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CONGREGATION



JEWISH
FILM
FESTIVAL



CALGARY, ALBERTA
NOVEMBER 2-17, 2019

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JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

November 2 - 17, 2019



Welcome to the 19th Annual Beth Tzedec Calgary Jewish Film Festival!

We're proud, one again, to bring you an exciting line-up of outstanding films and special guests. From stirring dramas to thought-provoking documentaries, this year's selection of films will explore a range of themes and take us to destinations as diverse as the Jewish experience itself – from Broadway, Brazil and Austria to Mexico City, Jerusalem and the Canadian Arctic.

We're delighted to have Calgary Jewish Federation join us as co-sponsors of the screening of the moving documentary *Chasing Portraits*, as part of the CJF's community-wide Kristallnacht commemoration. We're thrilled to have filmmaker Elizabeth Rynecki, writer, director and producer of the film, as our special guest that evening. This event is open to the entire community, at no charge.

Another special guest that you won't want to miss is David J. Fishelson, producer of the award-winning film *Golda's Balcony, the Film (2019)*, a cinematic version of the hit Broadway one-woman show starring Tovah Feldshuh. This enthralling film is being presented as this year's "Dr. Martha Cohen Memorial Screening".

This year's "Dr. Ralph Gurevitch Tikkun Olam Screening" will feature the stirring Spanish drama *The Light of Hope*.

We feel honored by the Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta's choice of our film festival, once again, as the venue for their annual Jay Joffe Memorial Program. JHSSA will be co-sponsoring the screening of our Closing Night film *Fiddler: A Miracle of Miracles*, an entertaining and feel-good documentary that goes behind the curtain to explore the enduring legacy of the beloved Broadway musical *Fiddler on the Roof*.

We're extremely pleased to have the Association for German Education in Calgary (AGEC) join us as co-sponsors of the screening of the captivating drama *The Keeper*, a German/British co-production. And we're delighted to have the Rimón Calgary Judaic Needlework Guild join us as co-sponsors of the screening of the inspiring short documentary *Stitchers: Tapestry of Faith*.

As always, we would like to express our deepest thanks to all of our sponsors, without whom this festival would not be possible. It is their generosity, community-mindedness and commitment to Jewish culture that enables us to offer this event to the community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my hard-working committee for all the time and effort they've put into planning this year's festival.

We hope that you'll enjoy the festival, and that this year's selection of exceptional films will move and inspire you, entertain and delight you, enlighten and challenge you!

Harvey Cyngiser



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PICTURE OF HIS LIFE

Israel/USA/Canada 2019

Directors: Yonatan Nir, Dani Menkin

English, Hebrew & Inuit with English subtitles

71 minutes

Documentary

World-famous Israeli-born underwater wildlife stills photographer Amos Nachoum has swam with crocodiles and killer whales, with anacondas and with great white sharks. He has developed a unique approach that puts him face-to-face with his subjects, without any protection. But one major predator has always eluded him: he has always dreamed of swimming underwater with a polar bear and capturing it face-to-face on film. Barely escaping with his life on a previous attempt, he is determined to give it one last shot. The danger is real, perhaps more real than ever, but now, as he nears the end of his career, he knows that this is his last chance to get the picture of a lifetime. Set against the stunning stark landscapes of the Canadian Arctic, and featuring breathtaking underwater cinematography, this enthralling and moving documentary follows Amos on his heartfelt quest. As the journey unfolds, Amos contemplates the series of unspoken events from his past that drove him here, to the end of the world. It has been a long and painful journey, but where others find fear, Amos finds redemption.

Saturday, November 2nd at 7:30 PM



THE KEEPER

UK/Germany 2019

Director: Marcus H. Rosenmuller

English

113 minutes

Drama

When love blossoms between a young Englishwoman and a German PoW in post-war Britain, they must overcome prejudice, public hostility and personal tragedy in this epic drama based on the incredible true story of legendary soccer player Bert Trautmann. Against a backdrop of British post-war protest and prejudice, Trautmann, a German soldier and prisoner of war, secures the position of goalkeeper at Manchester City, and in so doing, becomes a soccer icon. His signing causes outrage to thousands of fans, many of them Jewish. But support comes from an unexpected source: a remarkable open letter to the press from Manchester's communal rabbi, Alexander Altmann, asking for Trautmann to be given a chance. Bert's love for Margaret carries him through and he wins over even his harshest opponents by winning the 1956 FA Cup Final, playing on with a broken neck to secure victory. But fate will soon twist the knife for Bert and Margaret, when their love and loyalty to each other is put to the ultimate test.

