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MONTCLAIR FILM FESTIVAL

For Immediate Release

The Montclair Film Festival Announces Opening, Closing, and Centerpiece Films

Roger Ross Williams' LIFE, ANIMATED to open the festival, Barbara Kopple's MISS SHARON JONES! to close, Ido Haar's PRESENTING PRINCESS SHAW and James Schamus' INDIGNATION selected as festival centerpieces

March 21, 2016, Montclair, NJ— The Montclair Film Festival (MFF) today announced that *LIFE, ANIMATED* has been selected as the Opening Night Film of the 2016 Montclair Film Festival, screening Friday, April 29, at 7:30 PM at the historic Wellmont theater. Academy Award® winning director Roger Ross Williams will join subjects Owen, Walt, Cornelia, and Ron Suskind at the screening, with *The Late Show* host Stephen Colbert moderating a post-screening discussion.

Ido Haar's *PRESENTING PRINCESS SHAW* will be the festival's Documentary Centerpiece film, screening on Friday, May 6, at 8:00 PM at the Wellmont. Hailed by *Variety* as "astounding and thoroughly inspirational," the film will feature a post-screening Q&A with Princess Shaw attending.

James Schamus' *INDIGNATION* will be presented as the festival's Narrative Centerpiece film, screening on Saturday, May 7, at 4:30 PM at the Wellmont. Adapted from the novel by legendary New Jersey writer Philip Roth, and featuring a wonderful supporting performance from Montclair's own Ben Rosenfield, the screening will feature a Q&A with Mr. Schamus.

Two-time Academy Award® winner Barbara Kopple's *MISS SHARON JONES!*, her fiery portrait of the great soul singer Sharon Jones, has been selected as the Festival's Closing Night Film, screening on Saturday, May 7, at 7:30 PM at the Wellmont. Ms. Kopple will attend with members of Sharon Jones' band *The Dap Kings* for a post-screening Q&A.

"Each of these wonderful films is a rich portrait of a life transformed by the urgent need to find one's true voice and engage with the world," said MFF Executive Director Tom Hall. "These are stories that are sure to inspire and move audiences, and we are incredibly proud and honored to feature them at our festival."

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The full program for the Montclair Film Festival will be announced on Tuesday, April 5.

Tickets for MFF members go on sale Tuesday, April 5, with public tickets on sale Friday, April 8, at 11:00 AM. Visit www.montclairfilmfest.org for details.

THE FILMS

OPENING NIGHT FILM

Friday, April 29, 7:30 PM, *The Wellmont Theater*

LIFE, ANIMATED

Director: Roger Ross Williams

Producers: Roger Ross Williams, Julie Goldman

USA/91 Min

LIFE, ANIMATED is the real-life story of Owen Suskind, the son of the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ron Suskind and his wife, Cornelia. An autistic boy who couldn't speak for years, Owen memorized dozens of Disney movies, turned them into a language to express love and loss, kinship, and brotherhood.

Directed by Academy Award® winning filmmaker Roger Ross Williams, LIFE, ANIMATED is the story of a family's love, struggle and triumph, revealing how, in darkness, we all literally need stories to survive. The Montclair Film Festival is proud to present the luminous, inspiring LIFE, ANIMATED as the Opening Night Film of our 2016 festival.

Q&A with Director Roger Ross Williams, subjects Owen, Walt, Cornelia, and Ron Suskind, moderated by Stephen Colbert.

DOCUMENTARY CENTERPIECE FILM

Friday, May 6th, 8:00 PM, *The Wellmont Theater*

PRESENTING PRINCESS SHAW

Director: Ido Haar

Producers: Liran Atzmor, Stephen Apkon

Israel/80 Min

By day, Samantha Montgomery cares for the elderly in one of New Orleans' toughest neighborhoods. By night, she writes and sings her own songs as Princess Shaw on her confessional YouTube channel. Meanwhile, in Israel, a composer, musician and video artist named Kutiman creates video mash ups of amateur YouTube performers. When Kutiman discovers Princess Shaw's raw, vulnerable vocals online, the pair of artists unwittingly begin a journey that will bring them together from across the globe, transforming their lives forever.

PRESENTING PRINCESS SHAW is the story of the birth of an unlikely star who will make you believe in the power of dreams.

Q&A with Princess Shaw

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NARRATIVE CENTERPIECE FILM

Saturday, May 7th, 4:30 PM, *The Wellmont Theater*

INDIGNATION

Director: James Schamus

Producers: Anthony Bregman, James Schamus, Rodrigo Teixeira

Cast: Logan Lerman, Sarah Gadon, Ben Rosenfield, Tracy Letts

USA/110 Min

Based on the novel by Philip Roth, INDIGNATION is the story of Marcus (Logan Lerman), a working-class Jewish student from Newark, attending a small liberal arts college in Ohio. It's 1951, and while the Korean War rages half a world away, life in America offers its own discontents; Marcus is infatuated with a fellow student named Olivia Hutton (Sarah Gadon), his parents don't approve, and his struggles with the administration at his college lead him on a collision course with the conservative values of the day. James Schamus' INDIGNATION is a masterful reminder of the power of fighting for your ideals.

Q&A with Director James Schamus

CLOSING NIGHT FILM

Saturday, May 7th, 7:30 PM, *The Wellmont Theater*

MISS SHARON JONES!

Director: Barbara Kopple

Producers: Barbara Kopple, David Cassidy

USA/93 Min

Two-time Academy Award® winning filmmaker Barbara Kopple returns to the MFF with MISS SHARON JONES!, a portrait of one of the most fiery and talented performers working today. In 2014, on the eve of the band launching a new album, Ms. Jones faces her greatest challenge yet; a cancer diagnosis that brings her career to a stand still. MISS SHARON JONES! documents the singer's battle to not only heal her body but continue to drive the Dap Kings toward the musical summit. Filled with incredible performances, laughs, tears and plenty of inspiration, we are proud to present MISS SHARON JONES! as the Closing Night Film of the 2016 Montclair Film Festival.

Q&A with Director Barbara Kopple and members of The Dap Kings

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ABOUT THE MONTCLAIR FILM FESTIVAL

The Montclair Film Festival, Inc. (MFF), a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization, nurtures and showcases the talents of filmmakers from around the region and world. MFF unites, empowers, educates and celebrates our region's diverse cultural heritage and robust artistic community by presenting an annual spring festival and a growing assortment of engaging programs and events all year long. The fifth annual spring festival will take place from April 29 through May 8, 2016. MFF 2016 is presented by Investors Bank and made possible with support from Audible, Inc., Horizon Foundation for NJ, HackensackUMC Mountainside, Ashenfelter, Slous, McDonough & Trevenan, LLP, Chubb, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage, Kensington Senior Living, Applause Theatre & Cinema Books, The Healthcare Foundation of NJ, Partners for Health Foundation, RBC Wealth Management, Wellmont Theater, William H. Connolly & Co., Shine Global and Montclair Radiology, among others. The festival is supported by grants from the New Jersey Department of State, Division of Travel and Tourism and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. For more information about MFF, visit www.montclairfilmfest.org.

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