



PRESS BOOK

16TH Annual Hartford Jewish Film Festival March 17 – 27, 2012

Presented by

**Mandell Jewish Community Center
Zachs Campus, 335 Bloomfield Avenue
West Hartford, CT 06117**

With

**Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art
Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies
and
The Hartt School, University of Hartford**

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Official Festival Site www.hjff.org

Photos, interviews, press kits available.

Free 2012 HJFF iPhone App available at the iTunes App Store.

16th Annual Mandell JCC Hartford Jewish Film Festival Returns March 17- 27, 2012 with Heartbreakers and Heroes, A Flood of Family Features, Hot Docs and Music makers; 22 Films From 10 Countries, Concerts, Filmmakers and Stars Take Center Stage

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(West Hartford, CT, Jan 10, 2012) When the **16th Annual Mandell JCC Hartford Jewish Film Festival** tap dances into five theaters March 17 – 27, 2012, audiences will be treated to a globe-spanning love story, war heroes and saviors, taboo-breaking documentaries, tango, klezmer and dancing superstars, and a child's eye view of the world on film, as well as visiting directors, actors and authors, parties, concerts and special events. The state's longest-running and largest celebration of Jewish culture and peoplehood returns to screen 22 award-winning features, documentaries, shorts and romances from ten countries over ten days.

Most films will have their New England, Connecticut or Hartford premieres at the Festival, which is presented by the Mandell Jewish Community Center with the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, the Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies and The Hartt School, University of Hartford. The films will be screened in five venues in Bloomfield (Digiplex Destinations), Hartford (Aetna Theater, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art) and West Hartford, CT (Criterion Cinemas Blue Back Square; Herbert Gilman Theater, Mandell JCC and The Emanuel Synagogue).

Hartford's annual ten day culture-crossing cinematic feast is Jewish story-telling with an international accent, featuring titles from Argentina, China, Croatia, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Poland, United Kingdom and the United States, where they have won multiple awards and honors. The festival expands this year to present Connecticut's first *ReelAbilities, The New York Disabilities Film Festival*, in partnership with The Saul Schottenstein Foundation B, on Sunday, March 25, 2012. This one-day marathon of films - general and Jewish – celebrates the art and expression of all people with disabilities and features guest presenters and experts.

A gala reception on Opening Night (March 17) heralds the premiere of the miraculous love story, ***Remembrance***, and a closing night (March 27) tango concert and dance party with The Hartt School, University of Hartford, follows ***Tango - A Story with Jews***. Special events during the festival include an encore screening of Joyce Mandell's and Michael King's ***The Rescuers***; a Muslim-Jewish Teen Screen event with young cast members and the director of ***David – The Movie***; a Jewish soul music performance and kosher nosh with ***The Klezmatiks – On Holy Ground***; a ***Shalom Sesame*** Family Flicks program for tots and a Senior Screen matinee film, entertainment and lunch.

Book (*Far To Go*) meets film (***Nicky's Family***) when Canadian Jewish Book Award winner Alison Pick and Ivan Backer, a Hartford resident rescued from Czechoslovakia as a child reveal their connections to Sir Nicholas Winton and his life-saving World War II Kindertransport mission. Trailblazing journalist Phil Jacobs and director Scott Rosenfelt of Branford, CT visit to present ***Standing Silent***, their taboo-shattering documentary on child sexual abuse in the Orthodox Jewish community with a special *Reel Talk* following the film.

Other films and shorts to be screened at the 2012 Mandell JCC Hartford Jewish Film Festival include ***Ahead of Time, All Day, Crime After Crime, Honeymoon Suite, In Heaven Underground, Kaddish for a Friend, Lea and Daria, Mitzvah on the Street (Shalom Sesame), Restoration, Shooting Beauty, The Flood (Mabul), The Tailor, The Tenth Man, Warrior Champions – From Baghdad to Beijing*** and ***White Balance***.

