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FLICKERS PARTNERS WITH ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY TO PRESENT FILM/SPEAKER SERIES ON THE JEWISH EXPERIENCE

FREE PROGRAM SPONSORED BY THE HELENE AND BERTRAM BERNHARDT FOUNDATION

BRISTOL, RI (October 30, 2017) – The Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival has partnered with **Roger Williams University** (RWU), to present its Fall-edition of the annual **Roving Eye International Film Festival**. The popular and acclaimed festival celebrating global cinema and artists, announces its 2017 sidebar program on the Jewish Experience through short films, documentary, media and guest speakers. The event takes place **November 7, 8, & 12th**. This year's series explores representations of the Jewish experience in Israel, across the globe and the Holocaust through six (6) recent films and is entitled: "**ARTS AND CULTURE: SHAPING THE FUTURE, REFLECTING THE PAST.**" The series includes a talk by the **Rev. Nancy Hamlin Soukup**, University Multifaith Chaplain, RWU and filmmaker, Roger Lyons. All programming will take place on the Bristol, RI, campus of Roger Williams University at the Global Heritage Hall, Room 01. The series is free and open to the public!

"Through film and scholarship, this series tells the stories of the Jewish experience globally—stories of joy, sorrow, faith, a rich culture, diasporas, fear and ultimately, hope," said the Rev. Nancy Hamlin Soukup, RWU University Multifaith Chaplain co-organizer of the event with Flickers.

The Fall Jewish Experience sidebar of the Roving Eye Festival is presented in partnership with the Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival, the Helene and Bertram Bernhardt Foundation, the RWU Department of Communication, the RWU Feinstein College of Arts and Sciences, Dean Robert Cole, Associate Dean Roberta Adams, the RWU Film Production Collaborative, RWU Hillel, and the Spiritual Life Office.

THIS YEAR'S SCHEDULE:

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7th:

LEVINSKY PARK

Directed by: Beth Krivant | 67 min. Israel, USA, 2016

Levinsky Park, tells the simple stories of residents, refugees and activists riding the tide of history in Tel Aviv, Israel. Through the lens of an asylum seeker from Darfur, long time residents of the community, and a human rights activist, we explore the contours and nuances of the refugee story. Particular to Israel's refugee history, the film examines the subtle ways in which unrest exacerbates community tensions uncovering the global crisis pervading the world today.

The ways in which Israel, a country, itself, comprised historically of refugees, has responded to this unique migration reveals the conflicted views with which so many in the world are reckoning

in the current refugee crisis. Some Israelis have embraced the new refugees, even creating food and clothing stations in Levinsky Park to support them. Others have impugned the Africans as outsiders, who show little interest in Jewish culture and life, and who are driving down wages of ordinary Israelis. Politicians have capitalized on these anxieties by passing harsh anti-immigrant legislation, building an enormous fence on the border of Israel and Egypt, building refugee detention centers and camps, and even paying Africans to resettle in other countries.

MY FRIEND YANIV

Directed by: Maayan Schwartz | 40 min., Israel, 2016

Maayan (the filmmaker) and Yaniv have been friends for over 10 years. The film provides a glimpse into their honest companionship. Recently, Yaniv shares with Maayan his desire to leave home in order to become truly independent for the first time, even at the cost of risking his own life. Yaniv takes us on a journey full of humor, which challenges conventional thinking about what it means to be alive. The film displays life as a constant struggle between desire and determination, between body and spirit and between helplessness and optimism.

Location: Global Heritage Hall, Room 01
Roger Williams University, One Old Ferry Road, Bristol, RI
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Cost: *Free Admission*

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 8th:

MEMORIES NEVER DIE

Documentary Screenings and Director's Discussion

Location: Global Heritage Hall, 01

HOPE DIES LAST

Directed by: Ben Price | 8 min. United Kingdom, 2017

A barber cuts hair in Auschwitz

AFTER AUSCHWITZ: THE STORIES OF SIX WOMEN

Directed by: Jon Kean | 82 min. Poland, USA, 2017

"You're free. Go home"

Most Holocaust films end with these words, the very words that survivors heard at liberation. But *After Auschwitz* is not a "Holocaust" film. It begins with these words, inviting audiences to experience what happened next. In watching the struggles of survival, the audience feels a searing connection to our current political climate, as history teaches us the vital role humanity plays in our hopes for greater understanding and compassion.

To an American, liberation sounds like it should have been a great day. For survivors, liberation from the camps was the beginning of a life long struggle. They wanted to go home, but there was no home left in Europe. They came to America and wanted to tell people about their pasts but were silenced for over three decades. "You're in America now, put it behind you".

After Auschwitz is a "Post-Holocaust" documentary that follows six extraordinary women, capturing what it means to move from tragedy and trauma towards life. These women all moved to Los Angeles, married, raised children and became "Americans" but they never truly found a place to call home. What makes the story so much more fascinating is how these women saw, interpreted and interacted with the changing face of America in the second half of the 20th century. They serve as our guides on an unbelievable journey, sometimes celebratory, sometimes heart breaking but always inspiring.

Location: Global Heritage Hall, Room 01
Roger Williams University, One Old Ferry Road, Bristol, RI
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Cost: *Free Admission*

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12th:

TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES

Introduced by the **Rev. Nancy Hamlin Soukup**, University Multifaith Chaplain

2:30 p.m.

MONKEY BUSINESS: The Adventures of Curious George's Creators

Directed by: Ema Ryan Yamazaki | 81 min. USA, 2017

In 2016, Curious George turned 75 years old. Since the first book was published in 1941, the stories of the adventurous little monkey who frequently finds himself in trouble have sold over 75 million copies in more than 20 languages. However, the story of George's creators is much less known. MONKEY BUSINESS: The Adventures of Curious George's Creators explores the extraordinary lives of Hans and Margret Rey, whose creative spirit and resilient attitude produced a monkey loved by the world.

