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MEDIA RELEASE

Mill Valley Film Festival

Showcasing the Best in Independent and World Cinema Thursday, October 5-15, 2023

MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL OPENING AND CLOSING NIGHT PRESENTATIONS TRIBUTES, SPOTLIGHTS, AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

OPENING NIGHT

Opening Night Gala following screening(s) will be held at the Marin Country Mart in Larkspur.

DAY OF THE FIGHT | Thursday, October 5, 5:00 PM CinéArts Sequoia & Smith Rafael Film Center EXPECTED GUESTS: Director Jack Huston

Day of the Fight

US, 2023

Writer/Director: Jack Huston

Cast: Michael C. Pitt, Ron Perlman, Joe Pesci, Nicolette Robinson, John Magaro, Anatol Yusef, Steve

Buscemi

On the day of his first fight since leaving prison, Mikey, a once celebrated boxer, takes a redemptive journey through his past and present. Over the course of the day, Mikey visits influential figures from his life, encouraging him to overcome his checkered past. After a fight for the ages at Madison Square Garden, a twist of events reveals that this day was never really about boxing for Mikey. This is an underdog story built on introspection, self-sacrifice, and forgiveness which asks the question: how far are we willing to go for the ones we love?

CLOSING NIGHT

Closing Night Party following screening(s) will be held outside on the streets of San Rafael

MAESTRO | Sunday, October 15, 5:00 PM

CinéArts Sequoia & Smith Rafael Film Center

EXPECTED GUESTS: a stellar lineup of renowned industry experts featuring Producer **Kristie Macosko Krieger**, Editor **Michelle Tesoro**, Makeup Artist **Kazu Hiro**, Costume Designer **Mark Bridges**, and Production Designer **Kevin Thompson**

Maestro

US, 2023

Director: Bradley Cooper

Writer: Bradley Cooper (screenplay) | Josh Singer (screenplay)

Cast: Bradley Cooper, Carey Mulligan, Matt Bomer, Maya Hawke, Sarah Silverman, Josh Hamilton,

Scott Ellis, Gideon Glick, Sam Nivola, Alexa Swinton, Miriam Shor

Maestro is a towering and fearless love story chronicling the lifelong relationship between Leonard Bernstein (Bradley Cooper) and Felicia Montealegre Cohn Bernstein (Carey Mulligan). A love letter to life and art, Maestro at its core is an emotionally epic portrayal of family and love.

TRIBUTE | MIND THE GAP AWARD • VISIONARY ARTIST/LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENTS

LYNN HERSHMAN LEESON | Sunday, October 8, 4:00 PM

Smith Rafael Film Center

The program will feature a screening of the complete Cyborgian Rhapsody series, consisting of four captivating short films. Additionally, there will be a special presentation of the Mind the Gap Award, honoring Hershman Leeson for her visionary contributions to the arts and lifetime achievements. Following the award presentation, SF Chronicle writer Tony Bravo will moderate an engaging conversation that will delve deep into Hershman Leeson's boundary-pushing innovations in film and art, providing attendees with valuable insights into her exploration of crucial societal themes, particularly the intriguing dynamics between humans and technology.

CYBORGIAN RHAPSODY

US. 2023

Director: Lynn Hershman Leeson

Writer: Sarah, GPT3 chatbot, & Lynn Hershman Leeson

Cast: Featuring performances by Tessa Thompson (Passing, MVFF44) and Joan Chen (Lust,

Caution, MVFF32).

In 1960, two scientists from N.A.S.A., Manfred Clynes and Nathan S. Kline, coined the term "cyborg" to describe the technological apparatus a human would require to record information at supersonic speeds. Both the revolutionary potential of this technology and how it can be abused are examined in this screening of the complete *Cyborgian Rhapsody* series, consisting of four captivating short films: Seduction of a Cyborg (1994), Shadow Stalker (2018), Logic Paralyzes the Heart (2022), and the World Premiere of the final installment, CYBORGIAN RHAPSODY – IMMORTALITY (2023), written and performed by a Cyborg – GPAT-3 Chatbot.

