



LA Harbor International Film Festival

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Telephone: (310) 519-0756 ~ www.laharborfilmfest.com

To create a cinematic bridge between the people of the region and the people of the world



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LA Harbor International Film Festival™ Sets Sail On 20th Voyage March 2-5 Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn Unveils Official Poster & Banner February 1

Education Outreach Program “Read the Book, See the Movie” *The Jungle Book*
Young Frankenstein Opening Night

Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute *White Christmas* in 35mm Benefits Harbor Interfaith Services & YWCA

New Filmmakers LA Participates For 11th Year Presenting *Emerging Filmmakers Showcase*

DocSunday™ POLA Premier *Nailed It: Vietnamese & The Nail Industry*
Reprise of Award Winning *PORT TOWN* and World Premiere Oral History Documentary
Stories Of Los Angeles Harbor Area: For Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow (The Movie Vol. IV)

Veterans & Currently Serving In Military Complimentary Admission

February 1, 2022 - San Pedro (SP), California - Port of Los Angeles (POLA) - Programming and sponsors were announced, and official poster/banner unveiled, for the 20th annual LA Harbor International Film Festival (LAHIFF), at the Seafarin’ Reception & Press Launch, held in the Warner Grand Theatre (WGT) where LAHIFF takes place March 2-5, 478 W. 6th Street, historic downtown SP. Observing City of Los Angeles (CLA) current health guidelines a minimal number of invited guests including members of the media, festival sponsors and supporters, civic and business leaders attended the invitation only announcement.

The WGT has been the main venue for the LAHIFF since the first festival in 2004. This year commemorate the 92nd anniversary of the opening of the vintage art deco “movie palace” in January 1931, and LAHIFF dedicates this year’s festival to Golden Age of Hollywood actress the late Marsha Hunt who was honored at LAHIFF and attended numerous times in past 20 years. The award winning documentary *Marsha Hunt’s Sweet Adversity* debuted at LAHIFF in 2015.

Festival Director Stephanie Mardesich expressed thanks to supporters and directed all to review announcement press release handed out at conclusion of the reception and subsequently dispatched through email and LAHIFF website. “We are delighted to be in the Warner Grand Theatre this evening to reveal festival programming and unveil another ‘wow’ poster,” announced Mardesich. “With the imminent closing of the theatre of the theatre at the end of June for long anticipated renovation, for as long as two years, we urge all to spend as much time in the WGT as possible.”

More.....

The official festival poster “*The Foxy Cinematic Bridge*”, and street banner, were unveiled by Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, District 4. Key photo art for the iconic bridge image by eminent photographer and LAHIFF board member Peter Read Miller (Sports Illustrated, NFL, Associated Press, Canon spokesman), was introduced in 2009 and each year is the “palette” for the new poster version. The first five years of the LAHIFF paintings were commissioned by prominent local artists Tom Phillips, Muriel Olguin, Violet Parkhurst, and Tony Podue to create their own version of the “*Cinematic Bridge*”, originated by Phillips that has become the LAHIFF brand re-imagined each year. This year’s theme is inspired by the opening night selection and the Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute film (HNT); art direction by Alison Robertson of Wellington Signs, MJM Graphics festival printer, Alchemy poster printing sponsor. Framing by Distinctive Edge Framing & Gallery.

“The festival is grateful for a loyal group of sponsors and supporters, especially Supervisor Hahn, Contributing Sponsor, who as Los Angeles City Council member for District 15 advocated for the film festival since it was founded in 2003; and has continued as staunch supporter through tenure in the harbor area including representative in U.S.A. Congress, and currently as she continues working vigorously for District 4 and all constituents of the LAC.”

LAHIFF begins Thursday March 2 with Program A, at 10:30 am, “Read the Book, See the Movie” (RBSM) Culmination Program, free education outreach program, featuring the classic novel The Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling, and Walt Disney Studios 1967 Academy Award® nominated animated film Jungle Book that boasts a star quality (voice) cast. RBSM is a program of enrichment that promotes literacy and a more thoughtful way to view a film and the most successful motivating aspect of the LAHIFF. Over 20,000 free books have been distributed to students and community members since 2004. This year books were again provided by “publishing angel” Sponsor Penguin Random House Young Readers. Participating are: San Pedro’s Crestwood and Leland Street Elementary Schools, Dodson and Holy Trinity Middle Schools, Mary Star of the Sea and San Pedro John & Muriel Olguin Magnate (SPHS) high schools; and Wilmington’s Gulf Avenue Elementary and Harry Bridges Middle Schools. Juxtaposed with the live program will be a real time Webinar, for students and also the public who cannot attend, set up by SPHS Magnate Campus educator and reading coach Sandy Martin-Alvarenga, who has participated in RBSM every year since 2004.

