THE JEWISH MUSEUM AND FILM AT LINCOLN CENTER ANNOUNCE THE 31ST ANNUAL NEW YORK JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL, PRESENTED IN PERSON AND VIRTUALLY JANUARY 12-25, 2022

Opening Film: Neighbours by Mano Khalil
Centerpiece: Sin La Habana by Kaveh Nabatian
Closing Film: Rose by Aurélie Saada

NEW YORK, NY (December 13, 2021) – The Jewish Museum and Film at Lincoln Center will present the 31st annual New York Jewish Film Festival (NYJFF) in person and virtually from January 12 through 25, 2022. Among the oldest and most influential Jewish film festivals worldwide, NYJFF presents the finest documentary, narrative, and short films from around the world that explore the Jewish experience.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, the 2021 festival was presented exclusively online. The 2022 edition will feature both in-person screenings at the Walter Reade Theater, 165 West 65th Street, NYC, and virtual offerings. The NYJFF line-up showcases 33 wide-ranging and exciting features and shorts (24 features and 9 shorts), including the latest works by dynamic voices in international cinema, as well as the world premiere of a new 4K restoration of the 1984 film Kaddish by Steve Brand.

In the Opening film Neighbours, 6-year-old Sero and his family live in a Kurdish community near the Syrian/Turkish border in the early 1980s. He’s extremely fond of his Jewish neighbors but perplexed when a new teacher propagates fiery nationalism and antisemitism. Director Mano Khalil mines childhood experiences with a welcome sense of humor while drawing parallels with contemporary refugee crises.

This year’s Centerpiece film is Sin La Habana, winner of the award for Best Canadian Film at the 2021 Vancouver International Film Festival. In the film a salsa dance instructor and his
girlfriend, a lawyer, seek to escape Cuba by any means, ensnaring an Iranian-Jewish woman in their plot. Writer/director/composer Kaveh Nabatian, himself Iranian-Canadian, offers a lyrical and deeply felt meditation on cross-cultural relationships, with their attendant gulfs of religion and background, further complicated by the hidden agendas of all concerned parties.

The Closing selection is *Rose* featuring a career-crowning turn from screen legend Françoise Fabian (star of the 1969 classic *My Night at Maud’s*). Suddenly widowed at 78, family matriarch Rose learns to pursue her desires, rejecting the societal pressure to “act her age” and fade into benign oblivion. Actress and screenwriter Aurélie Saada makes her directorial debut with this life-affirming reminder that it’s never too late to seek fulfillment. *Rose* took home the Variety Piazza Grande Award at the 2021 Locarno Film Festival.

Several notable highlights in this year’s festival are: *A Kaddish for Bernie Madoff*, *The Lost Film of Nuremberg*, *Tiger Within*, and *The Will to See*.

Set on Wall Street in 2008, *A Kaddish for Bernie Madoff* offers a singularly creative perspective on financial fraud. Musician/poet Alicia Jo Rabins plays herself, obsessing over Madoff and the capitalist system that enabled him, in this head-spinning hybrid of fantasy, music, and personal memoir.

Adapted from Sandra Schulberg’s essay, “Filmmakers for the Prosecution,” *The Lost Film of Nuremberg* re-traces the hunt by Hollywood filmmakers Budd and Stuart Schulberg for film evidence that could convict the Nazis at the Nuremberg Trial. Seventy-five years after the trial, French journalist and filmmaker Jean-Christophe Klotz uncovers never-before-seen footage, and interviews key figures to unravel why the resulting film about the trial was intentionally buried by the U.S. Department of War.

The late Edward Asner demonstrates his versatility yet again in one of his final roles in Rafael Zielinski’s *Tiger Within*. Asner portrays Samuel, a Holocaust survivor who develops an unlikely friendship with a troubled teenage runaway who sports a swastika on her jacket. The film sparkles with the genuinely surprising chemistry between its sublime leads, over 75 years apart in age.

The eye-opening essay film, *The Will to See*, grew out of writer, activist, and philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy’s journalistic coverage of places where human suffering predominates. Journeying from Mogadishu, Somalia, “a ghost town abandoned to the warlords,” to Nigeria, where Christians are massacred with impunity, Lévy spotlights locations the world cannot afford to keep ignoring.

Other films in this year’s lineup include:

- *Cinema Sabaya*, Orit Fouks Rotem. Nine women of divergent backgrounds, from Hadera, Israel who are Jewish and Arab, observant and secular, enroll in a filmmaking seminar which serves as the setting for this deft study of art’s capacity to unite disparate communities.
- *The End of Love*, Keren Ben Rafael. Julie and Yuval, a couple living in Paris with their new baby, are parted when Yuval must return to Israel to renew his visa. This pre-pandemic account of technology’s role in a long-distance relationship poignantly foreshadows our reliance on screens to maintain connections.
The Last Chapter of A.B. Yehoshua, Yair Qedar. A.B. Yehoshua, “the Israeli Faulkner,” shares his late-period reflections, emerging as a living testament to wholehearted engagement with the world.

Labyrinth of Peace, Mike Schaerer. In Mike Schaerer’s illuminating and handsomely produced miniseries, three youths face bitter realities in post-World War II Switzerland, learning that war leaves no one untouched.

