

**LA Harbor International Film Festival (LAHIFF)**  
P.O. Box 5202 - San Pedro, CA 90733 ~ Telephone: (310) 519-0756 ~ [www.laharborfilmfest.com](http://www.laharborfilmfest.com)  
*To create a cinematic bridge between the people of the region and the people of the world*

**FOR RELEASE IMMEDIATE**

Contact: Stephanie Mardesich, Festival Director  
(310) 519-0756 or [stephaniemardesich@yahoo.com](mailto:stephaniemardesich@yahoo.com)

**It's A Wrap!**

**15<sup>th</sup> Voyage Of LA Harbor International Film Festival Concludes With Rave Reviews  
Held At Warner Grand Theatre – Historic Downtown San Pedro – Port of Los Angeles  
Quinceanera Magazine Sponsor For Fabulous Opening Night HBO's 15: A Quinceanera Story**

**Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute *Bye Bye Birdie*  
San Pedro High School Jazz Ensemble Rocks with "One Last Kiss"**

**DocSunday Considered Gun Control and Ethics & Lost Oscar® Winning Documentary**

**16<sup>th</sup> LAHIFF Set for March 14-17, 2019**

**March 21, 2018, San Pedro (SP), CA - the Port of Los Angeles (POLA)** The 15<sup>th</sup> annual LA Harbor International Film Festival (LAHIFF) held March 15-18 at the vintage art deco Warner Grand Theatre (WGT), a facility of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA), in historic downtown SP concluded March 18 with Veterans of the Foreign Wars, Wilmington Post # 2967 for 15<sup>th</sup> year tradition of presenting the Flag of the United States of America at the final program on "DocSunday" including the Pledge of Allegiance followed by the audience singing *The Star Spangled Banner*.

"It's with deep respect that the LAHIFF honors veterans and those currently serving in the military, demonstrates reverence for all for their service to the U.S.A., as we also express appreciation and gratitude for our wonderful country," states Stephanie Mardesich, festival director/founder.

The LAHIFF opened March 15 with the Culmination Program for free education outreach program "Read the Book, See the Movie" (RBSM), that promotes literacy and a more thoughtful way to view a film. Bagpiper Chrissy Orcholski greeted nearly 700 students as they arrived at the WGT after reading 20,000 Leagues Under The Sea by Jules Verne who were excited to view the Disney classic 1954 35mm film adaptation of the book and participate in "conversation" about the book and film afterward. Over 900 copies of the book were distributed to local students from elementary to high school. Preceding the film there was a presentation about AltaSea – the proposed marine research campus located in SP near the outer harbor – with a short video overview and remarks by Jenny Krusoe, AltaSea executive director.

RBSM is also a program of enrichment increasing erudition and inspiring the joy and pleasure of reading. Thanks to generous publishing sponsors Random House-Penguin Publishing the LAHIFF has distributed nearly 15,000 free books since the inception of RBSM (2004) to readers who are truly enjoying classic literature and will be reading far into the future. "This year's book selection ties in with the AltaSea scheme and links to Dr. Robert (Bob) Ballard who is a key advisor to the project," Mardesich revealed. "The book a favorite of the esteemed marine archeologist (responsible for uncovering the artifacts of RMS Titanic) who is preparing an exhibit aboard Battleship Iowa opening later in the spring. To have a book in hand is to have a friend for life is the continuing message we convey."

(\*2019 dates subject to change)

More.....

Additional RBSM sponsors are Contributing Sponsor Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, District 4, refreshments provided by The Popcorn Man, Mary Star of the Sea High School and 7-Eleven (Pacific Ave., SP store) and “Juice Sponsor” Arlene (Dickey) and Myron Lockrem.

Friday’s opening night featured the POLA premiere of HBO’s *15: A Quinceanera Story* (four 28 min. documentaries) chosen to compliment the LAHIFF 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. The films are amazing unique stories of the ritual for 15 year old Latina girls making transition to womanhood. “With many beautiful ‘Q’ dresses on display (thanks to Quality of Life Sponsor) in the WGT lobby the coups de gras was HBO permitting us to screen the films, and our new Media Sponsor Quinceanera Magazine arriving with six young ladies who modeled detailed and extravagant gowns, descending the stairs from the mezzanine like something out of the Ziegfeld Follies. They charmed the young audience from ‘I Heart Wilmington’ and Boys and Girls Club, and were simply exquisite with their beauty and grace. It was a ‘Quinceanera fantasy’ come true,” observed Mardesich.