Students read and discuss the book prior to the program and arrive enthused and excited welcomed by an authentic bagpiper that began in 2009, inspired by the another classic book Kidnapped by Robert Louis Stevenson. This year the LAC Mounted Enforcement Unit (sheriffs on horseback) is slated to return. Students are delighted to meet and pet the horses., and the Sheriffs offer some comments about their work and the animals before the film rolls. The readers enjoy complimentary snacks and after the movie there is lively “Conversation and Q&A.” RBSM sponsors include: Supervisor Hahn, Mary Star of The Sea High School, 7-Eleven and Arlene (Dickey) and Myron Lockrem.

Opening Night Program B at 7 pm, Friday March 3, features *Young Frankenstein* (1974) kicking off the 50th anniversary of the film’s debut. Audience is encouraged to “dress up” as a favorite character. Director Mel Brooks and Producer Michael Gruskoff are invited to attend.

Saturday, March 4 begins with Program C at 1 pm, with New Filmmakers LA (NFMLA), participating for eleventh year, presenting *Emerging Filmmakers Showcase* (four short films for total of 54 min.) at 1 pm. Filmmakers are

More.....

invited to participate in “Conversation and Q&A” after the screening. “NFMLA brings in a hip, younger crowd to see their movies on the big screen, and explore and enjoy San Pedro and surroundings, that’s one of our goals,” commented Mardesich.

At 4 pm Program D “Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute” (HNT) begins with a brief video presentation by Julie Anderson showcasing her late photographer father’s extraordinary collection of photos of true “movie stars” from 1940s through c. 2000 in the The Golden Age of Hollywood: Through the Lens of Joe Ackerman “coffee table” book she recently published. There will be a display in the lobby with books for purchase and to sign.

The HNT feature presentation *White Christmas* (Paramount, 1954) in 35mm immediately follows. The audience is invited to sing along to the familiar tunes. The program will benefit Harbor Interfaith Services and YWCA/San Pedro. Admission is by bringing a non-perishable food item or new clothing item that will be placed by the Christmas Tree display in the lobby, and at conclusion of LAHIFF will be donated to the worthy organizations. Tickets also may be purchased at \$5.

Closing day March 5, known as “DocSunday”, is devoted to non-fiction film beginning with POLA premier Program E *Nailed It: Vietnamese & The Nail Industry*. There is local connection to the story that was partly filmed in Rancho Palos Verdes and Watts. The story of immigrant refugee from Viet Nam who arrived in the USA c. 1975 is heartfelt and inspiring; and the added glamour of actress Tippi Hedren who was vital to their success and what has become an \$8 billion business of “fashion nails” is truly remarkable. Director Adele Pham is winging in for the screening (subject to last minute change) and will participate in “Conversation and Q&A” afterward.

Program F at 3 pm is reprise screening of *Port Town*, directed by local filmmaker Emmy Award winner Jack Baric followed by another POLA premier composite film of the oral history project *Stories Of Los Angeles Harbor Area: For Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow (SOLAHA) The Movie – Volume IV* produced by Mardesich and Baric who also directs. Conversation and Q&A with filmmakers and participants after the screening. The long standing tradition of Veterans of the Foreign Wars Wilmington Post #2967 presenting the flag of the U.S.A and singing of the Star Spangled Banner precedes the screening.

LAHIFF always encourages festival attendees to support the Epicurean Sponsors including Niko’s Pizzeria, Wienerschnitzel, San Pedro Brewing Company, Big Nick’s, Sacred Grounds, J. Trani’s Ristorante, Think Café, Raffaello’s Ristorante, Omelet & Waffle Shop, The Sandwich Saloon and Think Prime, and dine before or after programs.

