



**THE JEWISH MUSEUM AND
THE FILM SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER
PRESENT THE 28TH ANNUAL
NEW YORK JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL,
JANUARY 9–22, 2019**

**Opening Night: New York Premiere of Eric Barbier's *Promise at Dawn*,
starring Charlotte Gainsbourg and Pierre Niney**

Centerpiece: U.S. Premiere of Israeli miniseries *Autonomies*

Closing Night: New York Premiere of Bille August's *A Fortunate Man*

**Highlights include: new works by Amos Gitai and Nina Paley; a
documentary about Joseph Pulitzer; restorations of *The Ancient Law* and
The City Without Jews, and more**

NEW YORK, NY (December 12, 2018) – The Jewish Museum and the Film Society of Lincoln Center will present the 28th annual New York Jewish Film Festival (NYJFF), January 9–22, 2019. Among the oldest and most influential Jewish film festivals worldwide, the NYJFF each year presents the finest documentary, narrative, and short films from around the world that explore the diverse Jewish experience. Featuring new work by fresh voices in international cinema as well as restored classics, the festival's 2019 lineup includes 32 wide-ranging and exciting features and shorts from the iconic to the iconoclastic, many of which will be screening in their world, U.S., and New York premieres. Screenings are held at the Walter Reade Theater, 165 West 65th Street, NYC.

The NYJFF opens on Wednesday, January 9, with the New York premiere of Eric Barbier's epic drama *Promise at Dawn*, starring Charlotte Gainsbourg and Pierre Niney. This riveting memoir chronicles the colorful life of infamous French author Romain Gary, from his childhood conning Polish high society with his mother to his years as a pilot in the Free French Air Forces.

The Closing Night film is the New York premiere of *A Fortunate Man*, directed by Academy Award–winner Bille August (*Pelle the Conqueror*). In it, a gifted but self-destructive young man leaves his suffocating Lutheran upbringing for metropolitan

1880s Copenhagen, where he's welcomed into a wealthy Jewish family and strives to realize his grand ambitions.

The Centerpiece selection represents the first time an Israeli television series has been presented at the NYJFF with the three-and-a-half-hour miniseries *Autonomies*, to be presented all at once, binge-style, with a 20-minute intermission. Directed by Yehonatan Indursky, the dystopian drama is set in an alternate reality of present-day Israel, a nation divided by a wall into the secular "State of Israel," with Tel Aviv as its capital, and the "Haredi Autonomy" in Jerusalem, run by an ultra-Orthodox Jewish group. A globally relevant tale of identity, religion, politics, personal freedom, and love, this gripping story follows a custody battle that upends the fragile peace of the country, pushing it to the brink of civil war. Indursky will present a master class in conjunction with the screening of *Autonomies*.

New to the NYJFF this year is an annual initiative that highlights a film made by a woman filmmaker that deserves broader American recognition. Maria Victoria Menis's *Camera Obscura* (2008) tells the story of an immigrant woman whose encounter with an itinerant photographer reveals a sense of self she never knew. The film was shot in the lush forests and lagoons of Buenos Aires province in a mélange of visual styles, including elements of hand-drawn animation, World War I archival footage, and early surrealist black-and-white films.

Filmmaker Amos Gitai returns to the 2019 NYJFF with the U.S. premiere of his thought-provoking new drama, *A Tramway in Jerusalem*. Gitai uses the tramway that runs through Jerusalem to connect a series of short vignettes, forming a mosaic of Jewish and Arab stories embodying life in the city.

The NYJFF will also present the U.S. premiere of *Fig Tree* by first-time director Aäläm-Wärqe Davidian. Set in Addis Ababa during the Ethiopian Civil War, the film concerns a young woman who plans to flee to Israel with her brother to reunite with their mother. But she is unwilling to leave her Christian boyfriend behind and hatches a scheme to save him from being drafted.

Other fiction works of note include:

- Joachim Lang's *Mack the Knife—Brecht's Threepenny Film* is a satirical re-creation of Bertolt Brecht's valiant effort to adapt his famed opera for the silver screen (U.S. Premiere).
- *Seder Masochism*, from animator Nina Paley (*Sita Sings the Blues*), is a playful and imaginative retelling of the Book of Exodus in musical form (N.Y. Premiere).
- Silvia Quer's *The Light of Hope* is based on the true story of Elisabeth Eidenbenz, who as director of the Elne maternity home in the south of France saved the lives of 600 infants during the Spanish Civil War and World War II (N.Y. Premiere).
- Ondřej Trojan's *Toman* presents the life of Czech politician Zdenek Toman, an unscrupulous careerist who was also the unlikely savior of thousands of Jewish refugees after World War II (U.S. Premiere).

