



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BOSTON FILM FESTIVAL LAUNCHES 35<sup>TH</sup> SEASON OF CELEBRATING SUPERB AND TRANSFORMATIVE CINEMA THAT INCLUDES FOUR WORLD AND ONE U.S. PREMIERES FEATURING BOLD NEW DIRECTIONS IN FILM**

Festival Will Run from September 19-22 as It Reveals World Premiere of “She’s in Portland” (Starring Minka Kelly, Tommy Dewey, Francois Arnaud), “Whaling” (Starring Tom Felton, Tammin Sursok, Wendi McLendon-Covey) and “American Tragedy,” Upcoming Features “JoJo Rabbit” (Starring Scarlett Johansson) and “A Hidden Life” (from Accomplished Director Terrence Malick); Thought-provoking Documentaries Also Take Center Stage

**BOSTON – September 10, 2019** -- Continuing its tradition of showcasing momentous and daring new films, the 35<sup>th</sup> annual Boston Film Festival (September 19-22) will spotlight four world premieres (including “She’s in Portland,” starring Minka Kelly), a United States premiere (“JoJo Rabbit,” starring Scarlett Johansson), and the East Coast debut of “A Hidden Life” (from acclaimed director Terrence Malick). In addition, the festival will spotlight several riveting documentary films, including the world premieres of “American Tragedy” as well as “In Their Shoes,” a Jim Wahlberg production.

Many contemporary themes and points-of-view will be presented at the Boston Film Festival (BFF) in the assembled films that address diversity, empowerment, redemption, and honor. There will also be a special advance screening of the new NBC drama series “Bluff City Law,” a presentation of the inspirational film “Once Upon a River” by female director Haroula Rose, and the world premiere of the new comedy feature “Whaling.” Additional documentaries are “The Wild,” “The Last Harvest: You Can’t Grow Without Change,” and “The Dog Doc.”

Question-and-answer sessions with the director and featured actors follow most of the films. Among the actors who are confirmed to attend are; Tammin Sursok, Austin Swift, David Koechner (“Whaling”) Francois Arnaud, Tommy Dewey, Lola Glaudini (“She’s in Portland”), Massachusetts’ native Caitlyn McGee, Jayne Atkinson, Michael Luwoye (“Bluff City Law”), Kenadi DelaCerna, John Ashton, Lindsay Pulsipher, Coburn Goss (“Once Upon a River”) and Dr. Marty Goldstein “The Dog Doc”). James Wahlberg, the executive producer of “In Their Shoes,” also will participate.

In addition, there will be a short film program on the afternoons of September 21 and 22. On Opening Night, September 19 (7 p.m.) at the Icon Seaport, the searing documentary world premiere of “American Tragedy” recounts the dark day of April 20, 1999 – the date of the infamous Columbine school shootings – and the aftermath of the ordeal from the unique perspective of Sue Klebold, the mother of one of the shooters Dylan Klebold.

National surveys immediately after the carnage revealed that most American blamed the killers' parents, and it has taken nearly 20 years for Sue Klebold to reconcile how her son – whom she affectionately referred to as “Sunshine Boy” – could have conceived such a murderous plan. She has scavenged her past, looking for warning signs and clues, and discovered that despite her love, Dylan was profoundly suicidal, which proved to be the catalyst for the tragedy. The documentary also includes interviews with top mental health experts, including Tom Insel, Peter Langman, and Anthony Biglan. Josh Sabey directs the film, which comes from BOLDRUSH!.

Also, on September 19 (9 p.m.), the BFF will present the U.S. premiere of “JoJo Rabbit” as writer-director Taika Waititi (“Thor: Ragnarok,” “Hunt for the Wilder People”) brings his signature style of humor and pathos to his latest film. “JoJo Rabbit” is a World War II satire that follows a lonely German boy (Roman Griffin Davis), whose world view is turned upside down when he discovers his single mother (Scarlett Johansson, the “Avengers” film series) is hiding a young Jewish girl (Thomasin McKenzie) in their attic. Aided only by his idiotic imaginary friend – Adolf Hitler (Taika Waititi) – JoJo must confront his blind nationalism. The film is from Fox Searchlight Pictures.

The world premiere of the comedy film “Whaling” (September 20, 6:45 p.m.) depicts a dysfunctional brother and sister who must come to terms with each other after learning of the final wish of their recently deceased mother. Tom Felton (“The Flash”), Tammin Sursok (“Pretty Little Liars”), Wendi McLendon-Covey (“The Goldbergs”), David Koechner (“Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy”) and Austin Swift star. Sean McEwen is the director, and Cassidy Lunnen is the producer.

The critical documentary “The Wild” (September 20, 9:30 p.m.) illustrates Alaska’s Bristol Bay as home to the planet’s largest wild salmon run left. Writer-director Mark Titus resumes where he left off in his 2014 award-winning documentary “The Breach Left Off.” “The Wild” is a race against time where the hard-won protections for Bristol Bay now seem as fleeting as the morning mist as Pebble Mine wants to extract all the copper there. The film reflects Titus’ love for wild salmon and reveals the conflict in Alaska to be a harbinger of broader global questions: how do humans reconcile separation from the natural world that sustains them? And if a change of course can be accomplished, how can what remains be saved? Interviews with Mark Harmon (“NCIS”), Yvon Chouinard (Patagonia founder), Chef Tom Colicchio (Food Network). David J. Cornfield and Linda A. Cornfield are the executive producers.