The WGT was dedicated on opening day by Jack Warner, one of the four Warner brothers, who proclaimed “you’ll enter the palace of your dreams” to the eager audience. It is one of the three Warner Bros. theatres built in the metropolitan L.A. area (others were in Beverly Hills and Huntington Park) known as “the triplets” with distinguished architecture and décor; and the only theatre still functioning. Considered a treasure of historic downtown SP, and the region. with 1500 seats the WGT typically offers a variety of concerts, musical plays, and live performances including annual San Pedro City Ballet production of “*The Nutcracker*”, graduation ceremonies, weddings, and community events throughout the calendar year. It is also a location for numerous commercial and theatrical film productions. On going restoration projects have included the Grand Vision Foundation (WGF) “Save Your Seat” and “Love The Lobby” campaigns.

More.....

19th annual LAHIFF March 3-6.....

Page Four of Five

“Since the film festival began we have been committed to our mission to screen 35mm films whenever possible, this year with the charming *White Christmas*, and over the years many true ‘movie stars’ of the films in attendance.” observed Mardesich.

“We hope that Academy Award winning actor George Chakiris will again join us and share stories of making the movie (he dances behind Rosemary Clooney the vampy *Love You Didn’t Do Right By Me* number). A facility CLA Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) the WGT is one of the last venues in the metropolitan L.A. area, and entire USA, that has capability to project 35mm film. Its historical significance, and as a major venue for so many cultural and community events, is hugely important and meaningful to SP and the region, and will be greatly missed during its hiatus.”

The LAHIFF offers stimulating and entertaining programming that inspire the audience and respects the integrity of the silver screen. Mardesich, an alumna of the University of Southern California film school, founded the LAHIFF in 2003 (with Jack Baric) and observes “the film festival is a way to offer a collective experience augmenting the cultural landscape and promoting all San Pedro and surrounding areas have to offer residents, visitors, and tourists.”

Additional LAHIFF sponsors and supporters include Associate Sponsors Marathon Petroleum, Cal Marine Fish Company, SA Recycling, Rancho LPG Holdings. Sustaining Sponsors: CLA District 15, ILWU Foremen’s Local #94, BNSF Railway, Joseph & Lee (Sher) Mardesich Family Trust; Elite Sponsor Spirit Cruises; Media Sponsors Random Lengths News, San Pedro Today Magazine, PalosVerdesPulse.com, and NewFilmmakers LA (social media).

Additional In-Kind Sponsors include: Los Angeles Maritime Museum (LAMM), Hollywood Heritage, Inc. (HH), Polish Film Festival L.A, Grand Vision Foundation (GVF), San Pedro Bay Historical Society (SPBHS), fINDings Art Center & Gallery; Courier Sponsor 247 Delivers; Website sponsor is Clear Steps; Volunteer support from San Pedro Recovery Alliance. Other LAHIFF board members include community liaison Andrea (Rukavina) Hegybeli; businesswoman Nancy (McCutchan) Nottingham, and Northern California rep Carla Contestable, R.N. Festival advisor is Dr. Betsy McLane, Ph.D.

“Being a sponsor of the LAHIFF demonstrates community awareness and appreciation of our mission,” proffered Mardesich. “The commitment to support culture and education is vital as partnerships between business and individuals is fundamental to perpetuate the humanity, creativity, and traits we value as citizens; and its significance can never be underestimated. We also thank community collaborators for helping us to promote the program schedule.”

LAHIFF is 501(c)3 non-profit organization with no paid employees. Over the past 20 years LAHIFF has continued to grow and gain support. In 2013 the Coastal SP Neighborhood Council presented LAHIFF with a special Proclamation for ten years of outstanding contribution to culture and education leadership. Volunteer hours can also be accrued for school or community service. Donations to the LAHIFF are welcome. Sponsorship opportunities are available at various benefit levels. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent the law allows.

“The LA Harbor International Film Festival is a celebration of the cinematic arts that film lovers and residents across the harbor area, and the region, look forward to every year,” stated Supervisor Hahn. “It’s a wonderful opportunity to enjoy a movie in the beautiful and historic Warner Grand Theater. This year is another great line up of films reflecting a variety of themes, from historical and nostalgic, to social justice, an inspiring business success story, and always entertaining.”

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Tickets at Box Office day of programs, open one hour prior to program time, cash only. General Admission \$10; discount admission \$8 for seniors, students, and “affiliations” including LAMM, GVF, HH, and SPBHS. HNT \$5.

All veterans and those currently serving in military receive complimentary admission.