Both originally from Hamburg, Germany, Hans and Margret grew up in Jewish households shortly after the turn of the 20th century. As children, Hans was a genius beyond his years and a daydreamer, while Margret was outspoken and rebellious, always knowing just what she wanted. They first met when Hans was dating Margret's older sister – Margret came sliding down the banister and landed at Hans' feet. Years later, Margret had heard that Hans was wasting his artistic talents as a bookkeeper in Rio de Janeiro. She traveled to Brazil, persuaded him to marry her, and they started an advertising agency. They planned a four-week honeymoon to Paris, which ultimately became a four-year stay. While there, Hans and Margret became accidental children's book authors when a French publisher suggested they try expanding one of Hans' cartoons into its own story.

However, as German Jews living in Paris in the late 1930s, the Reys could not avoid the impact of war. In June of 1940, Hans and Margret were still in Paris as Hitler's troops rapidly approached the city. Caught among the millions of refugees fleeing south, the only mode of transportation they could find was a tandem bicycle. It took no longer than two minutes on their test drive before Margret lost her patience: "I am not riding this with you Hans! Think of some other way." That night, Hans became a bicycle maker, cobbling together spare parts to make two bicycles. Margret packed a few clothes and their life's work – unpublished manuscripts for children's books, including the first Curious George book in its entirety. The next morning, 48 hours before the Nazi troops arrived, the Reys pedaled out of Paris. Sleeping in barns and on floors of restaurants, they continued south through Spain and Portugal. When the border officials became suspicious of their German accents, they showed them pages from the Curious George manuscript – the guards were immediately taken with the story, and allowed them to continue on. Saved by their own creation – a carefree, irresistibly cute monkey – the Reys eventually made it out of Europe just as the horrors of the Holocaust were beginning to unfold. A few months later they sailed into the New York harbor and started life anew. Over the next three decades they wrote six more Curious George books, creating a children's book classic and a global mascot that has lasted well beyond their own lives.

4:30 p.m.

ETCHED IN GLASS: THE LEGACY OF STEVE ROSS

Directed by: Roger Lyons | 55 min. USA, 2017

'Etched In Glass: The Legacy of Steve Ross' is the compelling, true story of survival, resilience and hope. Young Steve, then Szmulek Rosenthal from Poland, was captured by the Nazis and endured 5 horrific years in 10 concentration camps. Upon his liberation from Dachau, an American soldier showed him kindness, which kindled his resilience, propelling him to dedicate his life to helping disadvantaged young people for over 40 years.

He was the driving force behind the iconic New England Holocaust Memorial on the Freedom Trail in Boston. All the while, Steve searched tirelessly for the soldier who changed the course of his life and the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of people.

Featuring a discussion with the film's director, **Roger Lyons**. Moderated by **George T. Marshall**, Executive Director of the Flickers Rhode Island International Film Festival.

ABOUT ROGER LYONS, PRODUCER/DIRECTOR

An award-winning writer/producer/director, Roger Lyons is an experienced and multi-talented veteran of New England television. Following successful stints at WBZ/WSBK, WCVB, WGBH, Metromedia, WVIT and WHDH, Roger runs his own production company, Many Hats Productions. His company produces commercials and PSA's, web videos, documentaries and other video projects for a variety of sponsors and companies. Recently, he served as the Coordinating Producer on the documentary "Digital Man, Digital Age", a film about the life and work of Ken Olsen, founder of Digital Equipment Corporation.

Roger Lyons is National Trustee from the Boston/New England Chapter of The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS). In 2011, he received the prestigious Governors Award for the Boston/New England Chapter. He has also received numerous industry awards from organizations such as PBS, ProMaxBDA, Imagine Magazine and others.

In addition to his production work, he also serves as adjunct professor in the Communication Department at Curry College. He has also written 4 feature screenplays and has worked as a talent coach at Boston Casting.

A Reception Follows at 6:00 p.m.

For more information, contact the Spiritual Life Program at Roger Williams University, email nsoukup@rwu.edu. Directions to Roger Williams University can be found at www.rwu.edu

Location: Global Heritage Hall, Room 01
Roger Williams University, One Old Ferry Road, Bristol, RI
Time: 2:30 and 4:30 p.m.
Cost: Free Admission

ABOUT ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY:

Roger Williams University is ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as eighth among comprehensive colleges in the north. Roger Williams offers undergraduate and graduate programs in the arts and sciences, architecture, business, construction management, education, engineering, historic preservation, justice studies, legal studies, visual arts studies and law. For more information, go to: www.rwu.edu.

ABOUT THE RHODE ISLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL:

The **Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIIFF)**, has secured its place in the global community as the portal for the best in international independent cinema, earning the respect of domestic and foreign filmmakers, filmgoers and trend watchers. This confluence of art and commerce brought together world-class celebrities, award-winning filmmakers, new talent and audience members in record numbers last year. Ranked as one of the top 10 Festivals in the United States, RIIFF is a qualifying festival for the Live Action, Animation and Documentary Short Film Academy Awards through its affiliation with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) and the Canadian Screen Awards. There are only 6 film festivals worldwide that share this distinction and RIIFF is the only festival in New England. The Festival takes place every August.

For more information about the **Flickers' Rhode Island International Film Festival**, running **August 7-12, 2018** at The **Providence Performing Arts Center (PPAC)** and **The Vets**. Please visit our website at www.RIFilmFest.org or call **401.861.4445**.

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