Ticket prices range from \$10 advance (\$13 at door) for most films to \$75 for Opening Night film, gala and parking. Tickets for the Tuesday, March 27 ***Tango, A Story With Jews*** film and Closing Night concert and tango party featuring musicians and dancers from The Hartt School, University of Hartford are \$20 per person. Tickets for all shows on sale in person, via phone and by mail at the Mandell JCC. Seating is limited, advance purchase is recommended to avoid sellouts. For films other than Opening Night, tickets will be sold at the door subject to availability; all seating is general admission and program is subject to change. All events are under Hartford Kashrut Commission supervision.

The **2012 HJFF iPhone App**, developed by iDoTouch.com, can be downloaded for free from the iTunes App Store. Users can view schedule, photos, sneak previews and trailers, maintain favorites, call or email the box office and share favorites via email and Facebook. For tickets, schedules, directions, and a Festival brochure contact the Hartford Jewish Film Festival Box Office, Mandell JCC, Zachs Campus, 335 Bloomfield Ave., West Hartford, CT. 06117, 860-231-6316, visit the official film festival website, www.hjff.org or contact the Mandell JCC, 860-236-4571.

Sneak Previews

Saturday, March 17, 2012

Aetna Theater, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, 600 Main St., Hartford, CT

Opening Night - New England Premiere, 8:30 PM

REMEMBRANCE (Germany, 2011, 105 min, English/Polish/German with English subtitles) Director: Anna Justice

Inspired by actual events, *REMEMBRANCE* is the remarkable love story of Tomasz and Hannah which blossomed amidst the terror of a Nazi concentration camp in Poland in 1944. During the post-war chaos, they are forcibly separated; each convinced the other has perished. More than 30 years later in New York City, Hannah, now happily married, sees Tomasz on television and vows to find her lost love.

Sunday, March 18, 2012

Herbert Gilman Theater, Mandell JCC, Zachs Campus, 335 Bloomfield Ave., West Hartford CT

Family Flicks, 10:00AM

SHALOM SESAME: MITZVAH ON THE STREET (USA and Israel, 2011, 25 minutes, English and Hebrew)

When a storm makes a mess of the neighborhood, everyone lends a helping hand. Sesame Street friends learn about mitzvot (good deeds) and the many ways in which people can work together and treat one another with kindness. In the meantime, Grover is invited to a Bar Mitzvah in Jerusalem. Special guest star Matisyahu, the reggae rocker, is featured. Crafts, refreshments follow the film.

Hartford Premiere, Teen Screen, 4:00 PM

DAVID – THE MOVIE (USA, 2011, 80 minutes, English) Director: Joel Fendelman

This film is about faith, friendship, family and the challenges of being different in America, as seen through the eyes of an eleven-year-old Muslim boy, Daud, growing up in Brooklyn and his new-found Jewish friend, Yoav. Through an innocent act, Daud pretends he is Jewish, until the web of deceit unravels and the two friends must face their families, friends and the truth. Reel Talk and dinner with actors Muatasem Mishal, Binyomin Shtaynberg, Noam Wienberg and director Joel Fendelman to follow film.

Sunday, March 18, 2012

Digiplex Destinations, Bloomfield 8, 863 Park Road, Bloomfield, CT

Connecticut Premiere, 12:30 PM

THE TENTH MAN (United Kingdom, 2006, 10 minutes, English)

Kidnapping and dirty tricks when it comes to finding a minyan are the way of the street among the aging Jewish community of London's East End.

AHEAD OF TIME: THE EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEY OF RUTH GRUBER (USA, 2010, 73 minutes, English)

Director: Bob Richman

This is the remarkable portrait of 100-year-old photojournalist, foreign correspondent and humanitarian Ruth Gruber, who became the world's youngest PhD at age 20. For seven decades she didn't just report the news...she made it.

Hartford Premiere, 3:00 PM

DAVID – THE MOVIE (USA, 2011, 80 minutes, English)

Director: Joel Fendelman

This film is about faith, friendship, family and the challenges of being different in America, as seen through the eyes of an eleven-year-old Muslim boy, Daud, growing up in Brooklyn and his new-found Jewish friend, Yoav. Through an innocent act, Daud pretends he is Jewish, until the web of deceit unravels and the two friends must face their families, friends and the truth.

