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**HOLMDEL FILMMAKER
SELECTED FOR GARDEN STATE FILM FESTIVAL**

Asbury Park, N.J. February 26, 2024 – **New Jersey’s Premier Independent Film Festival** is celebrating its 22nd Anniversary **March 21 – 24**. The internationally recognized **Garden State Film Festival** (GSFF) celebrates the independent film genre by bringing a carefully curated and enriching selection of original works from locally produced filmmakers as well as from around the world. “The upcoming 2024 Festival returns to experience **200 films from over 14 countries over four days in 8 venues** hosting parties, professional panels, events, special honors and more,” says Lauren Concar Sheehy, the festival’s Executive Director.

The Garden State Film Festival offers several categories for films and filmmakers of all kinds. Among the selection include feature length and short films, documentaries, comedies, children’s, thrillers, pilots, student films and “**Home-Grown**” **films shot in NJ**. The Garden State Film Festival is pleased to announce that the film ***ROCKIT! The Making of a Musician*** directed by Holmdel resident, **Arielle Borges** will screen at this year’s festival. We hope you come out to cheer on our hometown heroes who have put so much time and talent into these productions.

“We are extremely proud to present ***ROCKIT! The Making of a Musician*** as a part of our 22nd Annual Film Festival, and to share this work with our global audience,” says Lauren Concar Sheehy, the festival’s Executive Director.

ROCKIT! The Making of a Musician will screen on Sunday, March 24th at 9:33am at the Berkeley Kingsley Ballroom.

As explained by filmmaker, **Arielle Borges**, The film is, "**ROCKIT! The Making of a Musician**" is an expository documentary. It is based on a New Jersey Music Academy, for teen musicians, which I attend. Rockit Academy is a 501(C)(3) organization that helps develop, nurture and inspire young musicians to reach their full artistic potential. I’ve attended this academy for several years and have been amazed by the talent, hard work, and professionalism it provides to the students. As a filmmaker I was inspired to make a film which exhibits the extreme talent that is cultivated through this unique program. Through interviews with the founder/director, students and industry supporters and through b-roll footage, I’ve

attempted to exhibit the hard work and passion that leads up to each performance.

You may contact the filmmaker by emailing her at arielleb21@gmail.com

“Since New Jersey has seen record production numbers in recent years, thanks in no small part to Governor Murphy’s competitive financial incentives and the film-friendly environment created here in the state, including the efforts of the **NJ Motion Picture & Television Commission**, we’re seeing an increase in the number of projects that qualify for this category. It is wonderful to see our filmmakers live where they work, and to fulfill their creative dreams,” explains Lauren. “And since New Jersey offers so many different kinds of locations and settings; mountains, beaches, cities, farms and more, we see Jersey appearing in so many different kinds of films.”

The entire GSFF program of this year’s selections will be presented in multiple venues in the **Asbury Park** area, with special events and screenings each night. A full day of screenings will also be presented at **The Cranford Theater** in Cranford, NJ on **Saturday, March 23** starting at noon with the last screening ending at 10:15pm. The film schedule indicates which films have subtitles available for universal-access for the hearing impaired. Free on the website is the GSFF “[Cinema for the Ears](#)” series for those with visual impairment. Over 440 students will be attending our sold out 2024 statewide field trip will be introduced to vocations by **UARTS Karl Staven** as well as New Jersey’s place in the birth of film. You can check the schedule at www.gsff.org for showtimes and to see which films are screening at which venue.

Following 2023’s successful event, this year’s 22nd Anniversary celebration, will include world premieres, celebrities, industry panels, parties, and networking, along with entertainment for all. Catch the not to be missed panel, “**Filmmaking is booming in New Jersey! Find out why that’s good for YOU**”, with special guest speakers on **Saturday, March 23th at 9:30 am in the Berkeley Oceanfront Hotel Johnny and June Room.**

Founder Diane Raver said, “The GSFF is action-packed and there is something for everyone! Come one, come all, it only happens once a year and we don’t want you to miss it.”