In “The Last Harvest: You Can’t Grow Without Change” (September 20, 9:30 p.m.), the new documentary offers a rare glimpse into the hopes, hardships and uncertain futures of three agricultural family growers. Today, 75 percent of the fresh fruit consumed in the United States is entirely dependent on hard-harvesting. The growers face a harsh reality of tightened immigration control and inefficient guest-worker programs that prevent them from finding a workforce to pick their fields. These problems threaten the country’s availability of fresh food and the vibrancy of the thriving agricultural community. Alexis Spraic is the director; Tim Lynch and Tienke Pavesic are the executive producers.

In an advance premiere of NBC's new drama series "Bluff City Law" (September 21, 7 p.m.), brilliant lawyer Sydney Strait (Newton native Caitlin McGee, "Grey's Anatomy") hails from a famous Memphis family known for confronting injustice. Sydney recently split from her father Elijah's (Emmy and Golden Globe winner Jimmy Smits, "NYPD Blue") celebrated law firm when their tumultuous relationship got in the way. After barely speaking to him for years, she is thrust back into the family fold when her mother suddenly passes away. In the wake of her loss, Elijah hopes to reconnect with his beloved daughter, and he asks her to rejoin his firm. Despite their lingering resentment, Sydney agrees because she knows that working alongside her father is her best hope of changing the world – if they can tolerate each other. Jessica Yu is the director. Jayne Atkinson, ("House of Cards"), Jimmy Smits, ("NYPD Blues"), and Michael Luwoye also star. Dean Georgaris, David Janollari, and Michael Aguilar are the executive producers.

Later on September 21 (8:40 p.m.), the Boston Film Festival Centerpiece showcases the world premiere of the film "She's in Portland." In the comedy-drama, two thirtysomething guys opt to take a road trip after a college reunion to find Maggie (Minka Kelly, "Titans") – the girl who got away on their youth. Wes (Tommy Dewey, "Casual") is a charismatic East Coast banker grappling with a stressful home life and a marriage that's gone cold. Meanwhile, his friend, Luke (Francois Arnaud, "Midnight, Texas") is a creative type from Los Angeles who is struggling with his career and life as a lonely single guy. Marc Carlini ("Worn") is the director and co-writer (with Patrick Alexander). Kevin Cognetti, Greg O'Bryant, James W. Rizzo and T. Justin Ross are the executive producers.

The world premiere of the documentary "In Their Shoes" on September 22 (2 p.m.) is a Wahl St. production that follows the lives of four men whose stories intersect in a Writers Without Margins prison reentry and addiction recovery program. In these complex portrayals of both hope and heartache, viewers learn what led each person to commit their crimes and witness the challenges of their ongoing stories on the outside. Also included are interviews with Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, Congressman Joe Kennedy III, Sheriff Michael Bellotti, Professor Randall Horton and Dr. Bertha Madras of the President's Commission on Combatting Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis, among others. The premiere will take place at the Boston Public Library with a forum to follow. Taylor Katsanis is the director, Cheryl Buchanan is the producer, and James Wahlberg is the executive producer.

The progressive new approach to sustain the healthier lives of animals is the focus of "The Dog Doc" (September 22, 4 p.m.) which highlights Dr. Marty Goldstein, a founding father of integrative veterinary medicine as well as his colleagues in South Salem, New York. There, they have created a mecca for holistic care, offering a better life for scores of otherwise hopeless animals. Dr. Goldstein combines conventional medical training with cutting-edge alternative therapies that prove to be transformative for his all living things. In addition, "The Dog Doc" poses a serious question that asks if Americans are overmedicating their pets even as it paints a complete picture of the dedication and joys of being a veterinarian. Cindy Meehl directs the project. Alex Henty and Brittany Batterton are the executive producers.

Adapted from the acclaimed best-selling novel by Bonnie Jo Campbell, the new drama feature "Once Upon a River" will be screened on the festival's final night of September 22 (7 p.m.). Set in rural Michigan in 1978, the film depicts Margo Crane (Kenadi DelaCerna), a Native American

teen, who sets out on the Stark River in an odyssey to find her estranged mother after her father is killed in a tragic accident. Margo, who is a dead-shot with a rifle, idolizes Annie Oakley, but as a loner, she strives to prove herself in a community dominated by men. On her dangerous journey, Margo learns to live life on her own terms while processing her grief. However, when she befriends an elderly man who has given up on life, they strike up a deep and unlikely friendship that changes their lives. Haroula Rose (“Lost & Found”) directs. John Ashton (“The Joke Thief,” “Gone Baby Gone”), Tatanka Means (“The Son”), Ajuawak Kapashesit (“Indian Road Trip”), Lindsay Pulsipher (“True Blood”), Sam Straley (“The Kids Are Alright”) and Coburn Goss (“Man of Steel”) also stars. Sue Berghoef and JJ Ingraham are the executive producers.

Based on real events, “A Hidden Life” (the festival’s concluding film on September 22, 9:20 p.m.) comes from visionary writer-director Terrence Malick. It centers on the story of unsung hero Franz Jägerstätter (August Diehl), who refused to fight for the Nazis in World War II. When the Austrian peasant farmer is faced with the threat of execution for treason, it is his unwavering faith and his love for his wife, Fani (Valerie Pachner), and their children, that keeps his spirit alive. “A Hidden Life” is from Fox Searchlight Pictures.

Sponsors are A&E; The Hollywood Reporter; NBC; Verizon Fios; Showplace Icon; Starz; Williams Sennott & Rogers; Yotel, Boston Public Library; The Met Club, Strega on the Waterfront; Party by Design; Dream Alley at press time.

Filmgoers can access [www.bostonfilmfestival.org](http://www.bostonfilmfestival.org) for more details and to purchase tickets.

Facebook: Boston Film Festival; Instagram: Bostonfilmfestival; Twitter: @Bostonfilmfest.

MEDIA CONTACT: Julie Dennehy, Julie@dennehypr.com

###