



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 2018 Calendar & Event Submission
December 6, 2017

Contact:
Deborah Muller
deborahmuller@cox.net
602-515-2304
Greater Phoenix Jewish Film
Festival

**22nd ANNUAL
GREATER PHOENIX JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL
RETURNS FEBRUARY 11 - 25, 2018**

*2018 Line Up for the Greater Phoenix Jewish Film Festival --
21 Features + 5 shorts + 40 screenings + 3 locations = One Great Time!*

GREATER PHOENIX JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL



GREAT FILMS *With a little Jewish flavor*



FEBRUARY 11-25, 2018

21 FILMS PLAYING ONLY AT:

SCOTTSDALE HARKINS SHEA 14 - HARKINS TEMPE MARKETPLACE 16 - PEORIA HARKINS PARK WEST 14

MORE INFO: WWW.GPJFF.ORG | CONTACT@GPJFF.ORG | 602.753.9366 | /GREATERPHXJEWISHPHILMFFEST | @GPJFF

© 2018 Greater Phoenix Jewish Film Festival. All rights reserved. The Greater Phoenix Jewish Film Festival is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. All proceeds from the festival go to the Greater Phoenix Jewish Film Festival. For more information, please visit www.gpjff.org.

December 6, 2017 - (Phoenix, ARIZONA) -- For the past 22 years, the Greater Phoenix Jewish Film Festival (GPJFF) has celebrated Jewish culture through film, bringing an exciting lineup of films to Arizona honoring Jewish traditions and heritage. From February 11-25, 2018, the 22nd Annual Greater Phoenix Jewish Film Festival will screen films showcasing the best of Jewish traditions, at

three Valley locations: Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale; Harkins Park West 14, Peoria and Harkins Tempe Marketplace 16, Tempe.

Currently the longest-running film festival in the Valley, the Greater Phoenix Jewish Film Festival celebrates its 22nd year by presenting more great films that make our festival even bigger and better - almost 2,100 magical minutes of Jewish cinema from 10 different countries! Rejoice in this annual crowd-pleasing two-week annual event with 21 new films and five short films ranging from defiance and struggle to fun and adventure to laughter and love, with something for everyone and stories that engage both mind and heart. Without leaving your movie theater seat, travel from the baseball diamonds of South Korea to the chessboards of the former Soviet Union, from the courtrooms of South Africa to the mountaintops of Switzerland; from the back lots of Hollywood to the deserts of both Las Vegas and Israel!

The Arizona premiere of *HEADING HOME: THE TALE OF TEAM ISRAEL*, featuring former and current Jewish Major League Baseball players who played for Israel in the World Baseball Classic, coincides with the start of Cactus League Spring Training and features a few familiar ballplayer faces that will grace both big screens and the baseball diamonds across the Valley.

Guest speakers with knowledge of specific topics applicable to the films moderate discussions following many of the screenings. All three screening locations will hold Valentine's Day screenings of the film *AN ISRAELI LOVE STORY* on Feb. 14 with special Valentine's Day promotions. A special Jewish folk music performance by the Rural Street Klezmer Band will precede the Tempe screening of *ITZHAK* on Feb. 15 in Tempe.

In addition to the website: <http://gpiff.org>, you can also follow the Festival on www.facebook.com/GreaterPhxJewishFilmFest or @GPJFF on Twitter.

WHAT: The 22nd Annual Greater Phoenix Jewish Film Festival

WHEN: Sunday, February 11th -- Sunday, February 25th

WHERE: Harkins Shea 14, 7354 E. Shea Blvd., Scottsdale

Harkins Tempe Marketplace 16, 2000 E. Rio Salado Parkway, Tempe

Harkins Park West 14, 9804 W. Northern Ave., Peoria

TICKET PRICES:

\$11 for adults (\$13 at the door)

\$7 for students (ID required, 25 yrs & under)

\$7 Active Military (ID required)

\$150.00 Festival Pass (see all 21 movies)

(For more information about ticket packages, group discounts, student and military orders, call 602-753-9366, or visit www.gpiff.org)

Heading Home: The Tale of Team Israel

Arizona Premiere

Documentary - (USA) 92 minutes, English

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Sun. Feb. 18th, 3 PM

Harkins Park West 14, Peoria -- Tues. Feb. 13th, 7 PM

HEADING HOME: THE TALE OF TEAM ISRAEL follows a team of current and former Jewish Major League Baseball players on their first trip to Israel and their journey to capture Israel's first baseball championship. Many of those pro players have not had much exposure to Judaism, much less visited Israel. Several Jewish baseball players agree to play for Team Israel at the World Baseball Classic qualifier in Brooklyn in the fall of 2016, winning and making it for the first time in the country's history to the World Baseball Classic in South Korea in March 2017. Prior to that, the delegation of American-based baseball players make an historic visit to the Promised Land, a "birthright" trip of sorts for the majority of them. While visiting Israel, the group experienced huge laughs, unexpected tears, and a ton of soul-searching.

