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FILM INDEPENDENT AND MUBI PRESENT A LIVE READ OF BACK TO THE FUTURE

DIRECTED BY BEN SCHWARTZ AT THE WALLIS ON JUNE 24

Starring Ben Schwartz, Quinta Brunson, Sam Richardson, Scott Aukerman, Bobby Moynihan, Drew Tarver, Tawny Newsome and Gil Ozeri

LOS ANGELES (June 23, 2023) — Fire up your flux capacitor to 1.21 gigawatts and floor it to 88 mph because Film Independent is going Back to the Future! The nonprofit arts organization that produces the Spirit Awards and Film Independent Presents – a year-round program offering screenings, conversations and other unique cinematic experiences – has partnered with the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts and MUBI to present a Live Read of Back to the Future. Beloved improvisor and actor Ben Schwartz (Sonic the Hedgehog, Renfield, Parks and Recreation) will direct and star as Marty McFly in this wild ride from writer Bob Gale and writer/director Robert Zemeckis at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts’ Bram Goldsmith Theater this Saturday, June 24.

Guests will experience some of cinema’s most iconic characters – Marty McFly, Doc Brown, George McFly, Biff – reinvented by a cast of outstanding actors, including Ben Schwartz, Quinta Brunson (Abbott Elementary), Sam Richardson (Ted Lasso), Bobby Moynihan (SNL), Drew Tarver (The Other Two), Tawny Newsome (Bajillion Dollar Propertie$) and Gil Ozeri (Big Mouth), along with Scott Aukerman (Comedy Bang! Bang! podcast), as narrator.

“Back to the Future was the movie that made me fall in love with movies. I have recited this film to myself so many times throughout the years that I cannot wait to see what it feels like to do it with this incredible and inspiring group of actors,” said Ben Schwartz.

“If you close your eyes and picture a 2023 version of Back to the Future… this is it,” said Rachel Bleemer, Director of Programming and Events, Film Independent.

Audiences are encouraged to show up in costume, either as a 1950s resident of Hill Valley or a 1980s-time traveler like Marty himself. A costume contest will be held, with the winner receiving a Live Read poster signed by the cast.
When Marty McFly agrees to help his eccentric mad scientist friend, Emmett “Doc” Brown, with videotaping his newest experiment, he unexpectedly gets sent back 30 years to 1955. At first, Marty thinks his biggest problem is finding the plutonium necessary to power the DeLorean time machine back to his own time, but he soon learns that a chance encounter with his own mother, herself a teenager, may have set a series of events in motion that could lead to him never being born. This classic teen science-fiction adventure was the highest grossing movie worldwide in 1985, was nominated for four Academy Awards, including Best Screenplay, and was selected by the Library of Congress for preservation in the National Film Registry in 2007.

Ben Schwartz can be seen alongside Nicolas Cage, Nicholas Hoult and Awkwafina in Universal Pictures’ Dracula reboot, Renfield. He starred in Lord & Miller’s Apple TV+ miniseries The Afterparty, as well as Greg Daniels and Steve Carell’s Netflix series Space Force. Ben is currently the voice of Sonic in the Sonic the Hedgehog films from Paramount. Other credits include the Showtime series House of Lies, opposite Don Cheadle and Kristen Bell; Parks and Recreation, alongside Amy Poehler, Chris Pratt, Aubrey Plaza and Aziz Ansari; and This Is Where I Leave You. He co-created and stars in three improv specials on Netflix, entitled Middleditch & Schwartz, and can currently be seen on tour with his improv group Ben Schwartz & Friends, which will play Radio City Music Hall later this year. He has lent his voice to various animated shows such as Ducktales and Rise of the TMNT. As a writer, Ben has published four books and written television shows and movies for many major studios.

Past Live Read guest directors include Karyn Kusama (Jennifer’s Body), Ruben Östlund (Triangle of Sadness) Marlee Matlin (Sunset Boulevard), Quentin Tarantino (The Hateful Eight), Jason Reitman (Ghostbusters), and Marvin Lemus (L.A. Story), among others.

Previous Live Read guests include Nicholas Braun (Succession), Alison Brie (Somebody I Used to Know), Ayo Edebiri (The Bear), Brett Goldstein (Ted Lasso), Troy Kotsur (CODA), Nick Kroll (History of the World: Part II), Simona Tabasco (The White Lotus), Steven Yeun (Nope) and many more.

