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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2017 SUN VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES FILM LINE-UP
Fest to screen *Bitch, L.A. Times, Machines, Menashe, Walking Out* and more

Sun Valley, Idaho... The 2017 Sun Valley Film Festival (SVFF), presented by Zions Bank, announced its film line-up for the weekend of March 15-19. Now in its sixth year, SVFF offers five days of 30 feature film screenings, including 5 world premieres and featuring 16 documentaries and 14 narrative features.

The festival will open with the World Premiere documentary *Blood Road* starring Sun Valley local Rebecca Rusch on March 15 and close with the documentary *Big Sonia* on March 19. Additional film highlights include *The Hero*, starring Sam Elliott, Laura Prepon, Krysten Ritter and Nick Offerman, *Custody* with Viola Davis, Hayden Panettiere, Ellen Burstyn and Tony Shalhoub, and *Dina*, winner of the "U.S. Grand Jury Prize: Documentary" at Sundance. Additional films, including the slate of selected short films, will be announced on the festival website at a later date. The following is a list of the 30 feature films that will screen at the Festival. The film slate can also be viewed [here](#).

Narrative Fiction

AWOL

Director: Deb Shoval
Writers: Deb Shoval, Karolina Waclawiak
Producers: L.A. Teodosio, Jessica Caldwell, Michel Merkt
Cast: Lola Kirke, Breeda Wool, Dale Soules, Ted Welch

Lola Kirke (*Mistress America*) shines as Joey, an aimless young woman searching for a direction in her small town in rural Pennsylvania. A visit to an Army recruiting office appears to provide her a path but when she meets and falls in love with Rayna (Breeda Wool), a rough and tumble housewife neglected by her long-haul trucker husband, that path diverges in ways that neither woman anticipated. As Joey falls deeper in love, she begins to lose sight of what's most important to her while also becoming blind to the mistakes she is making.

BITCH

Director/Writer: Marianna Palka
Producers: Daniel Noah, Josh C. Waller, Elijah Wood, Mike Moran
Cast: Jason Ritter, Jaime King, Marianna Palka, Brighton Sharbino, Rio Mangini, Kingston Foster, Jason Maybaum

Jill, a lonely, distraught housewife with four unruly children, paces on her dining room table with a belt around her neck, contemplating a desperate end to her wretchedness. Her husband, Bill, focused on his identity as breadwinner and an affair with a lusty co-worker, is as oblivious to Jill's growing terror that she will do something destructive as he is to the panic at his unraveling company. Meanwhile, dogs bark and howl through the night, as one persistent mutt continually stalks the family's yard. When Jill's psyche finally breaks, she takes on a vicious new canine persona.

BRAVE NEW JERSEY

Director: Jody Lambert
Writers: Michael Dowling, Jody Lambert
Producers: Taylor Williams, Jen Roskind
Cast: Tony Hale, Heather Burns, Anna Camp, Dan Bakkedahl, Sam Jaeger, Raymond J. Barry

A comedy about a small town on the night of Orson Welles's legendary, 1938 "War of the Worlds" radio broadcast -- the hoax that terrified millions into believing Martians were invading America. As the citizens of one New Jersey town are faced with what they believe is their last night on Earth, their lives will change forever. An alien invasion movie where the aliens never show up.

BUSTER'S MAL HEART

Director/Writer: Sarah Adina Smith

Producers: Travis Stevens, Jonako Donley

Cast: Rami Malek, Kate Lyn Sheil, DJ Qualls, Toby Huss, Mark Kelly

Buster (Rami Malek) was once Jonah, a hard-working husband and father whose job as the night-shift concierge at a hotel took its toll on his mood and, consequently, his marriage to the sensitive and long-suffering Marty (Kate Lyn Sheil) — until a chance encounter with a conspiracy-obsessed drifter (DJ Qualls) changed the course of their lives forever. As the sad and solitary present-day Buster drifts from house to house and eludes the local sheriff at every turn, we gradually piece together the events that fractured his life and left him alone on top of a snowy mountain, or perhaps in a small rowboat in the middle of a vast ocean — or both.

