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JEWISH FILM INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES \$100,000 IN JFI COMPLETION FUND GRANTS

***The Nation's Only Grant Program Specifically Aimed at Completing
Jewish-Content Films***

Recipients include documentary REMEMBER THIS featuring David Strathairn's virtuoso solo performance portraying reluctant WWII hero and Holocaust witness Jan Karski and THE LIEGNITZ PLOT on a former "Seinfeld" writer's mission to return Holocaust era property to its rightful owners

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - Sunday, August 1, 2021 - The Jewish Film Institute (JFI) - the premier curatorial voice for Jewish film and media and a leading arts and culture organization in the Bay Area now celebrating its 41st anniversary - announces the six projects that have been selected for the second cycle of JFI's Completion Grants Program. The announcement was made at the awards ceremony at the conclusion of the 41st San Francisco Jewish Film Festival (SFJFF).

[\[Photos/stills\]](#)

The fund supports the completion of bold films that expand and evolve the Jewish story for audiences everywhere in every genre—narrative, documentary, short, episodic program, and web series. Prior JFI grantees include critically-acclaimed documentaries "A Crime on the Bayou" by Nancy Buirski and "Til Kingdom Come" by Maya Zinshtein. This year JFI is giving away \$100,000 in film completion grants ranging from \$5,000-\$30,000.

"Awarding our grants to these compelling and imaginative projects is a fitting culmination to the 41st San Francisco Jewish Film Festival and our hope is to present the completed films at a future JFI event in the not too distant future," said Jewish Film Institute Program Director Jay Rosenblatt.

Jurors for this year's award included:

- Academy Award-winning producer Jannat Gargi (Summer of Soul, The Reason I Jump, Body Team 12, Knife Skills);

- Two-time Academy Award nominated director and producer, Rick Goldsmith (The Most Dangerous Man in America: Daniel Ellsberg and the Pentagon Papers), Tell the Truth and Run: George Seldes and the American Press, Mind/Game: The Unquiet Journey of Chamique Holdsclaw)
- Ground-breaking director, producer, and documentary theorist, Lisa Leeman (Metamorphosis, One Lucky Elephant, Awake, Crazy Wisdom)
- Multi-award-winning filmmaker Micha Peled (Store Wars: When Wal-Mart Comes to Town, China Blue, and Bitter Seeds)
- And veteran editor and director Veronica Selver (The Word is Out, You Got to Move, KPFA On The Air, and IRMI - a 2020 JFI Completion Grant awardee).

“We know that films have unparalleled power to help us to make sense of our world,” said Lexi Leban, Executive Director of the Jewish Film Institute. “We are excited to see the 2020 inaugural grantees already making an impact. We are honored to be able to provide this much needed resource to help this talented body of filmmakers make it over the finish line.”

“This year’s grantees are startling reflections of the zeitgeist — telling stories that explore white privilege and the courage to speak truth to power, and prodding us to ask who writes the history we learn. While across the board in approach and content, from comedy to animation, they all approach Jewish themes and identity in very contemporary ways,” said new Jewish Film Institute Filmmaker Services Manager Marcia Jarmel.

2021 JEWISH FILM INSTITUTE COMPLETION FUND GRANTEES

REMEMBER THIS

Directors: Jeff Hutchens, Derek Goldman, Producer Eva Anisko

In a virtuoso solo performance, David Strathairn (Nomadland, Good Night, and Good Luck, Lincoln) portrays Jan Karski in a genre-defying true story of a reluctant World War II hero and Holocaust witness.

1341 FRAMES OF LOVE AND WAR

Director: Ran Tal, Producer: Sarig Peker

The Albert and Judith Goldberg Awardee by director Ran Tal and producer Sarig Peker follows Israel’s most celebrated war photographer, Micha Bar-Am, on a re-examination of his life’s work documenting Israel’s history, as his early enthusiasm for Zionism turns into a journey of self-doubt and questioning—seen through through the eye of his remarkable camera lens.

THE LIEGNITZ PLOT

Director: Dan Sturman, Producer: Dylan Nelson

Part mystery story and part comedic heist, “The Liegnitz Plot” is the surprising tale a risk-averse father of four and an original “Seinfeld” writer/producer, who drops everything and flies halfway around the world when he hears about a priceless stamp collection stolen by the Nazis and

buried somewhere in Poland. His tactic: a fake movie shoot. His goal: to return the stolen stamps to their rightful owners, more than 70 years after the Holocaust.

