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Media Contacts: PMG 323.337.9042

Henry Eshelman/Mark Rabinowitz/Alexa Oliphant

heshelman@platformgrp.com; mark@platformgrp.com; alexa@platformgrp.com

First Annual MINT International Film Festival Announces Competition Titles, Main Slate

Films Feature: Diane Lane, Helena Bonham Carter, Logan Lerman, Gérard Depardieu, Sam Upton, Mark Boone Junior, Jared Abrahamson, Kate Vernon, Kerry Condon, Cassi Thomson, Laila Ali, Rory Culkin, Brian Dennehy, David Harbour, Mary Riitano, Jenna Ciralli and more.

Event Runs September 14-16 In Billings, MT and Includes Panels, Parties, and Networking Opportunities

Billings, MT (August 16, 2018) – The First Annual Montana International Film Festival today announced its main slate of over 55 films, panels and events from September 14 – 16 in Billings, MT.

The inaugural festival will see six narrative and eight documentary features competing for \$15,000 in cash and in-kind prizes, including the first-ever MINT Spirit Award, as well as six juried awards: Best Female Director, Best Narrative Feature, Best Narrative Short Film, Best Documentary Feature Film, Best Documentary Short Film and the Made In Montana award.

MINT will feature nearly 60 films, submitted from over 40 countries. “We’re excited to have had the caliber of submissions that we received, especially for a first-year festival,” said Executive Director Brian Murnion. “Making the selection was a rewarding challenge.”, Programming Director, Pete Tolton added “It forms an amazing foundation for both our audience and to help build our goals and reputation for the future.” MINT is working to become an Oscar®-qualifying festival by 2019 for Feature and Short Narratives and is organizing a film market for the 2019 festival season with select film distributors. Also, in 2019, MINT will be launching the MINT Film Institute to offer film education in Eastern Montana. Between the 2018 and 2019 fests, MINT will present regular screenings of noteworthy films and visits by directors and talent.

MINT was born from filmmakers and artists endeavoring to enrich global and local film communities. MINT is a conduit for filmmakers to grow, expand, and connect with audiences in Billings, MT and beyond. The Billings community is a hard-working,

unpretentious place with a growing film culture. Organizers feel it has been inspiring to watch the local art house scene expand and stabilize into a sustainable community fixture.

The historic Babcock Theater in Billings will host many of the MINT screenings and other programming and is re-emerging as a robust cinema, an effort kindled in part by MINT. Murnion says, “The time seemed right for creating space for the unlikely moments that occur when people get together in the same room—well, rooms—at the same time to witness and engage in great storytelling.” Other theaters include the Art House Cinema, a non-profit, independent cinema and pub in the heart of downtown Billings and the 2905 Montana, a pop-up space transformed for MINT on Montana Avenue in the Historic District of Billings.

The **Narrative Feature** competition includes WE WERE ISLANDS (USA, dir. Amrita Pradhan); HUMAN AFFAIRS (USA, dir. Charlie Birns); THE RED GOODNIGHT (USA, dir. John C. Koch); GUN (USA, dir. Sam Upton); THE SONG OF SWAY LAKE (USA, dir. Ari Gold), and IN THE WAKE OF IRE (USA, dir. Brian Maurer), with the animated feature, SGT. STUBBY – AN AMERICAN HERO (Canada), directed by Richard Lanni and featuring the voice talents of Helena Bonham Carter, Logan Lerman and Gérard Depardieu screens out of competition.

Seven American films comprise the **Feature Documentary competition**: AMERICAN RELAPSE (USA, dir. Pat McGee and Adam Linkenhelt); GENERAL MAGIC (USA, dir. Sarah Kerruish and Matt Maude); RIDING WILD (USA, dir. Aniela Gottwald); THE PUSHOUTS (USA, dir. Katie Galloway and Dawn Valadez); THE BEAVER BELIEVERS (USA, dir. Sarah Koenigsberg); REINVENTING POWER: AMERICA'S RENEWABLE ENERGY BOOM (USA, dir. Tony Valentino), and RODENTS OF UNUSUAL SIZE (USA, dir. Quinn Costello, Chris Metzler and Jeff Springer).

Made in Montana is a first-ever category which presents an opportunity to highlight the growing film community in Montana with several short films being presented, including WILLOW CREEK ROAD (USA) from Francesca Mirabella, a Big Sky Grant recipient, which chronicles the world of Ruth, a lonely ranch hand who unexpectedly assumes the role of mother to two children, set within the landscape of Montana's mountains, plains and vast stretches of rural dirt road.

THE BATTERED WIFE (USA) directed by Jess Portuondo, features narration from Rhiannon Martinez in an adaptation of Russell Rowland's essay of the same name. It focuses on understanding the problems involved with developing more mining sites in locations around Yellowstone National Park. Also featured are Kristen Hester's RAINMAKER (USA), which features a mother struggling with an eating disorder and how it affects her young daughter and ALL MANKIND (USA), directed by Marshall Granger.

