

NEWS RELEASE

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Please contact the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at 732-932-2033 or go to www.jewishstudies.rutgers.edu.

BOXING, ESPIONAGE AND MUSIC FEATURED AT RUTGERS NEW JERSEY JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. – The ninth annual Rutgers New Jersey Jewish Film Festival will bring award-winning movies, directors and film personalities to North Brunswick Nov. 9 through Nov. 19. All screenings and events will take place at the Regal Cinema Commerce Center, 2399 Route 1 South. The variety of topics and formats are impressive.

“Some films tackle uniquely Jewish issues, while others address universal themes through a Jewish lens,” said Karen Small, associate director of Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at Rutgers University. “With such a diverse selection, the festival draws a wide audience, reaching the region’s Jewish population as well as the Rutgers University community and the general film-going public.”

Each screening includes a question- and -answer session related to the film. The festival turns the spotlight on Israeli film and includes a panel discussion on the emergence of Israeli cinema. Tickets are now on sale and advance purchase is strongly recommended. The festival is sponsored by Rutgers’ Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life and made possible by the Karma Foundation.

Below is a listing of movies in the festival and information on a special panel discussion.

The Champagne Spy French and Arabic with English subtitles

At the age of 12, Oded Gur Arie discovered that his father was an Israeli Mossad agent leading a double life in Egypt. Forty years later, “The Champagne Spy” is his attempt to fill in the blanks in his father’s life and tell his dramatic tale of espionage. The film weaves together Oded’s personal reflections, home movies, newsreel footage and interviews with friends, former

colleagues and high-ranking Mossad officials. The film won an Israeli Academy Award in 2007 for best documentary.

Screening Sunday, Nov. 9, at 7 p.m. with special guest Oded Gur Arie. An additional screening will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 11 at 1:30 p.m.

Two Ladies (Dans La Vie) French and Arabic with English subtitles

As tensions mount between France's Jewish and Muslim communities, two women – Esther, who is Jewish, and Halima, who is Muslim – form a special bond, linked by their Algerian roots. This hopeful drama offers a sensitive portrayal of their unlikely friendship, which defies the prejudice and hostility that surround them.

Screening Sunday, Nov. 9, at 12:30 p.m. with Professor Joelle Bahloul, department of Anthropology and Jewish studies, Indiana University. There will be an additional screening on Tuesday, Nov. 18, at 7 p.m. with Ruth Knafo Setton, professor of literature, Lehigh University.

Praying with Lior English

This moving documentary portrays Lior Liebling, a child with Down syndrome and a powerful spirituality, as he sings and prays in preparation for his long anticipated bar mitzvah. His supportive family and community set an unparalleled example of love and inclusion.

Screening Sunday, Nov. 9, at 3:15 p.m. with special guest Lior Liebling. There will be an additional screening on Tuesday, Nov. 11 at 4 p.m. with the director of the film, Ilana Trachtman.

Orthodox Stance English, Russian with English subtitles

Twenty-four-year-old Russian immigrant Dmitriy Salita is a strictly observant Jew who is breaking records and making boxing history. This documentary film takes an intimate look at how he balances life in two seemingly incompatible worlds, demonstrating a rare ability to integrate his religious devotion and his drive to capture a professional boxing title.

Screening Sunday, Nov. 9 at 12:45 p.m. with Mike Silver, boxing historian and author of "The Rise and Decline of the Sweet Science." There will be an additional screening of the film on Sunday, Nov. 16 at 7 p.m. with guest appearance by Dmitriy Salita.

The Band's Visit English, Arabic, and Hebrew with English subtitles

The members of an Egyptian police band arrive in Israel as part of a cultural exchange, but are left stranded at the airport. Venturing out on their own, they become lost in a desolate development town in the heart of the desert, where they discover more in common with the local residents than at first thought. "The Band's Visit" treats this touching cultural encounter with gentle humor. The film was the winner of Un Certain Regard, Jury Coup de Coeur, Cannes Film Festival 2007 and eight Israeli Academy Awards.

Screening Sunday, Nov. 9, at 3:30 p.m. with Professor Gil Eyal, department of sociology,
Columbia University

Four Seasons Lodge English (some Hebrew, Polish, and Yiddish with English subtitles)

“Four Seasons Lodge,” a bungalow colony in New York’s Catskill Mountains, has provided idyllic refuge to a group of Holocaust survivors and their families for nearly three decades. With inspiring openness, this film offers an insightful portrait of their summers at the lodge, documenting their love of life, family, mahjong and dance as well as their commitment to their community and a special bond with the lodge itself.

Screenings Tuesday, Nov. 11, at 7 p.m. with the film’s producer Matt Lavine. There will be an additional screening Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 1 p.m. with some of the “Lodgers” featured in the film.