MVFF SPOTLIGHT

GEORGE C. WOLFE | Sunday, October 8, 6:45 PM

Smith Rafael Film Center

The MVFF Spotlight program will feature an onstage conversation with five-time Tony award-winning director and DGA award recipient George C. Wolfe, the West Coast Premiere screening of *Rustin*, and presentation of the MVFF Award for Directing.

RUSTIN

US, 2023

Director: George C. Wolfe

Writer: Julian Breece, Dustin Lance Black

Cast: Chris Rock, Glynn Turman, Aml Ameen, Gus Halper, CCH Pounder, Da'Vine Joy Randolph,

Johnny Ramey, Michael Potts, Jeffrey Wright, Audra McDonald

The architect of 1963's momentous March on Washington, Bayard Rustin, was one of the greatest activists and organizers the world has ever known. He challenged authority, never apologized for who he was, what he believed, or who he desired. And he did not back down. He made history, and in turn, he was forgotten. Directed by DGA Award and five-time Tony Award winner George C. Wolfe and starring Emmy Award winner Colman Domingo (*If Beale Street Could Talk*, MVFF41), Rustin shines a long overdue spotlight on the extraordinary man who, alongside giants like the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., Adam Clayton Powell Jr., and Ella Baker, dared to imagine a different world, and inspired a movement in a march toward freedom. Produced by Academy Award winner Bruce Cohen, Higher Ground's Tonia Davis and George C. Wolfe, the film features an all-star cast including Chris Rock, Glynn Turman, Aml Ameen, Gus Halper, CCH Pounder, Da'Vine Joy Randolph, Johnny Ramey, Michael Potts, with Jeffrey Wright and Audra McDonald.

MVFF SPOTLIGHT

JEFF NICHOLS | Monday, October 9, 7:15 PM

Smith Rafael Film Center

The MVFF Spotlight program will feature an onstage conversation with acclaimed writer and director Jeff Nichols (*Loving*, MVFF 2016), a special screening of *The Bikeriders*, and presentation of the MVFF Award for Directing.

THE BIKERIDERS

US, 2023

Director: Jeff Nichols

Writer: Jeff Nichols (screenplay) | Danny Lyon (inspired by the book by)

Cast: Jodie Comer, Austin Butler, Tom Hardy, Michael Shannon, Mike Faist, Boyd Holbrook, with

Norman Reedus

From writer-director, Jeff Nichols (*Loving, Midnight Special, Mud*), 20th Century Studios, and New Regency, *The Bikeriders* is a furious drama following the rise of a fictional 1960s Midwestern motorcycle club through the lives of its members, starring Jodie Comer (*Killing Eve, The Last Duel*), Austin Butler (*Elvis*) and Tom Hardy (*Mad Max: Fury Road, The Revenant*).

Inspired by Danny Lyon's iconic book of photography, *The Bikeriders* immerses you in the look, feel, and sounds of the bare-knuckled, grease-covered subculture of '60s motorcycle riders. Kathy (Comer), a strong-willed member of the Vandals who's married to a wild, reckless bikerider named Benny (Butler), recounts the Vandals' evolution over the course of a decade, beginning as a local club of outsiders united by good times, rumbling bikes, and respect for their strong, steady leader Johnny (Hardy). Over the years, Kathy tries her best to navigate her husband's untamed nature and his allegiance to Johnny, with whom she feels she must compete for Benny's attention. As life in the Vandals gets more dangerous, and the club threatens to become a more sinister gang, Kathy, Benny and Johnny are forced to make choices about their loyalty to the club and to each other.

The cast, most of whom did their own riding on an array of period-correct bikes, also includes Michael Shannon (*Bullet Train*), Mike Faist (*West Side Story*), Boyd Holbrook (*Logan*) and Norman Reedus (*The Walking Dead*). Sarah Green, p.g.a., Brian Kavanaugh-Jones, p.g.a. and Arnon Milchan are the producers. Yariv Milchan, Michael Schaefer, Sam Hanson, David Kern and Fred Berger are the executive producers.