Saturday, November 2nd at 9:10 PM



Proudly co-sponsored by
ASSOCIATION FOR GERMAN EDUCATION IN CALGARY



STITCHERS: TAPESTRY OF SPIRIT

Canada 2017

Director: Tassie Notar

English

15 minutes

Short Documentary

This award-winning short documentary chronicles the inspiring journey behind one woman's ambitious project to write a complete Torah - in cross stitch. Launched by Torontonians Temma Gentles, an internationally renowned textile artist, "Torah Stitch by Stitch" invites participants to engage with words of Torah in a collaborative and socially inclusive textile art project aimed at promoting cooperation and understanding. Over 1,500 stitchers of different faiths and cultural backgrounds from 28 countries around the world are each stitching a portion in the hope that the final work, with full text in Hebrew and hundreds of illuminations, will become an inspiring traveling museum exhibit. A number of women from the Rimón Calgary Judaic Needlework Guild have participated in this meaningful artistic legacy project which, when completed, will represent over 150,000 hours of collaborative work.

Winner – Canada Shorts 2018 Award of Merit

Winner – Special Jury Award, Worldfest Houston 2018

Winner – Gold Camera Documentary Award, US International Film & Video Festival

Sunday, November 3rd at 1:00PM

Rimón Calgary
Judaic Needlework Guild



Proudly co-sponsored by
RIMÓN CALGARY JUDAIC NEEDLEWORK GUILD



YOU ONLY DIE TWICE

Israel/Austria 2018

Director: Yair Lev

Hebrew, English, German & Serbo-Croatian with English subtitles

88 minutes

Documentary

At the centre of this incredible but true "detective" story, is a man by the name of Ernst Bechinsky - a man who died in Israel in 1969 - and then again in Austria in 1987. When Israeli filmmaker Yair Lev inadvertently discovers that the identity of his grandfather, Ernst Bechinsky, had – apparently - been stolen during WWII, he sets out to unravel the mystery and uncover the truth about the "other" Ernst Bechinsky – a man who had lived with a Nazi SS family during the war, and later became president of a Jewish community in Austria. Who was this man who took on another man's identity? Why and how did he do it? What dark past did he wish to conceal? Unfolding in surprising and moving ways, the filmmaker's riveting journey takes him from Tel Aviv to Vienna, to Innsbruck and then to Zagreb, revealing a complicated history that leads to an emotionally fraught meeting between third generation descendents of Jews and Nazis.

Winner – Audience Award, Doc Aviv International Film Festival 2018

Winner – Research Award, Doc Aviv International Film Festival 2018

Winner – Research Award, Israeli Documentary Film Forum 2018

Sunday, November 3rd at 1:25 PM



THE UNORTHODOX

Israel 2018

Director: Eliran Malka

Hebrew with English subtitles

93 minutes

Drama

Inspired by real-life events, *The Unorthodox* is a rousing and often humorous underdog story about the improbable beginnings of “Shas”, the first political party in Israel to represent the disenfranchised Sephardic community. When Ya’akov Cohen’s daughter is expelled from a prestigious school for ethnic reasons, he decides to fight back. It’s 1983 and Ya’akov, a printer in Jerusalem, is just a regular guy. He has no money, connections or political experience. But he does have the will and the passion to take action, and a belief that he and other Sephardic Jews should be able to hold their heads up high. Ya’acov enlists the help of two friends, and together they start the first ethnic political group in Jerusalem. Their grassroots campaign is a ragtag operation that doesn’t seem to stand a chance against the establishment, but then again, it’s driven by a deep sense of conviction, humor and a whole lot of rage. Their efforts will ultimately reshape Israeli society in ways that continue to reverberate today.

Nominated – 14 Israeli Academy Awards 2019, including Best Picture, Best Director, Best Screenplay and Best Actor

Sunday, November 3rd at 3:15 PM



THE DR. MARTHA COHEN MEMORIAL SCREENING

GOLDA'S BALCONY, THE FILM (2019)

USA 2019

Director: Scott Schwartz

English

86 minutes

Documentary

Six-time Emmy- and Tony-nominated actress Tovah Feldshuh delivers an enthralling, tour de force performance as Golda Meir (and, stunningly, 44 other characters) in *Golda's Balcony*, a Broadway play that originally opened in 2003, and after more than 500 sold-out performances, became the longest running one-woman show in Broadway history! And now, a rare, multi-camera shoot from the play's original run that was recently unearthed (literally, from a safe) has been assembled into a new and absolutely riveting motion picture. Tracking the rise of Golda Meir from impoverished Russian schoolgirl to Prime Minister of Israel, *Golda's Balcony* offers an intimate look at one of the 20th Century's most iconic figures, transforming her life story into a cinematic event of overwhelming power and inspirational triumph.