*

HARMONIA

Phoenix Premiere

Drama - (Israel) 98 minutes, Hebrew & Arabic w/ English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Tues. Feb. 13th, 7 PM

A childless Israeli musical couple seeks to form a family in **HARMONIA**, a contemporary and layered adaptation of the tale of Abraham and Sarah set inside the inner sanctum of the Jerusalem Philharmonic Orchestra. Conductor Abraham and his wife Sarah, the orchestra's harpist, cannot have children. Hagar, a young horn player from East Jerusalem who joins the Western Side Orchestra, offers to have a baby with Abraham for the couple. The child grows estranged from Sarah as the thin line of family balance is shaken.

*

1945

Drama - (Hungary) 91 minutes, Hungarian w/ English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Thur. Feb. 15th, 7 PM

Harkins Park West 14, Peoria -- Mon. Feb. 19th, 3 PM

On a summer day in **1945**, an Orthodox man and his grown son solemnly return to a village in Hungary where the villagers are preparing for the wedding of the town clerk's son. The townspeople - suspicious, remorseful, fearful, and cunning - expect the worst and behave accordingly. The clerk fears these visitors may be heirs of the village's deported Jews and expects them to demand the return of their illegally acquired property. Paranoia runs rampant throughout the small hillside town where collective guilt and enduring anti-Semitism coexist in postwar Hungary.

A screening of the short film **HOPE DIES LAST** precedes these screenings.

*

BYE BYE GERMANY

Arizona Premiere

Dramedy - (Germany) 102 minutes, Germany & English w/ English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Sun. Feb 11th, 7 PM

Harkins Tempe Marketplace 16, Tempe -- Thur. Feb. 22nd, 7 PM

At the end of the Third Reich, most surviving Jews from the Holocaust understandably fled and said **BYE BYE GERMANY** as quickly as possible. Former concentration camp inmate David Bermann, one of 4,000 other real-life survivors who remained, sees his blasted homeland as the land of opportunity. The smooth-talking salesman recruits some friends to sell linens to Germans at inflated prices by employing outlandish shenanigans, absurd ploys and good old-fashioned chutzpah. While his friends are earning the money for their tickets to America, David is meeting with U.S. Special Agent Sara Simon who is determined to discover his secrets.

A screening of the short film **WENDY'S SHABBAT** precedes the Tempe screening.

*

BOMBSHELL -- THE HEDY LAMARR STORY

Documentary - (USA) 90 minutes, English

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Sun. Feb. 18th, 7 PM

Harkins Park West 14, Peoria -- Wed. Feb. 21st, 3 PM

Harkins Tempe Marketplace 16, Tempe -- Sun. Feb. 18th, 3 PM

Starlet. Screen Siren. The Most Beautiful Woman in the World. **BOMBSHELL -- THE HEDY LAMARR STORY** explores the ravishingly beautiful and intelligent actress of the 1930s and 40s. Hedy Lamarr was an Austrian Jewish emigre whose scandalous nude scene in the 1933 film *Ecstasy* led to a glittering Hollywood life. Behind the scenes, this glamour icon's ground-breaking, but completely uncredited inventions, are the basis of cell phone and Bluetooth technology. Dealing with repercussions of both sides, her later years become reclusive, impoverished and almost forgotten.

*

An Israeli Love Story

Arizona Premiere

Drama - (Israel) 93 minutes, Hebrew and Arabic w/ English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Wed. Feb. 14th, 7 PM

Harkins Park West 14, Peoria -- Wed. Feb. 14th, 7 PM

Harkins Tempe Marketplace 14, Tempe -- Wed., Feb. 14th, 7 pm

Set during the turbulent period of British Mandate in 1940s Palestine, **AN ISRAELI LOVE STORY** is at its heart a love story about two people during a simple time. Actress Margalit meets charismatic Eli on a bus and falls in love with him instantly. She tries to get close to him, but he's too busy with the Hagana's Palmach, the elite fighting force of the Jewish underground army. Finally, the barriers between the two come down and romance blooms. Margalit moves in with Eli and they set a date for their wedding, but soon Israel's harsh reality intervenes. The film is based on the true story of the love affair between Pnina Gary and Eli Ben-Zvi, son of Rachel Yanait and Yitzhak Ben-Zvi the Second President of the State of Israel.