Saturday opening program showcased the *New Filmmakers L.A. On Location Project*, returning for the sixth year, screening 26 short (1-5 min.) films that won the 2017 competition sponsored by City of Los Angeles, KTLA, Sunset Las Palmas Studios, and L.A. City Council members Bob Blumenfield and Mitch O’Farrell. Since 2007 New Filmmakers L.A. (NFMLA), under the leadership of co-founders Larry Laboe and Susie Kim, has established itself as a strong gathering place for independent cinema with over 30,000 constituents in the Los Angeles community, screening nearly 1000 films from over 59 countries. According to Laboe, “NFMLA is a vital organization that encourages the advancement of filmmakers with on-going screenings and events during a calendar year to promote the economic, educational, social, and cultural advancement of filmmaking, arts and culture.” As Mardesich adds: “Through their online connections NFMLA gets the word out to over 50,000 and attracts a ‘cool, hip crowd’ (generation x,y,z) to view the films on the big screen; and explore and enjoy San Pedro - dining, shopping, visiting Battleship Iowa, Lane Victory, Los Angeles Maritime Museum, Ports O’Call, Cabrillo Marine Aquarium - and all the interesting attractions of our seaside town.”

Saturday evening’s Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute (HNT) featured *Bye Bye Birdie* (1963), Academy Awards® and Golden Globe nominee starring Dick Van Dyke, Janet Lee, Ann-Margret and Bobby Rydell with stellar support cast. The film version of the acclaimed Broadway musical was preceded by the “Put On A Happy Face Red Carpet Gala” held in the WGT mezzanine. On arrival guests were greeted and escorted by the San Pedro High School JROTC cadets, enjoyed SVEDKA Cucumber Lime Vodka “Bye Bye Birdie-tinis” created by LAHIFF official bartender Michael Caccavalla. The Americana “picnic buffet” provided by LAHIFF Elite Sponsor Ports O’Call Restaurant and Epicurean Sponsors Niko’s Pizzeria, San Pedro Brewing Company, and The Sandwich Saloon., and Wienerschnitzel. Chanteuse Rosie Brand entertained with popular tunes from HNT honored films and other vintage favorites. As guests exited they received a special party bag including signature chocolate chip cookie from Accommodation Sponsor DoubleTree by Hilton (Cabrillo Marina, SP). Since 2004 the HNT has had many true “movie stars” grace the Red Carpet (Mitzi Gaynor, George Chakiris, Russ Tamblyn, Nancy Kwan, Pat Boone to name a few), and as the years go by when “talent” not available there have been special presentations before the film rolls.

Before the 7 pm film screening the San Pedro High School “Jazz Ensemble” played two favorites from the movie “Put On A Happy Face” and “One Last Kiss” lead by award winning band leader Darnella Davidson. “It was like being in Carnegie Hall with the musicians looking elegant in black suits, shirts and ties, playing like seasoned pros,” exclaims Mardesich. “The live

More.....

**15<sup>th</sup> annual LAHIFF “ It’s a wrap!”**  
**Page Three of Five**

music adds verve and vitality and was a wonderful and inspiring contribution to the program. These students are dedicated and disciplined, spending hours rehearsing along with the usual homework and school activities; and excellent role models for their peers and all youth. We were delighted to include the band member’s friends and families as our guests to experience the WGT, enjoy the charming film - a rare experience to view a 35mm print - and add to the festive mood of the evening.”

Last day known as DocSunday, devoted to non-fiction film, featured more POLA premieres beginning with theme of “social justice” Abigail Disney’s *The Armor Of Light* (co-directed with Kathleen Hughes). The film played at the Grace Cathedral Social Justice Film Festival (San Francisco, CA) in 2017 among other significant festivals and has numerous nominations and awards. Local faith based communities, philanthropic organizations, schools and all people of conscience were invited to attend the free screening in an effort to open up communication about a topic of controversy and concern.