Winner – Audience Choice Award at the 2019 Jewish Film Festivals of Los Angeles, Palm Beach, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Charlotte, Pittsburgh, Winnipeg & Dayton

Sunday, November 3rd at 7:00 PM



SPECIAL GUEST:

David J. Fishelson – Producer

Proudly sponsored by

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Beth Tzedec Congregation



THE OTHER STORY

Israel 2018

Director: Avi Nesher

Hebrew with English subtitles

112 minutes

Drama

Set against a backdrop of fraught family dynamics and secular-religious frictions, this poignant and gently humorous drama from renowned Israeli director Avi Nesher unfolds with the tension and intrigue of a juicy thriller. Anat, a strong-willed and rebellious young woman, has suddenly found God. Much to the dismay of her secular family, she has embraced the Orthodox lifestyle, enrolled in a Jerusalem seminary, and is about to marry Shazar, a charismatic musician who was once part of Tel Aviv's wild club scene and has now become a devoted Hasid. Desperate to force Anat to reconsider her radical new path, Anat's divorced parents, along with her grandfather, devise a plot to thwart the upcoming wedding. Meanwhile, her grandfather, a psychologist, is counseling a divorcing couple embroiled in a bitter custody battle over their young son. The paths of both these troubled families will soon become intertwined in startling and unexpected ways. Deftly weaving together the multiple plot lines, *The Other Story* explores the secular-religious divide in present-day Israel, while offering an engaging and thought-provoking reflection on universal themes of identity, belonging, forgiveness and acceptance of "the other".

Saturday, November 9th at 7:00 PM



LEONA

Mexico 2018

Director: Isaac Cherem

Spanish with English subtitles

95 minutes

Drama

A young Jewish woman from Mexico City finds herself torn between her family and a forbidden love in this intimate, insightful and moving drama. 25-year-old Ariela is an independent-minded artist living with her family, among Mexico's close-knit Syrian-Jewish community. When she falls in love with a non-Jewish young man, Ariela is soon faced with the disapproval of her family and rejection by her insular Jewish community, where religious values and traditions run deep. As Ariela's place within her family and community is called into question, she must negotiate the labyrinth of familial pressure, religious precedent, and her own burgeoning sentiment. There are no easy choices to be made, as Ariela struggles with her heart to navigate a path forward, to find her own voice and become her own woman.

Winner – Best Actress, Morelia International Film Festival 2018

Saturday, November 9th at 9:15 PM

Content Advisory: mature themes, sexuality, nudity



KING BIBI: THE LIFE AND PERFORMANCES OF BENJAMIN NETANYAHU

Israel/USA 2018

Director: Dan Shadur

Hebrew & English with English subtitles

87 minutes

Documentary

Benjamin Netanyahu, or “Bibi”, has now been Israel’s longest-serving prime minister. Twenty years before the spectacle of Donald Trump’s presidency emerged, Benjamin Netanyahu already understood the political benefits of creating an adversarial relationship with the media, and communicating directly with the public. This riveting documentary, brilliantly assembled entirely of archival footage from his public appearances over the years, tells the remarkable and controversial story of Benjamin Netanyahu’s ascent to power. Tracking the media-savvy prime minister’s career as he quickly perfected his skills as a master of public speaking and media manipulation, the film chronicles Bibi’s evolution from Israel’s great political hope, to a controversial figure whom some perceive as Israel’s savior, and others – as a cynical politician who will stop at nothing to retain his power.