A screening of the short film **WENDY'S SHABBAT** precedes the Scottsdale screening.

*

Keep Quiet

Documentary - (United Kingdom/Hungary) 93 minutes, Hungarian and English w/ English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Tues. Feb. 13th, 3 PM

A notorious anti-Semite and fascist firebrand undergoes an astonishing transformation after finding out he is Jewish in **KEEP QUIET**, a provocative examination of spiritual and ideological realignment. By his mid-twenties, Csanad Szegedi, a fervent Holocaust denier and outspoken anti-Semite, rose up through the ranks to lead the Hungarian far-right conservative Jobbik Party. Cofounding the Hungarian Guard and serving his country in the European Parliament, Szegedi, with his extremist views and racist agenda, ascends the political ladder. His world tumbles upon discovering that his grandmother is an Auschwitz survivor and he is Jewish. Szegedi, shunned by his political party and in shock at his identity, seeks the help of a local Orthodox rabbi who takes the man under his wing and aids Szegedi in his unbelievable transformation from raving anti-Semite to devout Jew.

*

They Played For Their Lives

Arizona Premiere

Documentary - (USA) 52 minutes, English

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Sun. Feb. 11th, 3 PM

Harkins Tempe Marketplace 16, Tempe -- Wed. Feb. 21st, 7 PM

Through intimate interviews, live performances and illustrations, **THEY PLAYED FOR THEIR LIVES** portrays how music saved the lives of eight young musicians during the Holocaust. Playing music in the ghettos and concentration camps not only fostered spiritual strength, but also often proved a bargaining tool that spared their lives. Hear from a piano prodigy who played more than 800 recitals in the Terezin ghetto, an Auschwitz prisoner who taught an SS guard to play the harmonica, and a virtuoso child whistler who performed for his life in front of Heinrich Himmler, Adolf Eichmann, Josef Mengele and other Nazi officers.

A screening of the short film **JOE'S VIOLIN** precedes the Tempe screening.

*

The Testament

Phoenix Premiere

Drama - (Israel/Austria) 96 minutes, Hebrew w/ English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Wed. Feb. 21st, 3 PM

Harkins Park West 14, Peoria -- Thur. Feb. 22nd, 7 PM

Having spent years studying the Nazi methods of annihilating Jews in Austria and Hungary, Yoel is regarded as one of the leading international experts in Holocaust research. In **THE TESTAMENT**, the researcher is troubled by his latest project - to locate a mass grave of Jewish victims of mob brutality in Lensdorf during WWII. It's a race against the clock as a land development deal is set to go through and potentially cover the alleged gravesite forever. His efforts seem to be frustrated on all sides as witnesses, survivors, and collaborators all prove unreliable, excusing their reluctance to share information for fear of retribution. Then he stumbles upon the most disturbing and life-changing testimony of all -- his mother's.

*

Keep the Change

Arizona Premiere

Romantic Comedy - (USA) 94 minutes, English

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Wed. Feb. 14th, 3 PM

Harkins Park West 14, Peoria -- Tues. Feb. 20th, 7 PM

In **KEEP THE CHANGE**, upper-class New Yorker David leads a very comfortable life until he is mandated to attend a support group for adults with disabilities at the Jewish Community Center. There, he is forced to come to terms with his own high-functioning autism, despite his resentment towards being singled out as different. David is obsessed with being perceived as "normal", thanks in part to his parents, and wants nothing to do with the other members of the support group. That changes when he meets quirky Sarah. She is optimistic, embraces her differences and exudes positivity and confidence. In a world where no character is "normal", this film is a romantic comedy about people navigating the difficulties of a relationship while exploring an underrepresented community with authenticity, optimism and humor.

A screening of the short film **IN OTHER WORDS** precedes the Peoria screening.

*

AMOR

Arizona Premiere

Drama - (Israel) 86 minutes, Hebrew w/ English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Thurs. Feb 22nd, 3 PM

Harkins Park West 14, Peoria -- Thurs. Feb. 15th, 7 PM

In **AMOR**, artist Daniel, after years of wandering through Europe, suddenly returns to his childhood home in Israel. He has come back to see Lila, the love of his life, a former ballet teacher. The dancer, now paralyzed, has been bedridden for more than three years with no hope for recovery. Lila wants to end her life. Those who love her refuse her pleas for help, protesting that religious law prohibits euthanasia. The question comes to Daniel: can his love face its ultimate test, doing the unimaginable for Lila and giving her the release she cannot achieve herself?