CAMERA STORE

Director/Writer: Scott Marshall Smith

Producers: Robert Reed Peterson, Nicholas Cafritz

Cast: John Larroquette, John Rhys-Davies, Cheryl Ladd,

It's Christmas Eve morning 1994. Ray LaPine and his loquacious, liquored-up salesman Pinky Steuben are trying to make it through the biggest shopping day of the year, again. Two decades ago, their camera store was a thriving neighborhood business. Today, Bibideaux Photographic has withered into a sad relic of a bygone era. The two men now find themselves trapped while merely keeping the store alive for their wealthy, amoral, and absent boss, Mr. Bibideaux. But there is something different about today. With the arrival of an old friend, Ray gets word of a big change coming to the business he thought he knew so well. Ray must act immediately to save himself from the sinking ship before he loses the little chance he has for a better life. Imprisoned by complacency and denial, these once ambitious, intelligent, and skilled men have de-evolved along with their dead-end jobs and dilapidated store into equal parts comedy, tragedy and futility.

CUSTODY

Director/Writer: James Lapine

Producers: Katie Mustard, Lauren Versel

Cast: Viola Davis, Catalina Moreno, Hayden Panettiere, Ellen Burstyn, Tony Shalhoub

Legal proceedings and intimate family dynamics dovetail in Custody. Starring Viola Davis as an embattled family court judge with a fraught marriage of her own; Hayden Panettiere as a recent law-school grad flung into a custody case; and Catalina Sandino Moreno plays the single mother at the center of the case who risks losing her two children over an ill-timed argument.

DAVE MADE A MAZE

Director: Bill Watterson

Writers: Bill Watterson, Steven Sears

Producers: John Charles Meyer

Cast: Nick Thune, Meera Rohit Kumbhani, James Urbaniak, Adam Busch

Dave, an artist who has yet to complete anything significant in his career, builds a fort in his living room out of pure frustration, only to wind up trapped by the fantastical pitfalls, booby traps, and critters of his own creation. Ignoring his warnings, Dave's girlfriend Annie leads a band of oddball explorers on a rescue mission. Once inside, they find themselves trapped in an ever-changing supernatural world, threatened by booby traps and pursued by a bloodthirsty Minotaur.

With puppetry, stop-motion animation, and in-camera optical illusions, *Dave Made A Maze* re-imagines classic 80s adventure films with a modern comedic edge.

L.A. TIMES

Director/Writer: Michelle Morgan

Cast: Michelle Morgan, Jorma Taccone, Dree Hemingway, Kentucker Audley, Adam Shapiro, Robert Schwartzman, Nora Zehetner, Tate Donovan

Annette (Michelle Morgan) and Elliot (Jorma Taccone) are a mostly happy, moderately neurotic LA couple. Maybe Annette doesn't enjoy game nights or taco stands as much as Elliot does, but no relationship is perfect, right? Rather than embracing their differences, Annette can only compare their relationship to their happy couple friends. This cannot be endorsed by Annette's beautiful but romantically troubled best friend, Baker (Dree Hemingway), who is very well-versed on the bleakness of the LA dating scene. Taking its cues from classic mid-20th Century comedies with a stylish and contemporary spin, *L.A. TIMES* is an irreverent tale of life and the search for elusive love in the 21st Century.

MENASHE

Director: Joshua Z. Weinstein
Producers: Alex Lipschultz, Traci Carlson, Joshua Z. Weinstein, Danny Finkelman, Yoni Brook
Executive Producers: Danelle Eliav, Adam Margules, Chris Columbus, Eleanor Columbus
Cast: Menashe Lustig

Deep in the heart of New York's ultra-orthodox Hasidic Jewish community, Menashe, a kind, hapless grocery store clerk, struggles to make ends meet and responsibly parent his young son, Rieven, following his wife Leah's death. Tradition prohibits Menashe from raising his son alone, so Rieven's strict uncle adopts him, leaving Menashe heartbroken. Meanwhile, though Menashe seems to bungle every challenge in his path, his rabbi grants him one special week with Rieven before Leah's memorial. It's his chance to prove himself a suitable man of faith and fatherhood, and restore respect among his doubters.