SPOTLIGHT | MIND THE GAP AWARD: FILMMAKER OF THE YEAR

EMERALD FENNELL | Tuesday, October 10, 7:00 PM

Smith Rafael Film Center

The Spotlight program will feature an onstage conversation with Oscar®-winning filmmaker Emerald Fennell (*Promising Young Woman*, MVFF43), a special screening of Saltburn, and the Mind the Gap Filmmaker of the Year Award presentation.

The Mind the Gap Award honors people whose work has helped close the gender gap in the film industry and our lives. Recognizing talents above and below the line, the Award celebrates their groundbreaking achievements and acknowledges their importance as role models.

SALTBURN

UK, 2023

Director: Emerald Fennell Writer: Emerald Fennell

Cast: Barry Keoghan, Jacob Elordi, Rosamund Pike, Richard E. Grant, Alison Oliver, Archie Madekwe,

Carey Mulligan

Academy Award-winning filmmaker Emerald Fennell brings us a beautifully wicked tale of privilege and desire. Struggling to find his place at Oxford University, student Oliver Quick (Barry Keoghan, *The Banshees of Inisherin*, MVFF45) finds himself drawn into the world of the charming and aristocratic Felix Catton (Jacob Elordi), who invites him to Saltburn, his eccentric family's sprawling estate, for a summer never to be forgotten.

MVFF CENTERPIECE SPOTLIGHT

CORD JEFFERSON | Wednesday, October 11, 6:30 PM

CinéArts Sequoia

The MVFF Spotlight program will feature an onstage conversation with Emmy award-winning writer and versatile storyteller Cord Jefferson, a screening of his directorial debut *American Fiction*, and presentation of the MVFF Award for Breakthrough Directing.

AMERICAN FICTION

US, 2023

Director: Cord Jefferson

Writer: Cord Jefferson (screenplay) | Percival Everett (adapted from the book by)

Cast: Jeffery Wright, Tracee Ellis Ross, John Ortiz, Erika Alexander, Leslie Uggams, Adam Brody, with

Issa Rae and Sterling K. Brown

Emmy award winner Cord Jefferson brings Percival Everett's Erasure in American Fiction to life, marking Jefferson's hilarious directorial debut. The film confronts our culture's obsession with reducing people to outrageous stereotypes. Jeffrey Wright stars as Monk, a frustrated novelist who's fed up with the establishment profiting from "Black" entertainment that relies on tired and offensive tropes. To prove his point, Monk uses a pen name to write an outlandish "Black" book of his own, a book that propels him to the heart of hypocrisy and the madness he claims to disdain.

MVFF CENTERPIECE SPOTLIGHT

SOFIA COPPOLA | Wednesday, October 11, 7:00 PM

CinéArts Sequoia

The MVFF Spotlight program will feature an onstage conversation with the celebrated filmmaker Sofia Coppola, known for her talents as a director, producer, and screenwriter, a special screening of *Priscilla*, and presentation of the MVFF Award for Filmmaking.

PRISCILLA

US, 2023

Director: Sofia Coppola

Writer: Sofia Coppola | Priscilla Presley (based on the memoir by)

Cast: Cailee Spaeny, Jacob Elordi, Dagmara Dominczyk

When teenage Priscilla Beaulieu meets Elvis Presley at a party, the man who is already a meteoric rockand-roll superstar becomes someone entirely unexpected in private moments: a thrilling crush, an ally in loneliness, a gentle best friend. Through Priscilla's eyes, Sofia Coppola tells the unseen side of a great American myth in Elvis and Priscilla's long courtship and turbulent marriage, from a German army base to his dream-world estate at Graceland, in this deeply felt and ravishingly detailed portrait of love, fantasy, and fame.