This year's festival also features an array of enlightening and gripping documentaries. Highlights include:

- Oren Rudavsky's *Joseph Pulitzer: The Voice of the People*, about the man behind the Pulitzer Prize, who spoke of "fake news" and the importance of

freedom of the press over a century ago, is narrated by Adam Driver and features Liev Schreiber as the voice of Pulitzer. A later panel discussion titled “Pulitzer’s World: The Role of the Media in a Fake News Universe,” featuring Jami Floyd, host of *All Things Considered*, Adam Moss, Editor-in-Chief of *New York* magazine, filmmaker Oren Rudavsky, and Jodi Rudoren, Associate Managing Editor of *The New York Times*, will discuss contemporary issues raised within the film. (N.Y. Premiere).

- Veronica Gonzalez Peña’s *Pat Steir: Artist* is an intimate portrait of the groundbreaking painter and feminist (World Premiere).
- Elizabeth Rynecki’s *Chasing Portraits* is the compelling story of the director’s quest to uncover the fate of her great-grandfather’s paintings, dispersed after the Holocaust (N.Y. Premiere).
- *Mohamed and Anna: In Plain Sight* is the remarkable story of an Egyptian doctor who saved a Jewish woman from the Nazis by disguising her as a Muslim, putting himself at great personal risk (U.S. Premiere).

NYJFF special programs include restorations of four films:

- Ewald Andrew Dupont’s 1923 silent masterpiece *The Ancient Law*, featuring a new score and live accompaniment by pianist Donald Sosin and klezmer violinist Alicia Svigals. In this classic drama the son of an orthodox rabbi leaves home, against his father’s wishes, to join a traveling theater troupe.
- Hans Karl Breslauer’s *The City Without Jews* (1924), one of the few surviving Austrian Expressionist films and a chilling premonition of the Holocaust in its vision of the expulsion of the Jews of Austria, is presented with a newly recorded soundtrack (N.Y. Premiere of the Restoration).
- Samy Szlingerbaum’s *Brussels Transit*, one of the first post-World War II films in Yiddish, masterfully weaves the story of the director’s parents and footage of postwar Brussels to explore the marginality of young Holocaust survivors in Europe (U.S. Premiere of the Restoration).
- Assi Dayan’s *Life According to Agfa* (1923), a touchstone of Israeli cinema starring the acclaimed Gila Algamour, features an assortment of Tel Aviv citizenry that gather in a bar to play out a series of bitter and ultimately tragic dramas over the course of one night (U.S. Premiere of the Restoration).

Tickets

NYJFF tickets will go on sale to FSLC and Jewish Museum members on Thursday, December 20, and to the public on Thursday, December 27. Tickets may be purchased online or in person at the Film Society’s Elinor Bunin Munroe Film Center and Walter Reade Theater box offices, 144 & 165 West 65th Street. For complete festival information, visit NYJFF.org.

This year’s New York Jewish Film Festival was selected by Rachel Chanoff, Director, THE OFFICE performing arts + film; Gabriel Grossman, Coordinator, New York Jewish Film Festival/The Jewish Museum; Miriam Niedergang, short film curatorial consultant; and Aviva Weintraub, Associate Curator, The Jewish Museum and Director, New York Jewish Film Festival; with Dennis Lim, Director of Programming, Film Society of Lincoln Center, as adviser.

SUPPORT

The New York Jewish Film Festival is made possible by the Martin and Doris Payson Fund for Film and Media.

Generous support is also provided by Wendy Fisher and Dennis Goodman, Sara and Axel Schupf, The Liman Foundation, Louise and Frank Ring, an anonymous gift, the Ike, Molly and

Steven Elias Foundation, Amy and Howard Rubenstein, Robin and Danny Greenspun, Steven and Sheira Schacter, and through public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with City Council.

Additional support is provided by Office of Cultural Affairs – Consulate General of Israel in New York, the German Consulate General New York, Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the United States, the Polish Cultural Institute New York, Czech Center New York, and Eye International.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Nicola Galliner, Jewish Film Festival Berlin & Brandenburg; Béatrice Godlewicz, Institute of Audiovisual Jewish Memory, Brussels; Eric Goldman, Ergo Media; Stuart Hands, Toronto Jewish Film Festival; Annette Insdorf, Columbia University; Judy Ironside, UK Jewish Film Festival; Marlene Josephs, Volunteer; Linda Lipson, Volunteer; Nicola Mazzanti, Royal Film Archive of Belgium; Joshua Moore, San Francisco Jewish Film Festival; Richard Peña, Columbia University; Ben Rubin, Intern; Eve Sicular; Melissa Tincopa, Intern.

FILM DESCRIPTIONS & SCHEDULE

*All films screen digitally at the Walter Reade Theater (165 West 65th St.)
unless otherwise noted*

Opening Night

Promise at Dawn

Eric Barbier

France, 2017, 131 min.

French with English subtitles

N.Y. Premiere

The great Jewish novelist Romain Gary, also known by the pen name Emile Ajar, was one of France's most prolific and popular writers of the mid-20th century, and the only person to win the Prix Goncourt twice. His autobiographical novel *Promise at Dawn* is a loose memoir, recounting his impoverished childhood in Poland, his time as a fighter pilot in World War II, early relationships in the south of France, and most of all the unyielding love between him and his single mother. The book's drama and adventure lend themselves naturally to the big screen. This adaptation by Eric Barbier, starring Charlotte Gainsbourg and Pierre Niney, is a rollicking journey through a life richly lived.