NO LIGHT AND NO LAND ANYWHERE

Director/Writer: Amber Sealey
Executive Producer: Miranda July
Cast: Gemma Brockis, Jennifer Lafleur, David Sullivan, Kent Osborne

Grieving her mother's death and her own failing marriage, Lexi (Gemma Brockis) boards a plane from London to Los Angeles in search of the estranged father who abandoned her when she was three-years-old. Based out of a seedy Hollywood motel, she follows a tenuous trail of breadcrumbs, beginning with his aging former in-laws, collecting numbers and addresses in the hopes that one will lead to her father. Along the way, she establishes other unexpected connections: her father's ailing former second wife (Deborah Dopp), her bitter half-sister Tanya (Jennifer Lafleur) and her caregiver girlfriend (Jade Sealey), and two local barflies (David Sullivan and Kent Osborne). A stranger in the City of Angels, Lexi's reckless searching leads to cautious discoveries in this atmospheric and introspective quest. *No Light and No Land Anywhere* is an assured exploration of the ties that bind us to (and unbind us from) the people we love, and to the people we wish would love us back.

THE HERO

Director: Brett Haley
Writers: Brett Haley, Marc Basch
Producers: Houston King, Sam Bisbee, Erik Rommesmo
Cast: Sam Elliott, Laura Prepon, Krysten Ritter, Nick Offerman, Katharine Ross

Lee Hayden (Sam Elliott) is an aging Western icon with a golden voice, but his best performances are decades behind him. He spends his days reliving old glories and smoking too much weed with his former-co-star-turned-dealer, Jeremy (Nick Offerman), until a surprise cancer diagnosis brings his priorities into sharp focus. He soon strikes up an exciting, contentious relationship with stand-up comic Charlotte (Laura Prepon), and he attempts to reconnect with his estranged daughter, Lucy (Krysten Ritter), all while searching for one final role to cement his legacy.

THE ORNITHOLOGIST [*O Ornítólogo*]

Director/Writer: João Pedro Rodrigues
Producers: João Figueiras, Diogo Varela Silva
Cast: Paul Hamy, João Pedro Rodrigues, Xelo Cagiao

Fernando, a solitary ornithologist, is looking for black storks when he is swept away by the rapids. Rescued by a couple of Chinese pilgrims, he plunges into an eerie and dark forest, trying to get back on his track.

WALKING OUT

Directors: Alex Smith, Andrew Smith
Writers: Alex Smith, Andrew Smith
Producers: Brunson Green, Laura Ivey
Director of Photography: Todd McMullen
Cast: Matt Bomer, Josh Wiggins, Bill Pullman

Fourteen-year-old David reluctantly travels from his comfortable Texas home to rural Montana for his annual visit with his brooding, off-the-grid father, Cal, who has planned the boy's first big game hunt. As the pair ascends into the wilderness, Cal tries to connect with David by recounting the story of his own first kill, on his last hunting trip with his now long-dead father. After their trip is disrupted by a chance encounter with a grizzly bear, a wounded Cal realizes they must both rely on David's strength and resilience to survive.

Documentary

BEYOND THE WALL

Directors: Jenny Phillips, Bestor Cram
Producers: Jenny Phillips, Bestor Cram
Editor/Writer: Andrew Kakura

Beyond the Wall follows five formerly incarcerated men who are attempting to rebuild their lives with little support from our criminal justice system. The film highlights one of the most critical issues in the national debate over criminal justice reform—the flood of prisoners returning to our streets and communities, where they face tremendous hardships, challenges and barriers. The characters’ stories revolve around one central figure, a former prisoner named Louie Diaz, who works with each man to help him maintain his sobriety and his freedom. Through compelling and intimate scenes, the film vividly captures their stories.

