspired by one of the most remarkable true life rescue missions ever, **The Red Sea Diving Resort** is the incredible story of a group of international agents and brave Ethiopians who in the early 80s used a deserted holiday retreat in Sudan as a front to smuggle thousands of refugees to Israel. Chris Evans plays Ari Kidron, the Mossad agent who leads the mission together with courageous local Kabede Bimro, played by Michael Kenneth Williams. Posed as naive European entrepreneurs, the team he leads take advantage of the Sudanese government’s interest in expanding its feeble Ministry of Tourism to purchase a strategically located property along the Red Sea. Their plans are thrown for a loop, however, when real tourists begin arriving, expecting service.

Director Gideon Raff—creator of the acclaimed Israeli series **Prisoners of War** and an executive producer of its American adaptation **Homeland** —brings his signature pacing to the pulse-elevating scenes of intrigue, finding opportunities along the way to fill the mise-en-scene (from Mossad office headquarters to the kitschy scuba hotel) with sly references to the culture, politics, and distinctive aesthetics of its late ‘70s-early ‘80s setting. Finding more humor and adventure in the story than one would imagine possible given the high stakes of the drama, what resonates most strongly throughout **The Red Sea Diving Resort** is an indistinguishable pride in the sense of fraternity (the name of the Mossad’s original mission was “Operation Brothers”) between the Israeli and Ethiopian Jews, and the resourcefulness and bravery that bonds them together. The prestigious cast also includes Haley Bennett, Alessandro Nivola, Michiel Huisman, Chris Chalk, Greg Kinnear and Ben Kingsley.

The Closing Night screening is followed by a reception in the Castro Theatre Mezzanine, with food and drink provided by La Méditerranée. Tickets are \$22 members, \$25 general public.

For Festival logos, photos and press materials, visit jfi.org/press or sfjff.org/press. To request interviews or screeners, contact Larsen Associates at publicity@larsenassoc.com or call 415.957.1205.

For general or ticket information, visit sfjff.org or email jewishfilm@sfjff.org. To contact the SFJFF Box Office, please email boxoffice@sfjff.org, or call 415.621.0568.

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About the Jewish Film Institute

The Jewish Film Institute (JFI) is the premier curatorial voice for Jewish film and media and a leading arts and culture organization in the Bay Area. Presenter of the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival, JFI catalyzes and inspires communities in San Francisco and around the world to expand their understanding of Jewish life and culture through film, media, and dialogue. Year round, the Jewish Film Institute promotes awareness and appreciation of the diversity of the Jewish people through multiple mediums – including original online programming that reaches a global audience of over 2 million views. All of these services, along with artists' support and educational initiatives, give audiences around the world even greater access to Jewish culture and the visionaries who shape it.

About the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival

The San Francisco Jewish Film Festival (SFJFF), presented by the Jewish Film Institute, is the largest and longest-running festival of its kind and a leader in the curation and presentation of new film and media exploring the complexities of Jewish life around the world. Presenting more than 65 films and 135 individual screenings, performances and events in five Bay Area cities (San Francisco, Palo Alto, San Rafael, Oakland, Albany), SFJFF attracts more than 40,000 filmgoers and industry professionals to its 18-day program.