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## **Joe Berlinger to Receive Freedom of Expression Award at 37th San Francisco Jewish Film Festival**

*Berlinger will present his latest film INTENT TO DESTROY*

**SAN FRANCISCO, June 13, 2017** – The Jewish Film Institute (JFI) is pleased to announce that award-winning documentary filmmaker Joe Berlinger (*Paradise Lost, Brother's Keeper, Under African Skies*) will be the recipient of the 2017 Freedom of Expression Award. Berlinger will be presented the award as part of the 37th San Francisco Jewish Film Festival (SFJFF), which returns to the Bay Area July 20th to August 6th, 2017.

Since 2005, the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival has presented the Freedom of Expression Award annually to honor the unfettered imagination, which is a cornerstone of a free, just and open society. The festival is pleased to recognize Academy Award® nominated documentary filmmaker Joe Berlinger for his two decades of work as a leading voice in nonfiction film and television. Berlinger will be present Thursday, July 27th at the Castro Theatre in San Francisco to receive the Award.

As part of the Award Presentation, Berlinger will be on hand for a screening of his latest film **INTENT TO DESTROY**. In the film, Berlinger embeds himself on the epic film set of Terry George's *THE PROMISE* (starring Oscar Isaac and Christian Bale), to take an unwavering look at the Armenian Genocide. Historians, scholars, and high-profile filmmakers come together in Berlinger's cinematic exploration of the tangled web of responsibility that has driven a century of denial by the Turkish government and its strategic allies. The film will make its West Coast Premiere at the Festival following its World Premiere at the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival.

Following the film, Carrie Lozano, Director of the IDA Enterprise Documentary Fund, will conduct an onstage interview with Berlinger.

Entering its 37th year, the Festival is expecting an audience of over 40,000 moviegoers at the following theaters; the Castro Theatre in San Francisco, the Landmark Albany Twin in Albany, the CinéArts Theatre in Palo Alto, the Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center in San Rafael, and the New Parkway Theater in Oakland.

For ticket information, please visit the Jewish Film Institute online at [www.jfi.org](http://www.jfi.org) or the Festival website at [www.sjfff.org](http://www.sjfff.org) or contact the box office at 415.621.0523. The full program with complete information to be announced June 20, 2017.

**Jewish Film Institute and San Francisco Jewish Film Festival Social Media:**

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/sfjewishfilm/](https://facebook.com/sfjewishfilm/)

**Twitter:** [twitter.com/SFJewishFilm](https://twitter.com/SFJewishFilm)

**Instagram:** [instagram.com/sfjewishfilm/](https://instagram.com/sfjewishfilm/)

**YouTube:** [youtube.com/SFJewishFilmFestival](https://youtube.com/SFJewishFilmFestival)

**Website:** [www.jfi.org](http://www.jfi.org) / [www.sjfff.org](http://www.sjfff.org)

**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. 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. SFJFF attracts more than 40,000 filmgoers and industry professionals to its annual three weeks of inspiring films, events, panels and parties. Screenings take place at the historic Castro theatre in San Francisco and venues throughout the Bay Area during July and August.

**Ticket Information, Festival Dates and Public Contact Numbers**

The 37th San Francisco Jewish Film Festival will take place July 20th – August 6th, 2017. For more information, visit the SFJFF website at [www.sjfff.org](http://www.sjfff.org) or contact [jewishfilm@sjfff.org](mailto:jewishfilm@sjfff.org). For Box Office information, please contact [boxoffice@sjfff.org](mailto:boxoffice@sjfff.org) or call 415.621.0523. The complete lineup of films will be announced on June 20,

2017 along with a full complement of discussion programs, international guests, awards, and celebrations.

The 37th San Francisco Jewish Film Festival is supported by: Premier Festival Sponsors – Sterling Ban & Trust and the Seligman Family Foundation; Premier Hospitality Sponsor – The Orchard Hotel; Grand Media Sponsors – The Forward, KQED, J. the Jewish News of Northern California and SF Weekly.