Several short films will be included in the 2022 festival. Among them are:

Beregovsky #136, Yoav Potash. This beguiling short accompanies archival footage of prewar Jewish life with a recent, live, outdoor performance by Saul Goodman’s Klezmer Band, shot in Berkeley, California.

The Violin Upstairs, Asali Echols. Filmmaker Asali Echols utilizes animation to recount the provenance of her beloved violin, from its origins in 18th-century Austria to its present existence in San Francisco.

Mazel Tov, Eli Zuzovsky. Bar mitzvahs signify the arrival of adulthood, but 13-year-old Adam Weizmann must grow up extra quickly, as his coming-of-age ritual coincides with a war, family turmoil, and Adam’s apprehension of his sexuality.

The NYJFF will also present the world premiere of the new 4K digital restoration of Steve Brands’ Kaddish, an engaging chronicle of a Hungarian Holocaust survivor’s son that reveals 1980s New York and activist Yossi Klein Halevi in his formative years.

In addition, the festival includes Special Program: Tribute to Pearl Bowser (presented virtually), focusing on the celebrated film scholar, author, archivist, educator, activist, filmmaker, and independent distributor. Harlem-raised Pearl Bowser is a stalwart champion of independent film and filmmakers of color. Alongside her late colleagues, psychologist and artist Mel Roman, and Charles Hobson, producer-writer at ABC-TV, Bowser researched and curated a landmark retrospective at the Jewish Museum in 1970 called “The Black Film,” igniting a new wave of enduring interest in exhibiting, producing, and engaging with African American cinema beyond borders. She has spent her multifaceted career cultivating audiences for marginalized voices in motion pictures, particularly with her groundbreaking work on early 1900s Black film pioneer Oscar Micheaux. This virtual tribute program includes a recent short-film interview with Bowser and several films, including Body and Soul (1925) by Oscar Micheaux, which features Paul Robeson in his acting debut.

See below for the slate of films with full descriptions and schedule. Dates for Q&A sessions to be announced. Watch a preview from the programmers on the 2022 edition here.

The films for the 2022 New York Jewish Film Festival were selected by Rachel Chanoff, Director, THE OFFICE performing arts + film; Lisa Collins, filmmaker and programmer, digital journalist, and special events producer; Indigo Sparks, performance artist, writer, and arts administrator; and Aviva Weintraub, Director, New York Jewish Film Festival, The Jewish Museum; with Dennis Lim, Director of Programming, Film at Lincoln Center and New York Film Festival, and Dan Sullivan, Assistant Programmer, Film at Lincoln Center, as advisers.

TICKETS
Member ticket presale for NYJFF tickets for Film at Lincoln Center and Jewish Museum members begins on December 14 at noon, and tickets for the general public will be on sale beginning December 17 at noon. Tickets can be purchased at nyjff.org. Members will be sent a unique link for Virtual Cinema pre-sale access.
In-Theater ticket prices are $15 for the general public; $12 for students, seniors, and persons with disabilities; and $10 for FLC and JM members. See more and save with the NYJFF All-Access Pass for just $95 (approx. 40% savings!).

Virtual Cinema prices are $12 for the general public; $9.60 for FLC and JM members; and $85 for the virtual all access pass. Film at Lincoln Center and Jewish Museum members save 20% on individual rentals and the all-access pass.

One rental per account. For ticketing assistance or questions about the virtual cinema, please email virtualsupport@filmlinc.org.

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 the Kirsh Foundation, Sara and Axel Schupf, Mimi and Barry Alperin, Louise and Frank Ring, the Ike, Molly and Steven Elias Foundation, The Carl Marks Foundation, Inc., Amy Rubenstein, and Steven and Shera Schacter.

Additional support is provided by the Consulate General of Israel in New York, the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany in New York, the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the United States, and the Consulate General of Switzerland in New York.

Film at Lincoln Center receives additional support for the New York Jewish Film Festival from The Jack & Pearl Resnick Foundation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
Mahen Bonetti, African Film Festival; Nicola Galliner; Stuart Hands, Toronto Jewish Film Festival; Jessica Rosner, Media Consultant; Isaac Zablocki, Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan; Marlene Josephs, Linda Lipson, Volunteers; Aisha Dia, Ben Lipkin, Chie Xu, Interns.

FILM DESCRIPTIONS & SCHEDULE
All in-person films screen at the Walter Reade Theater (165 West 65th St.) unless otherwise noted as a virtual presentation.

Each virtual presentation will be available for viewing beginning at 12pm ET on the below dates and available to rent up to five days after the specified premiere date with 24 hour playback.

Opening Film
Neighbours
Mano Khalil, Switzerland, 2021, 124 min.
Kurdish, Arabic, Hebrew, and Turkish with English subtitles
N.Y. Premiere
In Mano Khalil’s autobiographical Neighbours, 6-year-old Sero (expressive newcomer Serhed Khalil) and his family live in a Kurdish community near the Syrian/Turkish border in the early
1980s. Sero is extremely fond of his neighbors, the last Jewish family in a village where Jews and Kurds once coexisted peacefully but where rising tensions have caused all the other Jews to flee. When he begins his first year of Arabic school, Sero is inundated with the fiery nationalism of a new teacher who demands that the Arabic language replace Kurdish in the home and propagates anti-Semitism to his impressionable charges. Amidst other tumultuous developments, Sero struggles to resist the dangerous ideology of his forceful instructor, while his fellow students embrace these ideas to the detriment of the warmhearted Jews they’ve lived alongside all their lives. Khalil mines childhood experiences with a welcome sense of humor, while drawing tragic parallels with the plight of contemporary Syria.