Nominated – Best feature-length Documentary, Israeli Academy Awards 2019

Sunday, November 10th at 1:00 PM



BACK TO MARACANA

Israel/Brazil/Germany 2018

Director: Jorge Gurvich

Hebrew, Portuguese & English with English subtitles

92 minutes

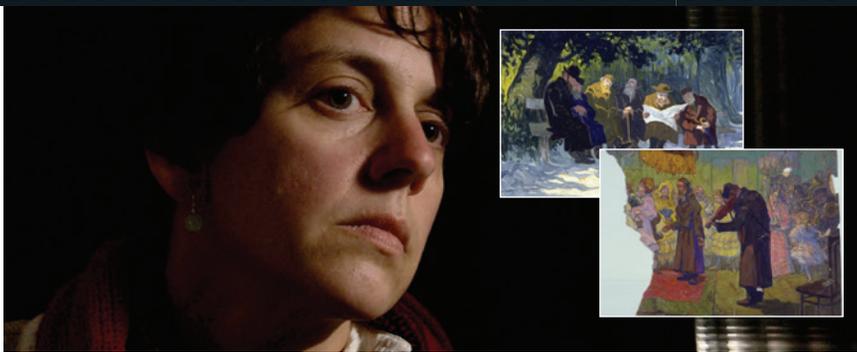
Drama

This heartfelt and humorous inter-generational road trip film follows Roberto, a divorced 40-year-old with a failing business, as he finds himself on an unexpected trip, along with his father and son, from Israel to Brazil for the 2014 World Cup. His Brazilian-born father, a passionate soccer fan, has brought them to cheer on his beloved home team, but Roberto’s spoiled 12-year-old son has no interest in soccer and would rather be anywhere else. Their unplanned trip turns into an eventful journey that changes all of them.

Sunday, November 10th at 2:50 PM



Proudly co-sponsored by
CALGARY JEWISH FEDERATION



CHASING PORTRAITS

USA 2018

Director: Elizabeth Rynecki

English & Polish with English subtitles

78 minutes

Documentary

Moshe Rynecki was a prolific Warsaw-based Jewish artist whose body of work reached close to eight hundred paintings and sculptures before he was killed at Majdanek during the Holocaust. Aware that her family had only managed to save a small fraction of Moshe's works, and that many more pieces might have survived and still be out there somewhere, Elizabeth Rynecki, his great-granddaughter, has been on a decades-long quest to find the lost art. *Chasing Portraits* accompanies Elizabeth as she sets out on an emotional journey to rediscover her great-grandfather's legacy of stunning and evocative paintings depicting the everyday lives of the Polish-Jewish community prior to the war - a veritable historical treasure that offers a rare glimpse into a vibrant and thriving world that was all but erased by the Holocaust. Spanning decades of Elizabeth's life and four generations of her family, this heartfelt and very personal documentary is a deeply moving narrative of the richness of one man's art, the devastation of the Holocaust, and one woman's unexpected path to healing.

Sunday, November 10th at 7:00 PM



SPECIAL GUEST:

Elizabeth Rynecki – Writer, Director & Producer

Screening of the film Chasing Portraits and Special Guest Speaker are open to the entire community, at NO CHARGE, as part of our community-wide Kristallnacht Commemoration.



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THE DR. RALPH GUREVITCH TIKKUN OLAM SCREENING
"Repairing the World"

THE LIGHT OF HOPE

Spain 2018

Director: Silvia Quer

Spanish, Catalan & French with English subtitles

96 minutes

Drama

This stirring Spanish drama is based on the inspiring true story of Elisabeth Eidenbenz, founder of the Mothers of Elne, a maternity home in the south of France on the Spanish border. In the late 1930's and early 1940's, as thousands of refugees flee Franco's regime in Spain and Vichy refugee camps, young Swiss volunteer Elisabeth Eidenbenz arrives in the south of France near Spain to aid those suffering from disease and malnutrition. Appalled by the dire conditions facing pregnant women, and children, Eidenbenz transforms an abandoned old villa into a birth clinic and safe haven for these young mothers, their newborn babies and small children. But when French authorities demand she turn over the Jewish refugees, Eidenbenz must make a decision that could endanger everyone in the maternity. By the end of the war, Elisabeth and her female staff had saved the lives of almost 600 infants. In 2002, Eidenbenz was honored by Yad Vashem as a Righteous Among the Nations.

Saturday, November 16th at 7:00 PM

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THE TOBACCONIST

Austria/Germany 2018

Director: Nikolaus Leytner

German with English subtitles

113 minutes

Drama

A captivating and moving drama about loss of innocence, *The Tobacconist* is based on the international bestselling novel by Robert Seethaler – a tender coming-of-age story about one young man and his friendship with Sigmund Freud during the Nazi occupation of Vienna. Franz, a naïve seventeen-year-old, journeys from his rural home to Vienna to apprentice at a tobacco shop. There he meets Sigmund Freud, an avid cigar smoker and regular customer, and over time, a singular friendship is forged between them. When Franz falls desperately in love with the music-hall dancer Anezka, he seeks advice from the renowned psychoanalyst, who admits that the female sex is as big a mystery to him as it is to Franz. As the political and social climate in Austria dramatically worsens with the Nazis' arrival in Vienna, Franz, Freud, and Anezka are swept into the maelstrom of events. Amid the dark shifts taking hold of the society around him, young Franz will need to decide where he stands.