*

Past Life

Arizona Premiere

Drama - (Israel/Poland) 107 minutes, German, Hebrew, Polish and English w/ English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Mon. Feb. 19th 7 PM

PAST LIFE, set in the late 1970s, focuses on two Israeli daughters of Holocaust survivors, combative liberal journalist Nana and her younger sister Sephi, a soprano and aspiring composer. After a performance in West Berlin, Sephi is accosted by an elderly Polish woman who angrily accuses her father of murder. Traumatized by the startling encounter, the sisters launch an investigation, attempting to discover what really happened to their father in Poland during the war.

*

Shelter

Drama - (Israel) 93 minutes, Hebrew and Arabic w/ English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Mon. Feb 19th, 3 PM

Harkins Tempe Marketplace 14, Tempe -- Mon. Feb. 19th, 7 PM

Naomi Rimon, a Mossad agent, is sent on a presumably easy two-week mission: to protect Mona, a Lebanese informer, while she recovers from plastic surgery for her new identity in a safe house in Hamburg, Germany. But in **SHELTER**, there are no easy missions in this world, and certainly not in this multi-dimensional labyrinth of espionage and intrigue.

*

Fanny's Journey

Drama - (France/Belgium) 94 minutes, French w/ English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Sun. Feb 25th, 3 PM

Harkins Park West 14, Peoria -- Sun. Feb. 18th, 3 PM

Harkins Tempe Marketplace 14, Tempe -- Sun., Feb. 11, 3 PM

Following the arrest of their father in Paris during World War II, Fanny and her younger sisters are sent to a boarding school in France's neutral zone. Their safe haven is only temporary, however, and the Jewish students are whisked away to another safe haven in Italy where they come under the care of the tough but tender Madame Forman. As danger advances again, the children's fate is entrusted to 13-year-old Fanny who fearlessly treks through the countryside on a perilous mission through occupied France to reach the Swiss border, with only wits and solidarity to guide her. The children learn resilience, teamwork, and independence on their quest to reach freedom and safety in **FANNY'S JOURNEY**.

A screening of the short film **JOE'S VIOLIN** precedes the Peoria screening.

A screening of the short film **HOPE DIES LAST** precedes the Tempe screening.

*

SAMMY DAVIS JR.: I'VE GOTTA BE ME

Documentary - (USA) 100 minutes, English

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Thur. Feb. 22nd, 7 PM

Harkins Park West 14, Peoria -- Sun. Feb. 11th, 3 PM

Harkins Tempe Marketplace 16, Tempe -- Sun. Feb. 25th, 3 PM

Blazing a trajectory across the major flashpoints of American society from the Depression through the 1980s, Sammy Davis, Jr. had a career that was indisputably legendary. Yet, his life was complex, complicated and contradictory as seen in **SAMMY DAVIS JR.: I'VE GOTTA BE ME**. Davis strove to achieve the American Dream in a time of racial prejudice and shifting political climates. In the face of increasingly outdated show business traditions, the man nicknamed Mister Show Business strived to stay relevant. He found himself bracketed by the bigotry of white America and the distaste of black America. He was the most public black figure to embrace Judaism, thereby yoking his identity to yet another persecuted minority.

A screening of the short film **THE CHOP** precedes all screenings.

*

An Act of Defiance

Phoenix Premiere

Drama - (Netherlands) 123 minutes, Afrikaans and English w/ English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Mon., Feb. 12th, 7 PM

In the riveting historical drama, **AN ACT OF DEFIANCE**, Nelson Mandela and his inner circle of Black and Jewish supporters face a possible death sentence for conspiracy to commit sabotage after they are arrested by the apartheid South African government during a raid in the town of Rivonia during the summer of 1963. Bram Fischer, a sympathetic lawyer, risks his career and freedom to defend these men.