**Wednesday, January 12, 4:00pm**

**Centerpiece**

**Sin La Habana**

Kaveh Nabatian, Canada, 2020, 95 min.

**Spanish, Farsi, and English with English subtitles**

**N.Y. Premiere**

Everyone in *Sin La Habana* is seeking escape in some form. For ballet dancer–turned–salsa instructor Leonardo (Yonah Acosta) and his lawyer girlfriend Sara (Evelyn O’Farrill), leaving Cuba would afford opportunities for personal and creative advancement. Iranian-Jewish tourist Nasim (Aki Yaghoubi), a woman of means based in Montreal, hopes to move beyond her painful marriage and begin life anew. When Leonardo resolves to seduce one of his dance students to engineer passage out of Havana for himself and Sara, the expat would appear to be the perfect foil for their plans. But Nasim is concealing a few secrets, too. Writer/director/composer Kaveh Nabatian, himself Iranian-Canadian, offers a lyrical and deeply felt meditation on cross-cultural relationships, with their attendant gulfs of religion and background, further complicated by the hidden agendas of all concerned parties. Winner of the award for Best Canadian Film at the 2021 Vancouver International Film Festival.

**Saturday, January 15, 7:00pm**

**Monday, January 17, 4:00pm**

**Closing Film**

**Rose**

Aurélie Saada, France, 2021, 102 min.

**French with English subtitles**

**U.S. Premiere**

Actress and screenwriter Aurélie Saada makes her directorial debut with this life-affirming reminder that it’s never too late to seek fulfillment. The joys of celebrating the birthday of the Goldberg family patriarch give way to sorrow as his sudden death leaves his devoted wife Rose (screen legend Françoise Fabian, who played the title role in Éric Rohmer’s 1969 classic *My Night at Maud’s*) uncertain of how to navigate life as a widow approaching 80. Her family offers little solace, but gradually Rose begins to advocate for her wishes and pursue her desires, rejecting the societal pressure to “act her age” and fade into benign oblivion. Similar in concept to Sebastián Lelio’s crowd-pleasing *Gloria*, but with its own cultural specificity and a career-crowning turn from Fabian, *Rose* took home the Variety Piazza Grande Award at the 2021 Locarno Film Festival.

**Wednesday, January 19, 1:00pm & 7:00pm**
MAIN SLATE FILMS

Cinema Sabaya
Orit Fouks Rotem, Israel/Belgium, 2021, 92 min.
Hebrew and Arabic with English subtitles
Nine women of divergent backgrounds enroll in a video production seminar that promises to teach the fundamentals of filmmaking. These residents of Hadera, Israel are Jewish and Arab, observant and secular, ensconced in all manner of domestic arrangements, with life spread out before some of them and regarded by others in hindsight. Strangers to one another (one of the Jewish attendees has never interacted with Arabs until now), the students share the common goal of self-expression through their cameras, with Tel Aviv–based filmmaker Rona (Dana Ivgy, acclaimed star of Or and Zero Motivation) supplying instruction. Orit Fouks Rotem casts her debut feature with a mix of seasoned and nonprofessional actors, all shooting their own footage and viewing their colleagues’ work for the first time on screen. Sparked by former workshop leader Rotem’s personal experiences, Cinema Sabaya presents a deft and never didactic portrait of art’s capacity to unite disparate communities.
Friday, January 21 (virtual)

The Death of Cinema and My Father Too
Dani Rosenberg, Israel/France, 2020, 105 min.
Hebrew with English subtitles
N.Y. Premiere
Erstwhile documentarian Dani Rosenberg makes his feature debut as solo director with a project he calls “a fiction film that crashes into the walls of reality.” Previously awarded a grant to shoot a political drama, Rosenberg had planned to cast his own father in the leading role, but the older man’s cancer halted the production. After his father’s death, Rosenberg returned to the material with a meta-narrative about a filmmaker (Roni Kuban as a version of Dani) directing his ailing father (played by esteemed producer Marek Rozenbaum) in an against-the-clock film shoot that incorporates footage of the real Rosenberg Sr. A playful statement on cinema’s power to freeze a moment but not stop the flow of time, The Death of Cinema and My Father Too won the award for Best Israeli Feature at the Jerusalem Film Festival, and finds the director’s mother Ina playing the parent of his alter ego.
Thursday, January 13 (virtual)