Saturday, November 16th at 9:00 PM

Content Advisory: mature themes, sexuality, nudity



MY WAR HERO UNCLE

Israel 2018

Director: Shaked Goren

Hebrew with English subtitles

59 minutes

Documentary

Shaked Goren, the film's director, was raised hearing stories about his war-hero uncle, Ami, who was killed at the age of 18 in the 1967 war. Through those stories, Memorial Day ceremonies, and the letters that Ami had sent home during his army service, his uncle Ami was always a present absence for his nephew Shaked. With his aging grandmother's health declining, Shaked applies, on her behalf, to the Defense Ministry for nursing care benefits to which she is entitled because of her status as a bereaved mother of an IDF soldier who "fell in the wars of Israel". His claim is rejected. Their refusal leaves him confused and he sets out to investigate. Fifty years after Ami's death, a shocking truth is unveiled, family secrets are uncovered and Shaked gains the strength to reveal one of his own.

Winner – Van Leer Prize for Best Director, Jerusalem International Film Festival 2018

Nominated – Best Documentary, Israeli Academy Awards 2019

Sunday, November 17th at 1:00 PM



THE RABBI FROM HEZBOLLAH

Israel 2019

Director: Itamar Chen

Hebrew with English subtitles

64 minutes

Documentary

Who would believe that Avraham Sinai, an ultra-Orthodox Jew living in Israel, is Ibrahim Yassin - a Lebanese Shiite Muslim with an inconceivable and turbulent connection to Hezbollah. Born in a small village in Lebanon, he was destined to follow in his father's footsteps as a farmer and shepherd, but fate had something else in store for him. As his life unfolds, he is faced with difficult events that lead him to a point where death becomes his only wish. But just when it seems as if the story is over, a new one begins - an implausible story that sounds like a work of fiction, placing Yassin at the heart of some of the most daring, dangerous and secret operations Israel attempted in Lebanon in the 1980s and '90s. This intriguing documentary sketches an intimate portrait of a man who, through tribulations, circumstance and choice, became one of Israel's top international agents and spies.

Sunday, November 17th at 2:20 PM



GOOD MORNING SON

Israel 2018

Director: Sharon Bar-Ziv

Hebrew with English subtitles

84 minutes

Drama

Omri, a young IDF soldier critically injured during a Gaza military operation, lies comatose in a hospital bed while his anxious parents maintain a bedside vigil - rarely leaving Omri's side, speaking softly to him, praying and watching for any sign of improvement. His loving family, loyal friends from his army unit, doctors and therapists all rally around Omri in the battle to bring him back to life, while struggling to temper expectations and cope with the strain of the situation. During the long wait, there will be moments of heartbreak, humor and hope. Portrayed with a sense of intimacy and authenticity, this tender and beautifully rendered drama is a life-affirming and moving story of human resilience, family and the power of love.

Sunday, November 17th at 3:45 PM



FIDDLER: A MIRACLE OF MIRACLES

USA 2019
Director: Max Lewkowicz
English
92 minutes

Documentary

More than 50 years after its Broadway debut, *Fiddler on the Roof* continues to be one of the most beloved musicals of all time – since its 1964 opening, it has been performed somewhere in the world every single day. What lies behind its enduring appeal? Why has the tale of Tevye the milkman and his five daughters resonated across cultures and captured the imaginations of audiences around the globe – from Japan and Thailand to Johannesburg and Mexico City? Seeking to answer these questions, this illuminating and highly entertaining documentary delves into *Fiddler's* creative roots in 1960's New York - a time of social upheaval and change - when "traditional" social conventions were being challenged by the rise of the civil rights and women's liberation movements. Alongside performance clips and rare archival footage, the film offers a wealth of fascinating anecdotes, insightful commentary and interviews with the musical's creators, original cast members, scholars, and more as it explores the universal – and still relevant – themes at the heart of the musical. Overflowing with the sweeping soundtrack of the show's memorable and beloved musical score, this joyful feel-good documentary is a loving tribute to a timeless cultural gem that will leave you humming the tunes long after the lights come up.

