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**IN FOCUS: WOMEN'S DIRECTORIAL DEBUTS  
AT THE 37TH SAN FRANCISCO JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL**

**SAN FRANCISCO, June 20, 2017** – According to one recent study, women filmmakers account for only 29 percent of all films selected at over 23 top U.S. film festivals. The Jewish Film Institute (JFI) is pleased to announce that the lineup for the 37th San Francisco Jewish Film Festival (SFJFF) will have 41% of its official selection come from women directors with a significant number being directorial debuts (both the Opening and Closing Night films at this year's Festival are feature directorial debuts by women filmmakers).

The festival will honor these women directorial debuts during the festival, which returns to the Bay Area July 20th to August 6th, 2017.

The Tribeca Film Festival award-winning narrative **KEEP THE CHANGE** will open the festival 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.

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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.

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 Arab family living in Nazareth, Ramallah and Sweden.

**HOUSE OF Z** is Sandy Chronopoulos' examination of renowned fashion designer Zac Posen. Best known as a celebrity judge on Project Runway, Chronopoulos' shows how Posen began designing as a teen and with his family's support, enjoyed a meteoric rise.

Maysaloun Hamoud's **IN BETWEEN**, a tale of three modern Palestinian Israeli women searching for friendship, love and independence.

Director Jessie Auritt will be in attendance for her film **SUPERGIRL**, a fascinating look at the life of Naomi Kutin, a nine-year-old Orthodox girl with a talent for weightlifting.

The World Premiere of **RED TREES** which is Marina Wiler's enigmatic, poetic and intensely personal documentary, chronicling one family's journey through war based on the recollections of the director's father.

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.

**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.sfjff.org](http://www.sfjff.org) or contact [jewishfilm@sfjff.org](mailto:jewishfilm@sfjff.org). For Box Office information, please contact [boxoffice@sfjff.org](mailto: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 37<sup>th</sup> 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.