BIG SONIA

Directors: Leah Warshawski, Todd Soliday
Producer: Leah Warshawski
DP/Editor: Todd Soliday

For years, Sonia Warshawski (91) has been an inspirational public speaker at schools and prisons, where her stories of surviving the Holocaust as a teenager have inspired countless people who once felt their own traumas would leave them broken forever. But when Sonia is served an eviction notice for her iconic tailor shop (in a dead mall), she’s confronted with an agonizing decision: either open up a new shop, or retire. For a woman who admits she stays busy “to keep the dark parts away”, facing retirement dredges up fears she’d long forgot she had, and her horrific past resurfaces. *Big Sonia* explores what it means to be a survivor and how this affects families and generations. Will you let your trauma define you? Or will your past make you stronger?

BLOOD ROAD

Director: Nicholas Schrunk
Producer: Sandra Kuhn
Featuring: Rebecca Rusch, Huyen Nguyen

Red Bull Media House Film *Blood Road* follows the journey of ultra endurance mountain bike athlete Rebecca Rusch and her Vietnamese riding partner, Huyen Nguyen, as they pedal 1,200 arduous miles along the infamous Ho Chi Minh Trail through the dense jungles of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Their Goal: to reach the newly discovered crash site and final resting place of Rebecca’s father, a U.S. Air Force pilot shot down over Laos some 40 years earlier. Along the way, both women push their bodies to the limit while learning more about each other’s culture, the historic ‘Blood Road’ they’re pedaling, how the Vietnam War shaped each of their lives in different ways, and, ultimately, discovering more about themselves.

* WORLD PREMIERE

CHARLIE VS GOLIATH

Director: Reed Lindsay
Producers: Reed Lindsay, Philip Landrum, Ronica Reddick, Anthony Weldon
Composers: Adam Robl, Shawn Sutta

Former priest Charlie Hardy is 75 years old and has no money or political experience. But none of that dissuades this 21st-century Don Quixote from running for the US Senate in his home state of Wyoming. Charlie’s courage to run a principled campaign against money in politics attracts a ragtag group of young volunteers determined to challenge the status quo. With particular relevance in this cynical era of US politics, *Charlie vs Goliath* is a story about the power of hope even when all seems lost and the importance of optimism no matter how bleak the circumstances.

DINA

Directors: Dan Sickles, Antonio Santini
Producers: Dan Sickles, Antonio Santini
Featuring: Dina Buno, Scott Levin

Dina, an outspoken and eccentric 49-year-old in suburban Philadelphia, invites her fiancé Scott, a Walmart door greeter, to move in with her. Having grown up neurologically diverse in a world blind to the value of their experience, the two are head-over-heels for one another, but shacking up poses a new challenge. Scott freezes when it comes to physical intimacy, and Dina, a *Kardashians* fanatic, wants nothing more than to share with Scott all she’s learned about sensual desire from books, TV shows, and her previous marriage. Her increasingly creative forays to draw Scott close keep hitting roadblocks—exposing anxieties, insecurities, and communication snafus while they strive to reconcile their conflicting approaches to romance and intimacy.

FINDING OSCAR

Director: Ryan Suffern

Producers: Ryan Suffer, Frank Marshall
Executive Producer: Steven Spielberg
Writer: Mark Monroe

Finding Oscar is a feature-length documentary about the search for two little boys who offer the only living evidence that ties the Guatemalan government to the devastating Dos Erres Massacre. In a country built on impunity, it will take this dedicated team—from a forensic anthropologist to a young Guatemalan prosecutor—more than thirty years to uncover the truth and find justice.

MACHINES

Director: Rahul Jain
Producers: Rahul Jain, Thanassis Karathanos, Iikka Vehkalahti
Cinematographer: Rodrigo Trejo Villanueva
Sound Design: Susmit "Bob" Nath

With rare access to the guarded world of sweatshops, Rahul Jain brings us into one of the thousands of textile mills in heavily industrialized Sachin, India. To the rhythmic churning of machines, his anatomical exploration follows the flow of fabric through the labyrinthine factory as it's carted around; spooled and unspooled; and passed through dye presses, baths, and sundry machines—ultimately headed to couture stores a world apart. But the dim and claustrophobic mill, with its chaotic patchwork of cords and pipes, is also home to human toil.