This inaugural festival also features the **World Premieres** of one feature THE RED GOODNIGHT and several short films including: MOON RABBIT (Japan), directed by Kae Ho about a young girl's visit to her Japanese relatives and a mysterious family history; THE DEPLORABLE (USA), directed by Christopher Martini, chronicles a Korean War veteran's connection to an artist who wants to draw his portrait, and THE SECOND SESSION (USA), directed by Michael Ward, takes on virtual reality therapy and stressful workplaces.

MINT is proud to feature TRIBAL JUSTICE in the **Indigenous** section, directed by Anne Makepeace and focusing on two Native American judges—Yurok Judge Abby Abinanti and Quechan Judge Claudette White—as they forge innovative justice systems to keep their citizens out of prison, prevent children from being taken from their communities, and stop the school-to-prison pipeline that plagues tribal youth. TRIBAL JUSTICE features vérité footage of the judges’ lives and work while following several cases in and out of their courtrooms. Also screening in the section is the short film MUD from director Shaandiin Tome, which had its world premiere at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival.

Documentary Short presentations include FINDING WATER (Canada, dir. Brendan O’Brien), which follows a team of geoscientists to the heart of the UN’s refugee camp in Kakuma, Kenya, as they work to find new sources of water for the hundreds of thousands of refugees and local Turkana people. The section also features DRAWBACK (USA, dir. Colter Olmstead); SKATING CUBA (dir. Matt Jeffrey); STATE OF CYCLOCROSS (USA, dir. Drew Coleman); INNER TELESCOPE, A SPACE ARTWORK BY EUDARDO KAC (France, dir. Virgile Novarina), and MOKSHA (Nepal, dir. Francesca Weikert and Taylor Killian).

US Short Narrative selections include: SILVERLAKE AFTERNOON (dir. Rebecca Holopter and Michael Osborne); GOLDBLOODED (dir. Tom Botchii Skowronski); WHERE THE WILD THINGS PLAY (dir. Krystle Wright); THE SO-SO YOU DON’T KNOW, EP. 3 (dir. Marlene Rhein) and CARRO (dir. Gustavo Rosa).

The **International Short Narratives** highlight a variety of films including: ALMA BANDIDA (Brazil, dir. Marco Antônio Pereira); #TAGGED (Netherlands, dir. Martjin Winkler); CALAMITY (Belgium, dir. Maxime Feyers and Séverine De Streyker); DIM SUM (UK, dir. Freddie Waters); GUSTAV (Ireland, dir. Denis Fitzpatrick and Ken Williams); GUARD (UK, dir. Johnathan Harden); FOR LIFE (Israel, dir. Leon Livshitz), and DEUX MAINS (France, dir. Michaël Barocas).

Dreyfest Block (Experimental/Music) films include: THE OTHER END OF THE EARTH, narrated by Diane Lane and directed by Jacob W. Madness celebrating culture, destinations and picturesque moments featuring quotes from Nellie Bly, who in 1889, traveled around the world in 72 days – setting a new world record. She did so despite extreme resistance, having been told that only a man could accomplish such a feat. Eleven other films comprising the section are: ICONS (USA, dir. Ronnie Cramer); THE STAINLESS STEALER STEALS THE UNIVERSE (USA, dir. Kathy Kasic); ONIKUMA (Italy, dir. Alessia Cecchet); UNGE FERRARI – HUERTELØS (Norway, dir. Axel Lavin); MOON CHILD (France, dir. Bruno Mazzocchi); NEOSPECTERS (Germany, dir. Johannes Horak); MINI MOGUL MASTERS MUD MENAGERIE (USA, dir. John Akre); THIS IS JACK (USA, dir. Darrett Sanders); UNDER THE WALNUT TREE (USA, dir. Leah Bedrosian Peterson); ORGANUM MATHEMATICUM (USA, dir. Simone Sello); and HIPPO + CRATE – COME TO CONFESS (USA, dir. Wes Urbaniak).

Opening and closing night films, panels and events will be announced shortly.

Passes and individual tickets for MINT go on sale today. Please visit <https://mintfilmfestival.org/> for tickets, passes and all other film festival information.

About the Montana International Film Festival

MINT derives its name from Montana International, and is a 3-day film festival located in Billings, Montana. MINT is organized by filmmakers for filmmakers. MINT's driven purpose is the festival experience by collaborating with industry professionals to bring new ideas and strategy to redefine what a world-class festival can be. MINT's mission is to connect people through film from around the world. With a focus on curating a film program that showcases films pushing creative, technical or social boundaries, MINT connects filmmakers with distributors, offers prizes, grants and funding for filmmakers to create new films. MINT promotes educational programs in Yellowstone County for high school students, special needs students, and low-income students.

For film press kits, images, graphics, clips or anything else visit:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/iqkck3w1neuxaci/AADgs5EAg9fIERMxmGl40xl9a?dl=0>

Additional press resources here:

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