

First Night - November 28th, 2021:



THE BROKEN CANDLE (short film)

Felix Kiner / USA

English

9 minutes

Synopsis: "The Broken Candle" tells the heartwarming tale of Nira, a broken Hanukkah candle who becomes the shamash ("lead candle" of the Hanukkah) on the last night of the Festival of Lights. Featuring the voice talents of Vanessa Marshall, Tiffany Haddish, Tom Kenny, Eugenio Derbez, Mark Feuerstein, Dave Boat, and Keili Lefkowitz.



UNRAVELING (documentary short)

Stacey Ravel Abarbanel & Jeff Swimmer / USA

English

38 minutes

Synopsis: "Did Pancho Villa really try to kill my grandfather? And if so, why?" In unraveling this mystery, filmmaker Stacey Ravel Abarbanel delves into memory, history, and contemporary life in the border town of Columbus, New Mexico, famed for being raided in 1916 by Villa's army during the Mexican Revolution. While scholars have long debated why Villa attacked the village, one rumor persists: he was angry at Sam Ravel—a Jewish immigrant and local merchant—over an arms deal gone wrong. This probing-yet-delightful journey unfolds during the annual raid memorials, including the Cabalgata Binacional Villista, a magnificent cavalcade of equestrians who journey through Mexico for weeks in Villa's hoof steps to join American riders on the border, turning the memory of a bloodbath into a festival of friendship. Broadening the mainstream narratives of both Jewish immigration and the borderlands, UnRaveling reveals an unusual personal history while examining broader sagas about the border region—geopolitics, family, immigration, commerce, and culture, then and now.



XUETA ISLAND (feature documentary) | [WORLD PREMIERE!](#)

- Includes discussion with Producer / Narrator / Subject Dani Rotstein

Dani Rotstein, Felipe Wolokita and Ofer Laszewicki / Spain, USA

Spanish, English (with English subtitles)

63 minutes

Synopsis: When the Inquisition decreed the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, there were no Jews officially left on the Mediterranean island of Mallorca. In 1435, the entire Jewish community underwent a massive baptism in order to save them from further persecution. But many converts - or "crypto Jews" - preserved the law of Moses. They lived secretly until 1691, when the "Autos de Fe" saw them publicly burned at the stake in front of the larger Mallorquin society. Marginalized and subjugated, the trauma their descendants, the chuetas, suffered was silenced by an ironclad social taboo, fostered even by themselves, eager to permanently forget the dark past.

Dani Rotstein, an American Jew and producer by profession, landed in Mallorca and discovered a robust legacy not yet widely known by the rest of the world. Fascinated by his continuous discoveries, he began to offer guided tours through the alleys of the Jewish quarters of Palma. Rotstein understood that this was not only about legends of the past: it is a story in current development. This documentary interrogates fundamental questions of human nature such as historical memory; identity and belonging; generational clashes; and the preservation of tradition.

Second Night - November 29th, 2021:



KISS ME KOSHER (feature film)

- Includes discussion with director Shirel Peleg, producer Christine Guenther, and stars Moran Rosenblatt, Luise Wolfram, Rivka Michaeli and John Carroll Lynch

Shirel Peleg / Israel, Germany

Starring Moran Rosenblatt, Luise Wolfram, Rivka Michaeli and John Carroll Lynch

English, German, Hebrew, Arabic (with English subtitles)

101 minutes

Synopsis: A subversive love story between clashing cultures and families, Kiss Me Kosher is a romantic misadventure crossing all borders. When two generations of Israeli women fall for a German woman and a Palestinian man, chaos follows. What happens with lovers who don't fit but do belong together?

Third Night - November 30th, 2021:



THE TATTOOED TORAH (short film)

- Includes discussion with star Ed Asner, director Marc Bennett, producers Melinda Goldrich and Stephen Smith of USC Shoah Foundation

Marc Bennett / USA

Narrated by Ed Asner

English

21 minutes

Synopsis: Over the last three decades, the beloved children's book by Marvell Ginsburg, *The Tattooed Torah*, has been a powerful resource for Holocaust education. The book recounts the true story of the rescue and restoration of a small Torah from Brno, Czechoslovakia, and teaches the Holocaust not only as a period of destruction but also as an opportunity for redemption.

Narrated by Ed Asner, the film brings illustrator Martin Lemelman's rich artwork to life, and will allow this story to reach a much broader audience all over the world. Now more than ever, it is essential to continue teaching the lessons of the Holocaust to young children in an impactful and palatable way, so that such horrific events are never forgotten and never repeated.