Asbury Park highlights include the **famous red-carpet Gala** on **Friday, March 22nd** at the Asbury Lanes. This event includes a cash bar cocktail reception and light fare with industry professionals, red carpet photos and a film screening starring Matthew Modine, John Cleese, Fiona Glascott, Derek Jacobi, Stuart Townsend in the feature drama ***The Martini Shot*** -a filmmaking reference to the last shot of a film shoot. Tickets to this event are limited and are available on the website www.gsff.org/tickets.

Saturday and Sunday offer a schedule packed with films for every viewer, plus industry related workshops. Winners of the festival’s **Movie Music Competition** will have their musical

compositions played before the live screenings. You can also listen to the music winners by clicking the playlist [here](#). All events are open to the public.

This year's winning Feature Length **Screenplay Competition** winner will be announced soon. The reading of the winning screenplay by professional actors, will take place on **Sunday, March 24, 10:00–11:30am at the Berkeley Oceanfront Hotel in the Oval Room on the Second Floor**. The GSFF Screenplay table read is presented by partner [Project Write Now](#). A ticket is required and available at www.gsff.org.

The weekend culminates with the Garden State Film Festival Awards Dinner event on Sunday evening March 24th, where this year's honorees will be recognized, and Festival winners were announced. The GSFF Honorary Chair is **Clinton, NJ Mayor Janice Kovach**. Mayor Kovach embarks on her 4th term as Mayor of Clinton and in 2019, Janice was appointed by Governor Murphy and received Senate confirmation as a member of the NJ Motion Picture and Television Commission where she assists productions navigating local NJ government. The GSFF **Exceptional Women In Film** recipient is **Carla Raij**, who is a Co-Producer and UPM that worked with Steven Spielberg on Amblin Entertainment's *The Fabelman's*, and Educator of the Year recipient **David Dianni** of [FilmAcademy360](#). David is an active member of The Student Television Network, New Jersey Educational Computing Cooperative (NJECC) and presenter at the Producers Guild of America. The **2024 MVP** is photographer **Tom Zapcic** who spends his time covering nonprofit events and shoots for publications such as Industry Magazine, Community, The Journal and more.

The Garden State Film Festival offers a variety of ticket packages. The best deal is the Parkway Pass for \$100. Pass includes Access to Meet the Film Makers event, Gala Reception, All film screenings and Panels. This special combo must be purchased in advance ONLINE ONLY while supplies last. Friday Gala Cocktail Party and Screening for \$55, Saturday Day Pass \$40, Sunday Day Pass \$30. If you want to go to one Film Screening event it is just \$18. Panel Discussion \$18. The Festival concludes with a Black-Tie optional Awards Dinner \$150 which includes cocktails [cash bar] followed by a sit-down dinner, where we acknowledge this year's best with presentations of awards to winning filmmakers and high-profile honorees in attendance. For tickets and more information about this film and other programs, please visit www.gsff.org.

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About the Garden State Film Festival:

A 501-c-3 non-profit organization, created to promote the art of filmmaking on all levels. This globally recognized festival also provides creative arts education programs and creates a forum where local and international independent filmmakers can exhibit their work. Their outreach programs also support the U.S. Military, seniors, children and the underserved. Since 2003, thousands of films have made their public premieres, hundreds of thousands of people from around the world have attended; and the total infusion of cash to local businesses since

inception exceeds \$10 million. It is held in Asbury Park and surrounding area as well as Cranford, NJ.

For more information visit gsff.org or email lauren@gsff.org

For social media updates on the GSFF, please visit the sites below:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GardenStateFilmFestival/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/GardenStateFilm>

Instagram: <http://instagram.com/gardenstatefilmfestival>

Hashtags: #GSFF #gsffasburypark #asburyparkfilm #GSFF2021 #youhavetowatchthis

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Contact: diane@gsff.org or 732.359.6467