The End of Love
Keren Ben Rafael, France/Israel, 2019, 90 min.
French and Hebrew with English subtitles
N.Y.C. Premiere
Julie and Yuval (Judith Chemla and Arieh Worthalter), a couple living in Paris with their new baby, are parted when Yuval is forced to return to Israel to renew his visa. Thousands of miles removed, with Yuval detained by red tape, they must rely on technology to maintain their connection. Director Keren Ben Rafael’s second feature was made before the COVID-19 pandemic, yet uncannily foreshadows what would soon become a near-universal condition: dependence on screens to sustain relationships over vast distances and prolonged separations. Judith Chemla, the star of NYJFF 2020’s My Polish Honeymoon, brings her deep expressiveness to this engaging and poignant film. Ben Rafael’s screenplay, co-written with Élise Benroubi, captures the bewildering sensation of mediated intimacy, depicting how virtual interactions, seemingly preferable to none at all, can escalate feelings of paranoia and estrangement, erode privacy, and pose as grave a threat to love as time and distance apart.
From Where They Stood
Christophe Cognet, France/Germany, 2021, 110 min.
French, German, and Polish with English subtitles
N.Y. Premiere
Nonfiction veteran Christophe Cognet contributes a vital account of the risks undertaken to create a visual record of the Holocaust. From Where They Stood details the heroic efforts of prisoners at Dachau, Auschwitz-Birkenau, and elsewhere to photograph the realities of their existence, and to smuggle their pictures out of the camps in the fervent hope that the world would bear witness. After establishing his mise-en-scène, Cognet zooms in to consider the individuals who took the photos—their methods and motives—and the figures populating their images, rescuing them from historical anonymity and endowing them with human dimensions. The winner of a documentary prize at the 2021 Jerusalem Film Festival, From Where They Stood was screened in France under the title À pas aveugles, meaning “blindly”—a cogent reminder of the speed and precision necessary for the photographers to snap their shots without fatal exposure.

Grossman
Adi Arbel, Israel, 2021, 54 min.
Hebrew with English subtitles
U.S. Premiere
Israeli author and activist David Grossman’s writings have been translated into 45 languages and garnered him myriad accolades, including the UK’s International Booker Prize. His 20-year-old son was killed by an anti-tank missile during the 2006 Lebanon War, two days after Grossman and his fellow writers had urged the government to agree to a cease-fire—and near the end of his composition of what many regard as his masterpiece, To the End of the Land, a novel about a woman running from her certainty that her son has died in combat. In this tender and insightful portrait of a captivating subject, Adi Arbel observes Grossman lecturing, conducting research, meeting with translators, and speaking eloquently on the nexus of art and existence, concluding that “the only way we can contemplate the emptiness of death, and at the same time feel the fullness of life, is by writing.”

Preceded by
The Last Chapter of A.B. Yehoshua
Yair Qedar, Israel, 2021, 55 min.
Hebrew, Arabic, English with English subtitles
U.S. Premiere
Writer A.B. Yehoshua, one of the key figures of the Israeli New Wave, has been called “the Israeli Faulkner” by The New York Times. Now 84 and widowed, he struggles with loneliness and health setbacks, yet his mind remains agile and his perspective clear. Filmmaker Yair Qedar, known for his involvement with the wide-ranging documentary cycle The Hebrews (exploring the Jewish and Hebrew literary canon), attentively follows Yehoshua with his camera as the illustrious author reflects on his mortality, his complicated heritage (having been born in Jerusalem to a Sephardic father and a Moroccan mother), and his belief that Jews and Arabs are both paralyzed by the past (his prescription: “a little dementia” all around). Sharp-witted and tart-tongued, Yehoshua stands as a source of inspiration, a living testament to wholehearted engagement with the world.

Tuesday, January 18, 7:00pm
Kaddish
Steve Brand, USA, 1984, 94 min.
English
World Premiere of 4K Restoration
Yossi Klein’s life was shaped by an event he never experienced. His father, Zoltan, a Hungarian Jew, survived the Holocaust in part by hiding in a hole in the ground for six months. In 1950 he relocated to Brooklyn’s Borough Park, the largest Orthodox community of survivors in the United States, and three years later Yossi was born. For many boomers coming of age in the 1950s and ‘60s, the postwar years were a time of stability and calm, but Yossi’s childhood was dominated by his father’s belief that the Shoah could recur at any time. Filmmaker Steve Brand spent four years chronicling the lives of the Klein family, proffering a warm and engaging glimpse at 1980s New York and the young man who would become Yossi Klein Halevi, noted writer and activist. The resulting film, Kaddish, movingly contemplates how trauma is passed down from parent to child, and how history must be confronted lest it be repeated.

A Kaddish for Bernie Madoff
Alicia Rose, USA, 2021, 75 min.
English
N.Y.C. Premiere
Set on Wall Street in 2008, A Kaddish for Bernie Madoff offers a singular perspective on devastating financial fraud. When director Alicia J. Rose saw musician/poet Alicia Jo Rabins’s “one-woman socio-political-personal rock opera” onstage, she conceived of the live show adapted to the screen, with Rabins playing herself in New York’s financial district, obsessing over Madoff and the capitalist system that enabled him from the vantage point of her ninth-story studio apartment, a stone’s throw from the hub of his crimes. Pushing the concept of hybrid film to necessary extremes to encompass the head-spinning scope of Madoff’s amorality, Rose’s feature pivots from fantasy to animation to music-video riffs on real-life interviews, anchored by Rabins’s presence as an artist witnessing with morbid fascination and unnerving proximity a global economic collapse. Rose aptly deems the ensuing work “the most accessible experimental film people will see.”

Labyrinth of Peace
Mike Schaerer, Switzerland, 2020, 6 episodes, 50 min. each
Swiss, German, and French with English subtitles
N.Y. Premiere
Switzerland may be reductively synonymous with political neutrality, but Swiss director Mike Schaerer’s illuminating miniseries Labyrinth of Piece examines the profound effects of the Second World War on every aspect of life in that central European nation. The well-appointed and compulsively watchable six-part historical drama opens in 1945, as the conflict’s end heralds a bright future for young people with bold plans. The focal characters are Klara (Annina Walt), concerned for the welfare of uprooted Holocaust survivors; her fiancé, Johan (Max Hubacher), who seeks to revolutionize the struggling textile company run by Klara’s father; and Johan’s brother, Egon (Dimitri Stapfer), who’s tasked with ferreting out ex-Nazis in hiding. All three are faced with the bitter realities of lingering anti-Semitism, unpunished war crimes, and
the primacy of profit over human life, forcing them to acknowledge that war leaves no one untouched and prosperity nearly always comes at a price.