Connecticut Premiere, 5:00 PM

CRIME AFTER CRIME (USA, 2011, 93 minutes, English) Director: Yoav Potash

This award-winning documentary tells the dramatic story of Joshua Safran, an Orthodox Jewish rookie attorney, who volunteers to free Deborah Peagler, an incarcerated survivor of domestic violence in Los Angeles.

Hartford Premiere, 7:30 PM

THE FLOOD (Israel/Canada/France/Germany, 2011, 97 minutes, Hebrew with English subtitles)

Director: Guy Nattiv

On a coastal Israeli farm, the Rosko family is quietly struggling to keep up appearances while hiding their sins, small and large. Miri teaches preschool and is having an affair; her husband Gidi lies about losing his job. Son Yoni yearns for puberty while practicing for his bar mitzvah and selling homework assignments to bullies. When autistic older son Tomer returns from years in an institution, the family falls apart. It takes a crisis and a flood to reunite them.

Monday, March 19, 2012

Herbert Gilman Theater, Mandell JCC, Zachs Campus, 335 Bloomfield Ave., West Hartford CT

Hartford Premiere, 7:00 PM

***THE TAILOR* (USA, 2011, 7 minutes, English subtitles) Director: Gordon Grinberg**

Culture and confusion meet on a Brooklyn street.

***THE KLEZMATICS – ON HOLY GROUND* (USA, 2010, 106 minutes, English)**

Director: Erik Greenberg Anjou

This feature-length backstage documentary about the Grammy Award-winning klezmer band captures the band's highs, lows, and relentless march forward. The Klezematics – with West Hartford native drummer Richie Barshay - have recorded with the best, including Itzhak Perlman and Arlo Guthrie. Heavy Shtetl Klezmer Band and nosh precede film at 5:00 PM, Reel Talk with director Erik Greenberg Anjou follows screening.

Tuesday, March 20, 2012

Herbert Gilman Theater, Mandell JCC, Zachs Campus, 335 Bloomfield Ave., West Hartford CT

Connecticut Premiere, 7:00 PM

***STANDING SILENT* (USA, 2010, 81 minutes, English) Director: Scott Rosenfelt**

Hoping to break through an impenetrable wall of silence, Phil Jacobs, former editor of the *Baltimore Jewish Times*, wrote about child sexual abuse perpetrated by trusted rabbis and educators in his city. Jacob's pen becomes a sword of justice as personal revelations come to light, death threats are received and the establishment responds. Yet the healing begins. Reel Talk with Lynn Marcus-Cohen, LCSW, Jewish Family Services of Greater Hartford, Rabbi James Rosen, MSW, Beth El Temple, West Hartford, Phil Jacobs and director Scott Rosenfelt (Branford, CT), follows screening.

Wednesday, March 21, 2012

Criterion Cinema, Blue Back Square, West Hartford Center

Connecticut Premiere, 6:00 PM

***RESTORATION* (Israel, 2011, 105 min, Hebrew with English subtitles)**

Director: Joseph Madmony

After his longtime business partner dies, Yakov Fidelman discovers that his antique furniture-restoration shop is in grave financial difficulty. A neglected 1882 Steinway piano, a handsome new apprentice, an estranged son and his pregnant wife provide the rich story lines of this modern Israeli family drama.

Encore Screening, 8:15 PM

***REMEMBRANCE* (Germany, 2011, 105 min, English/Polish/German with English subtitles)**

Director: Anna Justice

Inspired by actual events, *REMEMBRANCE* is the remarkable love story of Tomasz and Hannah which blossomed amidst the terror of a Nazi concentration camp in Poland in 1944. During the post-war chaos, they are forcibly separated, each convinced the other has perished. More than 30 years later in New York City, Hannah, sees Tomasz on television and vows to find her lost love.

Thursday, March 22, 2012

Criterion Cinema, Blue Back Square, West Hartford Center

Hartford Premiere, 6:00 PM

***IN HEAVEN UNDERGROUND* (Germany, 2011, 90 minutes, German with English subtitles)**

Director: Britta Wauer

An enchanting journey into history that celebrates life and the immortality of memories, this is the story of the peaceful and secluded 130-year-old Weissensee Jewish Cemetery, the oldest Jewish burial ground in Europe and still in use. It features a delightful array of characters: mourners, tourists, a young family residing at the cemetery, a third-generation gravedigger and an ornithologist studying rare birds of prey.

