



For Immediate Release...

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2021 AJFF STREAMS TO AT-HOME AUDIENCES, PLUS EXPANDED Q&A, DRIVE-IN, VIRTUAL LOBBY, AND OTHER EXPERIENCES

Atlanta Jewish Film Festival Announces Full Lineup and Reimagines Annual Event for a Virtual World

ATLANTA: The Atlanta Jewish Film Festival (AJFF), one of the most influential Jewish film festivals in the world, continues to cement its status as an innovator. Since the COVID-19 pandemic struck, AJFF has pivoted to all-virtual programming and reimagined the entirety of its landmark festival, which is set to take place Feb. 17-28. In addition to watching movies from the comfort and convenience of home via a Virtual Cinema, audiences will also enjoy three nights of drive-in movies at Mercedes-Benz Stadium and The Home Depot Backyard, plus in-depth and expanded Q&A conversations, a “Virtual Lobby” to connect with other moviegoers, a curated and custom “Festival-In-A-Box” for Opening Night ticketholders, along with other special experiences.

AJFF has also announced its full 2021 lineup, providing audiences a robust selection of diverse and high-caliber films for which the festival has become known. This year, more than 500 films were submitted for consideration, with **38** feature and **16** short films selected – including three World premieres, eight North American premieres, three U.S. premieres, and one world premiere local film. The film selection covers a range of genres, with everything from introspective biographies like *Howie Mandel: But, Enough About Me*; topical themes like *On Broadway* or *Atlanta: The City Too Busy to Wait*; side-splitting comedies like *Shiva Baby*; LGBTQ+ stories like *Kiss Me Kosher*; powerful dramas like *Asia*; and so much more. The full lineup and schedule are available at AJFF.org.

“In a year of firsts and unprecedented challenges, AJFF has worked tirelessly to reimagine the annual festival in a way that preserves the most cherished qualities of this annual celebration of community and the cinematic arts,” said AJFF Executive Director Kenny Blank. “Though the experience itself will be undeniably different, the power of these films to connect and inspire us is more deeply felt and appreciated than ever. Our hybrid edition embraces all of the opportunities that virtual affords us, while continuing our commitment to bring audiences *‘together through film’* in new ways.”

The 2021 AJFF will feature a number of new offerings and experiences, including:

Extensive At-Home Viewing Options:

For a full 12 days, AJFF’s diverse lineup of narrative and documentary shorts and features are accessible to viewers from the comfort of home. Powered by CineSend, AJFF’s Virtual Cinema will allow audiences to access the best in Jewish cinema from a smart TV, home theater, tablet, or mobile device. Requiring only a single ticket per film for each household, viewers will have a flexible 48-hour window to watch festival films at their convenience. Each film has a limited capacity of views, so audiences are encouraged to purchase their tickets in advance. General admission for virtual screenings is \$16/household (\$14 early bird pricing), and for special events which include Opening and Closing Night, admission is \$36/household.

Drive-In Screenings at The Home Depot Backyard at Mercedes-Benz Stadium:

Against the spectacular backdrop of Mercedes-Benz Stadium, AJFF invites audiences to enjoy the throwback fun of drive-in movies at the 11-acre greenspace of The Home Depot Backyard. Accommodating over 200 vehicles nightly for this premium experience, the AJFF drive-in includes three special evenings of film on Feb. 18, Feb. 20, and Feb. 21. Kicking off with AJFF’s Young Professionals Night, followed by two campy, kitschy Hollywood classics: Mel Brooks’s sci-fi spoof *Spaceballs* and the musical comedy *Little Shop of Horrors*, this exciting venue provides guests the ability to watch on the big screen while remaining safely socially distant. Each drive-in pass can be purchased for \$40 and accounts for parking for

one car, regardless of how many people are in the vehicle, so bring the whole family along! Food trucks will be on site serving delicious bites, to enjoy from the comfort of your vehicle.

Expanded Q&A Offerings Featuring Filmmakers, Actors + Experts:

AJFF has long been recognized for fostering dialogue and building bridges of understanding between audiences of different faiths and backgrounds. This commitment continues in 2021, with an expanded program of virtual Q&A conversations. A record number of filmmakers, actors and other guest speakers will partake in Q&A programs, recorded especially for AJFF audiences and accessible to watch online throughout the 12 days of the festival.