**Tuesday, January 25 (virtual)**

**The Lost Film of Nuremberg**  
Jean-Christophe Klotz, France/Germany, 2021, 52 min.  
French and German with English subtitles  
U.S. Premiere  
Adapted from Sandra Schulberg’s monograph *Filmmakers for the Prosecution*, **The Lost Film of Nuremberg** retraces the hunt for film evidence that could convict the Nazis at the Nuremberg Trial. The searchers were two sons of Hollywood—brothers Budd and Stuart Schulberg—serving under the command of OSS film chief John Ford. The motion pictures they presented in the courtroom became part of the official record and shape our understanding of the Holocaust to this day. Seventy-five years after the trial, French journalist and filmmaker Jean-Christophe Klotz returns to the German salt mines where films lay burning, uncovers never-before-seen footage, and interviews key figures to unravel why the resulting film about the trial—**Nuremberg: Its Lesson for Today** by Stuart Schulberg—was intentionally buried by the U.S. Department of War. Klotz’s riveting film also fills in the gaps of how these groundbreaking materials were sourced and poses still-pertinent questions about documentarians’ obligations to posterity.

*Preceded by*  
**A Kaddish for Selim**  
Jane Wells, USA, 2021, 15 min.  
English  
World Premiere  
Composed of century-old photographs and letters, Jane Wells’s *A Kaddish for Selim* tells the story of her uncle, a young British Jew forced to change his name in order to enlist in the army. This haunting short film honors the memories of those who relinquished first their names and then their lives in defense of their adopted homelands.

**Thursday, January 13, 1:00pm & 7:00pm**

**Persian Lessons**  
Vadim Perelman, Germany, 2020, 127 min.  
German and French, with English subtitles  
N.Y.C. Premiere  
An official selection at numerous international festivals, including Berlinale, and a submission for the 2021 Best International Film Oscar, Vadim Perelman’s *Persian Lessons* proceeds from a spellbinding premise: In 1942, Gilles (Nahuel Pérez Biscayart, César winner for *BPM*), a Belgian Jew, is sent to a German concentration camp. He escapes execution by claiming to be Persian, but is ordered to teach the language (which he does not speak) to an SS officer (veteran actor Lars Eidinger), who plans to open a restaurant in Iran after the war. Gilles must somehow fabricate a language, complete with rules and extensive vocabulary, knowing that exposure of the ruse will cost him his life. To wit, Ukrainian director Perelman, best known for the Ben Kingsley drama *House of Sand and Fog*, collaborated with a Russian linguist to devise a 600-word lexicon of ersatz Persian for this suspenseful, performance-driven film.

**Sunday, January 16, 1:00pm & 7:00pm**
Raymonde El Bidaouia
Yaël Abecassis, Israel, 2020, 79 min.
French, Arabic, and Hebrew with English subtitles
N.Y. Premiere
Singer Raymonde El Bidaouia is rightly referred to as a living legend: She’s performed Judeo-Arabic music on both sides of the Mediterranean for over half a century. Born Raymonde Cohen in Morocco (her stage name means “from Casablanca” in Arabic), El Bidaouia immigrated to Israel at 18. In addition to her music career, she has championed feminist causes, acted in film and theater, retained her Moroccan dialect despite pressures to assimilate, and raised her daughter alone after losing her husband in a car accident. That daughter, award-winning Israeli actress Yaël Abecassis (Prisoners of War, Live and Become), has crafted an intimate and affectionate documentary portrait of the woman she knows better than anyone, yet about whom so much remains mysterious. As the pair journey from Israel to formative locales in Morocco, they share their profound love of music, mutual grief and hardships, and indissoluble mother-daughter bond.

Tuesday, January 18, 4:00pm
Wednesday, January 19, 4:00pm

Shtetlers
Katya Ustinova, USA, 2020, 80 min.
Russian, Ukrainian, English, and Yiddish with English subtitles
N.Y. Premiere
An invaluable record of tight-knit communities that endured genocide and shifting political regimes, Shtetlers offers a glimpse at the small Jewish towns (“shtetls”) dotting the former Soviet Union—towns where for many years Yiddish continued to be spoken and ancient rituals dutifully observed. Located on the fringes of the territory, in what are now Ukraine and Moldova, these villages that withstood the Holocaust managed to abide by supplying non-Jewish neighboring towns with goods and services. Director Katya Ustinova examines nine former shtetl inhabitants, now spread out across the world, and solicits their memories of a resilient but ultimately vanishing way of life. Ustinova’s documentary serves as an elegy for these once numerous strongholds of tradition and culture, but also, by archiving the recollections of those who experienced them firsthand, preserves them.

