



NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON TO LAUNCH IN PERSON WITH OPENING FILMS *WHERE IS ANNE FRANK* AND *OINK* ON FRIDAY MARCH 4; CENTERPIECE SCREENING *TURNING RED* ON FRIDAY MARCH 11 AND CLOSING NIGHT FILM *APOLLO 10 ½: A SPACE AGE CHILDHOOD* ON SATURDAY MARCH 19

NEW YORK, NY (February 10, 2022): The Oscar®-qualifying New York International Children's Film Festival (NYICFF) launches its 25th Anniversary season as North America's largest and most prestigious film festival for young audiences on Friday, March 4th. In addition to commemorating its 25th anniversary, the 2022 Festival will mark its celebratory return to the cinema and in-person events. NYICFF announced today its 2022 Opening, Centerpiece, and Closing Programs. The Festival will kick off on Friday, March 4th at SVA Theatre (333 W. 23rd Street, New York, NY 10011) and run weekends through March 19th. The Festival's annual Shorts for Tots and other programs for ages 5 and under will be offered exclusively online. From thousands of entries submitted from around the globe, the Festival selected approximately 100 feature and short films to screen. Each program is carefully curated for NYICFF's dedicated audience of over 28,000 children, families, educators, filmmakers, cinephiles, and industry professionals.

The Festival will open with Oscar®-nominated director Ari Folman's extraordinary new animated film *Where Is Anne Frank*, which made its debut at the Cannes Film Festival and will now celebrate its East Coast Premiere at NYICFF. A brilliant reimagining of Anne Frank's story, the visually vibrant animated feature crosses time periods and settings, creating a unique take that is both timely and timeless, deeply meaningful, and wholly original. Also screening on Opening Night is the North American Premiere of *Oink*, a warm, witty, and meticulously handcrafted animated feature that marks the Netherlands' first feature-length stop-motion animated film, directed by Mascha Halberstad. Disney and Pixar's *Turning Red*, the debut feature by Oscar® winner Domee Shi (Pixar short *Bao*), will screen on Friday, March 11th as NYICFF's 2022 Centerpiece film. The Festival will close with the East Coast Premiere screening of Richard Linklater's highly anticipated new animated feature film *Apollo 10 ½: A Space Age Childhood* on Saturday, March 19th.

"Our 25th Anniversary lineup is a truly joyous celebration of resilience with filmmakers overcoming the challenges of our times to make fresh, unique, and vibrant new films with meaningful messages for eager young audiences," said Programming Director Maria-Christina Villaseñor. "Ari Folman's *Where Is Anne Frank* is a captivating film to launch the NYICFF 2022 festival, with an imaginative re-envisioning of Frank's diary that connects its core essence to the present, and singularly utilizes animation to make this enduring tale come alive. *Oink* is an unapologetically absurd and amusing story that gently asks us to reflect upon the impact our choices have on the world around us, while also showcasing the uncanny art of fully analogue stop-motion animation. We're also overjoyed to celebrate winning storytelling, expanded diversity in the field, dynamic animation, and a charming

ode to the power of being thirteen with Domee Shi's first feature, *Turning Red*, on the heels of her Oscar[®]-winning short *Bao*. And fittingly, alongside NYICFF's silver anniversary, we close by celebrating an enduring commitment to the artistry of film and a rich examination of childhood, from the stunningly creative mind of seasoned filmmaker Richard Linklater with his brilliant new feature *Apollo 10 ½*," said Villaseñor, who has led NYICFF's dedicated efforts to curate thoughtful, inclusive films for young audiences and each year identifies the highest artistic achievements in new works from emerging filmmakers through to well-established directors across the globe.

For the past 25 years, NYICFF has screened thousands of films that introduce young audiences to complex topics and portray rich, thought-provoking stories from voices historically excluded from mainstream media. NYICFF's curated programs help young people think critically to better understand themselves, others, and the complicated world they live in. As NYICFF embarks on its 25th anniversary, the organization remains steadfast in its commitment to turn the tide and increase diverse representation in children's media, an effort reflected in its Festival programming, Industry Forum, and FilmEd Classroom programs alike.

Following last year's completely virtual event, this year's Festival will bring back in-person events with must-see screenings and filmmaker Q&As from March 4th through March 19th. The Festival's annual Shorts for Tots and other programs for ages 5 and under will be offered exclusively online, ensuring the youngest film fans can watch safely at home. Tickets will be available for members on www.NYICFF.org starting Monday, February 14th, with the General Public on-sale following on Thursday, February 17th.

NYICFF's 2022 film slate celebrates creativity and unlocks vast new possibilities for a new generation eager to be back in person and grasping their futures. Whether NYICFF's cinematic young protagonists are mapping new paths in space, devising exciting new worlds in film, or grappling with the challenges and joys of growing up with all of its unexpected glory, this year's filmmakers expertly harness a range of animation and filmic techniques to tell culturally specific and universally relatable stories of hope.

