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CROSSROADS FILM FESTIVAL SHOWCASES MISSISSIPPI FILMS AND MORE

JACKSON, Miss. – In cooperation with the Crossroads Film Society, the Mississippi Film Office, a division of the Mississippi Development Authority, presents the Second Annual Crossroads Film Festival in Jackson from April 5 through 8. The festival will feature premieres, short films, documentaries and seminars. Films will be screened at United Artists Parkway Cinema, Mississippi Museum of Art and the Alamo Theater during the festival. Many of the filmmakers will be on hand to share their experiences.

“We were fortunate to have most of the filmmakers with us to discuss their films,” said Nina Parikh, Associate Manager of the Film Office, of last year’s festival. “And each one of them commented on how friendly everyone was . . . they loved being here.” With over 750 festivals worldwide, the emphasis on hospitality and heritage sets Crossroads apart.

Prior to the festival’s kick-off, a special, one-time screening of *The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg* will be presented at the United Artists Parkway Theatre on April 2. The Jackson premiere of this acclaimed documentary about America’s first Jewish baseball star is made possible by a partnership of the Crossroads Film Festival, the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience and the Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame. The presentation will be followed by an appearance by baseball great Boo Ferriss and a discussion of the film’s portrayal of the social climate in the United States during the 1940s and 1950s.

World premieres will include *Sins Of Omission*, a film by Mississippi natives Ron Rodenmeyer and Art McAlpin, along with the Southern premiere of Tag Purvis' *Red Dirt*, filmed in his hometown of Meridian, the first area public screening of Avery Crouse's *Cries Of Silence*, which was filmed along the Mississippi Gulf Coast in 1994, and the Mississippi premiere of *Traveling Miles*, a documentary following the creation of Jackson native Cassandra Wilson's tribute album to Miles Davis.

In addition, a special screening of *Harem Scarem*, starring Elvis Presley, will honor co-star Mary Ann Mobley who will be in attendance. A focus on blues documentaries by Robert Mugge ("King of American Film Music") and panel discussions at the Alamo Theatre will highlight Saturday's activities.

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Attendees will be treated to rare screenings of award-winning films from around the world. These films will compete for awards in the following categories: Best Feature, Best Short Film, Best Documentary and Best Student Film. Several workshops will be a part of the four-day festival, including “Fundraising for Film and Video” and “Using Macintosh iMovie Software”. Also, an animator from the Walt Disney Company will facilitate a discussion about computer and conventional animation.

Hal and Mal’s will be the location of two social events associated with the festival – performances by musician-actor-filmmaker-philosopher-icon Webb Wilder on Friday night and Chris Thomas King, one of the stars of *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*, on Saturday night.

Ward Emling, Director of the Film Office, stated, “The Crossroads Film Festival is an important part of the Mississippi film program on many levels: It provides a forum for filmmakers, showcases the work of the cinema-generation of the Mississippi storytelling legacy, brings dozens of filmmakers to Mississippi, and presents a world of independent films to a new audience.”

For more information about the festival, call 601-359-3347.

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