Monday, January 24 (virtual)

Tiger Within
Rafal Zielinski, USA, 2020, 98 min.
English
N.Y. Premiere
The late Edward Asner, whose incomparable body of work includes The Mary Tyler Moore Show and Pixar’s Up, demonstrates his versatility yet again in one of his final roles. He plays Samuel, a Holocaust survivor who develops an unlikely friendship with Casey (Margot Josefsohn in her feature film debut), a troubled teenage runaway who sports a swastika on her leather jacket. In time Samuel comes to offer Casey the kindness and direction she never found at home, while she provides the elderly widower with a renewed sense of purpose. The genuinely surprising chemistry between confident 14-year-old Josefsohn and graceful nonagenarian Asner gives Tiger Within a special charm, placing it in the small but invaluable cluster of films that explore the commonalities between people at opposite ends of the age
continuum. Screenwriter Gina Wendkos (The Princess Diaries) balances grit and sentiment astutely in her study of friendship where it’s least expected.

**Friday, January 21 (virtual)**

**Wet Dog**

Damir Lukacevic, Germany, 2020, 103 min.

German with English subtitles

**N.Y. Premiere**

Arye Sharuz Shalicar’s autobiography A Wet Dog is Better Than a Dry Jew (the title a harsh summation of the prejudice that drove the author’s parents from Iran) forms the basis for Damir Lukacevic’s thought-provoking film about how the need to find one’s place can lead to self-denial and toxic reinvention. Soheil (Doguhan Kabadyi), the 16-year-old son of Iranian-Jewish emigres, moves from a peaceful town in central Germany to the Berlin neighborhood of Wedding, where he experiences anti-Semitism for the first time from his mostly Muslim peers. As a means of self-preservation, he hides his Jewish identity and joins a gang, rising in the ranks as petty crimes lead to drug sales and altercations with police, but always with the constant threat of being found out. Croatian-born German filmmaker Lukacevic transposes Shalicar’s 1990s-set memoir to the present day, driving home the point that bigotry and the impulse to conform are dismayingly perennial.

**Sunday, January 16 (virtual)**

**We Were the Others**

Hadas Ayalon, Israel, 2019, 54 min.

Hebrew with English subtitles

**N.Y. Premiere**

A valuable companion piece to the numerous nonfiction films depicting the gay rights movement in America in the 1960s and ’70s, Hadas Ayalon’s We Were the Others considers the fight against prejudice and ignorance during the same period in Israel. Not only were homosexuals said to be mentally ill there, but same-sex relationships were illegal, with violators subject to lengthy imprisonment. “Gay people were thought of as worse than murderers,” confides one of the six men interviewed who struggled to understand and acknowledge their sexuality at a time when LGBTQ issues received no legitimate media coverage, and fought for the right to lead their lives without shame or fear of retribution. The interviewees are no longer compelled to conceal their nature, but their memories remain raw and painful. Nominated for an Israeli Academy Award as Best Documentary under 60 minutes, We Were the Others marks Ayalon as a filmmaker of rare sensitivity and compassion.

*Preceded by*

**Alone Together**

Maya Tiberman, Kineret Hay-Gillor, Israel, 2019, 56 min.

Hebrew with English subtitles

**N.Y. Premiere**

At the outset, Ravit Reichman seems too good to be true. By day she runs a soup kitchen in Tel Aviv, and at night she reports to the hospital to care for abandoned babies, offering them warmth and tenderness, without which they would develop improperly and perhaps die. Unable to have children of her own and deemed ineligible to adopt in Israel because she’s single and approaching 50, Ravit channels her maternal instincts into perpetual selfless care. But as Maya Tiberman and Kineret Hay-Gillor’s inspiring documentary reveals, the infants are not the only ones in dire need of affection; with her milestone birthday drawing near, Ravit confronts the essential qualities missing from her life. Never mawkish or patronizing, Alone Together
acquaints us with a woman of almost saintly generosity and investigates the immense loneliness underlying her acts of altruism.

**Friday, January 21 (virtual)**

**The Will to See**  
**Bernard-Henri Lévy and Marc Roussel, France, 2021, 92 min.**  
**French and English with English subtitles**  
**N.Y. Premiere**

Prolific French writer, activist, and philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy has been described by *The New York Times* as “an intellectual adventurer who brings publicity to unfashionable political causes.” He’s written over 30 books and at times attracted controversy for his outspoken opinions. His latest project, this eye-opening essay film, which also provides an intellectual history of Levy’s thinking from his time with author and statesman André Malraux some 50 years ago, grew out of his expedition on behalf of several international newspapers to places where human suffering predominates. Whether due to prolonged war, terrorism, or state-sponsored genocide, Lévy’s destinations are not only beset with misfortune but also largely overlooked by the apparatuses capable of effecting change. Journeying from the overcrowded and unsanitary refugee camp in Lesbos that burned to the ground in September 2020 to Mogadishu, Somalia, “a ghost town abandoned to the warlords,” to Nigeria, where Christians are massacred with impunity, Lévy turns a spotlight on locations the world cannot afford to keep ignoring.

**Sunday, January 16, 4:00pm**

**With No Land**  
**Aalam-Warqe Davidian, Kobi Davidian, Israel, 2021, 83 min.**  
**English, Amharic, and Hebrew with English subtitles**

In May 1991, 15,000 Ethiopian Jews were airlifted to Israel in less than 24 hours’ time. Known as Operation Solomon, this covert mission coordinated by the Israeli military saw the birth of eight babies en route and set the world record for the most passengers on a single aircraft. History regards the endeavor as an unqualified triumph, but 30 years later, the full story is being told. Aalam-Warqe and Kobi Davidian delve into the details that have been suppressed for all this time, and explore the desperate but motivated measures taken by Jewish Ethiopian activists in Israel, North America, and their country of origin. Archival footage and firsthand accounts of participants lend nuance to a story heretofore viewed as black and white, supplemented by accounts of recent efforts to finally relocate to Israel those whom Operation Solomon left behind.

