



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION FILM FESTIVAL (UNAFF) CELEBRATES 17 YEARS OF GROUNDBREAKING DOCUMENTARIES WITH 70 FILMS FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE**

*7 WORLD PREMIERES AND 16 U.S. PREMIERES TO BE SCREENED OCTOBER 16-26 WITH THE THEME OF "BRIDGING THE GAP"*

PALO ALTO, CA (August 4, 2014) The United Nations Association Film Festival (UNAFF) is delighted to announce its program for the 17th year. Established in 1998 to honor the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UNAFF stands out as one of the most reputable film festivals in the US, exclusively dedicated to documentary filmmaking. Throughout the years, UNAFF has earned the respect of audiences and filmmakers alike for its courageous independence and integrity. In addition to providing advance outlets for films, many of which have gone on to win major awards and accolades including Academy Awards, UNAFF prides itself in creating a community forum for discovery and dialogue about different cultures, issues and solutions.

UNAFF's mission has expanded to broad, year round programs that augment its reach. In addition to the annual film festival, UNAFF organizes panel discussions, initiates programs that engage children, students, seniors, veterans, hosts a traveling festival which keeps the films alive well beyond their initial festival showings and opens its doors to documentary film students and researchers.

This year, as part of the ongoing celebration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we have chosen the theme BRIDGING THE GAP as well as the UDHR article 25 "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family". The UN has always been about overcoming chasms between: North and South, developed and undeveloped, educated and uneducated, those with water, food, healthcare and other means, and those without, men and women, races and religions, cultures and lifestyles. While we are experiencing many of these widening gaps here in the US as well, we felt that it would be timely to survey what filmmakers from around the globe have to say on these topics and paint a larger

picture, so we can glean what is specific, and what is universal about these differences and what we should do to overcome them.

In the eleven days of UNAFF 2014, we will present current themes from the streets of Syria, Afghanistan, India, Iraq, Pakistan, Iran, China, Morocco, Rwanda, US and other countries. Additional topics will include a new perspective on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the slums of the world, the global waste crisis, women at the center of the drive for social change, teens placed in solitary confinement and photography on the front-lines of modern day slavery.

From October 16-26, the films will be screened in various Bay Area locations: Palo Alto, Stanford University, East Palo Alto and San Francisco. The Festival opens on Thursday, October 16 in Palo Alto with four films: MARIA OF MANY (USA) at 7:00pm; JESUS WAS A COMMIE (USA) at 7:10pm; KING'S POINT (USA) at 7:30pm; TRASHED (China/Indonesia/Lebanon/Turkey/UK/USA) at 8:10pm. The films will be preceded by opening words from the Mayor of Palo Alto, Nancy Shepard with the Proclamation for the 17<sup>th</sup> UNAFF. All four films will be screened at the historic Aquarius Theatre in Palo Alto.

MARIA OF MANY (USA), directed by Alexandra Liveris. After being mistreated as a part-time hire, Mexican immigrant María finds her voice, a community, and dignity within the San Francisco Women's Collective—an all women worker-run group that provides cleaning jobs in exchange for activism on behalf of the rights of domestic laborers.

JESUS WAS A COMMIE (USA), directed by the Hollywood star Matthew Modine and produced by Terence Ziegler. Did Jesus speak against economic inequalities, or was he a capitalist who taught about rewards based on ability and achievement? This avant-garde story follows “John Doe” as he examines history and science and whether Jesus might have been a utopian communist.

KING'S POINT (USA), directed by Sari Gilman. In the Academy Nominated documentary about five seniors living in a retirement resort in King's Point, Florida. During the 1970s and 1980s, thousands of New York's primarily Jewish senior citizens migrated to King's Point, a retirement community in Florida. Lured by blue skies, sunshine and the promise of richer social lives, they bought paradise for a mere \$1500 down payment.

TRASHED (China/Indonesia/Lebanon/Turkey/UK/USA), directed by Candida Brady, follows Academy Award-winner Jeremy Irons on a world tour as he discovers the pressing issues surrounding waste and sustainability. Vast landscapes in China are covered in tons of rubbish. The wide waters of the Ciliwung River in Indonesia are now barely visible under a never-ending tide of plastic. Children swim among leaking bags; mothers wash in the sewage-filled supply.

