

For Immediate Release

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**LA Harbor International Film Festival™**  
**Sets Sail for Second Voyage April 29 – May 1**  
**South Pacific Screens at Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute April 30<sup>th</sup>**  
**Film's Star Mitzi Gaynor, WW II & All Vets to be Honored**

**Seafarin' Reception & Press Launch Thursday March 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**Sustaining Sponsor Councilwoman Janice Hahn & John Papadakis**  
**To Unveil Key Art "Under the Cinematic Bridge" by Tom Phillips**

**SAN PEDRO, CA., The Port of Los Angeles (POLA)** -- Programming and additional sponsors will be announced for the second annual LA Harbor International Film Festival (LAHIFF) at the Seafarin' Reception and Press Launch, Thursday March 10 at 5:00 p.m., hosted by Ports O'Call Restaurant, Berth 76, Nagoya Way, Ports O'Call Village in San Pedro. Members of the media, sponsors, civic and business leaders have been invited to attend the invitation only event.

A non-competitive, non-juried festival, with films selected by invitation or referral, the LAHIFF includes theatrical, animation and documentary film and video, and takes place April 29, 30 and May 1, at Warner Grand Theatre (WG), 478 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, in historic downtown San Pedro.

"The festival's inspiration is all the harbor embraces – shipping, commerce, fishing, sailing, water sports, sea life and the cultural and ethnic influences of the area," states Stephanie Mardesich, festival director and co-founder. "We aim to 'create a cinematic bridge between the people of the region and the people of the world' by including diverse and provocative programming."

The highlight of the LAHIFF is the Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute & Gala (HNT) featuring Rogers & Hammerstein's *South Pacific* (1958), screens Saturday April 30 at 7:30 p.m. Film's star Mitzi Gaynor and co-stars John Kerr and France Nuyen are being honored and invited to walk the Red Carpet (attendance to be confirmed) to the Gala reception prior to the screening from 5 – 7:15 p.m., at the elegant Arcade Building across the street from the WG. Tickets for Gala are \$85 before April 20; \$95 after, if not sold out, which is expected. A live program precedes the film with esteemed performer and KNX radio entertainment reporter Tom Hatten invited to return as emcee.

Opening night film April 29 is *The Hunt For Red October* (1994) at 8 p.m. preceded by a Vodka & Caviar reception in the WG chosen as a prelude to the French documentary *Koursk* (about the sinking of the Russian nuclear submarine in 2001) anticipated to play Saturday at noon. *Whale of A Tale* out of Canada leads Sunday program with final programming and schedule to be revealed at the press launch.

The HNT Gala is sponsored by Star Fisheries and catered by Paradise Restaurant featuring the Bali Hai Mai Tai Bar, lite buffet supper with Polynesian/ tropical menu; and dessert provided by the San Pedro Skills Center bakery (coconut and mango cream cake with design depicting key art and *South Pacific*). “We want to make the evening fun and festive and encourage those attending the Gala, or only the program (general admission \$8; preferred seating \$25) to dress in tropical, vintage 1940’s or cocktail attire.

A key element of LAHIFF is the education outreach program “Read the Book, See the Movie” (RBSM) that promotes literacy and a more thoughtful way to view a movie. Corresponding to *South Pacific* as the Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute feature, Random House Publishing has provided 500 paperback copies of James Michener’s Pulitzer Prize winning book Tales of the South Pacific for students from Mary Star of the Sea High School, San Pedro High School, Rolling Hills Prep, the San Pedro Adult Learning Center among schools and members of the community participating in the free program. Books are distributed about two months prior to the culmination program held at 2 p.m. April 28 at the WG. The film screening is followed by a discussion among participants and a representative of the film if available.

“The continuity of the programming came to be very motivated by *South Pacific* with its themes of racial and cultural tension against the backdrop of war,” comments Mardesich. “To compliment *South Pacific* we are proud to present an outstanding documentary *Price For Peace* (executive producers the late Stephen Ambrose – *Band of Brothers* - and Steven Spielberg, directed by Oscar® winner James Moll) about the Pacific theater of war in World War II.”