**Monday, January 17 (virtual)**

**Home**  
**Anita Bruvere, United Kingdom, 2019, 8 min.**  
**English**

Anita Bruvere’s prizewinning documentary short uses newspapers and fabrics to bring to life the saga of an East End London residence that sheltered refugees for 300 years, from Irish weavers to Jewish tailors. A mixture of 2D and stop-motion animation provides the aesthetic for this unique meditation on belonging.

**Followed by**  
**Xueta Island**  
**Felipe Wolokita, Dani Rotstein, Ofer Laszewicki, Spain, 65 min.**  
**Catalan with English subtitles**  
**N.Y. Premiere**
The Spanish island of Mallorca has a long and shameful history of Jewish persecution, from the coerced baptisms that forced holdouts to keep their faith a secret (“crypto Jews”) to the Inquisition of the 15th century to the “auto-da-fé” rituals of the late 1600s, where Jews were publicly burned at the stake. The Xuetas are their heirs, bearing 15 surnames associated with Judaism and stigmatized accordingly. Forced to intermarry and divested of basic rights, their ordeal has long been compounded by a taboo against broaching the past, requiring them to internalize their trauma. Filmmaker Dani Rotstein, an American Jew, became fascinated by the heritage of these descendants, who’ve managed against all odds to influence the island’s culinary and commercial character. In Xueta Island, Rotstein and his co-directors ponder the current state of Judaism on Mallorca and reasons for optimism about the future.

**Sunday, January 23 (virtual)**

**Short Films on Creativity**  
**Thursday, January 20 (virtual)**

**AA**  
**Cynthia Madansky, USA, 2020, 18 min.**  
**Russian and English**  
The late Anna Alchuk was a Russian poet, feminist, and photographer whose work has been described as “a free-spirited romp across complex and significant ideas about personhood, identity, representation, linguistic performance, and political action.” Filmmaker Cynthia Madansky (*NYJFF, Treyf*) envisions Alchuk’s “dream diaries” in this imaginative tribute from one multidisciplinary artist to another.

**Beregovsky #136**  
**Yoav Potash, USA, 2021, 4 min.**  
**English**  
**N.Y. Premiere**  
Named for Moshe Beregovsky, a folklorist and ethnomusicologist who spent the 1920s-40s collecting secular Jewish music throughout Soviet Ukraine and preserving it for future generations, Yoav Potash’s beguiling short accompanies archival footage of prewar Jewish life (contemporaneous to Beregovsky’s efforts) with a recent live, outdoor performance by Saul Goodman’s Klezmer band, shot in Berkeley, California.

**The Violin Upstairs**  
**Asali Echols, USA, 2019, 3 min.**  
**English**  
**N.Y. Premiere**  
Filmmaker Asali Echols utilizes animation to recount the provenance of her beloved violin, from its origins in 18th-century Austria to its present existence in San Francisco; interim owners cherished the instrument, often with little else in the world to cherish. The inspired choice of stop-motion showcases the violin’s texture, with age marks and scratches manifesting its character.

**Mazel Tov**  
**Eli Zuzovsky, Israel/USA, 2021, 25 min.**  
**Hebrew, French, and Arabic with English subtitles**  
**N.Y. PREMIERE**  
Bar mitzvahs signify the arrival of adulthood, but 13-year-old Adam Weizmann must grow up extra quickly, as his coming-of-age ritual coincides with a war, family turmoil, and Adam’s
apprehension of his sexuality. Director Eli Zuzovsky’s vivid semi autobiographical film was shortlisted for an Israeli Academy Award.

Lily
Adrienne Gruben, USA, 2019, 26 min.
English
Lily Renée was perhaps the first female comic-book artist, gifting the world with strong female personages, but (to borrow a term from her industry) Lily’s own origin story is even more compelling. Adrienne Gruben lovingly traces her escape from Nazi-occupied Vienna and life in New York City, where she still resides at the venerable age of 100.

Untitled (Tania Project)
Rima Yamazaki, USA, 2020, 25 min.
English
World Premiere
A familiar Greenwich Village site is the 13-story geometric “wall painting,” but few know the identity or biography of its artist. The mononymic Tania (born Tatiana Lewin in 1920 Poland) fled to North America during WWII and left behind a formidable oeuvre. Untitled movingly portrays filmmaker Rima Yamazaki’s encounter with Tania’s work at the behest of her widower.

Special Program: Tribute to Pearl Bowser
Sunday, January 23 (virtual)
A celebrated film scholar, author, archivist, educator, activist, filmmaker, and independent distributor, Harlem-raised Pearl Bowser is a stalwart champion of independent film and filmmakers of color. Alongside her late colleagues Mel Roman, psychologist and artist, and Charles Hobson, producer-writer at ABC-TV, Bowser researched and curated a landmark retrospective at the Jewish Museum in 1970 called “The Black Film,” igniting a new wave of enduring interest in exhibiting, producing, and engaging with African American cinema beyond borders. She has spent her multifaceted career cultivating audiences for marginalized voices in motion pictures, particularly with her groundbreaking work on early-1900s Black film pioneer Oscar Micheaux. She's traveled the globe in pursuit of this urgent mission.