Connecticut Premiere, 8:15 PM

KADDISH FOR A FRIEND (Germany, 2011, 94 minutes, German, Russian and Arabic with English subtitles)

Director: Leo Khasin

Born into a Palestinian refugee family, 14 year old Ali is mixing with the wrong Berlin crowd. A teen prank turns violent and brings him face to face with feisty 84 year old Russian Jewish war veteran Alex, with whom he forges an uncommon human bond. This touching story about unlikely friendships, trust, loss and the art of forgiveness blurs the lines between enemies and friends with humor and pathos.

Saturday, March 24, 2012

Digiplex Destinations, Bloomfield 8, 863 Park Road, Bloomfield, CT

New England Premiere, 8:30 PM

LEA AND DARIA (Croatia, 2011, 101 minutes, Croatian with English Subtitles)

This triumphant dancing-with-the-child-stars film recreates the World War II true story of Jewish Lea Deutsch, the Shirley Temple of Zagreb's Children's Kingdom touring theater, and her best friend, German dance rival Daria Gaasteiger. Their friendship deepens as the Nazis invade and fate intervenes. Put on your dancing shoes but keep the tissues nearby for this lushly lensed feature starring Croatia's top dance stars, filmed in and around the majestic Zagreb Theatre.

Encore Screening, 8:30 PM

THE FLOOD (Israel/Canada/France/Germany, 2011, 97 minutes, Hebrew with English subtitles)

Director: Guy Nattiv

On a coastal Israeli farm, the Rosko family is quietly struggling to keep up appearances while hiding their sins, small and large. Miri teaches preschool and is having an affair; her husband Gidi lies about losing his job. Son Yoni yearns for puberty while practicing for his bar mitzvah and selling homework assignments to bullies. When autistic older son Tomer returns from years in an institution, the family falls apart. It takes a crisis and a flood to reunite them.

Sunday, March 25, 2012

The Emanuel Synagogue, 160 Mohegan Drive, West Hartford, CT

ReelAbilities – Connecticut Disabilities Film Festival

Connecticut Premiere, 1:00 PM

WARRIOR CHAMPIONS – FROM BAGHDAD TO BEIJING (China and USA, 2009, 80 minutes, English)

Director: George Renaud

Four Iraq War veterans turn the nightmares of war into Olympic dreams. After losing limbs and suffering paralysis fighting for their country in Iraq, these soldier-athletes have set out to do what many thought impossible – represent their country and compete in the 2008 Paralympic Games in Beijing. This award-winning film will be followed by Reel Talk with athletes and disability experts. Reel Talk with disabled athletes and trainers from The Sports Association of Gaylord Hospital, moderated by Denis Geary, Executive Director of the Jewish Association for Community Living follows screening.

Connecticut Premiere, 3:30 PM

ALL DAY (United Kingdom, 2009, 10 minutes, English)

This short romantic comedy follows two single neighbors who are looking for love. Each admits to their friends that they fancy the other, but neither knows that the other is also deaf. Throughout the day they visit the same locations, each time just missing each other. Will they ever meet?

WHITE BALANCE (Israel, 2004, 45 minutes, Hebrew with English subtitles)

Director: Dorit Hakim

Twelve-year-old Itamar has a deep passion for ice skating. However, he is slowly losing his hearing, and therefore his balance, forcing him away from his dream. Together with his new skating partner, they struggle and grow within a complicated world of adolescence.

Connecticut Premiere, 5:30 PM
SHOOTING BEAUTY (USA, 2010, 62 minutes, English)
Director: George Kachadorian
Producer & Project Founder: Courtney Bent

This is the inspiring story of fashion photographer Courtney Bent, whose career takes an unexpected turn when she discovers a hidden world of beauty at a Massachusetts center for people living with significant disabilities. From a simple photography project to a museum-worthy exhibition, a movement was born. Reel Talk with Dr. Stephen Becker, President and CEO, HARC, Inc., Albert Lognin, Self-Advocate, HARC, Inc. and Kaia Padersky of Unified Theater, Inc. to follow.

