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ANNOUNCING THE COMPLETE LINEUP FOR THE 37TH SAN FRANCISCO JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

SAN FRANCISCO, June 20, 2017 – The Jewish Film Institute (JFI) is pleased to announce the complete line up for the 37th San Francisco Jewish Film Festival (SFJFF) which returns to the Bay Area July 20th to August 6th, 2017.

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.

Opening Night – KEEP THE CHANGE

The Festival will open on Thursday, July 20th at the Castro Theatre in San Francisco with the Tribeca Film Festival award-winning narrative **KEEP THE CHANGE** with director Rachel Israel and invited guests in person. A romantic comedy set in New York City; **KEEP THE CHANGE** is an honest portrayal of a community of adults living on the autism spectrum. Following the film, the Festival will host the Opening Night Bash at the Contemporary Jewish Museum where partygoers will be able to explore the current exhibition *The 613* by Archie Rand.

Closing Night – BOMBSHELL: THE HEDY LAMARR STORY

The 37th San Francisco Jewish Film Festival closes its Castro Theatre screenings on Sunday, July 30th with Closing Night film **BOMBSHELL: THE HEDY LAMARR STORY**. An official selection of the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival, **BOMBSHELL** follows the life and career of actress Hedy Lamarr. Alexandra Dean's documentary chronicles not only Lamarr's achievements as an actress but also her accomplishments as an inventor. Director Alexandra Dean and Hedy Lamarr's son, Anthony Loder will be in attendance for the screening and the Closing Night Reception at the Castro Theatre Mezzanine.

Freedom of Expression Award – Documentary Filmmaker Joe Berlinger

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.

Centerpiece Narrative - 1945

The San Francisco Jewish Film Festival is pleased to present Ferenc Török's haunting film **1945**, based on the acclaimed short story "Homecoming" by Gábor T. Szántó, as its Centerpiece Narrative. Set during a sweltering August day in 1945 as villagers prepare for the wedding of the town clerk's son, two Orthodox Jews arrive at the village train station with mysterious boxes labeled "fragrances." The town clerk fears the men may be heirs of the village's deported Jews and expects them to demand their stolen property back. An official selection of the 2017 Berlin Film Festival, **1945** will make its Bay Area Premiere at the festival with director Ferenc Török in attendance.

Centerpiece Documentary - DINA

Winner of the 2017 Sundance Film Festival U.S. Documentary Grand Jury Prize, **DINA** will make its Bay Area premiere as the festival's Centerpiece Documentary. The film chronicles Dina and Scott, a loving couple each on the mental development spectrum. Filmmakers Antonio Santini and Dan Sickles follow the couple during a poignant time in their lives as they are moving in together and planning their wedding. Director Antonio Santini and subject Dina Buno will be in attendance for the Centerpiece presentation.

Local Spotlight - AN INCONVENIENT SEQUEL: TRUTH TO POWER

AN INCONVENIENT SEQUEL: TRUTH TO POWER, the highly anticipated sequel to **AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH**, will screen as the festival Local Spotlight with local filmmakers Bonni Cohen and Jon Shenk in attendance. The film follows Al Gore's work as he continues to inform and educate about the catastrophic consequences of climate change. Al Gore has been invited to attend the screening.

Next Wave Spotlight - THE BOY DOWNSTAIRS

Zosia Mamet of **GIRLS** stars in Sophie Brooks' **THE BOY DOWNSTAIRS**, which will screen as the Next Wave Spotlight presentation. An official selection of the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival, Mamet stars as Diana who has just returned to New York after living in London for three years trying to become a writer. She is forced to reflect on her first relationship when she inadvertently moves into her ex-boyfriend's apartment building. For SFJFF Next Wave passholders, the Next Wave Spotlight Reception will follow the film after the Saturday, July 29 screening at 6:25pm at the Castro Theatre. Director Sophie Brooks will be in attendance for the West Coast premiere of the film.

Film and Feast - Personal Affairs

An official selection of the 2016 Un Certain Regard section of the Cannes Film Festival, **PERSONAL AFFAIRS** will screen as the festivals Film and Feast presentation. Maha Haj's directorial debut traces the intergenerational dissatisfactions of a dispersed Palestinian family living in Nazareth, Ramallah and Sweden. Following the Thursday, August 3rd screening at 6pm at the Landmark Albany Twin Theatre in the East Bay, the festival will present an exclusive reception featuring Middle-Eastern flavors and wine pairings at Zaytoon Mediterranean Restaurant & Bar.

Song - BODY AND SOUL: AN AMERICAN BRIDGE

Oakland based filmmaker Robert Philipson will present his latest film **BODY AND SOUL: AN AMERICAN BRIDGE**. The film examines the relationship between African Americans and American Jews through early performance history of the jazz standard "Body and Soul", one of the most recorded songs in the jazz repertoire. The Castro screening of **BODY AND SOUL** is followed by a live performance by The Marcus Shelby Quartet. Marcus Shelby is a bandleader, composer, arranger, bassist, educator, and activist based in San Francisco. A collaborator of Anna Deavere Smith (*Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education*), Shelby is currently an artist in residence with the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival.

Dance - BOBBI JENE

Elvira Lind's multiple award-winner from the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival **BOBBI JENE** will make its Bay Area premiere as the Dance presentation at the festival. The documentary follows American dancer Bobbi Jene in the aftermath of her decision to leave behind her prominent position at the world-famous Batsheva Dance Company in Israel and return to the U.S. As part of the presentation at the festival, SFJFF will present *A Study in Effort*, a rare performance from Bobbi Jene in partnership with ODC Dance in San Francisco. The performance will take place Wednesday, August 2nd at 8PM at ODC.