MVFF TRIBUTE

TODD HAYNES AND CHRISTINE VACHON | Thursday, October 12, 6:30 PM

Smith Rafael Film Center

The first MVFF Tribute program dedicated to Collaboration will feature an onstage conversation with acclaimed director Todd Haynes (Tribute, MVFF40) and his longtime collaborator, producer Christine Vachon, a screening of their latest film *May December*, and the presentation of the MVFF Lifetime Achievement Award: Collaboration, honoring their exceptional contributions to the film industry.

MAY DECEMBER

US, 2023

Director: Todd Haynes Writer: Samy Burch

Cast: Natalie Portman, Julianne Moore, Charles Melton

Twenty years after their notorious tabloid romance gripped the nation, a married couple (Julianne Moore and Charles Melton) buckles under the pressure when an actress (Natalie Portman) arrives to do research for a film about their past.

MVFF SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

SPECIAL SCREENING

THE ZONE OF INTEREST | Friday, October 6, 7:00 PM

Smith Rafael Film Center

EXPECTED GUESTS: Christian Friedel

THE ZONE OF INTEREST

US/UK/Poland, 2022 Director: Jonathan Glazer

Writer: Jonathan Glazer (screenplay) | Martin Amis (based on the novel by)

Cast: Christian Friedel, Sandra Hüller

The commandant of Auschwitz, Rudolf Höss (Christian Friedel), and his wife Hedwig (Sandra Hüller) strive to build a dream life for their family in a house and garden next to the camp. Highlighted by Mica Levi's remarkable score, *The Zone of Interest* won the Grand Prix and FIPRESCI Prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

SPECIAL SCREENING

FAST CHARLIE | Saturday, October 7, 7:30 PM

Smith Rafael Film Center

EXPECTED GUESTS: Director Phillip Noyce

FAST CHARLIE

US, 2023

Director: Phillip Noyce

Writer: Richard Wenk (screenplay) | Victor Gischler (based on the novel by)

Cast: Pierce Brosnan, Morena Baccarin, James Caan, Gbenga Akinnagbe, Christopher Matthew Cook

Charlie Swift (Pierce Brosnan), aka "Fast Charlie," is a fixer with a problem: the target he's whacked is missing his head. And he must prove it's the intended target to the man who paid for the hit - New Orleans' biggest and most ruthless mobster, Beggar Mercado (Gbenga Akinnagbe). Charlie enlists Marcie Kramer (Morena Baccarin), the victim's ex-wife and a woman with the backbone and skillset Charlie needs. Dragging Marcie back into a past she was determined to escape sends the two of them on a wild and unpredictable odyssey that's at once hilarious and action-packed, and ultimately heartfelt. Along the way, Charlie and Marcie fight to protect the legacy of Charlie's best friend and mentor, Stan Mullins (James Caan in his final film role), while bringing down Beggar and his entire operation.

SPECIAL SCREENING | DIRECTORS NIGHT

NYAD | Friday, October 13, 6:15 PM

CinéArts Sequoia

EXPECTED GUESTS: Director Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi and Real Life Subject Bonnie Stoll

NYAD

US, 2023

Director: Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi, Jimmy Chin

Writer: Julia Cox (screenplay) | Diana Nyad (adapted from the memoir by)

Cast: Annette Bening, Jodie Foster, Rhys Ifans

A remarkable true story of tenacity, friendship, and the triumph of the human spirit, *NYAD* recounts a riveting chapter in the life of world-class athlete Diana Nyad. Three decades after giving up marathon swimming in exchange for a prominent career as a sports journalist, at the age of 60, Diana (four-time Academy Award nominee Annette Bening) becomes obsessed with completing an epic swim that always eluded her: the 110-mile trek from Cuba to Florida, often referred to as the "Mount Everest" of swims. Determined to become the first person to finish the swim without a shark cage, Diana goes on a thrilling, four-year journey with her best friend and coach Bonnie Stoll (two-time Academy Award winner Jodie Foster) and a dedicated sailing team.

The inspirational and thrilling film marks the narrative directorial debut of Academy Award-winning documentary filmmakers Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi and Jimmy Chin (*The Rescue*, MVFF 2021). NYAD is produced by Andrew Lazar, p.g.a. and Teddy Schwarzman, p.g.a. with a screenplay by Julia Cox, adapted from the memoir *Find a Way* by Diana Nyad.