Sunday, March 25, 2012

Herbert Gilman Theater, Mandell JCC, Zachs Campus, 335 Bloomfield Ave., West Hartford, CT

7:00 PM
THE RESCUERS (USA/Israel 2011, 94 minutes, English)
Director: Michael King
Executive Producer: Joyce D. Mandell, West Hartford, CT

This riveting documentary tells the largely unknown stories of 13 courageous diplomats who saved thousands of Jews during World War II. The film follows Stephanie Nyombayire, a young Rwandan anti-genocide activist and historian Sir Martin Gilbert as they travel across 15 countries and three continents interviewing survivors and descendants of the diplomats. Reel Talk with Executive Producer Joyce D. Mandell and Stephanie Nyombayire to follow screening.

Monday, March 26, 2012

Herbert Gilman Theater, Mandell JCC, Zachs Campus, 335 Bloomfield Ave., West Hartford, CT

Encore Screening
Senior Screen, Lunch and Matinee
12:00 PM

KADDISH FOR A FRIEND (Germany, 2011, 94 minutes, German, Russian and Arabic with English subtitles)
Director: Leo Khasin

Born into a Palestinian refugee family, 14 year old Ali is mixing with the wrong Berlin crowd. A teen prank turns violent and brings him face to face with feisty 84 year old Russian Jewish war veteran Alex, with whom he forges an uncommon human bond. This touching story about unlikely friendships, trust, loss and the art of forgiveness blurs the lines between enemies and friends with humor and pathos. For Greater Hartford Seniors, includes luncheon and entertainment

New England Premiere
5:30 PM Dinner with Author Alison Pick, *Far To Go*
7:00 PM Film

NICKY'S FAMILY (Czech Republic, 2011, 98 minutes, English)
Director: Matej Minac

A modern-day story of humanitarian activism and global goodwill, this is the nearly forgotten story of Britain's Sir Nicholas Winton – still alive today - who saved 669 Czechoslovak children from the Nazis on the Kindertransport to England in 1939. Book meets film when Canadian Jewish Book Award winner, author Alison Pick, speaks at a pre-film dinner about her fiction novel based on the rescue mission, *Far To Go*. Hartford resident Ivan Backer, who was rescued on the Kindertransport, will join Alison Pick and speak about his experiences in a Reel Talk following the screening.

Tuesday, March 27, 2012

Herbert Gilman Theater, Mandell JCC, Zachs Campus, 335 Bloomfield Ave., West Hartford, CT

**Closing Night Film, Concert and Tango Party
Connecticut Premiere, 7:00 PM**

***THE HONEYMOON SUITE* (United Kingdom, 2010, 12 minutes)**

Complete strangers on their honeymoon, a newly married young bride and groom take clumsy first steps in their arranged marriage.

***TANGO, A STORY WITH JEWS* (Argentina, 2009, 70 minutes, Spanish with English subtitles)**

Director: Gabriel Pomeranic

The passionate tango is one of the most popular musical styles to come from Argentina, but few know of its distinctly Eastern European Jewish immigrant beginnings. Musical recordings, family memories, stories and enticing performances bringing to light the tango's colorful history and its Jewish roots. A live music and dance concert by Performance 20/20 and Dance Division students from The Hartt School, University of Hartford will be featured, and a closing night tango party and reception immediately follows the film.

**16th Annual Mandell JCC Hartford Jewish Film Festival
March 17 – 27, 2012
At A Glance**

What: 16th Annual Mandell JCC Hartford Jewish Film Festival. Largest Jewish cultural event in Connecticut featuring 22 Films from 10 Countries in 10 Days and 5 Venues, most are Hartford, Connecticut or New England Premieres.

When: Saturday March 17 – Tuesday, March 27, 2012

Who: Presented by Mandell Jewish Community Center with Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies and The Hartt School, University of Hartford.

Special Events: Opening Night Film and Gala Reception (3/17); *ReelAbilities* – Connecticut Disabilities Film Festival (3/25); Jewish-Muslim Teen Screen (3/18); Klezmer Concert and Film (3/19); Book Meets Film Event with Author Alison Pick (3/26), Closing Night Film, Concert, Tango Party (3/27) and more.

iPhone App: The **2012HJFF iPhone App**, developed by iDoTouch.com, can be downloaded for free from the iTunes App Store. Users can view schedule, photos, sneak previews and trailers, maintain favorites, call or email the box office and share favorites via email and Facebook.