The Festival's 7 WORLD premieres include:

A Civil Remedy (USA)  
Dry Season (USA)  
Growing Home (Syria/USA)  
Libya, the Migrant Trap (France/Libya)  
A People without a Land (Israel/Palestine/USA)  
To Kill a Sparrow (Afghanistan)  
When You Can't See the Film (China/USA)

16 documentaries will have their U.S. premieres in the Festival including:

Alumbrones (Brazil/Cuba/USA)  
Barefoot(Mexico)  
Bastards (Morocco/UK)  
Dance Up from the Street (Rwanda/South Africa)  
Generation Z: Child Soldiers of the Zetas (Mexico/ USA)  
The Gold Spinners (Estonia)  
In The Wake of Stalin (France/Russia)  
It's Up To You (Norway)  
Killing Her is a Ticket to Paradise (Yemen)  
JFK: A President Betrayed (Austria/Germany/Russia/USA)  
The Last Battle (Kenya/UK)  
The Pad Piper (Japan/India)  
Pakistan's Hidden Shame (Pakistan/UK)  
Red Lines (Syria/USA)  
Slums: Cities of Tomorrow (Brazil/Canada/India/Nairobi)  
The Wild Years (Ethiopia/Spain)

UNAFF is committed not only to presenting films, but also creating spaces where audience members can engage in ongoing dialogue about the subjects at hand. Seven FREE panel discussions will take place during the course of the Festival covering climate change, the impact of social media and arts, how dance can transcend barriers of language and race, immigration and children, hate crime and LGBT issues, women poverty and inequality, interracial marriage and tolerance, human trafficking and modern slavery, scientific studies on the effect of meditation on the brain, philanthropy and social change and the passion for producing human rights documentaries.

**TRAFFICKING, RAPE, AND MODERN SLAVERY**

Monday, October 20 at 9:00PM

Stanford University: School of Education, CERAS Building

**FEAR AND COMPASSION – GENDER, RACE AND RELIGION**

Tuesday, October 21 at 5:30PM

Stanford University: Freeman Spogli Institute for International Study

### THE FACES OF ALTRUISM

Wednesday, October 22 at 5:30PM

East Palo Alto: Eastside College Preparatory School

### THE DESTRUCTIONS OF CULTURES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Wednesday, October 22 at 9:40PM

San Francisco: Ninth Street Independent Film Center

### LIBERTY AND INEQUALITY

Wednesday, October 22 at 9:00PM

Stanford University: School of Education, CERAS Building

### THE STIGMA OF DEPRESSION

Thursday, October 23 at 9:20PM

Stanford University: Stanford Medical School (Li Ka Shing Center Building)

### DIALOGUE THROUGH ARTS AND CULTURE

Friday, October 24 at 5:50PM

Palo Alto: Palo Alto High School's Media Arts Center

On October 26 the closing night film will be *A PEOPLE WITHOUT A LAND* (Israel/Palestine/USA) directed by Eliyahu Ungar-Sargon. For decades, the prevailing wisdom has been that the solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would come in the form of a two-state solution. Typically, this is formulated as an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and the establishment of a Palestinian state there and in the Gaza Strip. Unfortunately, with half a million Israeli settlers living throughout the West Bank and millions of Palestinian refugees demanding to return to their homes in Israel, the two-state solution no longer seems practical.

The film will be followed by an Awards Ceremony and Closing Night party sponsored by Garden Court Hotel.

For the full program, press material, photos and other details visit [www.unaff.org](http://www.unaff.org)

*The award winning UNAFF (the United Nations Association Film Festival) held annually in October at Stanford, Palo Alto, East Palo Alto and San Francisco, now in its 17th year has grown to be one of the oldest and most respected documentary film festivals in the United States. UNAFF was originally conceived to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was founded by Stanford educator and film critic Jasmina Bojic with the participation of the Stanford Film Society and the UNA Midpeninsula Chapter.*

*In 2014 the ICFT (International Council for Film, Television and Audiovisual Communication of UNESCO) presented the UNESCO Fellini Medal to Jasmina Bojic, Founder and Executive Director of UNAFF, in recognition of her exceptional contribution in promoting the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights through the art of documentary film.*