The Galilee Eskimos Hebrew with English subtitles

When an old kibbutz in the hills of Galilee is deserted overnight, 12 of its original members awaken to find themselves abandoned. Filled with humor and sadness, “The Galilee Eskimos” turns a bittersweet lens on the transformation of the original kibbutz way of life. This is the New Jersey premiere of the film.

Screening Sunday, Nov.16, at 4:30 p.m. with Professor Yael Zerubavel, director of Bildner Center, Rutgers University

Jellyfish Hebrew and Tagalog with English subtitles

Set against the background of Israel’s most cosmopolitan city, Jellyfish tells the story of three very different Tel Aviv women – a waitress, a disappointed bride and a domestic worker from the Philippines. Subject to the whims of destiny, they struggle to find love as their intersecting lives create an unlikely portrait of modern Israeli life. The film is a winner of the Camera d’Or, Cannes Film Festival 2007.

Screenings Thursday, Nov. 13, at 3:15 p.m. There will be an additional showing on Saturday, Nov. 15, at 9:30 p.m. with Professor Miri Talmon-Bohm, Israeli cinema and culture scholar, University of Wisconsin.

Constantine's Sword English

“Constantine's Sword” is the compelling personal narrative of James Carroll, a former Catholic priest on a journey to uncover the roots of religiously motivated violence. As Carroll confronts his own dark past, the film traces the history of religious intolerance and fanaticism that continue to cast their shadows and threaten the world today. This is the New Jersey premiere of the film.

Screenings Thursday, Nov. 1, at 7 p.m. with the film's director, Oren Jacoby. There will be an additional showing on Sunday, Nov. 16, at 4 p.m. with Professor Elizabeth Castelli, Department of Religion, Barnard College.

Noodle Hebrew/Mandarin/English with English subtitles

When the young son of her Chinese housekeeper is suddenly left in her care, twice-widowed Miri must face the unexpected challenge of reuniting the boy with his missing mother. With humor and sensitivity, "Noodle" interweaves this quest with Miri's own search for meaning in her life. The film is the winner of the Israel Academy Awards 2007, and the Special Grand Award of the Montreal World Film Festival.

Screenings Saturday, November 15, at 7 p.m. with Professor Miri Talmon-Bohm, Israeli cinema and culture scholar, University of Wisconsin. There will be an additional showing on Sunday, November 16, at 12:45 p.m. followed by a panel discussion on Israeli film.

Love and Dance Hebrew/Russian with English subtitles

A coming-of-age story, "Love and Dance" follows Chen, the young son of a Russian-born mother and an Israeli father, who falls in love with a Russian girl and joins her dance class. As his interest in ballroom dancing blossoms, he begins to come to terms with his identity and tries to bridge the cultural divide that pervades life in his immigrant town. This film may not be appropriate for audiences under the age of 13.

Screenings Sunday, Nov. 16 at 7:30 p.m., with Professor Olga Gershenson, Department of Judaic and Near Eastern Studies, University of Massachusetts-Amherst. There will be an additional screening on Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 3:30 p.m.

One Day You'll Understand (Plus Tard, Tu Comprendras) French with English subtitles

Raised Catholic like their father, Victor and his sister knew nothing of their parents' wartime past or of their maternal grandparents' deportation. In 1987, the televised trial of Klaus Barbie, "the butcher of Lyon," disturbs this legacy of silence and spurs Victor to search for the missing pieces of his family's history. This film is an adaptation of Jerome Clement's autobiographical novel, "Plus Tard, Tu Comprendras."

Screenings Wednesday, Nov. 19, at 7 p.m. with Professor Michael Levine, Department of German, Rutgers University. There will be an additional screening: Tuesday, Nov. 18, at 3 p.m. with Ernestine Schlant Bradley, visiting professor of comparative literature, The New School.

Panel Discussion on Israeli Film

Featuring: Professor Miri Talmon-Bohm, Israeli cinema and culture scholar, University of Wisconsin; Professor Olga Gershenson, Department of Judaic and Near Eastern Studies, University of Massachusetts-Amherst; and Isaac Zablocki, director of film and literary programs,

Jewish Community Center, Manhattan. This event, which is free and open to the public, will take place on Nov. 16, from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Ticket information is available from jewishstudies.rutgers.edu or by calling the Bildner Center at 732-932-4166. Film tickets are priced from \$5 to \$10 and are available online, by mail, at the Bildner Center or at the Regal Cinema. Tickets are also available from Trio Gifts, 246 Raritan Ave., Highland Park. Tickets ordered by Oct. 24 will be mailed to the purchaser. Ticket orders received after this date will be available at “will call” at the Regal Cinema during the Festival. Check jewishstudies.rutgers.edu for film updates and ticket availability.

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