Interview with Pearl Bowser, 10 min.
In November 2021, Pearl revisited the Jewish Museum five decades after programming “The Black Film,” and spoke with longtime associates and fellow filmmakers Lisa Collins and Mark Schwartzburt. The NYJFF presents an excerpt from the interview conducted during this visit, containing Bowser’s reflections on the film series, nuances in Black filmmaking, and her storied life’s journey.

Ten Bob in Winter
Lloyd Reckord, United Kingdom, 1963, 10 min.
English
In this pioneering short, experimental in form and radical in subject matter, a West Indian student tries to recover a 10-shilling loan over Christmas break and confronts colorism within the Black community. Director Lloyd Reckord supplies ironic voice-over narration in the style of Langston Hughes, while the Joe Harriott Quintet contributes a breezy jazz score.

Body and Soul
Oscar Micheaux, USA, 1925, 82 min.
English
The first significant Black feature filmmaker and the most accomplished in cinema’s early decades, Oscar Micheaux contributed over 40 motion pictures, with Body and Soul a true tour de force: Adapting his own novel to the screen, he also directed and produced it and distributed it himself. In an auspicious acting debut, gospel and folk singer Paul Robeson (like Micheaux, a trailblazer in his medium) plays the dual roles of an escaped convict hiding out in a Georgia town by posing as a minister and the con’s estranged twin brother; both love the same woman. While the story doesn’t shy away from melodramatic tropes, Micheaux’s flair behind the camera and Robeson’s charisma in front of it make for essential viewing. A landmark silent “race film” (i.e., made exclusively by and for African Americans), Body and Soul was selected by the Library of Congress for inclusion in the prestigious National Film Registry.

Schedule of Films
*Note that italicized titles are virtual presentations*

Wednesday, January 12
4:00pm: Neighbours (124’) (Opening Film) WRT

Thursday, January 13
1:00pm: A Kaddish for Selim (15’) followed by The Lost Film of Nuremberg (52’) WRT
4:00pm: Kaddish (94’) WRT
7:00pm: A Kaddish for Selim (15’) followed by The Lost Film of Nuremberg (52’) WRT
*The Death of Cinema and My Father Too (105’) (Virtual)*

Friday, January 14
*The End of Love (90’) - Virtual
*From Where They Stood (110’) - Virtual

Saturday, January 15
7:00pm: Sin La Habana (Centerpiece) WRT

Sunday, January 16
1:00pm: Persian Lessons (127’) WRT
4:00pm: The Will to See (92’) WRT
7:00pm: Persian Lessons (127’) WRT
*Wet Dog (103’) - Virtual

Monday, January 17 (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)
1:00pm: A Kaddish for Bernie Madoff (75’) WRT
4:00pm: Sin la Habana (95’) WRT
7:00pm: A Kaddish for Bernie Madoff (75’) WRT
*With No Land (83’) - Virtual

Tuesday, January 18
4:00pm: Raymonde (79’) WRT
7:00pm: The Last Chapter of A.B. Yehoshua (55’) followed by Grossman (54’) WRT

Wednesday, January 19
1:00pm: Rose (102’) WRT
4:00pm: Raymonde (79’) WRT
7:00pm: Rose (102’) (Closing Film) WRT

Thursday, January 20
*Kaddish (94’) - Virtual

Shorts program
*AA (18’) - Virtual
*Beregovsky #136 (4’) - Virtual
*The Violin Upstairs (3’) - Virtual
*Mazel Tov (25’) - Virtual
*Lily (26’) - Virtual
*Untitled (Tania) (25’) - Virtual

Friday, January 21
*Alone Together (56’) followed by We Were the Others (54’) - Virtual
*Cinema Sabaya (92’) - Virtual
*Tiger Within (98’) - Virtual

Sunday, January 23
*Home (8’) followed by Xueta Island (65’) Virtual

Pearl Bowser Tribute
*Interview with Pearl Bowser (approx. 10’) Virtual
*Borom Sarret (18’) Virtual
*Ten Bob in Winter (10’) Virtual
*Body and Soul (82’) - Virtual

Monday, January 24
The Last Chapter of A.B. Yehoshua (55’) followed by Grossman (54’)
*Shtetlers (80’) - Virtual

Tuesday, January 25
*Labyrinth of Peace (mini-series of 6 x approx. 50’ each) - Virtual

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. Whether visitors come to our Fifth Avenue building or engage online, there is something for everyone to enjoy and learn. The public may visit TheJewishMuseum.org or call 212.423.3200 for more information.

FILM AT LINCOLN CENTER
Film at Lincoln Center is dedicated to supporting the art and elevating the craft of cinema and enriching film culture.
Film at Lincoln Center fulfills its mission through the programming of festivals, series, retrospectives, and new releases; the publication of *Film Comment*; and the presentation of podcasts, talks, special events, and artist initiatives. Since its founding in 1969, this nonprofit organization has brought the celebration of American and international film to the world-renowned Lincoln Center arts complex, making the discussion and appreciation of cinema accessible to a broad audience and ensuring that it remains an essential art form for years to come.

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

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