Film Independent Presents is supported year-round by Lead Sponsor HFPA. Additional support for this special event at the Wallis is provided by MUBI.

About Film Independent
Film Independent’s mission is to champion creative independence in visual storytelling in all its forms, and to foster a culture of inclusion, supporting a global community of artists and audiences who embody diversity, innovation, curiosity and uniqueness of vision.

In addition to producing the Film Independent Spirit Awards, the organization supports visual storytellers with Artist Development programs – Labs, grants and fiscal sponsorship – now in their 30th year. Signature mentorship program Project Involve fosters the careers of talented filmmakers from underrepresented communities. Global Media Makers, a cultural exchange program produced in partnership with the U.S. Department of State, provides career-building opportunities for international film professionals. Education programs equip filmmakers of all ages and experience levels with tools and resources. Year-round screening program Film Independent Presents delivers a robust slate of unique cinematic experiences to Members in Los Angeles and beyond.

For more information or to become a Member, visit filmindependent.org.

About the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts
The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is a dynamic cultural hub and community resource where local, national and international artists share their artistry with ever-expanding audiences. The
campus, located in the heart of Beverly Hills, CA, is committed to robust and distinctive presentations and education programs curated with both creativity and social impact in mind. Distinguished by its eclectic programming that mirrors the diverse landscape of Los Angeles and its location in the entertainment capital of the world, The Wallis has produced and presented more than 300 dance, theater, opera, classical music, cinema and family programs since its doors opened in October 2013. Hailed as “au courant” (LaLa Magazine), The Wallis was lauded by Culture Vulture, which proclaims, “If you love expecting the unexpected in the performing arts, you have to love The Wallis.” Its programming has been nominated for 79 Ovation Awards and nine L.A. Drama Critics Circle Awards. The campus itself, a breathtaking 70,000-square-foot facility, celebrating the classic and the modern, has garnered six architectural awards. Designed by acclaimed architect Zoltan E. Pali (SPF:architects), the restored building features the original 1933 Beverly Hills Post Office (on the National Register of Historic Places), which serves as the theater's dramatic yet welcoming lobby, and includes the contemporary 500-seat, state-of-the-art Bram Goldsmith Theater; the 150-seat Lovelace Studio Theater; an inviting open-air plaza for family, community and other performances; and GRoW @ The Wallis: A Space for Arts Education, where learning opportunities for all ages and backgrounds abound. Together, these elements embrace the city's history and its future, creating a performing arts destination for L.A.-area visitors and residents alike. Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is led by Chairman of the Board Michael Nemeroff and Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer Robert van Leer.

About MUBI

MUBI is a global streaming service, production company and film distributor dedicated to elevating great cinema. MUBI makes, acquires, curates, and champions visionary films, connecting them to audiences all over the world.

MUBI is a place to discover ambitious films from iconic directors to emerging auteurs. A new hand-picked film arrives on the platform every day, each carefully chosen by MUBI’s curators. Notebook explores all sides of cinema culture — both in print and online. And with MUBI GO, members in select countries can get a free ticket every week to see the best new films in cinemas.

Some recent and upcoming MUBI releases include Ira Sachs’ Passages, Park Chan-wook’s Decision to Leave, Joachim Trier’s The Worst Person in the World, Lukas Dhont’s Close, Céline Sciamma’s Petite Maman, Aftersun from Charlotte Wells, Leos Carax’s Annette, Paul Verhoeven’s Benedetta, Julia Ducournau’s Titane, Apichatpong Weerasethakul’s Memoria, First Cow from Kelly Reichardt, Ben Sharrock’s Limbo, Pablo Larraín’s Ema, and Luca Guadagnino’s Suspiria.

MUBI productions include Christopher Andrews’ Bring Them Down, starring Christopher Abbott and Barry Keoghan, and Zia Anger’s My First Film, starring Odessa Young and Devon Ross. Co-productions include Michel Franco’s upcoming film Memory, starring Jessica Chastain and Peter Sarsgaard; Mia Hansen-Love’s One Fine Morning, starring Léa Seydoux; Ekwa Msangi’s Sundance prize-winner Farewell Amor and Rachel Lang’s Our Men.

MUBI is the biggest community of film lovers, available across 190 countries, with more than 12 million members around the world. MUBI acquired renowned sales agent and production company The Match Factory and Match Factory Productions in January 2022.

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