Wednesday, January 9, 7:30pm

Thursday, January 10, 3pm

Charlotte Gainsbourg in attendance on January 9

Centerpiece

Autonomies

Yehonatan Indursky

Israel, 2018, 210 min. (presented with a 20-minute intermission)

Hebrew and Yiddish with English subtitles

U.S. Premiere

Set in an alternate present where the state is brutally divided between the secular capital of Tel Aviv and a Jerusalem governed by an ultra-Orthodox "Haredi Autonomy," this dystopian thriller tells the story of a wheeler-dealer who smuggles contraband between the two regions and a little girl at the center of a secular-Orthodox custody battle whom he is hired to kidnap. Israel is experiencing a golden age of episodic television, turning out some of the finest narrative storytelling in any medium, and we'll screen all five

episodes for a proper binge. *Autonomies* shows why the country is such fertile ground for powerful fiction: the series is a boiling cauldron of the issues of identity, religion, politics, and personal freedom that define life in contemporary Israel.

Wednesday, January 16, 6pm

Q&A with Yehonatan Indursky on January 16

Closing Night

A Fortunate Man

Bille August

Denmark, 2018, 162 min.

Danish with English subtitles

N.Y. Premiere

A gifted but self-destructive young man leaves his suffocating Lutheran upbringing in the country for the metropolitan Copenhagen of the 1880s. An engineer with progressive ideas, he is welcomed by a wealthy Jewish family and assimilates himself into their opulent milieu, embarking on a journey of personal and professional ambition that teeters on the razor's edge between triumph and catastrophe. A sprawling story of grand scope and high romance from the Academy Award-winning director of *Pelle the Conqueror*, *A Fortunate Man* is a rare kind of film—beautifully realized, full of exceptional performances, and with a dramatic sweep on par with the great classics of cinema.

Tuesday, January 22, 8pm

Intro by Elisabeth Dyssegaard, Executive Editor, St. Martin's Press, on January 22

MAIN SLATE FILMS

Black Honey: The Life and Poetry of Avraham Sutzkever

Uri Barbash

Israel, 2018, 76 min.

Hebrew, English, and Yiddish with English subtitles

N.Y. Premiere

Russian-born poet Avraham Sutzkever is, by many accounts, the greatest Yiddish writer of modern times. He wrote with wit, passion, and vitality through the darkness of the Holocaust, and led the Paper Brigade, an underground resistance group that hid a cache of Jewish cultural items to protect them from destruction by the Nazis. Sutzkever was saved by a special rescue plane sent for him by Stalin, and later testified in the Nuremberg trials against the Nazi who murdered his mother and son. *Black Honey* uncovers this extraordinary life through Sutzkever's poetry and reveals how, amidst the darkest times, his poetry became a life-saving source of vitality and strength.

Preceded by

Triptych

Katia Lom

U.K., 2018, 8 min.

English

N.Y. Premiere

Using live action, animation, vintage artifacts, and photographs, director Katia Lom explores her family's history—including their escape from Czechoslovakia in 1951.

Tuesday, January 15, 1pm & 6pm

Intro by Katia Lom and Q&A with Uri Barbash on January 15

Camera Obscura

Maria Victoria Menis

Argentina, 2008, 86 min.

Spanish and Yiddish with English subtitles

With *Camera Obscura*, we are thrilled to inaugurate an exciting new annual program at NYJFF highlighting films made by women that deserve broader American recognition. At the end of the 19th century, a baby girl is born on a ship of immigrants headed for Buenos Aires. Gertrudis grows up shy and self-conscious, cast as an “ugly duckling” in her community. She goes on to marry a wealthy Jewish rancher and settles into a life of homemaking, always meditating on the idea of beauty and feeling stripped of it herself. When a nomadic French photographer comes to visit, though, his images allow Gertrudis to see herself for the first time. Shot on location in the lush forests, lagoons, and rivers of Buenos Aires province, *Camera Obscura* is a wondrous mélange of visual styles, including elements of hand-drawn animation, World War I archival footage, and early surrealist black-and-white films.

Tuesday, January 15, 3:30pm & 8:30pm

Q&A with Maria Victoria Menis on January 15

Chasing Portraits

Elizabeth Rynecki

USA/Canada/Israel/Poland, 2018, 78 min.

English and Polish with English subtitles

N.Y. Premiere

After the Nazis invaded Poland in 1939, artist Moshe Rynecki left his collection of more than 800 paintings and sculptures notable for portraying the everyday life of Polish Jews with friends around Warsaw for safekeeping. But after he was killed in Majdanek, the Rynecki family lost track of the vast majority of them, and they were dispersed among collections around the world. Decades later, his great-granddaughter Elizabeth enlists the help of historians, curators, and private collectors to uncover the extraordinary path of Moshe’s collection. *Chasing Portraits* is a rich and compelling documentary about one woman coming to terms with her family’s legacy and her place within it.