SPECIAL SCREENING | DIRECTORS NIGHT

FANCY DANCE | Friday, October 13, 7:30 PM

CinéArts Seguoia

EXPECTED GUESTS: Director Erica Tremblay

FANCY DANCE

US, 2023

Director: Erica Tremblay

Writer: Erica Tremblay, Miciana Alise

Cast: Lily Gladstone, Shea Whigham, Isabel Deroy-Olson, Ryan Begay, Audrey Wasilewiski

Following her sister's disappearance, a Native American hustler (Lily Gladstone, *The Unknown Country*, MVFF 2022) kidnaps her niece (Isabel Deroy-Olson) from the child's white grandparents and sets out for the state powwow in hopes of keeping what is left of their family intact.

MVFF MUSIC at SWEETWATER MUSIC HALL

10/10: THE 9 LIVES OF BARBARA DANE – PERFORMANCES IN HONOR OF AN AMERICAN HERO

A special one-of-a-kind tribute concert honoring the legendary Barbara Dane and the much-anticipated premiere screening of Maureen Gosling's captivating documentary, *The 9 Lives of Barbara Dane*. Brace yourself for an explosion of talent with mesmerizing performances that span genres and generations. Guest artists Holly Near and Willie Chambers (Chambers Brothers) will join Barbara Dane's son from Cuba, Pablo Menendez (Mezcla) who will lead Barbara's band featuring Tammy Hall (piano), Ruth Davies (bass) and Daria Johnson (drums), with cameo appearances by Barbara's eldest son Jesse Cahn and her Cuban rockstar grandson Osamu. This electrifying celebration promises an unforgettable night of music, memories, and a deep appreciation for a legacy that has touched lives across the globe.

10/13: A CELEBRATION OF EAST AND WEST COAST RENEGADE RADIO

Following the California premiere of Jay Schlossberg's documentary feature film *Feast Your Ears: The Story of WHFS 102.3*, we're turning up the heat with a live concert that's all about celebrating the iconic independent radio stations that kept us jamming through the 1960s, '70s, and '80s – WHFS on the East Coast and KSAN on the West Coast. Hosted by the legendary Ben Fong-Torres, this night is gonna rock as we bring you performances by Jesse Colin Young, Taj Mahal, members of the Firesign Theater, a reunion of former DJs from both KSAN and WHFS Radio, and other surprise guests that will have you grooving to the tunes.

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Stay connected:

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Facebook: @MillValleyFilmFestival
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For more information: mvff.com

About the Awards:

Mind the Gap Award honors creatives, leaders, and craftswomen whose work has helped close the gender gap in the film industry and in our lives. Recognizing talents above and below the line, the Award celebrates their groundbreaking achievements and acknowledges their importance as role models. Previous Mind the Gap Award recipients include Chinonye Chukwu, Danielle Deadwyler, Nina Yang Bongiovi, Jane Campion, Viola Davis, Dawn Porter, Céline Sciamma, Maggie Gyllenhaal, and Carrie Mulligan, to name a few.

The MVFF Tribute program honors and celebrates lifetime achievements in the career of a significant film artist. Over the years, MVFF has honored such extraordinary talents as Brendan Fraser, Kenneth Branagh, Dame Judi Dench, Sir Anthony Hopkins, Sophia Loren, Kate Winslet, Michael Apted, Alfre Woodard, Pawel Pawliskowski, Glenn Close, Kristin Scott Thomas, Sean Penn, Holly Hunter, Todd Haynes, Julie Dash, Catherine Hardwicke, Sir Ian McKellen, Laura Dern, Ben Stiller, Mira Nair, and Nicole Kidman, to name a few.

