



For Immediate Release

## **MONTCLAIR FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES OPENING, CLOSING, AND CENTERPIECE FILMS**

**Amanda Lipitz's STEP will Open the Festival, Zoe Lister-Jones' BAND AID will Close, Jeremy Jasper's PATTI CAKE\$ and Stanley Nelson's TELL THEM WE ARE RISING: AMERICA'S BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES set as Centerpiece films**

**Festival launches new Emerging Black Voices fellowship program in partnership with the American Black Film Festival, will address the "Fake News" phenomenon in partnership with Retro Report, and will present new restorations of George Romero's NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD and Andrei Tarkovsky's STALKER**

March 27, 2017, MONTCLAIR, NJ - Today, Montclair Film announced the Opening, Closing and Centerpiece screenings for the 6th annual Montclair Film Festival (MFF), taking place April 28 - May 7, 2017 in Montclair, NJ. Amanda Lipitz's STEP will open the festival on Friday, April 28; Stanley Nelson's TELL THEM WE ARE RISING: AMERICA'S BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, the festival's Documentary Centerpiece, will screen on Friday, May 5; Jeremy Jasper's PATTI CAKE\$ is set as the festival's Fiction Centerpiece for Saturday, May 6, with Zoe Lister-Jones' BAND AID set as the Closing Night film on Saturday, May 6. Each of these screenings will take place at the Wellmont Theater in Montclair.

Additionally, Montclair Film and the American Black Film Festival (ABFF) are proud to announce a partnership that helps build meaningful opportunity for African American professionals in the film and television industry, and which celebrates the work of established artists in the field. This year's partnership includes a new program, Emerging Black Voices, which will offer opportunity to filmmakers and producers at both the MFF

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and ABFF, as well as multiple panel discussions, screenings, and the House Party, a celebration of African American filmmakers held each year at the MFF. The inaugural class of Emerging Black Voices fellows will feature Iyabo Boyd (producer, FOR AHKEEM), Sabaah Foleyan (director, WHOSE STREETS?), and Yance Ford (director, STRONG ISLAND), and they will meet with industry advisors Jeff Friday (Founder & CEO, ABFF Ventures, LLC), Patrick Harrison (Director, New York Programs and Membership, The Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences), and Julie La'Bassiere (Founder & CEO, Tall Bird Marketing & Strategy.)

"We are excited to partner with the 2017 Montclair Film Festival. Their new Emerging Black Voices fellowship program aligns with the work we have championed for the past 21 years at the American Black Film Festival. I believe these types of collaborative partnerships ensure that stories with distinct voices, varied points of view and diverse casts are highlighted and celebrated," said Jeff Friday, ABFF Ventures CEO.

Montclair Film is proud to welcome Retro Report as our partner for a two-part series at this year's MFF that examines the state of news, reporting, and media consumption. The partnership features a program of films, curated by the Retro Report team and including the premiere of their latest film ZAPRUDER , that examines the way in which media stories can shape the public conversation, as well as a conversation entitled TRUE OR FALSE?: REPORTING IN THE AGE OF "FAKE NEWS" which will feature a panel of distinguished journalists and offer a look inside the job of reporting the facts when audiences are more inclined than ever to challenge them. Online at [retroreport.org](http://retroreport.org), Retro Report is home to a growing series of over 100 short documentaries for the digital generation. Their films provide context to today's headlines by exploring the pivotal moments that shaped our world and their impact on our lives today.

"We are honored to be partnering with the Montclair Film Festival," said Retro Report Executive Producer Kyra Darnton. "We look forward to discussing the importance of truth in journalism at a time when 'alternative facts,' 'fake news' and conspiracy theories are vying for attention with facts -- often on the losing side."