Monday, January 14, 6pm

Wednesday, January 16, 1pm

Q&A with Elizabeth Rynecki on January 14 & 16

Dear Fredy

Rubi Gat

Israel, 2017, 74 min.

Hebrew, Czech, and English with English subtitles

N.Y. Premiere

Fredy Hirsch was a German Jew and openly gay man in Nazi Germany. The Nuremberg Laws were passed when he was 19 years old, and he fled to the Czech Republic where he became a sports teacher in a Jewish youth club. Upon his deportation to Ghetto Terezin, he was appointed head of the youth department, teaching and working with over 4,000 children. In his final days at Auschwitz, he set up a daycare center, where he was much admired and his sexuality was fully public in the community. *Dear Fredy* excavates this remarkable story and seeks to reveal the mystery of his death, which happened on the eve of a revolt that never came to pass.

Preceded by

Lon

Nina Landau

Belgium, 2018, 7 min.

Dutch with English subtitles

The inner life of a Belgian Jewish set designer, whose survival in a Nazi transit camp was fueled by the power of the human imagination, is given animated form in this arresting and beautiful short.

Sunday, January 20, 2:45pm

Intro by Columbia University Film Professor Annette Insdorf

Echo

Amikam Kovner & Assaf Snir

Israel, 2018, 98 min.

Hebrew with English subtitles

N.Y. Premiere

In this tenderly acted drama starring Yael Abecassis and Yoram Toledano (who both starred in the enormously popular *Prisoners of War*, the Israeli forerunner to *Homeland*), an engineer named Avner suspects his wife, Ella, is having an affair and begins recording her phone conversations. While he obsessively listens and tries to learn the lover's identity, Ella tragically dies in a car crash. As Avner sinks deeper and deeper into his investigation, he grows more isolated from his friends and family, and his life begins to unravel. In the process, his attention is redirected from the mystery lover to his late wife; he realizes there were parts of her personality he never knew in her life, and the search turns into a reflection on himself and their relationship.

Saturday, January 12, 9:30pm

Etgar Keret: Based on a True Story

Stephane Kaas

The Netherlands, 2017, 67 min.

English and Hebrew with English subtitles

U.S. Premiere

Israeli writer Etgar Keret is beloved and renowned for his surreal, delightful short stories and his Cannes-winning work as a director. In *Etgar Keret: Based on a True Story*, filmmakers Stephane Kaas and Rutger Lemm journey deep into the perpetually comic and off-kilter tone of his fiction and real-life stories to better understand how he became the writer that he is. The son of Holocaust survivors, Keret describes early experiences that shape his writing and inspire his prolificacy, in conversations with friends that include *This American Life*'s Ira Glass and writer Jonathan Safran Foer. In keeping with the surreal style of his work, the film employs mixed-media detours to round out this quirky portrait—reenactments of his anecdotes and animated versions of his stories.

Preceded by

Torch

Odeya Rosnak

Israel, 2017, 17 min.

Hebrew with English subtitles

U.S. Premiere

A creative and quirky teenage girl in Jerusalem who loses her father in a terror attack attends a torch lighting ceremony at a local community center with her mother on Memorial Day, an event that becomes a poignant moment of self-discovery.

Monday, January 14, 8:15pm

Wednesday, January 16, 3:30pm

Q&A with Stephane Kaas on January 14 & 16

Fig Tree

Aäläm-Wärqə Davidian

Israel/Germany/France/Ethiopia, 2018, 93 min.

Amharic with English subtitles

U.S. Premiere

Mina is 16 years old and has lived with her brother and grandmother in the midst of the Ethiopian Civil War her entire life, but they are planning to flee for Israel, where her mother awaits their reunion. So Mina is spending her last days in Addis Ababa with her Christian boyfriend Eli, who has ensconced himself in the woods to avoid being drafted into Mengistu Haile Mariam's army. But Mina wants the best of both worlds and hatches a plan to rescue him. This coming-of-age film is tender and poignant, based on director Aalam-Warqə Davidian's experience growing up during the Ethiopian Civil War.

Preceded by

A Thousand Kisses

Richard Goldgewicht

Brazil/Ireland/Uruguay/USA, 2018, 16 min.

English and German with English subtitles

In this animated short, a young Jewish couple in 1933 Berlin must separate, so they make plans to reunite on the safe tropical shores of Brazil.

Monday, January 21, 5:30pm

Tuesday, January 22, 12:30pm

Q&A with *Fig Tree* Producer Naomi Levari on January 21 & 22

Happiness of the World

Michal Rosa

Poland, 2016, 98 min.

Polish with English subtitles

N.Y. Premiere

This entrancing film tells the story of an apartment building somewhere along the Polish-German border in the early twentieth century with an exceptionally colorful roster of tenants. The film centers on Rose, a beautiful young Jewish woman, who is being pursued by three aggressive suitors, a Pole, a Silesian, and a German. But her heart belongs to another: a fun-loving journalist who has recently arrived from Warsaw. The film follows Rose and the suitors through this delightfully dark comedy of manners as the encroaching war starts to cast their lives and romances in an ever more quixotic light.

