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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Best of Oxford Film Fest State Tour Kicks off March 10

OXFORD, MS: The 15th annual Oxford Film Festival finished up in February and will now travel the state from Water Valley to Oxford to Ocean Springs to Vicksburg to Meridian and Jackson with some of the highlighted films and Hoka award winners. This year's festival featured over 200 films and the Best of Tour has two different film blocks being shown across the state.

“After another successful festival with many great films, we are happy to announce that the show isn't over yet,” Executive Director Melanie Addington said. “If you were unable to attend the festival this year, then don't miss out on these key dates in March that are set to feature some of the winning and unique Mississippi films. We are so excited to be working with our venue partners throughout the state, especially the Mary C. O'Keefe Cultural Center for our fourth year in a row and the second year with The Strand Theatre in Vicksburg and adding on the Mississippi Museum of Art and Amelia and Temple Theatre this year.”

Depending on the venue, two film blocks will be screened. Ocean Springs and Jackson will play both film blocks for a mini-film festival. A panel discussion with the filmmakers will follow the first block screening in Jackson.

The Best of Tour will travel from Water Valley at Amelia on March 10 to Oxford at the Powerhouse on March 15 then down to Ocean Springs at the Mary C on March 16, Strand Theater in Vicksburg on March 18 and over to the Temple Theater in Meridian on March 19. A short break will be held before the closing event at Mississippi Museum of Art in Jackson on March 31 where a panel discussion will be held with both sets of film blocks screening.

Block one consists of:

Hoka winner *Manna* by King Woman and directed by Vincent Jude Chaney. Led by the hypnotic and breathy vocal dramatics of Kristina Esfandiari, the Hoka winning music video unveils the profoundly crafted opus of brooding, ethereal doom-rock.

Hoka Winner for Fest Forward, Mark C. Smith's, *Two Balloons*, animates two travelers return to a place crossed by stars and clouds where love is at the beginning of everything.

Highlighted Mississippi feature, *Mississippi Madam*, is Timothy Givens and Mark K. Brockway's feature film, which chronicles the life of Nellie Jackson, an African-American

woman born into poverty in Possum Corner, Miss., who travels north to Natchez in 1902 and opens a brothel she ran for more than 60 years with full knowledge of police and Natchez officials until a fiery end one hot July night in 1990.

Block one films screen on Friday, March 16 at Mary C. O’Keefe Cultural Center (1600 Government St. | Ocean Springs) at 6 pm and Sunday, March 18 at The Strand Theatre (717 Clay St. | Vicksburg) at 5 pm. This block also plays at the Mississippi Museum of Art (380 South Lamar Street, Jackson) at 9:45 am with a panel discussion following with the filmmakers.

Block two consists of:

Directed by Nathan Willis, *Cowgirl Up*, tells the story of a cowgirl from Mississippi who pursues her lifelong dream to be the first African-American woman in the National Finals Rodeo.

Peter Byck’s, *One Hundred Thousand Beating Hearts*, shares the story of a pioneering farmer in rural Georgia of his journey from industrialized beef production to sustainable, humane agricultural and environmental stewardship.

Directed by Rex Jones, *Flag Flap Over Mississippi* is a filmic conversation between all sides of the state flag that hopes to generate more civil discussion in the public atmosphere

Truth Rises, directed by Kelly Buckholdt, is a short film about a brother and sister who talk about getting in trouble after mistakes are made in the family business. The film won the Pat Rasberry Emerging Filmmaker Award.

Jeff Dennis’, *The Process: The Way of Pablo Sierra*, is a film about a potter who lives in Yocona, MS. Born in Spain, he came to Ole Miss on a track scholarship. He became a world-class runner, and is now a potter, baker, and horseman. For Pablo, the process is everything.

Block Two screens on Saturday, March 10 at Amelia at 7 pm (112 Main St. | Water Valley), Thursday, March 15 at The Powerhouse at 7 pm (413 S 14th St. | Oxford), Friday, March 16 at Mary C. (1600 Government St. | Ocean Springs) at 8 pm; and Monday, March 19, at the Temple Theatre (2320 8th St. | Meridian) at 7 pm. This block also plays at the Mississippi Museum of Art (380 South Lamar Street, Jackson) on March 31 at 1 p.m..

FILM BLOCKS:

Block 1 (screens on Friday, March 16 at Mary C. O’Keefe Cultural Center (1600 Government St. | Ocean Springs) and Sunday, March 18 at The Strand Theatre (717 Clay St. | Vicksburg). This block also plays at the Mississippi Museum of Art (380 South Lamar Street, Jackson) on March 31 at 9:45 am with a panel of the filmmakers following.)

BEST MISSISSIPPI MUSIC VIDEO

“Manna” by King Woman – Hoka Winner

Director: Vincent Jude Chaney

Country: USA, Running Time: 6:12 min

FEST FORWARD BEST ANIMATION

TWO BALLOONS- Hoka Winner

Director: Mark C. Smith

Country: USA, Running Time: 9 min

MISSISSIPPI FEATURE JURIED COMPETITION

MISSISSIPPI MADAM: THE LIFE OF NELLIE

Director: Timothy Givens and Mark K. Brockway

Country: USA, Running Time: 81 min

Block 2: (screens on Saturday, March 10 at Amelia (112 Main St. | Water Valley), Thursday, March 15 at The Powerhouse (413 S 14th St. | Oxford), Friday, March 16 at Mary C. (1600 Government St. | Ocean Springs); and Monday, March 19, at the Temple Theatre (2320 8th St. | Meridian). This block also plays at the Mississippi Museum of Art (380 South Lamar Street, Jackson) on March 31.

BEST MISSISSIPPI SHORT FILM

COWGIRL UP – Hoka Winner

Director: Nathan Willis

Country: USA, Running Time: 5:17 min

BEST DOCUMENTARY SHORT FILM

ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND BEATING HEARTS – Hoka Winner

Director: Peter Byck

Country: USA, Running Time: 15 min

PAT RASBERRY EMERGING MISSISSIPPI FILMMAKER AWARD

TRUTH RISES - Hoka Winner

Director: E. J. Carter

Country: USA, Running Time: 2:40 min

MISSISSIPPI SHORT FILM

FLAG FLAP OVER MISSISSIPPI

Director: Rex Jones

Country: USA, Running Time: 27 min

BEST MISSISSIPPI FEATURE

THE PROCESS: THE WAY OF PABLO SIERRA - Hoka Winner

Director: Jeff Dennis

Country: USA, Running Time: 66 min

Prices range at the venues from free to suggested donation to \$15 including appetizers. Be sure to check out the website, www.oxfordfilmfest.com for more information on each.

Photos of the films are available at: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/9dx8m555k69o0yw/AABLh-iyETmpBMwBckOJftnwa?dl=0>

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