The **MVFF Spotlight** program honors and celebrates exceptional work by film artists in their most current work. Honorees may be in early, mid, or late career. Over the years, MVFF has spotlighted such extraordinary talents as Nikyatu Jusu, Paolo Sorrentino, Denis Villeneuve, Regina King, Delroy Lindo, Robert Pattinson, Richard E. Grant, Karyn Kusama, Joel Edgerton, Amandla Stenberg, Dee Rees, Alejandro González Iñárritu, Eddie Redmayne, Ewan McGregor, Brie Larson, Steve McQueen, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Michelle Yeoh, Elle Fanning and Jared Leto, to name a few.

About the MVFF Award

Inaugurated in 2007, the Mill Valley Film Festival Award is a specially designed bronze sculpture created by Mill Valley artist Alice Corning, each one individually cast for the recipient and a numbered, limited edition. The MVFF Award is presented to the recipients of Tributes and Spotlights, MVFF's special programs honoring and celebrating the work of distinguished artists and innovators in the filmmaking community. Corning says of her artwork, "The purpose is to show the power and dignity of a human being...as it is with great work in film.

About Mill Valley Film Festival

Presented by the California Film Institute (CAFILM), the 46th Mill Valley Film Festival runs October 5-15, 2023. MVFF is a significant cultural cinema event in the San Francisco Bay Area. It has gained international recognition for its commitment to showcasing exceptional films, supporting emerging talent, and fostering creative dialogue. Over the years, it has hosted renowned filmmakers, actors, and industry professionals, further establishing its reputation as the West Coast launch pad for many Academy Award®-winning films and a hub for cinematic excellence.

About California Film Institute

The California Film Institute (CAFILM) is a non-profit organization that celebrates and promotes film and media arts through its renowned programs, which include the Mill Valley Film Festival and DocLands Documentary Film Festival. CAFILM fosters the next generation of filmmakers and film lovers through CAFILM Education, offering a wide range of activities, including screenings, Q&A sessions, seminars, and a rich program of classes and hands-on workshops led by international & local filmmakers and industry professionals. The Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, one of the leading non-profit independent theaters in the country, serves as a year-round hub for cinema-centric programming. CAFILM utilizes the power of storytelling through film to entertain and address social, environmental, and cultural issues, reaching 275,000 guests annually. Additionally, CAFILM is the majority owner of the Sequoia Theater in downtown Mill Valley. The organization relies on the generosity of its community; the invaluable support from our sponsors, foundations, individual donors, and members ensures our ability to sustain these vital programs. For more information, visit cafilm.org.

The California Film Institute and Mill Valley Film Festival are in Marin County, California, on the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary homelands of the Coast Miwok, Pomo, and Wappo peoples. This includes the Southern Pomo and Graton Rancheria Tribes. These tribes were removed or displaced from their lands. We recognize this history and the harm to present-day Coast Miwok, Pomo, and Wappo peoples and to their ancestors. The California Film Institute commits to moving forward from a place of authenticity and working with present-day tribes to elevate their stories, history, and present-day legacy through film.

Supporters

The California Film Institute is once again proud to acknowledge the leadership support of the Christopher B. Smith Family, Jennifer Coslett MacCready, Nancy P. and Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation, and Vickie Soulier, and the continued major support of Marin Community Foundation, The Bernard Osher Foundation, and The Gruber Family Foundation. We are also fortunate to have the contributions of the following Signature and Major Sponsors of the Mill Valley Film Festival: Jackson Square Partners, Lucasfilm, Ltd., Wareham Development, and Bellam Self Storage and Boxes.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS

46th Mill Valley Film Festival

Celebrating the best independent and world cinema alongside high-profile and prestigious award contenders. Thursday, October 5 to Sunday, October 15, 2023

Ticket On-Sale Now - mvff.com

MVFF46 Bay Area Screening Venues:

San Rafael: Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center – October 5 – 15, 2023

Mill Valley: CinéAris Sequoia – October 5 – 15, 2023 Larkspur: Lark Theater – October 13 -15, 2023

Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive – October 6, 7, & 8 and October 13 & 14, 2023

San Francisco: The Roxie Theater – October 9 & 10, 2023