Monday, January 21, 8:30pm

Tuesday, January 22, 3:15pm

Joseph Pulitzer: Voice of the People

Oren Rudavsky

USA, 2018, 85 min.

English

N.Y. Premiere

Joseph Pulitzer began as a penniless Jewish immigrant from Hungary and grew into one of America's most admired and feared media figures. His New York newspaper *The World* spoke to an unprecedented number of readers and maintained powerful journalistic and artistic ideals through its ascent. In 1908, in a notable parallel to contemporary debates, for example, Teddy Roosevelt accused an elderly Pulitzer of libel for a piece that harshly criticized the Panama Canal, threatening imprisonment and sending his reputation reeling. *Joseph Pulitzer: Voice of the People* tells the rare story of

the man behind the prize, who spoke of “fake news” and the importance of freedom of the press over a century ago. Narrated by Adam Driver, with the voice of Pulitzer performed by Liev Schreiber.

Thursday, January 10, 12:30pm & 6pm
Q&A with Oren Rudavsky on January 10

The Light of Hope

Silvia Quer

Spain, 2018, 96 min.

Spanish, Catalan, and French with English subtitles

N.Y. Premiere

The Light of Hope is based on the true story of Elisabeth Eidenbenz, the young Red Cross nurse who became director of the Elne maternity home in 1930s and 1940s France during the Spanish Civil War and afterwards. As hundreds of people flee Vichy camps and Franco’s regime, Eidenbenz and her female co-workers save the lives of 600 infants by providing humane conditions for pregnant women fleeing Vichy refugee camps and Franco’s regime in Spain. But just as the operation starts to thrive, threats from within and without take shape. As French authorities demand that she turn in all Jewish refugee and children, and Elisabeth’s deputy Victoria becomes heavily involved with La Résistance, Eidenbenz and her staff must risk their lives to keep the maternity home alive.

Thursday, January 17, 1pm & 6pm
Q&A with Silvia Quer on January 17

Mack the Knife—Brecht’s Threepenny Film

Joachim Lang

Germany, 2018, 130 min.

German with English subtitles

U.S. Premiere

After the premiere of Bertolt Brecht, Elisabeth Hauptmann, and Kurt Weill’s *Threepenny Opera* in 1928, the work seemed destined for the silver screen: Brecht wanted to make a film, and a studio was eager to capitalize. But Brecht clashed with producers over his desire to create a socially-conscious film, while the studio wanted a crowd-pleaser. After a court battle Brecht and Weill were forced off the project, which was released in 1931 with another director. Joachim Lang’s high-sheen dramatization of Brecht’s attempts to make the film is itself a frenzied satire, resplendent with historically accurate gems such as Brecht saying to his antagonists, “In the realm of art, you and your people have the mind of an oyster.”

Sunday, January 20, 8pm

Mohamed and Anna: In Plain Sight

Taliya Finkel

Germany/Israel, 2017, 58 min.

English

U.S. Premiere

Mohamed Helmy was an Egyptian doctor who traveled to Berlin to study medicine; there he eventually opened a practice in the decades before World War II. During that time, he met a Jewish girl named Anna Boros, whom he saved from capture by the Nazis by disguising her as a Muslim woman. This astounding documentary uncovers the many extraordinary maneuvers and deceptions he took to save her life, at great risk to his own. In 2013, Dr. Helmy posthumously became the first and only Arab recognized as

“Righteous Among the Nations” by the state of Israel. *Mohamed and Anna: In Plain Sight* embodies the Talmudic precept “He who saves one life, saves an entire world,” while demonstrating how the human heart can bridge religions, cultures, and nationalities.

Preceded by

Five Years After the War

Samuel Albaric & Martin Wiklund

France, 2017, 17 min.

French with English subtitles

U.S. Premiere

This animated short brings to explosive, exuberant life the wild fantasies of a Parisian man, the son of an absent Iraqi father and a Jewish mother, who is confounded by the modern world and trying to find his place in it.

Monday, January 21, 1pm

Tuesday, January 22, 5:45pm

Q&A with Taliya Finkel on January 21 & 22

Pat Steir: Artist

Veronica Gonzalez Peña

USA, 2018, 74 min.

English

World Premiere

The groundbreaking artist Pat Steir, a leading light in the development of Conceptual Abstraction and a trailblazing feminist, has been on the forefront of American painting for half a century, and her professional and personal life have intersected with many of the most influential artists and poets of her generation—from Sol Lewitt to Agnes Martin to John Cage to Anne Waldman. This intimate, revelatory portrait by Steir’s friend, the novelist and filmmaker Veronica Gonzalez Peña, was shot over the course of three years primarily in Steir’s home and studio. Enlivened by a visually poetic style and the clear affection between filmmaker and subject, the film offers a profound look into the life of an artist.