DocSunday closing program at 4 p.m. *Finding Kukan* reveals the story of Chinese (Hawaii-born) Li Ling-Ai, the un-credited female producer of *KUKAN* the 1941 Academy Award® winning color documentary about World War II China that had been lost for decades. Adroitly directed and researched by Robin Lung *Kukan* took over eight years to produce. The recipient of multiple award nods and nominations the movie has appeared in many prestigious film festivals to wide acclaim. . Lung made her way from her home base in Honolulu, Hawaii to attend and participate in “Conversation and Q&A” after the screening joined by Ed Carter, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences archivist. DocSunday Presenting Sponsor Andeavor Foundation.

Key art for the official LAHIFF posters and banners “The Cinematic Bridge Puts On A Happy Face” derived from the original photo by photographer and LAHIFF board member Peter Read Miller; art direction by Seann Curry, produced by Wellington Signs, printing by Alchemy. Souvenir program and collateral printing by MJM Graphics; official LAHIFF t-shirts produced by Boca Activewear; event photography by Casey Warren and Erika Velazquez.

The LAHIFF, 501c3 non-profit organization founded in 2003 with no paid employees, is a non-juried, non-competitive film festival that aims to entertain, enlighten and educate the cinematic audience by showcasing film and video that reflects the harbor and all it embraces: Shipping and commerce, fishing, sailing, water sports, sea life and the area’s rich ethnic and cultural influences - and to promote literacy and a more thoughtful way to view a film through the education outreach program “Read the Book, See the Movie”- *to create a cinematic bridge between the people of the region and the people of the world*. Additionally the LAHIFF promotes the intrinsic value of the WGT and makes its own effort toward continuing restoration. Other LAHIFF board members are James Cross, M.A., Andrea (Rukavina) Hegybeli, and Nancy (McCutchan) Nottingham; festival advisor is Betsy A. McLane, Ph.D.

“The LAHIFF is made possible through fiscal and in-kind sponsorship, and the help of volunteers including the ‘Gala Gals’ and special commendation to Fred Brown Recovery Service for this first time commitment to LAHIFF,” stated Mardesich. “Being a sponsor demonstrates community awareness and support of the mission that extends beyond the four day film festival with a presence in the community throughout the year. Partnerships between business and individuals in supporting cultural events is essential to perpetuate the humanity, creativity, and traits we value as citizens. Its significance can never be underestimated, and we are immensely grateful.” A complete list of LAHIFF sponsors included at end of the press release.

More.....

**15<sup>th</sup> annual LAHIFF “ It’s a wrap!”**  
**Page Four of Five**

As declared by Supervisor Hahn : “The LA Harbor International Film Festival is a valued cultural event for all ages; educational, informing, entertaining, and celebrating the cinematic arts. We encourage residents, visitors, and tourists in and around Los Angeles County and beyond to enjoy the diversity of programs and also discover and appreciate everything San Pedro and the harbor area has to offer.”

The 16<sup>th</sup> annual LAHIFF is on calendar for March 14-17, 2019 at the WGT. Sponsorship opportunities available; categories and benefits vary depending on the designated level. Programming will be announced early next year.

**For media relations, information, and “Sponsorship Opportunities Guidelines”**

**contact: Stephanie Mardesich, Festival Director at [stephaniemardesich@yahoo.com](mailto:stephaniemardesich@yahoo.com) or telephone (310) 519-0756.**

See [www.laharborfilmfest.com](http://www.laharborfilmfest.com) for this year’s complete schedule, current and historical photos, and more about the LA Harbor International Film Festival (LAHIFF).

