



The Boston Jewish Film Festival
1001 Watertown St., West Newton, MA 02465
Contact: Sara L. Rubin, Executive Director
Tel: 617-244-9899 x 209
Fax: 617-244-9894
srubin@bjff.org,
www.bjff.org

For immediate release

**FESTIVAL SHOWCASES ISRAELI FILMS
EXPLORES THE INTERNATIONAL “BUZZ”**

*Israeli Films Winning Worldwide Film Festival Awards
2007 Boston Jewish Film Festival*

NEWTON, Massachusetts – September 28, 2007 – Opening November 1 and continuing through November 11, the 19th annual Boston Jewish Film Festival showcases the latest in Israeli films. Come see the films that have been creating the “buzz” and winning awards throughout all the major film festivals, from Cannes to Berlin, and from Sundance to Tribeca and Toronto. The Boston Jewish Film Festival presents the most innovative films from Israel and around the world on Jewish themes. Films are accentuated by panel discussions; visits by directors, actors, and subjects; and musical events.

The Festival is New England’s largest Jewish cultural event, with last year’s attendance at 12,500 people. This critically acclaimed Festival features 40 independently produced films, shown in 8 locations, and reflects the work of film artists from 12 countries, spoken in 12 languages. Highlights include three world premieres, three North American premieres, one U.S. premiere, and 14 New England premieres. The Festival presents nearly 30 film artists, noted speakers, and panelists from around the world, not to mention a live stand-up comedy act.

The Festival program explores what it means to be Jewish – in the U.S., Israel, and around the world. Highlights for 2007, in addition to Israeli films, include films that reflect the strengths of local New England filmmakers. This year’s Festival also takes several novel looks at sports, notably soccer and boxing.

“Come and enjoy the newly emergent levels of sophistication in writing, themes and technology that we see in this year’s Israeli films,” said Sara L. Rubin, Executive Director. “Our Festival showcases work from one of the many film schools throughout Israel. We explore the ‘it’ factor that makes Israeli cinema so stubbornly and astonishingly unique.”

Opening, Closing and Mid-Fest Events

On October 30, the Festival celebrates its opening gala fundraiser: the first U.S. screening of *Sixty Six* at the AMC Boston Common, followed by a buffet dinner at the Hyatt Regency Boston. This riotous British coming-of-age comedy stars Helena Bonham Carter and features Stephen Rea. *Sixty Six* will make you laugh

– who knew that on Bernie Rubens' Bar Mitzvah day in the summer of 1966, all of England would be consumed by World Cup Final fever? Author Jonathan Wilson, who attended the early rounds of that World Cup, will be our special guest.

Opening Night, on November 1 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), features *Aviva My Love (Aviva Ahuvati)*, by Shemi Zarhin. The magnificent Asi Levi stars as Aviva, a working-class woman from Tiberias. This warm and richly textured tale is about one woman's struggle to recognize her talent and follow her dream.

The Festival closes on November 11 at the MFA with *The Year My Parents Went on Vacation (O Ano em que Meus Pais Saíram de Férias)*, by Cao Hamburger. In 1970, World Cup soccer fever gripped Brazil. So did a repressive military regime. This comic drama features a soccer-mad 12-year-old boy who comes under the care of an elderly Jewish man when his parents "go on vacation" – a euphemism for going into hiding.

Our Mid-Fest Event takes place November 7 at the Coolidge Corner Theatre, with Rachel Talbot's *Making Trouble*. This irresistible documentary, produced by Brookline's Jewish Women's Archive, profiles six great female comic entertainers. See what it means to be Jewish, female and funny – especially when comedian Cory Kahaney performs stand-up.

Panel Discussions on Israeli Films

On November 4 at the Coolidge Corner Theatre, our panel discussion is *Spotlight on Israeli Film*. A group of distinguished and lively Israeli filmmakers and educators, moderated by our Artistic Director Kaj Wilson, debates why Israeli films have roared into the limelight.

On November 11 at the MFA, our panel discussion *Jewish Utopias* offers a spirited review of the dreams, realities and futuristic visions of Jewish utopias in the 20th century, from Zionist kibbutzim to workers cooperatives. We'll look to the future to see what these visions mean for the 21st century.

Media Opportunities

Preview screeners are available for most films. Photos are available for download; contact the Festival office for user name and password. Interviews with visiting artists can be arranged.

Festival Locations, Tickets, Sponsors

Primary venues are the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA); the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (new for 2007); the Coolidge Corner Theatre in Brookline, and the West Newton Cinema. Screenings also take place at AMC Framingham 16 (October 23 and 25), Hollywood Hits Premiere Theatre in Danvers, Showcase Cinemas Randolph, and the Arlington Capitol Theatre (November 13 and 15).

On October 3, the Festival's website, www.bjff.org, goes live and tickets can be purchased through <http://ticketweb.com> or 1-866-468-7619, as well as through each location's box office, for that venue's shows.

Passes are available, including the ReelPass, a three-film pass for viewers in their 20s and 30s; the Friends Pass, which gives admission to all events at a deep discount; and Weekday Pass for five regularly-priced shows Monday – Thursday.

Tickets for most films are \$10 for general admission; \$9 for seniors, students, BJFF, MFA, CCT, and WGBH members. Discount tickets for groups of 20 or more are available at \$7 per person by contacting the Festival office at 617-244-9899x208 or sbursky@bjff.org prior to October 19. For more information, or to request a mailed brochure, contact the Festival office at 617-244-9899x200 or info@bjff.org

The Festival sponsors are the Consulate General of Israel to New England, Newbridge on the Charles, and Tofias PC. Other sponsors include Boston University, Emerson College, JDate, Northeastern University, and Stella Artois. Media sponsors include WGBH, *The Jewish Advocate* and National Public Radio station WBUR, and Air France is the official Festival airline. The Festival is grateful for the continued support of Combined Jewish Philanthropies and its Boston-Haifa Connection as well as the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

About The Boston Jewish Film Festival

The Boston Jewish Film Festival presents the best contemporary films from around the world on Jewish themes at its annual November Festival and throughout the year. Through features, shorts, documentaries, and conversations with visiting artists, the Festival explores Jewish identity, the current Jewish experience, and the richness of Jewish culture in relation to a diverse modern world. The Boston Jewish Film Festival, Inc. is a 501(c)3, not-for-profit arts organization.