Saturday, January 19, 7pm

Q&A with Veronica Gonzalez Peña and Pat Steir on January 19

Redemption

Joseph Madmony & Boaz Yehonatan Yacov

Israel, 2018, 104 min.

Hebrew with English subtitles

N.Y. Premiere

Menachem used to be the front man of a popular rock band, but now he is deeply religious and the father of a six-year-old girl. When she is diagnosed with cancer, the treatments are too expensive for the poor widower, and he decides to get the band back together for a reunion tour. What he initially thought would be a practical solution turns into a soul-searching journey as he reopens old wounds and reconnects with his secular past. The title alludes to Menachem’s confrontation with these two major identities—only a renewed connection to his music will allow him to redeem himself, save his daughter, and move forward with a new life.

Sunday, January 13, 6:15pm

Monday, January 14, 1pm

Q&A with Boaz Yehonatan Yacov on January 13 & 14

Seder Masochism

Nina Paley

USA, 2018, 78 min.

English, French, Bulgarian, Hebrew, and Aramaic with English subtitles

N.Y. Premiere

Animator Nina Paley follows her 2008 hit *Sita Sings the Blues* with this wild and imaginative retelling of the Book of Exodus in musical form, starring Moses, Jesus, and Paley's own father. Also heavily featured is the Great Mother, humankind's original deity, who is resurrected in a tragic struggle against the forces of Patriarchy. The Burning Bush does a rendition of Louis Armstrong, a Pharaoh sings "I Will Survive," and an unforgettable circumcision scene is choreographed à la Busby Berkeley. *Variety* calls it "a mix-tape musical that's all-singing and all-dancing, with the Ten Plagues alone soundtracked by a roster of artists encompassing 78-rpm blues, hip-hop, punk, 1970s pop rock, Oingo Boingo, and the Beatles."

Sunday, January 13, 9pm

Monday, January 14, 3:45pm

Q&A with Nina Paley on January 13 & 14

The Tobacconist

Nikolaus Leytner

Austria/Germany/Italy, 2018, 108 min.

German with English subtitles

U.S. Premiere

Vienna under Nazi occupation is the setting for this ravishingly shot wartime drama about a young man and his unlikely friendship with Sigmund Freud, played by the extraordinary Bruno Ganz. Franz arrives in the city as a 17-year-old to apprentice at a tobacco shop, where the elderly psychoanalyst is a regular customer, and the two develop an immediate bond. When Franz falls desperately in love with a music hall dancer named Anezka, he turns to Freud for advice, who tells him the female sex remains as mysterious to him as it was when he was Franz's age. As war approaches and the city descends into turmoil, the drama of this young man's life are swept up into the larger events that are shaking the foundations of Europe and the world. Based on the international bestseller by Robert Seethaler.

Sunday, January 20, 5pm

Toman

Ondřej Trojan

Czech Republic/Slovakia, 2018, 145 min.

Czech with English subtitles

U.S. Premiere

Zdenek Toman is a controversial and singular character in modern Czech politics. In the years following World War II, he served as the head of the Foreign Intelligence Service, where he orchestrated the coup of 1948 and the Czechoslovak Communist Party's rise to power. He was an unscrupulous careerist and an unsavory politician, blackmailing, exploiting, and intimidating his way to the top of the Communist food chain. But he has another unlikely other role in the history books—as a savior of Jews. *Toman* tells the story of the enigmatic man who organized the rescue of thousands of Eastern European Holocaust refugees by bringing them across Czechoslovak borders and setting the stage for their entry into Palestine.

Wednesday, January 9, 12:30pm

Thursday, January 10, 8:30pm

Q&A with Ondřej Trojan on January 9 & 10

A Tramway in Jerusalem

Amos Gitai

Israel/France, 2018, 94 min.

Hebrew, Arabic, French, English, and German with English subtitles

U.S. Premiere

The Light Rail Red Line of Jerusalem's tramway connects the city from East to West, from the Palestinian neighborhoods of Shuafat and Beit Hanina to Mount Herzl—a journey that comprises the culturally complex makeup of the city. This humorous and touching film, whose cast includes Mathieu Amalric and Hana Laslo, hinges on a series of encounters along the line: simple, mundane interactions that reveal the diverse mosaic of humanity that exists in the spiritual center of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Beneath the clashes and grievances among its population that the world sees, Jerusalem is a city teeming with everyday life. The small conflicts and reconciliations depicted in *A Tramway in Jerusalem* offer a kernel of hope in a society torn by political strife.

Saturday, January 12, 7pm

Sunday, January 13, 3:45pm

Q&A with Amos Gitai on January 12 & 13

Who Will Write Our History

Roberta Grossman

Poland/USA, 2018, 95 min.