# # #

(sm:3/2018)

15<sup>th</sup> annual LA Harbor International Film Festival™ (LAHIFF)  
Expresses appreciation to our generous Sponsors

Contributing Sponsors

Supervisor Janice Hahn, County of Los Angeles 4<sup>th</sup> District

Culture & Education Sponsor

Andeavor Foundation

Associate Sponsors

Tri-Marine International ~ Employees Community Fund of Boeing California

Sustaining Sponsors

ILWU Foremen’s Union Local #94 ~ The J & L Mardesich Family Trust ~ Rancho LPG Holdings ~ Valero Energy Foundation

Education Outreach Program “Read the Book, See the Movie”™

Random House -Penguin Classics & Puffin Classics ~ Mary Star of the Sea High School ~ The Popcorn Man

7-Eleven ~ Arlene (Dickey) & Myron Lockrem

Benefactors

City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) ~ McNerney’s Mortuary ~ The Sher Foundation ~ BNSF Railway ~ Council District 15

Quality of Life Sponsor ~ Clean San Pedro

Elite Sponsor ~ Ports O’Call Restaurant

Epicurean Sponsors

Niko’s Pizzeria ~ Wienerschnitzel ~ San Pedro Brewing Company ~ Sacred Grounds ~ Think Prime

The Whale and Ale ~ The Sandwich Saloon ~ Think Café ~ J. Trani Ristorante ~ Omelet & Waffle Shop ~ San Pedro Fish Market

**HOLLYWOOD NOSTALGIA TRIBUTE GALA**

Los Angeles Maritime Museum ~ Doubletree by Hilton ~ The Popcorn Man

Libation Sponsor ~ SVEDKA Vodka

Banner Sponsor ~ Rancho LPG Holdings

Print & Art Sponsors

Alchemy (poster printing)

Wellington Signs (art direction & banner production)

Distinctive Edge Framing & Gallery ~ MJM Graphics (souvenir program & other printing)

Hospitality Sponsor – Lux Marketing, Inc.

Accommodations Sponsor ~ Doubletree by Hilton (Cabrillo Marina, San Pedro)

Media Sponsors

San Pedro Today Magazine ~ Quinceanera Magazine

Promotion & In-Kind Sponsors

New Filmmakers L.A. ~ Battleship IOWA ~ AltaSea ~ Cabrillo Marine Aquarium ~ Spirit Cruises

San Pedro Chamber of Commerce ~ Grand Vision Foundation ~ The Arcade Building ~ Visit San Pedro

Hollywood Heritage, Inc. ~ AltaSea ~ Golden State Pops Orchestra ~ Polish Film Festival L.A.

LAHIFF Logo Video Sponsor ~ Wilkman Productions

Courier Sponsor ~ 247 Delivers

Security Sponsor ~ Black Knight Patrol

Website Sponsor ~ ClearSteps (designer/manager Alysa Marks)

**More about.....**

Warner Grand Theatre: [www.warnergrand.org](http://www.warnergrand.org)

ClearSteps: [www.clearsteps.com](http://www.clearsteps.com)

Peter Read Miller, photographer: [www.peterreadmiller.com](http://www.peterreadmiller.com)

Los Angeles Maritime Museum (LAMM): [www.lamaritimemuseum.org](http://www.lamaritimemuseum.org)

New Filmmakers L.A.: [www.NFMLA.org](http://www.NFMLA.org)

Battleship Iowa: [www.pacificbattleship.com](http://www.pacificbattleship.com)

Visit San Pedro: [www.visitsp.com](http://www.visitsp.com)

San Pedro Chamber of Commerce: [www.sanpedrochamber.com](http://www.sanpedrochamber.com)

Hollywood Heritage (HH): [www.hollywoodheritage.org](http://www.hollywoodheritage.org)

Grand Vision Foundation (GVF): [www.grandvision.org](http://www.grandvision.org)

AltaSea: [www.altasea.org](http://www.altasea.org)

Wellington Signs: [www.wellingtonsigns.com](http://www.wellingtonsigns.com)

Bagpiper: [surfcitypiper@hotmail.com](mailto:surfcitypiper@hotmail.com)

**Films:**

20,000 Leagues Under The Sea [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)

Bye Bye Birdie [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)

*The Armor Of Light* [www.forkfilms.net](http://www.forkfilms.net)  
*Finding Kukan* [www.nestedeggproductions.com](http://www.nestedeggproductions.com)