

LA Harbor International Film Festival

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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™ Will Set Sail On 9th Voyage May 3-6, 2012
Warner Grand Theatre – historic downtown San Pedro – Port of Los Angeles
Councilman Joe Buscaino Unveils Official Poster

Rodgers & Hammerstein’s *State Fair* Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute
Honor Film’s Star of Pat Boone & Director Jose Ferrer

Education Outreach Program Read the Book, See the Movie™
Features Jules Verne’s *Journey To The Center of The Earth* and 1959 20th Century Fox Film

Free Admission to all programs for U.S. Veterans & Those Currently Serving In Military

March 21, 2012 - San Pedro (SP), CA., the Port of Los Angeles (POLA) - Programming and sponsors were announced for the ninth annual LA Harbor International Film Festival (LAHIFF) at the Seafarin’ Reception and Press Launch, Wednesday March 21 held at and co-hosted by festival Epicurean Sponsor Ports O’ Call Restaurant. Members of the media, festival sponsors, civic and business leaders were among guests at the invitation only event.

The four day LAHIFF, a non-competitive, non-juried film festival with movies selected by research or referral and invited to be programmed, takes place May 3-6, at the vintage movie palace the Warner Grand Theatre (WGT), 478 W. 6th Street, in historic downtown SP. The WGT is a facility of the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA).

Festival Director and Founder Stephanie Mardesich announced “the LA Harbor International Film Festival is proud to reveal that all of our major sponsors have continued to support the film festival including national brands (Epicurean Sponsor) Wienerschnitzel and (Sustaining Sponsor) 7-Eleven, with many new sponsors. Sponsorship of the film festival demonstrates awareness and commitment of the business community in particular to support contemporary culture, art and education that is at the heart of the LAHIFF mission, along with promoting tourism and commerce in San Pedro and the continuing waterfront development.”

Prior to making introductions and announcements Mardesich read a letter from Congresswoman Janice Hahn who has been a staunch supporter of the LAHIFF since it was founded and not able to attend since she was in Washington, D.C. fulfilling obligations of her office.

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9th annual LAHIFF May 3-6.....
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“I congratulate the organizer of the ninth annual event for creating a film festival that has become a hallmark of San Pedro and Harbor communities, and the region. In addition to bringing a unique blend of fine films to the iconic Warner Grand Theatre the festival furthers appreciation for art, culture, and education in people of all ages. The LAHIFF should take tremendous pride in its impressive body of work that continues to celebrate the diversity and charm of Los Angeles, while adding to its reputation as the film capitol of the world,” stated Congresswoman Hahn.

Following introductions of dignitaries and sponsors, 15th District Councilman Joe Buscaino addressed the group. After program announcements the official LAHIFF poster, design by Maria Nita of National Promotions & Advertising (NPA) and street banners, produced by Wellington Signs of San Pedro, were unveiled. Entitled “Journey To The Cinematic Bridge” key art for the LAHIFF iconic cinematic bridge is by eminent photographer Peter Read Miller.

Festival program line-up was summarized by Mardesich who added “the LAHIFF is about celebrating the art of filmmaking and very selective in programming to appeal to a wide demographic”.

Beginning May 3 with the free education outreach program “Read the Book, See the Movie” (RBSM) that promotes literacy and a more thoughtful way to view a film. This year’s selection is the classic novel Journey To the Centre of the Earth by Jules Vernes. Publishing sponsors Penguin and Puffin Classics donated paperback copies of the book distributed to nearly 900 students from elementary to adult education classes, and community members. Students attending the culmination program arrive to the glorious sounds of an authentic bagpiper heralding the call to the theatre. They enjoy healthy refreshments and view the film version (U.S.A., 20th Century Fox, 1959; 132 min.) starring Pat Boone and James Mason. After the screening there is a discussion about the book and film. Participating schools include: Barton Hill, Bandini Street, White Point and Gulf Avenue Elementary Schools; Dana Middle School and Rolling Hills Renaissance School; San Pedro, Peninsula, Pacific Lutheran and Mary Star of the Sea High Schools; and San Pedro Adult Learning Center.

Education Culture Sponsor Supervisor Don Knabe has supported the RBSM since the inception of the festival. The Los Angeles Maritime Museum and Williams Book Store are in-kind sponsors distributing books to the community members who are also invited to attend the culmination program. The Popcorn Man is the new refreshment sponsor along with 7-Eleven and Mary Star of the Sea High School.