SONS OF DETROIT

Director: Jeremy Xido, Producer: Amanda Burr

The story of a family forged in 1970s Detroit. Two boys - one white, one black - raised as cousins. As the city teeters on the edge of economic collapse, the boys' lives take radically different turns, each shaped by violence, opportunity, and race. Now, more than 20 years later, they each return to the city to reckon with the loss of home and family - and their roles in the destruction.

A REEL WAR:SHALAAL

Director: Karnit Mandel, Producers: Gil Sima, Karnit Mandel

An Israeli archive researcher unexpectedly discovers a box of tapes titled "Loot" and clandestinely copies six tapes—the vestiges of a confiscated Palestinian film archive. Through the perspective of eyewitnesses on both sides, the victors and the vanquished, the real war unpacks a reel war, fought not with firepower but with historical records.

I WILL TAKE YOUR SHADOW

Director: Ayala Shoshana Guy, Producer: Ayala Shoshana Guy, Ehud Guy

An animated experimental autobiography, *I WILL TAKE YOUR SHADOW* creates an intimate impression of the personal journey of director, Ayala Shosana Guy. Loosely historic and mostly imagined, she tracks the losses that tore her grandparents' family apart in the late 1930s and ever since.

In addition to the grantees announcement, JFI also announced the following 41st San Francisco Jewish Film Festival award winners:

JFI Best Documentary Short Award: *The Love and Death of Yosef and Zilli*

Following a long and loving marriage, Yosef and Zilli tell their son Doron of their plan to commit suicide together. As the plan starts to materialize, Doron seeks to preserve his parents memory with his video camera. Directed by Dean Gold.

SF Film Critics Award: *Neighbours*

A tender, humorous and sometimes devastating coming-of-age story depicting an innocent six-year-old boy's perspective on Kurdish life in a 1980s-era Syrian village bordering Turkey. Directed by Mano Khalil.

Finally, the SFJFF Film Movement Award, co-presented with distributor Film Movement, honors achievement in short filmmaking that expresses the Jewish experience in a unique, original, and

meaningful way, or provides a fresh perspective on diversity within the Israeli or Jewish community. SFJFF selected shorts of any genre or style - live action, animation, documentary, etc. - are eligible for the award. The award-winner is announced at the close of that season's San Francisco Jewish Film Festival and receives the option of a non-exclusive, DVD and streaming distribution deal with Film Movement.

Film Movement Award for Narrative Short: **The Binding of Itzik**

An outside of the box story deftly tackling questions of identity and loneliness among others human frailties. This film was also a recipient of the inaugural JFI Completion Grant in 2020. Directed by Anika Benkov.

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About the Jewish Film Institute

The Jewish Film Institute (JFI) is the premier curatorial voice for Jewish film and media and a leading arts and culture organization in the Bay Area. JFI champions bold films and filmmakers that expand and evolve the Jewish story for audiences everywhere. Each year, JFI produces the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival, in four Bay Area counties, the largest Jewish cultural event in Northern California and the first and largest festival of its kind worldwide. The annual festival provides a suite of awards, some with cash prizes, including: the Freedom of Expression Award (recent recipients include Norman Lear, Lee Grant, Kirk Douglas and documentary filmmakers Joe Berlinger and Liz Garbus); Audience Award for Best Narrative and Best Documentary; the Film Movement Award for Best Narrative Short; a juried award for Best Documentary Short (the winner is eligible for the Oscars); and the SF Film Critics Award for best international fiction feature.

Additionally, JFI provides a number of Filmmaker Services to help provide support for emerging and established filmmakers working with Jewish themes and creates a continuum of support for filmmakers at various stages in their careers. This support is provided through JFI's Filmmaker Residency Program which since 2012 as provided office space and support for independent producers (current filmmakers in residence include documentary filmmakers: Nora Mariana, Theo Rigby, Eva Ilona Brzeski, Yoav Potash, and Charene Zalis), and JFI sends two emerging documentary student filmmakers to the Jerusalem Film Workshop, a 6-week program in which students from all over the world make short documentaries that screen at the Jerusalem International Film Festival and the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival. Finally, JFI provides a number of online programs including: the JFI Film Archive, the largest database of Jewish cinema online today, with almost 40 years of curatorial history and more than 1800 films to investigate. This archive is the most comprehensive online resource for Jewish film and media in the world; JFI On Demand provides online access to over 350 films from the archive that can be accessed anytime, anywhere; and a free Monthly Online Shorts program. These films have garnered 2.3 million views since 2009.

Website: www.jfi.org

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