Sunday, November 17th at 7:15 PM



Proudly co-sponsored by the
JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA



THE JAY JOFFE MEMORIAL PROGRAM OF THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN ALBERTA

The Jay Joffe Memorial Program was launched by the Jewish Historical Society of Southern Alberta (JHSSA) to honour the memory of its long-serving founding president, Jay Joffe (1931 - 2006).

This program is dedicated to promoting and featuring Jewish culture and history.

The directors of JHSSA are pleased to continue their support of the Beth Tzedec Jewish Film Festival through the co-sponsorship of *Fiddler: A Miracle of Miracles*. Jay Joffe was passionate about bringing Jewish history and culture to the widest possible audience. He was proud of the many contributions Jews have in so many fields and hoped to increase awareness of these accomplishments. This year's program highlights the global impact of the beloved musical based on one of Jewish literature's best know stories. It examines the history of the production and its relevance today.





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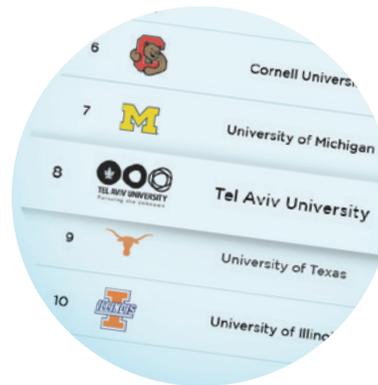
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Canadian Hadassah-WIZO Calgary Centre is proud to participate in The Beth Tzedec Calgary Jewish Film Festival. We are proud of our members, donors and friends for their continued support for over 100 years of our various programs and services for *Children, Healthcare and Women in Israel and Canada.*

At this year's Film Festival, kindly drop off a toy, book, movie pass, or gift certificate for our 17th Annual Toy Drive for Calgary's most needy boys and girls between the ages of baby to 16.

For further information visit chw.ca/calgary or call the Calgary Centre at 403-253-4612.



CHILDREN



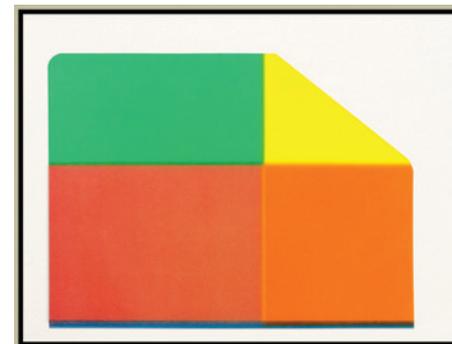
HEALTHCARE



WOMEN



Geoffrey Hunter



Jonathan Forrest



Cathy Daley



Yechel Gagnon

Evelyn Brader-Frank



Newzones.com

730 Eleventh Avenue Southwest
Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2R 0E4
403-266-1972
info@newzones.com



Original Art By
LILY ROSENBERG

"Transformation Painting"
14" x 14", acrylic collage

Artwork will be on display at the Festival.
lilyrosenberg613@gmail.com • www.lilyrosenberg.com

ADMISSION TO THE FESTIVAL

A PASS FOR THE ENTIRE FESTIVAL

Includes all films, guest speakers and receptions

\$75 per person prior to November 2nd
(\$85 at the door)

SINGLE SESSION

One full afternoon or evening of films

\$20 per person

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

\$20 for the entire festival

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Free

All films will be screened at the
BETH TZEDEC CONGREGATION
1325 Glenmore Trail S.W.

Festival Passes may be purchased at the synagogue office.

Please call:
403-255-8688

or visit us online at:
www.CalgaryJewishFilmFestival.com



FESTIVAL AT A GLANCE

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2

7:30 pm Picture of His Life
9:10 pm The Keeper

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4

1:00 pm Stitches: Tapestry of Spirit
1:25 pm You Only Die Twice
3:15 pm The Unorthodox
7:00 pm Golda, The Film (2019)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9

7:00 pm The Other Story
9:15 pm Leona

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10

1:00 pm King Bibi
2:50 pm Back To Maracana
7:00 pm Chasing Portraits

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

7:00 pm The Light of Hope
9:00 pm The Tobacconist

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17

1:00 pm My War Hero Uncle
2:20 pm The Rabbi From Hezbollah
3:45 pm Good Morning Son
7:15 pm Fiddler: A Miracle of Miracles



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Avi Amir, Chairman



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