Opening Night Friday evening May 4 at 7:30 p.m. the LAHIFF presents the POLA premiere of *La Prima Cosa Bella* {*The First Beautiful Thing*} (Italy, 2011, 122 min.; drama/comedy, in Italian with sub-titles). The movie was Italy’s submission for Academy Award® consideration in 2011. The film is not rated and intended for an adult audience (viewer discretion advised; mature themes, language). The program is sponsored by Councilman Buscaino and the Italian American Museum Los Angeles “We have programmed four Italian films in the past eight years and had a terrific response. This movie will appeal to the heart, soul and psyche of that demographic and also the ‘date night’ crowd,” commented Mardesich.

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Saturday May 5 at 12 pm is an “Old Fashioned Saturday Matinee” with a reprise screening of *Journey to the Center of The Earth* , The film is being released in Blue Ray DVD on May 8 and there will be some “lucky winners” of vouchers for the DVD. The producers of the (under Twilight Time label) Brian Jamieson and Nick Redman (Academy Award® nominated filmmaker) and Julie Kiirgo, well-known essayist, specializing in classic films, will be present at the RBSM program May 3 and the matinee (subject to availability) to speak to the students about the film and a career as a filmmaker to speak about the film and a career as a filmmaker.

General admission is \$5 with RBSM participants and their families invited to attend “complimentary”. Popcorn that day is sponsored by Arlene and Myron Dickey.

The evening of May 5 is the Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute (HNT) and “State of the Red Carpet Gala” featuring Rodgers & Hammerstein’s *State Fair* (U.S.A., Twentieth Century Fox, 1962; 97 min.) and honoring the film’s stars Pat Boone and director Jose Ferrer. The film program at the WGT begins at 7 p.m. The movie is an updated version of the 1945 film that was the illustrious lyricist and composer’s only musical created directly for the silver screen, and later produced on Broadway that garnered the Academy Award® for best song “*It Might as Well Be Spring*”.

A long-standing tradition of the LAHIFF is the Gala preceding the HNT film that takes place from 5-6:30 p.m. at the elegant Arcade Building across the street from the WGT. Guests will enjoy a menu of all American cuisine and Elite Sponsor Blue Ice – the great American vodka – Blue Boy and Lemon Drop Martinis. Tickets are \$65 before April 18; \$75 at the door space permitting. Included are film program, preferred seating, souvenir program and party bag. General admission for film only is \$10.

The Gala is sponsored by Star Fisheries, the Arcade Building and Helen Grace Chocolates. Catering by Ports O’Call Restaurant with additions provided by other Epicurean Sponsors.

Closing event May 6 is known as “DocSunday” beginning at 12:30 p.m. with 15 minute program and lecture presented by Ed Steiner of TopSail Youth Program based in San Pedro. TopSail, under the auspices of the Los Angeles Maritime Institute, offers “sailing the sea to educate youth for life ashore” with thousands of young people learning valuable life skills.

Following that presentation at 1:15 pm is the POLA premiere of *Kruzenshtern* (Poland, Arkana Studios, 2010, 52 min.; Polish with sub-titles), sponsored by the Polish Film Festival Los Angeles. The director of the film has been invited (to be confirmed). “Q&A” will take place after the screening.

Final program at 3 p.m. is another POLA premiere, *One Lucky Elephant* (U.S.A., Crossover Productions, 2010; 90 min.). The award winning and critically acclaimed feature documentary has had great success on the festival circuit; filmmakers expected for a “Q&A” after the screening that will be moderated by Mardesich and Dr. Betsy A. McLane, Ph.D., author of the definitive book [A New History of Documentary Film](#).

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A unique addition to this year's programming is a specially made short film *The Journey of the U.S. S. Iowa to the Port of Los Angeles* (approximately 10 min.) that will be shown at the beginning of each program. The film is sponsored by the Pacific Battleship Center who are in the midst of transporting the world's last battleship to its new permanent berth on the Main Channel in the POLA.

Since its inception in 2003 LAHIFF has rapidly gained momentum and support from civic and business leaders throughout the entire metropolitan area as echoed by Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa. "Creativity abounds throughout the City of Los Angeles and particularly at the Port in San Pedro," states the Mayor.

"Within the programming of the LA Harbor International Film Festival, there are films that reflect the historical and contemporary culture, celebrating the people and the diversity of the area, while drawing film lovers and tourists from around the country to this region. I commend the festival for contributing to the cultural and artistic landscape of Los Angeles and to the economic vitality of the City."