NALEDI: A BABY ELEPHANT'S TALE

Directors: Ben Bowie, Geoff Luck
Producers: Hilary Sparrow, Emre Izat
Cinematography: Bob Poole

Naledi tells the true story of a baby elephant born into a rescue camp in the Botswana wilderness. When she's suddenly orphaned at one month, the keepers and scientist looking after the herd become tireless surrogate mothers to keep her alive. Camp scientist Mike Chase knows the stakes. He has launched the most ambitious census ever of African elephants across the continent; a last ditch effort to help them survive. Now, he must race to defend an entire species while struggling to save a single life.

NAT GEO WILD'S ANIMAL MOMS: TODDLERS

Produced for Nat Geo WILD by Oxford Scientific Films
Oxford Scientific Film Series Producer and Director: Rob Neil
Executive Producers: Caroline Hawkins, Alice Keens-Soper

From a cheetah putting her babies in the naughty corner to a sheep comforting her crying lamb, *Animal Moms: Toddlers* explores the surprisingly human ways in which animal mothers raise their young. Featuring a mix of science, fascinating stories and heartwarming moments, *Animal Moms* reveals that animals can be as dedicated to their young, both physically and emotionally, as we are.

* WORLD PREMIERE

NAT GEO WILD'S WALKING WITH GIRAFFES

Produced for Nat Geo WILD by Iniosante
Iniosante Producer: Catherine Lane

Walking with Giraffes examines the decline of wild giraffes and its implications in our rapidly changing world. Featuring unprecedented footage, the film follows top scientists, wildlife conservationists and anti-poachers from Africa, Europe and America to shed light on the giraffe's struggle, celebrate what makes them so unique, and discover hope in their tangled relationship with humanity.

* WORLD PREMIERE

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC'S PARCHED: MONEY FLOWS

Directed by Jed Rothstein
Jigsaw Executive Producers: Alex Gibney, Stacey Offman, Lynne Kirby, Erica Sashin
National Geographic Channel Executive Producers: Tim Pastore, Kevin Tao Mohs

Many people know about the disaster in Flint, Michigan, where thousands were poisoned by government negligence. What they do not know is that this tragedy is part of a larger, much lesser known story that began in Detroit. When the financial crisis hit in 2008, fast-rising water fees resulted in thousands of residents without access to water in their homes, and precipitated Flint's disastrous decision to draw water from the Flint River. This episode explores an alarming trend in the water sector, where Wall Street banks control municipalities, ultimately holding the everyday American's water supply in their grip.

* WORLD PREMIERE

THE HAPPY FILM

Directors: Ben Nabors, Stefan Sagmeister, Hillman Curtis

Featuring: Stefan Sagmeister

Austrian designer Stefan Sagmeister is doing well. He lives in New York, the city of his dreams, and he has success in his work, designing album covers for the Rolling Stones, Jay-Z and the Talking Heads. But in the back of his mind he suspects there must be something more. He decides to turn himself into a design project. Can he redesign his personality to become a better person? Is it possible to train his mind to get happier? He pursues 3 controlled experiments of meditation, therapy, and drugs, grading himself along the way. But real life creeps in and confounds the process: art, sex, love, and death prove impossible to disentangle. His unique designs and painfully personal experiences mark a journey that travels closer to himself than ever intended.

THE LAVENDER SCARE

Director/Producer: Josh Howard

Associate Director: Jill Landes

Associate Producers: Barbara Pierce, Bruce Shaw

With the United States gripped in the panic of the Cold War, President Dwight D. Eisenhower deems homosexuals to be “security risks” and issues an executive order directing all agencies of the government to fire any employees – military or civilian – who are discovered to be gay or lesbian. Tens of thousands lose their jobs. But this little-known witch hunt, which continues for four decades, has an unintended effect: it thrusts an unlikely hero into the forefront of what would become the modern LGBT rights movement.