Where: Five Greater Hartford venues: (Bloomfield) Digiplex Destinations, Bloomfield 8; (Hartford); Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art; (West Hartford) Criterion Cinema, Blue Back Square; The Emanuel Synagogue, and Mandell JCC.

Tickets: Most films \$10 In Advance, \$13 At Door; \$1 discount for students, Wadsworth Atheneum Film Buffs, Let's Go card-holders. Patron Passes Available. Credit cards, cash and checks (payable to Mandell JCC) Purchase by mail, in person, phone, fax at Mandell JCC, Zachs Campus, 335 Bloomfield Ave., West Hartford. CT 06117. Mandell JCC Main Phone: 860-236-4571. Opening Night (3/17) \$75 Includes Film, Reception and Parking. Closing Night (3/27) \$20 Including film, concert, reception.

Festival Box Office: Phone: 860-231-6316 Fax: 860-233-0802 tickets@mandelljcc.org

Website: www.hjff.org Official Festival Brochure available

SATURDAY, March 17Aetna Theater,
The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art**8:30 PM** **REMEMBRANCE**
Opening Night Gala Reception Following Film**SUNDAY, March 18**

Digiplex Destinations, Bloomfield 8

12:30 PM **THE TENTH MAN & AHEAD OF TIME**
3:00 PM **DAVID – THE MOVIE**
5:00 PM **CRIME AFTER CRIME**
7:30 PM **THE FLOOD - MABUL**

Herbert Gilman Theater, Mandell JCC, West Hartford

10:00 AM **SHALOM SESAME – MITZVAH ON THE STREET**
4:00 PM **DAVID – THE MOVIE Teen Screen**
Followed by Dinner and Reel Talk**MONDAY, March 19**

Herbert Gilman Theater, Mandell JCC, West Hartford

7:00 PM **THE TAILOR & THE KLEZMATICS ON HOLY GROUND**
Followed by Reel Talk**TUESDAY, March 20**

Herbert Gilman Theater, Mandell JCC, West Hartford

7:00 PM **STANDING SILENT**
Followed by Reel Talk**WEDNESDAY, March 21**

Criterion Cinema, Blue Back Square, West Hartford

6:00 PM **RESTORATION**
8:15 PM **REMEMBRANCE (Encore)****THURSDAY, March 22**

Criterion Cinema, Blue Back Square, West Hartford

6:00 PM **IN HEAVEN UNDERGROUND**
8:15 PM **KADDISH FOR A FRIEND****SATURDAY, March 24**

Digiplex Destinations/Bloomfield 8

8:30 PM **LEA AND DARIA**
8:30 PM **THE FLOOD - MABUL (Encore)****SUNDAY, March 25**

The Emanuel Synagogue, West Hartford

1:00 PM **ReelAbilities: WARRIOR CHAMPIONS –**
FROM BAGHDAD TO BEIJING
Followed by Reel Talk
3:30 PM **ReelAbilities: ALL DAY & WHITE BALANCE**
5:30 PM **ReelAbilities: SHOOTING BEAUTY**
Followed by Reel Talk

Herbert Gilman Theater, Mandell JCC, West Hartford

7:00 PM **THE RESCUERS**
Followed by Reel Talk**MONDAY, March 26**

Herbert Gilman Theater, Mandell JCC, West Hartford

12:00 PM **KADDISH FOR A FRIEND (Encore)**
Senior Screen & Luncheon
5:30 PM **Dinner with Alison Pick, Far To Go**
7:00 PM **NICKY'S FAMILY**
TRIBUTE: OBSERVATIONS ON SURVIVAL
AND SPIRIT – LESSONS FROM THE HOLOCAUST
Followed by Reel Talk**TUESDAY, March 27**

Herbert Gilman Theater, Mandell JCC, West Hartford

7:00 PM **HONEYMOON SUITE & TANGO, A STORY WITH JEWS**
Followed by Concert, Tango Party, Reception*Program subject to change*