English, Polish, and Yiddish with English subtitles

N.Y. Premiere

In November 1940, after the Nazis sealed 450,000 Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, a vital insurgency took root—not of the sword, but of the pen. A group of scholars, journalists, and community leaders led by the historian Emanuel Ringelblum formed a secret resistance, vowing to strike back at Nazi propaganda by documenting the truth. Codenamed Oyneg Shabes, the organization gathered thousands of testimonies from Warsaw natives and refugees from other localities. Retrieved after the war from metal boxes and milk cans buried beneath the ruins of the Ghetto, it is perhaps the most important collection of original material compiled by Jews during the Holocaust. This documentary mixes writings from the Ringelblum Archive with interviews, rarely seen footage, and stunning dramatizations to tell this story for the first time on film—a story of the fight for truth alongside the fight for survival.

Thursday, January 17, 3:30pm & 8:30pm

**Q&A with Roberta Grossman & producer Nancy Spielberg on January 17;
historian Samuel Kassow and actor Joan Allen in attendance for 8:30 screening**

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

RESTORATIONS

The Ancient Law

Ewald André Dupont

Germany, 1923, 135 min.

Silent (with English intertitles)

The digital restoration of this lost gem from the silent era gets its NYC premiere at this year's NYJFF, featuring a new score and live accompaniment by pianist Donald Sosin and klezmer violinist Alicia Svigals. In a shtetl in Galicia, the son of a rabbi gets a bug for acting and is swept into a cosmopolitan, glamorous lifestyle, much to the chagrin of his very traditional father. The son becomes the object of a Viennese archduchess's affections, and, with a sweetheart waiting back home, he must decide between two divergent paths. *The Ancient Law* offers a nuanced depiction of both the shtetl and the Jewish ideals of the era, steering clear of caricature at every turn. The cinematography is spectacular, emulating the light and shadow of a Rembrandt etching.

Sunday, January 13, 12:30pm

Musical Accompaniment by violinist Alicia Svigals and pianist Donald Sosin

Brussels Transit

Samy Szlingerbaum

Belgium, 1980, 80 min.

Yiddish and French with English subtitles

U.S. Premiere of the Restoration

In one of the first postwar films in Yiddish, director Samy Szlingerbaum excavates his childhood through his parents' immigration to the "promised land" of Belgium after World War II and their subsequent failure to adjust. Weaving together haunting footage of postwar Brussels and astounding black and white photography, this film gestures at surrealist and avant-garde cinema to portray his—and his family's—poignant longing for a sense of home, and, alongside that, European Jewry's overwhelming isolation after the war.

Wednesday, January 9, 4pm

Monday, January 21, 3pm

Intro by film critic J. Hoberman on January 21

The City Without Jews

Hans Karl Breslauer

Austria, 1924, 91 min.

Silent (with English Intertitles)

N.Y. Premiere of the Restoration

Recently restored and featuring a new soundtrack, *The City Without Jews* is one of few surviving Austrian Expressionist films, and the magnum opus of the great director H.K. Breslauer. Filmed in 1924, it can be seen as a chilling premonition of the Holocaust—the premise is the political rise of the Christian Social Party, which orders all Jews to evacuate Austria. In the ensuing months, the sober reality of a society without Jews sets in, as cultural institutions close and cafes are replaced with beer halls. Eventually, the economy declines and unemployment runs rampant. Based on the dystopian book by Hugo Bettauer and intended originally as political satire, it became the subject of controversy and censorship, especially in conjunction with the rise of Nazism.

Sunday, January 20, 12:30pm

Life According to Agfa

Assi Dayan

Israel, 1992, 100 min.

Hebrew with English subtitles

U.S. Premiere of the Restoration

In a small, all-night bar owned by two women (played by Irit Frank and the legendary Gila Almagor), a colorful assortment of Tel Aviv citizenry gathers—men and women,

Jews and Arabs, Ashkenazi and Sephardi, kibbutzniks and city-dwellers, drug dealers and soldiers. As dramas among the patrons unfold over the course of the evening, tension mounts, culminating in a tragic denouement. *Life According to Agfa* was released to universal acclaim almost three decades ago and has since become a touchstone of Israeli cinema—a film of fully realized characters whose personal dramas reflect and then give way, in the bitter outcomes of small and increasingly large conflicts, to a broader national story about the fractures in Israeli society and the isolation and emotional devastation of modern life.

Preceded by

Travelogue Tel Aviv

Samuel Patthey

Switzerland, 2017, 6 min.

N.Y. Premiere

A Swiss art student studying abroad captures Tel Aviv's vitality and boldness in this vibrant, impressionistic animation.

Saturday, January 19, 9:15pm

MASTER CLASS WITH YEHOANATAN INDURSKY

Elinor Bunin Munroe Film Center, Amphitheater

Join Yehonatan Indursky, writer and director of NYJFF Centerpiece selection

Autonomies, for a master class on writing, directing, and producing for television and film. A writer and director of multiple films and television series (such as *Shtisel*, which won 11 awards from the Israeli Academy of Television including Best Screenplay), Indursky will focus on the difference between creating for film and television, and the process behind *Autonomies*.