THE TENTH STEP

Director: Gerry Moffatt

Producers: Pia Saengswang Moffatt, Gerry Moffatt

Editors: Gerry Moffatt, Pia Saengswang Moffatt, Mark Oliver

World-renowned Himalayan expedition leader Gerry Moffatt embarks on a 4,000-mile solo motorcycle adventure across the Himalayas for his 50th birthday, intent on exploring changes he’s seen over 30 years of guiding. As challenges and tragedies unfold, his adventure unexpectedly reveals that the biggest changes over the past 30 years were inside him. Inspired to finally revisit a river that almost killed him 20 years ago, Moffatt finds gratitude and closure in the crucible of one of the most dangerous whitewater canyons on the planet. *The Tenth Step* is an inspiring journey through self-discovery and recovery - set amidst a fascinating backdrop of adventure travel history.

* WORLD PREMIERE

TROPHY

Director: Shaul Schwarz

Producers: Lauren Haber, Julia Nottingham

Cinematographers: Shaul Schwarz, Christina Clusiau

Writer: Christina Clusiau

Endangered African species like elephants, rhinos and lions march closer to extinction each year. Their devastating decline is fueled in part by a global desire to consume these majestic animals. *Trophy* investigates the powerhouse industries of big-game hunting, breeding and wildlife conservation. Through the eyes of impassioned individuals who drive these industries – from a Texas-based trophy hunter to the world’s largest private rhino breeder in South Africa – the film grapples with the consequences of imposing economic value on animals. What are the implications of treating animals as commodities? Do breeding, farming and hunting offer some of the few remaining options to conserve our endangered animals? *Trophy* will leave you debating what is right, what is wrong and what is necessary in order to save the great species of the world.

UNTAMED WITH FILIPE DEANDRADE

Produced for Nat Geo WILD by Comfort Theory

Comfort Theory DP & Presenter: Filipe DeAndrade

Comfort Theory Producer: McKenzie Barney

Comfort Theory Director/Editor: Brian Moghari

Nat Geo WILD Executive Producer: Meghan Cassin

When wildlife Filmmaker Filipe DeAndrade won Nat Geo WILD’s “Wild to Inspire” short film competition in 2015, he never dreamed that the opportunity would lead to his own wildlife series. Now that dream is a reality with Nat Geo WILD’s new digital series, *Untamed with Filipe DeAndrade*. Follow Filipe and his two best friends as they travel the United States in search of the most diverse, iconic and unexpected animal species this country has to offer. *Untamed* demonstrates that

the wildlife in Americans' very own backyards rivals anything else in the natural world. Each episode captures an epic wildlife encounter in the U.S. Fans can keep up with DeAndrade and his crew through their Instagram accounts @filipe_deandrade and @thecomforttheory and by using #WildUntamed, as well as Nat Geo WILD's Facebook page, as they chronicle their adventures on the road.

WHEN WAR COMES HOME

Director/Producer: Michael W. King

Executive Producers: Debra Coleman Hyde, Jennifer G. Harris

Co-Executive Producers: Duncan L. Niederauer, Ed Fouche

In Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Michael King's *When War Comes Home*, three soldiers suffering from post-traumatic stress (PTS) and traumatic brain injury (TBI) face the toughest battle of their lives – trying to find a way to readjust to life with their families and build a healthy future out of a present that is wracked by pain, stress and loss.

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About the 2017 Sun Valley Film Festival

The Sixth Annual Sun Valley Film Festival, presented by Zions Bank, will run March 15-19, 2017, and will feature a curated slate of more than 60 cutting-edge films and TV premieres, engaging Talks with top industry insiders, fabulous parties and panels, a Screenwriters Lab led by award-winning writers – host Charles Randolph and judge Chris Moore – and the spectacular SVFF/Tito's Handmade Vodka Awards Bash. The combination of cutting-edge programming and intimate insider access in a fun, relaxed atmosphere is bringing Sun Valley Film Festival to the forefront of boutique festivals. This coming spring, filmmakers from around the world will bring their vision to the Sun Valley Film Festival, and movie lovers are invited to watch it come into focus.

For Sun Valley Film Festival details and tickets, visit: www.sunvalleyfilmfestival.org.

Get Festival updates on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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