Media relations, information, and “Sponsorship Opportunities” contact: Stephanie Mardesich, Festival Director at stephaniemardesich@yahoo.com or telephone (310) 519-0756. See www.laharborfilmfest.com for updates on programming. (2/2023)

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Note: As of January 21, 2023, DCA requires for entry to WGT that anyone 12 yrs or older must present a printed or digital copy of their official record of full vaccination against COVID-19, or a negative antigen or PCR test taken within the previous 72 hours. Face masks are recommended, however currently not required. These requirements are subject to change at any time.

List of films & times:

March 2 Prog. A - RBSM - 10:30 am and “real time Webinar” 10:30 a.m. *Jungle Book*
March 3 Prog. B - 7 pm Opening Night *Young Frankenstein*
March 4 Prog. C - 1 pm New Filmmakers LA *Emerging Filmmakers Showcase*
March 4 Prog. D - 4 pm *White Christmas* in 35 mm
March 5 Prog. E - 1 pm *Nailed It: Vietnamese & The Nail Industry*
March 5 Prog. F - 3 pm *Port Town*
March 5 Prog. G - 5 pm *Stories Of Los Angeles Harbor Area: For Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow (SOLAHA) The Movie – Volume IV*
www.storieslaharborarea.com

More about:

Warner Grand Theatre: www.warnergrand.org
ClearSteps: www.clearsteps.com
NewFilmmakers LA: www.newfilmmakersla.com
The Golden Age of Hollywood: Through The Lens of Joe Ackerman: <https://www.palosverdespulse.com/blog/2022/9/30/joe-ackermans-journey-through-the-golden-age-of-hollywood-by-julie-ackerman-anderson>
Los Angeles Maritime Museum (LAMM): www.lamaritimemuseum.org
Grand Vision Foundation (GVF): www.grandvision.org
Hollywood Heritage (HH): www.hollywoodheritage.org
Marsha Hunt: https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3422240/?ref=mv_sr_srgs_0
Peter Read Miller, photographer: www.peterreadmiller.com
Wellington Signs: www.wellingtonsigns.com

Complete LAHIFF 2023 Sponsor List

Contributing Sponsor ~ Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, District 4
Associate Sponsors ~ Marathon Petroleum Corporation Los Angeles Refinery ~ Cal Marine Fish Company ~ SA Recycling ~ Rancho LPG Holdings
Sustaining Sponsors City of L.A. Council District 15 ~ ILWU Foremen’s Union Local #94 ~ BNSF Railway ~ Joseph & Lee (Sher) Mardesich Family Trust
Education Outreach Program “Read the Book, See the Movie”™
Penguin-Random House Young Readers ~ Mary Star of the Sea High School ~ 7-Eleven ~ Arlene (Dickey) & Myron Lockrem
Elite Sponsor ~ Spirit Cruises
Media Sponsors ~ Random Lengths News ~ San Pedro Today ~ PalosVerdesPulse.com ~ NewFilmmakers LA (social media)
Print & Art Sponsors ~ Wellington Signs ~ Distinctive Edge Framing & Gallery ~ MJM Graphics ~ Alchemy
Promotion & In-Kind Sponsors & Volunteers
Los Angeles Maritime Museum ~ City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) ~ Hollywood Heritage, Inc.
San Pedro Art Association ~ Grand Vision Foundation ~ fINDings Art Center & Gallery ~ Polish Film Festival L.A. ~ San Pedro Recovery Alliance
Courier Sponsor ~ 247 Delivers
Website Sponsor ~ ClearSteps (Alyssa Marks, Designer/Manager)

Epicurean Sponsors (websites/contact tel. listed for “indoor/outdoor dining/ordering to go/curbside pick up”)

Niko’s Pizzeria www.nikospizzeria.com
Wienerschnitzel www.wienerschnitzel.com/location/59-north-gaffey-west-sepulveda-san-pedro-230-north-gaffey-san-pedro-ca-90731/
San Pedro Brewing Company <https://sanpedrobrewing.com/>
Sacred Grounds (telephone) (310)514-0800
Big Nick’s <https://bignickspizza.com/>
J. Trani’s Ristorante <https://www.sacredgrounds.coffee/>
Raffaello’s Ristorante <https://www.raffaelloristorante.com/>
The Sandwich Saloon <https://www.sandwichsaloon.com/>
Think Café <https://www.thinkcafe.sanpedro.com/>
Omelet & Waffle Shop (telephone) (310) 831-3277
Think Prime (telephone) (310) 221-0415