MISH MISH (feature documentary)

- Includes discussion with director Tal Michael and more

Tal Michael / Israel, France

English, Hebrew, French (with English subtitles)

74 minutes

Synopsis: In a basement near Paris a treasure-trove of Egyptian animated films has been found. The films show the work of the Arab world's pioneers in this genre, the Frenkel brothers: three exceptional young film-makers, creators of Mish-Mish Effendi, the Mickey Mouse of the entire region, which disappeared from Egyptian screens when the State of Israel was created.

Through their animated images, we uncover the history of the Frenkel family, marked by exile, a trauma being repeated today. "Bukra fil Mish-Mish" is a common Arabic expression referring to something which will never happen: "if pigs could fly". At the same time the extraordinary discovery of these films reveals a forgotten era gone forever, an Arab-Jewish golden age when the two communities could create things together. Not only has it disappeared, it has been erased from the pages of history.

Fourth Night - December 1st, 2021:



LATTER DAY JEW (feature documentary)

Aliza Rosen / USA

English

81 minutes

Synopsis: LATTER DAY JEW is a documentary feature film following H. Alan Scott, a gay, former Mormon / converted Jew / cancer survivor / writer-comedian, as he finds his spiritual path and prepares for his Bar Mitzvah. The film will cover his Mormon upbringing, eventual conversion to Judaism at age 31 and preparation for his Bar Mitzvah in the Fall of 2017 at age 35. But before he can become a man in the eyes of Jewish law, he wants to figure out what it means to be the best Jew he can be and even figure out what that means. LATTER DAY JEW chronicles his hilarious and often moving journey, and in the process shows that spiritual and cultural identity is deeper than just what we are born into or what our families believed and taught us.

Fifth Night: - December 2nd, 2021:



LEONA (feature film)

- Includes discussion with director Isaac Cherem and star/co-writer Naian González Norvind

Isaac Cherem / Mexico

Spanish (with English subtitles)

95 minutes

Synopsis: Leona tells the story of a young Jewish woman from Mexico City who finds herself torn between her family and her forbidden love. Ripe with all the drama and interpersonal conflicts of a Jane Austen novel, Ariela (Naian González Norvind, "New Order") navigates the labyrinth of familial pressure, religious precedent, and her own burgeoning independence as she struggles with her heart to find the right path.

Sixth Night - December 3rd, 2021:



THE CROSSING (feature film)

- Includes discussion with director Johanne Helgeland

Johanne Helgeland / Norway

Norwegian (with English subtitles)

90 minutes

Synopsis: THE CROSSING tells the story of the adventurous 10-year-old Gerda and her brother Otto, whose parents are in the Norwegian resistance movement during the Second World War. One day, just before Christmas in 1942, Gerda and Otto's parents are arrested, leaving the siblings on their own. Following the arrest, they discover two Jewish children, Sarah and Daniel, hidden in a secret cupboard in their basement at home. It is now up to Gerda and Otto to finish what their parents started: To help Sarah and Daniel flee from the Nazis cross the border to neutral Sweden and reunite them with their parents. THE CROSSING is a film about the confidence, uncompromising loyalty and great courage you can find in even the youngest of children.

Seventh Night - December 4th, 2021:



A STARRY SKY ABOVE THE ROMAN GHETTO (feature film)

- Includes discussion TBD

Giulio Base / Italy

Italian (with English subtitles)

100 minutes

Synopsis: Past and present meet upon the discovery of an old, mysterious photograph that will end up tying together Christian and Jewish students in search of the truth. Trying to unravel the mystery behind the portrait, the boys embark on a journey through a night of horror that cannot be forgotten: the raid of the Roman Ghetto. Retracing these painful events will give them the chance to take a collective stance towards personal, existential, and cultural commitment.

Eighth Night - December 5th, 2021:



HERE WE ARE (feature film)
- Includes discussion with director Nir Bergman

Nir Bergman / Israel
Hebrew (with English subtitles)
92 minutes

Synopsis: Aharon has devoted his life to raising his son Uri. They live together in a gentle routine, away from the real world. But Uri is autistic, and now as a young adult it might be time for him to live in a specialized home. While on their way to the institution, Aharon decides to run away with his son and hits the road, knowing that Uri is not ready for this separation. Or is it, in fact, his father who is not ready?