The film was commissioned by the screening sponsor the National D-Day Museum of New Orleans, LA. for its opening in 2001. “This year marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II. Unfortunately, we are still witnessing the atrocities and experiencing the trauma of war, and therefore it is appropriate that we

honor WWII veterans (to the present),” adds Mardesich.

To honor their service and valor, in times of war and peace, veterans of all branches of the military will be admitted to the screening of *Price For Peace* scheduled for Saturday April 30 at 2 p.m. as guests of the festival. WWII vets will also be admitted for free (general admission) to the *South Pacific* screening that evening.

*Price For Peace* chronicles the bombing of Pearl Harbor to the American occupation of Japan from the perspective of American and Japanese veterans who come together over 50 years after the war in an expression of understanding and rapprochement as they reflect on their mutual experiences.

Key art for the LAHIFF poster, created by esteemed artist Tom Phillips, will be unveiled at the launch. Painting was commissioned by Mardesich who extols that it “promises to be another Phillips masterpiece.”

Since its inception in 2003 LAHIFF has rapidly gained momentum and support from civic and business leaders and the community. Key sponsors include: President of the County Board of Supervisors Don Knabe who was the first on board as “Culture/Education Sponsor” in 2004, and continues in that capacity; Contributing Sponsor, The Port of Los Angeles; and Sustaining Sponsors, 15<sup>th</sup> District Councilwoman Janice Hahn, and Charles Gasper, and Xavier Hermosillo. For the second year Star Fisheries is the sole sponsor of the Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute Gala.

Among prominent leaders who have voiced support is Los Angeles Mayor James Hahn who observed at the launching of the festival in 2004: “The Los Angeles Harbor communities provide rich snapshots of our region’s diverse ethnic and cultural influences (and) it is exciting to anticipate the (festival’s) showcase of educational film and video.”

Other LAHIFF returning sponsors are the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA), the Grand Vision Foundation, Los Angeles Maritime Museum, Cinema Grand, Don O’Melveny Gallery, the International Documentary Association (IDA), The Whale and Ale (San Pedro’s British pub and restaurant), Mary Star of the Sea High School, Think Café, The Arcade Building, Boca Activewear, Distinctive Edge Gallery & Framing, Sacred Grounds, San Pedro Skills Center, Ports O’Call Restaurant, Sheraton L.A. Harbor (with special room rate for festival), McCune Audio Video Lighting, Random House Publishing, Winepickup.com and National Printing Associates, Inc. Website sponsor is Live Office located in Torrance, CA.

Media sponsors are the Press-Telegram's *San Pedro Magazine*, Comcast, Random Lengths, and the Daily Breeze.

The "Cinematic Bridge" extends to new sponsors this year including the National D-Day Museum, the National Film Board of Canada, Acqua film and Storyline Entertainment; and the victory ship S.S. Lane Victory (located at POLA Berth 94). The LAHIFF is a 501 (c )3 non-profit organization, with contributions tax-deductible to the extent of the law. Sponsorship opportunities are available at a variety of benefit levels, from Presenting Sponsor (\$20,000 donation) to Friend of the Festival (\$100 donation).

Festival Co-founder is Jack Baric. Festival advisor is Betsy A. McLane, Ph.D., film scholar, author and Director Emeritus of the IDA. Board members include: McLane, former manager of DCA Adolfo Nodal, Sports Illustrated photographer Peter Read Miller, and real estate broker Linda D'Ambrosi.

"This culturally rich event will encourage many county residents to discover and appreciate everything San Pedro has to offer while enjoying a variety of film and video pieces from around the world," states Knabe. "I am happy to continue to support such a valued and creative endeavor."

**For media relations, more information , "Sponsorship Opportunities" guidelines and to RSVP for the press launch Thursday March 10<sup>th</sup>**

**5 p.m., at Ports O'Call Restaurant (PLEASE REPLY BY MARCH 4 )**

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