The Montclair Film Festival is also proud to present two special restorations at this year's festival. First, George Romero's NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD will screen in a stunning new 4K restoration by the Museum of Modern Art and The Film Foundation, with funding provided by the George Lucas Family Foundation and the Celeste Bartos

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Preservation Fund. The screening, set for April 29 at the Wellmont Theater, will feature special guests Producer Russ Streiner, who also played Johnny in the film and delivered the now-famous line "They're coming to get you, Barbara," actress Kyra Schon, who portrayed the 11 year-old Karen Cooper in the film and provided one of the film's most unforgettable moments, and investor and the film's sound recordist Gary Streiner, who oversaw the film's restoration on behalf of Image Ten.

Next, the festival will present Mosfilm's beautiful new 2K restoration of Andrei Tarkovsky's STALKER, screening Saturday, April 29. This restoration of STALKER will be the first film ever screened in Cinema505, Montclair Film's new cinema located in their new home at the Investors Bank Film and Media Center, located at 505 Bloomfield Avenue in downtown Montclair. The restored STALKER is presented through the generous support of Janus Films.

Tickets for the 2017 Montclair Film Festival go on sale for Montclair Film members on Monday, April 3 at 10:00 a.m., and to the general public on Friday, April 7 at 10:00 a.m. Tickets are available online at [montclairfilmfest.org](http://montclairfilmfest.org) or at the festival's new Box Office, located in the lobby of the Investors Bank Film & Media Center at 505 Bloomfield Avenue in downtown Montclair.

The full program will be announced on Monday, April 3, 2017.

"Today's announcement highlights the diversity of programs and ideas that we'll be bringing to the 2017 Montclair Film Festival," said Montclair Film Executive Director Tom Hall. "We are incredibly excited to welcome these incredible artists and partners to our festival, and look forward to unveiling the full program next week."

*A hi-res set of Montclair Film and MFF logos and the 2017 poster image are available for download and use at:*

[bit.ly/MFF17OPENCLOSECENTERPIECE](http://bit.ly/MFF17OPENCLOSECENTERPIECE)



### **ABOUT MONTCLAIR FILM**

Montclair Film, a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization, nurtures and showcases the talents of filmmakers from around the region and world. Montclair Film unites, empowers, educates, and celebrates our region's diverse cultural heritage and robust artistic community by presenting engaging programs and events all year long. The sixth annual Montclair Film Festival will take place from April 28 through May 7, 2017. MFF 2017 is made possible through generous support from Investors Bank; Audible; Hackensack Meridian Health; the Horizon Foundation for New Jersey; Ashenfelter, Slous, McDonough, Golia & Trevenen, LLP; Chubb; Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage; and William H. Connolly & Co., and others. Our programs are made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey Department of State, Division of Travel and Tourism and New Jersey State Council on the Arts. For information about Montclair Film, visit [www.montclairfilmfest.org](http://www.montclairfilmfest.org)

### **ABOUT THE AMERICAN BLACK FILM FESTIVAL**

The American Black Film Festival (ABFF) is an annual event dedicated to showcasing quality film and television content by and about people of African descent. It supports emerging artists to foster a wider range of images, stories and storytellers represented in the entertainment industry. The festival is committed to the belief that Black artists and content creators deserve the same opportunities as their mainstream counterparts. ABFF founder Jeff Friday conceived the festival in 1997 as a vehicle to promote diversity in the motion picture industry, and strengthen the Black filmmaking community through resource sharing, education, artistic collaboration and career development. Today, the ABFF is recognized as the preeminent pipeline to new Black talent, both in front of and behind the camera, and is regarded as one of the leading film festivals in the world. The ABFF is a property of ABFF Ventures, a multifaceted entertainment company specializing in the production of live events, television and digital content targeted to upscale African American audiences. For more information about the American Black Film Festival, taking place in Miami, June 14-18, 2017, visit [www.ABFF.com](http://www.ABFF.com)



## **ABOUT RETRO REPORT**

Retro Report is a growing series of over 100 short documentaries for the digital generation. We provide context to today's headlines by exploring the pivotal moments that shaped our world and their impact on our lives today. Our mission as an independent non-profit is based on the conviction that an engaging and forward-looking review of high-profile events provides a critical opportunity to understand the lessons of history.

**For more information, please contact**

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