Mardesich introduced additional new sponsors BNSF Railway, Associate Sponsor ; Consolidated Disposal Services (a subsidiary of Republic Services, Inc.), Sustaining Sponsor and Accommodation Sponsor is 20kWatt-Artist Eco Alliance.

Other than those already mentioned sponsors include the Port of Los Angeles, Tri-Marine, City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA), Grand Vision Foundation (GVF), and Ponte Vista at San Pedro. Additional "Epicurean Sponsors" are: Niko's Pizzeria, The Whale and Ale, San Pedro Fish Market, Sacred Grounds, San Pedro Brewing Company, Rafaello's Ristorante, The Sandwich Saloon, J.Trani's Ristorante, and Trusella's.

In-kind sponsors and supporters include Pacific Battleship Center, San Pedro Convention and Visitors Bureau, San Pedro Chamber of Commerce, Distinctive Edge Framing & Gallery, Golden State Pops Orchestra. T-shirts are produced by Boca Activewear.

Website sponsor is Live Office, Torrance, CA. Media Sponsors are San Pedro Today, Random Lengths News, Experience San Pedro and ION Network – the Network of Champions. Print sponsors are National Promotions & Advertising, Inc. (NPA) of West Los Angeles, for poster and design; and Instant Print King, souvenir program. For the fourth year the Banner Sponsor is ConocoPhillips.

The vintage art-deco WGT (dedicated in 1931), is one of the three "triplet" Warner Brothers theatres built in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. During the past decade the GVF including the "Save Your Seat" campaign has been dedicated to preserving and restoring the WGT to its original glory. "Viewing a film on the big screen is an experience unlike any other. There is a movie that appeals to every sector of society. Enjoying and celebrating the art of cinema in the atmosphere of one of the treasures of San Pedro, the Warner Grand Theatre, is the sort of group experience that promotes empathy and good will. Our aim is to entertain, enlighten and educate the audience of all ages and backgrounds", stated Mardesich.

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“As long as we can still show film, in the optimum setting of a movie palace like the Warner Grand Theatre, that’s our goal as we keep extending the Cinematic Bridge from the harbor to Hollywood and beyond.”

The LAHIFF is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization, with contributions tax-deductible to the extent the law allows. Sponsorship opportunities are available at a variety of benefit levels, from Presenting Sponsor to Friend of the Festival. The organization is volunteer driven and service hours can be attributed to school or community service. LAHIFF board members include Dr. McLane; Sports Illustrated photographer Peter Read Miller; community liaison Andrea Hegybeli; and east coast representative businesswoman Nancy McCutchan Nottingham.

General admission for festival programs is \$10; \$8 with discounts for affiliations with GVF, LAMM, seniors and students. Opening night tickets are \$10; no discounts for the Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute Red Carpet Gala.

Free Admission for U.S.Veterans and those currently serving in military forces as long as space permits on first come first seated basis.

Tickets will be sold online from April 1 online at www.brownpapertickets.com and Williams Book Store located at 443 6th Street, downtown SP; and at the box office (cash only) during the festival one hour before program times.

“This culturally rich event will encourage residents of Los Angeles County and beyond to discover and appreciate everything San Pedro has to offer,” said Supervisor Knabe, “I am happy to continue supporting such a valued and creative endeavor that will inspire the audience to appreciate the art of cinema and also encourage local filmmakers.”

**For media relations, more information, and “Sponsorship Opportunities” guidelines
Contact Stephanie Mardesich, Festival Director
at stephaniemardesich@yahoo.com or telephone (310) 519-0756
See www.laharborfilmfest.com for updates on programming**

(3/21/2012)

More about.....

The Port of Los Angeles: www.portofla.org
Los Angeles Maritime Museum (LAMM): www.lamaritimemuseum.org
Peter Read Miller, photographer: www.peterreadmiller.com
Golden State Pops Orchestra: www.goldenstatepops.com
Grand Vision Foundation (GVF): www.grandvision.org
San Pedro Convention & Visitors Bureau: info@sanpedrocvb.com
TopSail Youth Program (Los Angeles Maritime Institute): www.lamitopsail.org
U.S.S. Iowa: www.pacificbattleship.com Films

Films:

Blue Ray DVD *Journey To The Center of the Earth* purchase exclusively at www.screenarchives.com
One Lucky Elephant: www.oneluckyelephant.com