HIGHLIGHTED FILMS

OPENING NIGHT:

WHERE IS ANNE FRANK

Ari Folman; France, Israel, Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg; Live Action; 2021; 99 min.
East Coast Premiere

One night Kitty, the most famous imaginary friend in history, suddenly materializes as a fully fledged girl from the ink-filled pages of Anne Frank's diary. She doesn't understand where her old friend has gone (or why, for that matter, their former home has become a tourist attraction). Kitty leaves behind her 1940s dress and dons jeans and sneakers, all the better to set out to solve the mystery. Aided by a resourceful pickpocket and befriending a group of young refugees seeking safe homes and community like anyone else, Kitty criss-crosses through time and takes us from the streets of contemporary, colorful Amsterdam through to gray war-era Germany and back. While Anne's now ever-present name has been reverently affixed to bridges and schools and hospitals, Kitty fears her friend's true legacy is being forgotten. An urgent and poignant detective story and anthem for social justice from award-winning filmmaker Ari Folman (*Waltz with Bashir*), *Where Is Anne Frank* is imbued with fantastical animated sequences ('40s era Clark Gable on horseback!) and a modern punk sensibility (complete with glorious Karen O soundtrack) and is an essential history for audiences of all ages.

Ari Folman directed the Oscar[®]-nominated animated documentary film *Waltz with Bashir* and the live-action/animated film *The Congress*.

OINK

Mascha Halberstad; Netherlands, Belgium; Animation; 2022, 73 min.

North American Premiere

Fabulously bespectacled nine-year-old Babs has the perfect life in the Netherlands, with parents who see to it that she has a lovely home and only the healthiest vegetarian meals on her plate. But what she really, really wants is a dog to call her own. So when Babs' grandfather, an American with a curiously rootin' tootin' cowboy accent, suddenly appears on the scene, he just may be the key to her perfect pet. Instead, he finds Oink, a lovable if constantly, er, digesting, pig, whom he gifts to Babs. Yet Babs' mother is less than thrilled and insists that Oink stays only on the condition he passes a rigorous puppy training program. Add to that her grandfather's secret nefarious connection to the Sausage King competition organized by The Society for Meat Products from Fresh Pigs, and *Oink* is full of cheeky humor, porcines behaving badly, and people behaving even worse. It's an uncannily realistic and genius stop-motion charmer that will have you snorting and cheering.

Mascha Halberstad is an acclaimed animator from the Netherlands. Together with Viking Film producer Marleen Slot, Halberstad founded Holy Motion animation studio, in which her debut feature *Knor* was filmed. Her short film *Fox and Hare* previously screened at NYICFF.

CENTERPIECE SCREENING:

TURNING RED

Domee Shi, United States, Animation, 2022, 99 min.

Disney and Pixar's *Turning Red* introduces Mei Lee (voice of Rosalie Chiang), a confident, dorky 13-year-old torn between staying her mother's dutiful daughter and the chaos of adolescence. Her protective, if not slightly overbearing mother, Ming (voice of Sandra Oh), is never far from her daughter—an unfortunate reality for the teenager. And as if changes to her interests, relationships and body weren't enough, whenever she gets too excited (which is practically ALWAYS), she "poofs" into a giant red panda! Directed by Academy Award® winner Domee Shi (Pixar short *Bao*) and produced by Lindsey Collins, *Turning Red* launches on Disney+ on March 11, 2022.

Director Domee Shi helmed Pixar's 2018 Oscar®-winning short *Bao*.

CLOSING NIGHT:

APOLLO 10 ½: A SPACE AGE CHILDHOOD

Richard Linklater, United States, Animation, 2022, 97 min.

East Coast Theatrical Premiere

Apollo 10 ½: A Space Age Childhood tells the story of the first moon landing in the summer of 1969 from two interwoven perspectives – the astronaut and mission control view of the triumphant moment, and through the eyes of a kid growing up in Houston, Texas who has intergalactic dreams of his own. Taking inspiration from Academy Award®-nominated filmmaker Richard Linklater's own life, *Apollo 10 ½: A Space Age Childhood* is a snapshot of American life in the 1960s that is part coming of age, part societal commentary, and part out-of-this-world adventure. The film will release globally on Netflix.

Five-time Academy Award® nominee Richard Linklater's credits include *It's Impossible To Learn to Plow By Reading Books* (1988); *Slacker* (1991); *Dazed and Confused* (1993); *Before Sunrise* (1995); *SubUrbia* (1997); *The Newton Boys* (1998); *Waking Life* (2001); *Tape* (2001); *School of Rock* (2003); *Before Sunset* (2004); *Bad News Bears* (2005); *A Scanner Darkly* (2006); *Fast Food Nation* (2006); *Inning By Inning: A Portrait of a Coach* (2008); *Me and Orson Welles* (2009); *Bernie* (2012); *Up To Speed* (2012, Hulu); *Before Midnight* (2013); *Boyhood* (2014); *Everybody Wants Some!!* (2016); *Last Flag Flying* (2017); and *Where'd You Go, Bernadette* (2019).

Additional programming announcements are forthcoming.

ABOUT NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL

Established in 1997, and celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2022, NYICFF's mission is rooted in the belief of film as a path for young people to understand themselves and others. All programs are designed to celebrate the beauty and power of film, spark the inherent capacity of children to connect with complex, nuanced art, and encourage the creation of intelligent films that represent and celebrate unique, diverse, and historically excluded voices. NYICFF serves children, students, families, educators, filmmakers, and media arts professionals through its three core activities: the annual, Oscar®-qualifying NYC film festival and national touring program; FilmEd, a media arts and literacy program; and Toward an Inclusive Future, an annual industry forum.

New York International Children's Film Festival is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts; public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, with support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature; and public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council. NYICFF is additionally supported by Humanities New York. Funding support for FilmEd Classroom is provided in part by Audible and SONY USA Foundation.

To learn more about NYICFF, visit: www.nyciff.org

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