East Bay Opening Night - THE YOUNG KARL MARX

To kick off the East Bay screenings at the Landmark Albany Twin Theatre in Albany, SFJFF will launch with Raoul Peck's biopic **THE YOUNG KARL MARX**, which looks at the early years of Karl Marx. The film originally premiered at the 2017 Berlinale and will make its Bay Area premiere at the festival. Following the East Bay screening of the film Thursday, July 27 at 7pm at the Landmark Albany Twin, the festival will celebrate the first night of East Bay screenings with a special Block Party with light refreshments and entertainment.

Palo Alto Opening Night - FANNY'S JOURNEY

Lola Diolon's **FANNY'S JOURNEY**, the absorbing true story of a 13-year-old girl separated from her parents in Nazi occupied France, will launch the festival's Peninsula screenings as the Palo Alto Opening Night Film on Saturday, July 22 at 6:15pm at the CinéArts Theatre in Palo Alto. Lead actor Léonie Souchaud will be in person in Palo Alto and San Francisco.

Exodus: A Sidebar on the Refugee Experience

In collaboration with The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, SFJFF is pleased to present *Exodus: A Sidebar on the Refugee Experience* as part of the 37th edition of the festival. The sidebar will screen films that examine the experience of refugees and underscore the similarities between past and contemporary xenophobia, populism and extreme nationalism. Films in the program include: **THE GOOD POSTMAN**, where a postman in a small town in Bulgaria runs for mayor under the platform of welcoming refugees and helping bring life to the dying city; **I'M OKAY**, Pia Lenz's look at Syrian and Roma refugees attempting to settle into Hamburg, Germany; **LEVINSKY PARK**, an examination of the residents, refugees and activists in the Levinsky Park neighborhood of Tel Aviv; **STRANGER IN PARADISE**, an exploration of the power dynamics among Europeans and refugees and the laws that impact them; and **VOYAGE OF THE DAMNED**, the 1976 Hollywood classic starring Faye Dunaway, Orson Welles, Lee Grant, Malcolm McDowell, Jonathan Pryce, Max Von Sydow and Katharine Ross was inspired by the true story of the MS St. Louis ocean liner carrying Jewish refugees from Nazi

Germany to Cuba in 1939. The screening of **STRANGER IN PARADISE** is followed by a panel discussion featuring Mark Hetfield, president and CEO of HIAS; Amy Weiss of Jewish Family and Children's Services of the East Bay; Subhi Nahas, Syrian refugee and LGBTQ activist.

Take Action Day: Repairing the World One Film at a Time

SFJFF will present the fourth annual *Take Action Day*, a full day of films dedicated to community action, on Monday, July 24 at the Castro Theatre in San Francisco. Inspired by the Jewish value of Tikkun Olam, SFJFF is proud to present the work of filmmakers who are creating social justice media working to inspire change and repair the world. Films in the program include: the SFJFF37 Local Spotlight: **AN INCONVENIENT SEQUEL: TRUTH TO POWER** from local filmmakers Bonni Cohen and Jon Shenk; **HEATHER BOOTH: CHANGING THE WORLD**, Lilly Rivlin's look at activist Heather Booth; **BENDING THE ARC**, Keif Davidson and Pedro Kos' inspiring look at the doctors and activists who came together thirty years ago with the goal of providing health care for all, particularly in the developing world; and **LITTLE STONES**, Sophia Kruz' profile of four women working to help women around the world in unique ways. Emmy-nominated filmmaker Susan Stern will moderate post film discussions following **HEATHER BOOTH**, **BENDING THE ARC** and **LITTLE STONES**.

In Focus: Women's Directorial Debuts

SFJFF37 is proud to have 41% of its official selection come from women directors with a significant amount being directorial debuts (both the Opening and Closing Night films at this year's Festival are feature directorial debuts by women filmmakers). In addition to the Opening Night, Closing Night, Next Wave Spotlight and Film and Feast films being directed by women, the festival will also screen the following directorial debuts by women: **HOUSE OF Z**, Sandy Chronopoulos' examination of renowned fashion designer Zac Posen; **IN BETWEEN**, Maysaloun Hamoud's tale of three modern Palestinian Israeli women; **SUPERGIRL**, Jessie Auritt's fascinating documentary about Naomi Kutin, a nine-year-old Orthodox girl with a talent for weightlifting; and **RED TREES**, Marina Willer's enigmatic, poetic and intensely personal documentary, chronicling one family's journey through war based on the recollections of the director's father.

50 Years: Six Days That Shaped Modern Israel

2017 marks 50 years since the 1967 Six Day War and SFJFF37 is pleased to present two important films that allow for reflection on the past, and contemplation of the future. The films include: **AVANTI POPOLO**, the digitally restored 2K DCP version of Rafi Bukai's compelling and comical saga from 1986 about two Egyptian soldiers stranded in the Sinai Desert at the end of the Six Day War; and Yariv Mozer's **BEN-GURION, EPILOGUE**, an homage to one of the icons of Israel's first generation of political leaders which features never before aired footage from a 1968 interview

with the former Israel prime minister.

For ticket information, please visit the Jewish Film Institute online at www.jfi.org or the Festival website at www.sfjff.org or contact the box office at 415.621.0523.

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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. 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.sfjff.org or contact jewishfilm@sfjff.org. For Box Office information, please contact boxoffice@sfjff.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.