*

Avalon

Drama - (USA) 128 minutes, English and Yiddish w/ English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14 -- Thur. Feb. 15th, 3 PM

In **AVALON**, the hope and heartache of the American Dream are lovingly depicted through the saga of an immigrant Jewish family in Baltimore. An evocative and nostalgic semiautobiographical film by Academy Award-winning writer-director Barry Levinson, the film celebrates the virtues of family life. The family's story begins with Jewish immigrant, Sam Krichinsky, arriving in America from Russia on July 4, 1914. Sam's brothers, Gabriel, Hymie, and Nathan, await his arrival. He settles in Baltimore with his brothers and raises a family. Over five decades, the family's annual Thanksgiving gathering reveals the Americanization of Sam's wife and son as well other family members. Friction develops between the more traditional patriarch and the younger generation who opt for assimilation and modern life over tradition.

*

Pawn Sacrifice

Drama - (USA) 115 minutes, English

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14 -- Wed. Feb. 21st, 7 PM

PAWN SACRIFICE chronicles American chess prodigy Bobby Fischer's terrifying struggles with genius and madness, and the rise and fall of the kid from Brooklyn who captured the world's imagination. In a gripping true story set during the height of the Cold War, American chess legend Bobby Fischer faced Boris Spassky of the Soviet Union in the greatest chess match ever played. It was a match in which Fischer fought against two superpowers: on the chess board, he fought the Cold War; in his mind he fought his madness.

*

The Invisibles

Arizona Premiere

Docudrama - (Germany) 110 minutes, German w/ English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Park West 14, Peoria -- Sun. Feb 25th, 3 PM

THE INVISIBLES dramatically tells the story of four young German Jews in 1943 who manage to survive the Third Reich in Berlin by living in plain sight. Taking on false identities -- a war widow, a playboy, a cool blonde, and risky activities such as forgery and joining the Resistance, they endure through resourcefulness, luck, and the decency of fellow Germans.

A screening of the short film **WENDY'S SHABBAT** precedes the screening.

*

A Quiet Heart

Drama - (Israel) 93 minutes, Hebrew, English & Italian with English subtitles

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Tues. Feb. 20th, 7 PM

Harkins Tempe Marketplace 16, Tempe -- Tues. Feb. 20th, 7 PM

In **A QUIET HEART**, Naomi is a secular Israeli suffering from a personal crisis that threatens to derail her career as a concert pianist. Overwhelmed by the expectations of her parents and colleagues in Tel Aviv, she seeks anonymity and solitude in Jerusalem. Despite her intentions to stay alone, Naomi makes two unexpected connections in her Haredi neighborhood - one with a musically gifted Ultra-Orthodox young neighbor and the other with Fabrizio, a charismatic Italian monk and organist. These relationships allow Naomi

to reconnect with her love of music and sense of meaning; they also make her a target in her new community. Faced with escalating isolation, Naomi must learn to use music as a bridge to overcome towering barriers.

A screening of the short film **IN OTHER WORDS** precedes the screenings.

*

Itzhak

Arizona Premiere

Documentary - (USA) 80 minutes, English

Screenings:

Harkins Shea 14, Scottsdale -- Sun. Feb. 25th, 7 PM

Harkins Park West 14, Peoria -- Mon. Feb. 12th, 3 PM

Harkins Tempe Marketplace 16, Tempe -- Thur. Feb. 15th, 7 PM

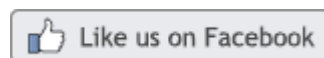
ITZHAK showcases the life and music of Itzhak Perlman, widely considered one of the world's greatest living violinists. The film explores the ways in which Perlman's passion for music allowed him to find a platform for personal expression against tremendous circumstances. If there's anyone who personifies the resilience, the vision and, ultimately, the contribution of the Jewish people, it's Itzhak. The violin is his chosen instrument, the vehicle Perlman uses to overcome his own challenges and express himself to the world. Through the man and his music, hear a story of obstacles and survival, trace the path of the Jewish people from the chaos of Europe to the promise of Israel, see the comfort of home and family, and witness how humor and talent combine with discipline and drive.

A screening of the short film **JOE'S VIOLIN** precedes the Scottsdale screening.

A special musical performance by the Rural Street Klezmer Band will precede the Tempe screening.

###

For more information about GPJFF or to schedule interviews with speakers and/or filmmakers, please contact Deborah Muller at 602-515-2304 or deborahmuller@cox.net



or visit us WWW.GPJFF.ORG

The GPJFF is supported in part by generous donations from the Molly Blank Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Phoenix, the Arizona Commission on the Arts which receives support from the State of Arizona, the National Endowment for the Arts, and a grant from the City of Scottsdale.

Greater Phoenix Jewish Film Festival, 6501 East Greenway Parkway, Suite 103 -
PMB 234, Scottsdale, AZ 85254