Virtual Lobby Over Lunch:

AJFF is also launching a “Virtual Lobby,” featuring a series of lunchtime Zoom sessions for the community of moviegoers to join a facilitated discussion, taking a deeper dive into five conversation-starting films of the festival.

Festival-in-a-Box:

To enhance the at-home viewing experience, ticket holders to Opening Night will receive a specially curated “Festival-In-A-Box.” Full of fun comfort items to help create a perfect, stay-at-home viewing experience, the box is full of tasty and cozy surprises.

Tickets go on sale on Jan. 26 for members and on Feb. 10 for the general public.

For media interested in speaking with Kenny Blank or any of the AJFF leadership, please email Katie Cline at info@360media.net. Stay connected via social media on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#). A variety of high-resolution photos are available upon request.

About Atlanta Jewish Film Festival: AJFF’s mission is to entertain and engage diverse audiences with film through a Jewish lens while simultaneously challenging conventional perspectives on culture and history, life in Israel, and the work of Jewish artists – particularly where these stories intersect with other communities. While traditional in-person programs are on hiatus during the COVID-19 pandemic, AJFF has launched a series of virtual initiatives to serve its audience, including the “In Conversation” podcast and webinar series, a 20th-anniversary “Playback” bracket-style film competition, and the “AJFF Recommends” online catalog of Jewish cinema. This year, the 21st annual festival will feature a hybrid experience spanning 12 days, from Feb. 17-28. AJFF has reimagined the annual festival to combine at-home virtual screenings with select drive-in movies, expanded conversations with filmmakers and special guests, as well as other components. In addition to its core programs, AJFF continues to work alongside its many partner organizations to support the greater Atlanta community while raising the bar for film festivals worldwide. Founded by the Atlanta Regional Office of American Jewish Committee (AJC) in 2000, AJFF has operated as an independent non-profit arts organization since 2014, while continuing an active partnership with its founding agency.

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ABOUT THE DRIVE-IN FILMS:



Drive-In Experience at Mercedes-Benz Stadium at The Home Depot Backyard.

Feb. 18, 2021 @ 7:30 p.m.

Young Professionals Night Screening TBA

Feb. 20, 2021 @ 7 p. m.

Spaceballs

USA • 1987 • 96 mins • English

Mel Brooks spoofs Star Wars and silly sci-fi conventions, in this outrageous outer space saga with an all-star cast. Set “in a galaxy very, very, very, very far away,” rogue space jockey Bill Pullman and John Candy’s half-dog sidekick Barf aim to stop Rick Moranis’s evil despot Dark Helmet and rescue spoiled Princess Daphne Zuniga. Along for the ride: snarky robot Dot Matrix and molten mobster Pizza the Hutt, voiced by comic greats Joan Rivers and Dom DeLuise. Brooks himself plays juicy dual roles: Spaceball President Skroob, and, most memorably, wise old imp Yogurt who extols the mystical mantra, “May the Schwartz be with you.” The grab-bag collection of self-referential jokes, bawdy innuendo, and cheesy sight gags, once chided as lowbrow by critics, has since earned cult status.

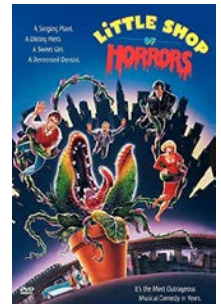


Feb. 21, 2021 @ 7 p.m.

Little Shop of Horrors

USA • 1986 • 94 mins • English

An electrifying fusion of retro camp, horror and showstopper tunes, this devious monster hit about a killer plant from outer space continues to devour generations of fans. When Seymour, a down-on-his-luck nebbishy florist with a hopeless crush on ditzy co-worker Audrey, discovers an exotic plant, fame and fortune follow. The catch: the alien flora has an insatiable appetite for human flesh and world domination. Rick Moranis and Ellen Greene star as amorous outcasts, with Vincent Gardenia as Skid Row shop owner Mr. Mushnik, Four Tops crooner Levi Stubbs voicing the potty-mouth plant, and inspired cameos by Steve Martin and Bill Murray. With jaw-dropping special effects, puppeteer-director Frank Oz delivers the darkly delicious comedic fun.



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