Sunday, January 20, 4pm

PULITZER'S WORLD: THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN A FAKE NEWS UNIVERSE

Elinor Bunin Munroe Film Center, Amphitheater

Presented in conjunction with the NYJFF Main Slate selection *Joseph Pulitzer: Voice of the People*, join Jami Floyd, host of "All Things Considered" on WNYC; Adam Moss, editor-in-chief of *New York* magazine; filmmaker Oren Rudavsky; and Jodi Rudoren, Associate Managing Editor of *The New York Times* for a multifaceted conversation about press issues that percolate through the film, such as first amendment rights and limits; the future of investigative reporting; crusading journalism and "click-bait" sensationalism; and the relationship between the first page vs. the editorial page. Moderator to be announced.

Sunday, January 13, 4:30pm

SCHEDULE

Wednesday, January 9

12:30 pm Toman
4:00 pm Brussels Transit
7:30 pm Promise at Dawn

Thursday, January 10

12:30 pm Joseph Pulitzer: Voice of the People
3:00 pm Promise at Dawn
6:00 pm Joseph Pulitzer: Voice of the People
8:30 pm Toman

Saturday, January 12

7:00 pm A Tramway in Jerusalem
9:30 pm Echo

Sunday, January 13

12:30 pm The Ancient Law
3:45 pm A Tramway in Jerusalem
4:30 pm Panel Discussion: Pulitzer's World: The Role of the Media in a Fake News Universe – Elinor Bunin Munroe Film Center, Amphitheater
6:15 pm Redemption
9:00 pm Seder Masochism

Monday, January 14

1:00 pm Redemption
3:45 pm Seder Masochism
6:00 pm Chasing Portraits
8:15 pm Etgar Keret: Based on a True Story *preceded by* Torch

Tuesday, January 15

1:00 pm Black Honey: The Life and Poetry of Avraham Sutzkever *preceded by* Triptych
3:30 pm Camera Obscura
6:00 pm Black Honey: The Life and Poetry of Avraham Sutzkever *preceded by* Triptych
8:30 pm Camera Obscura

Wednesday, January 16

1:00 pm Chasing Portraits
3:30 pm Etgar Keret: Based on a True Story *preceded by* Torch
6:00 pm Autonomies

Thursday, January 17

1:00 pm The Light of Hope
3:30 pm Who Will Write Our History
6:00 pm The Light of Hope
8:30 pm Who Will Write Our History

Saturday, January 19

7:00 pm Pat Steir: Artist
9:15 pm Life According to Agfa *preceded by* Travelogue Tel Aviv

Sunday, January 20

12:30 pm City Without Jews
2:45 pm Dear Fredy *preceded by* Lon
4:00 pm **Master Class with Yehonathan Indursky (*Autonomies*) – Elinor Bunin Munroe Film Center, Amphitheater**
5:00 pm The Tobacconist
8:00 pm Mack the Knife: Brecht's Threepenny Film

Monday, January 21 – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

1:00 pm Mohamed and Anna: In Plain Sight *preceded by* Five Years After the War
3:00 pm Brussels Transit
5:30 pm Fig Tree *preceded by* A Thousand Kisses
8:30 pm Happiness of the World

Tuesday, January 22

12:30 pm Fig Tree *preceded by* A Thousand Kisses
3:15 pm Happiness of the World
5:45 pm Mohamed and Anna: In Plain Sight *preceded by* Five Years After the War
8:00 pm A Fortunate Man

THE JEWISH MUSEUM

Located on New York City's famed Museum Mile, the Jewish Museum is a distinctive hub for art and Jewish culture for people of all backgrounds. Founded in 1904, the Museum was the first institution of its kind in the United States and is one of the oldest Jewish museums in the world. Devoted to exploring art and Jewish culture from ancient to contemporary, the Museum offers diverse exhibitions and programs, and maintains a unique collection of nearly 30,000 works of art, ceremonial objects, and media reflecting the global Jewish experience over more than 4,000 years. For more information, visit TheJewishMuseum.org.

FILM SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER

The Film Society of Lincoln Center is devoted to supporting the art and elevating the craft of cinema. The only branch of the world-renowned arts complex Lincoln Center to shine a light on the everlasting yet evolving importance of the moving image, this nonprofit organization was founded in 1969 to celebrate American and international film. Via year-round programming and discussions; its annual New York Film Festival; and its publications, including *Film Comment*, the U.S.'s premier magazine about films and film culture, the Film Society endeavors to make the discussion and appreciation of cinema accessible to a broader audience, as well as to ensure that it will remain an essential art form for years to come.

The Film Society receives generous, year-round support from Shutterstock, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. American Airlines is the Official Airline of the Film Society of Lincoln Center. For more information, visit www.filmlinc.org and follow @filmlinc on Twitter.

FOR MEDIA SPECIFIC INQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

The Jewish Museum

Anne Scher, Senior Director of Communications
212.423.3271 - ascher@thejm.org

Daniela Stigh, Director of Communications
212.423.3330 - dstigh@thejm.org

General Press Inquiries - pressoffice@thejm.org

Film Society of Lincoln Center

Lisa Thomas, Director of Publicity
212.671.4709 - lthomas@filmlinc.org