



Press contact:
springerassociatespr
Contact: Gary Springer
212-354-4660
gary@springerassociatespr.com

FIRST TIME FEST
The Third Time Is A Charm
March 5-9, 2015

**CELEBRATING FIRST-TIME FILMMAKERS
WITH A GRAND PRIZE OF THEATRICAL DISTRIBUTION
AND INTERNATIONAL SALES**

**6 NEW INTERNATIONAL FILMS IN COMPETITION
Voted On By Industry Professionals & Movie Going Public**

CLOSING NIGHT HONOREE
Harvey Weinstein
In Tribute To His Support Of First Time Filmmakers

PANELS AND CONVERSATIONS:
“How They Did It”

***First Time Fest* Partnering With
Big Vision Empty Wallet; B Bar & Grill; Intandem Creatives;
Gansevoort Hotels; Cinema Libre Studio; Raptor Films; Lazar;
Gibson; Tascam; DeepEddy Vodka**

Films Presented At Core Club, Village East Cinema

(New York, March 2, 2015) Following last year's acclaimed second edition, *FIRST TIME FEST* is back, and it shows that the third time is the charm. The 3rd *FIRST TIME FEST* is set for March 5-9, 2015, and it will be based at an exciting new array of venues. Screenings will take place at Core Club (55th St. and Park Avenue), the Wild Project (195 East 3rd St.), and Village East Cinema (2nd Ave. and 12th St.); and panels and other events will occur at B Bar & Grill (filmmaker lounge, panels - except for "From Rock To Score" at the Gansevoort Hotel Meatpacking), conversations & 'power lunches' and Gansevoort Park Ave (Closing Night Festivities).

FIRST TIME FEST is a unique film festival celebrating first-time feature filmmakers. Aimed at discovering and providing exposure for the next generation of great filmmakers from around the world, FTF is a five-day event with a competition section showcasing new and exciting debut films, and a series of panels and programs.

Martin Scorsese, who presented Darren Aronofsky with the first *John Huston Award for Outstanding Achievement in Cinema*, stated, "This venture is very very important to encourage young filmmakers."

Notable attendees from the first two installments include Martin Scorsese, Darren Aronofsky, Julie Taymor, Robert De Niro, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Sofia Coppola, Peter Bogdanovich, Michael Moore, Tony Bennett, Lake Bell, Michael Shannon, Slash, Nile Rodgers, Duncan Sheik, Brooke Shields, Rosie Perez, James Toback, Jennie Livingston, Tom McCarthy, Albert Maysles, Todd Solondz, Elliot Goldenthal, Hal Hartley, Carol Alt, Daphne Rubin-Vega, Nancy Savoca, Barbara Kopple, Christine Vachon, Melvin Van Peebles, Fred Elmes, and more!

FTF will present **Competition Films**, an eclectic selection of six fiction and documentary films from Lebanon, the Netherlands, and the U.S., including several world, U.S., and New York premieres, which will be judged by a panel of industry luminaries *and* the FTF audience. All of the films in competition at FTF are the very first feature of the writer, director, producer, editor, cinematographer or composer of each film. All competition screenings will be followed by discussions with the filmmakers, and all audience members will vote on the films as well. Together, the jury and audience will select the Grand Prize winner, which is offered theatrical distribution and international sales representation from the renowned American film distributor, **Cinema Libre Studio**. This year finds an exciting new opportunity for our competition filmmakers. **Raptor Films** has come onboard to offer a First Look deal for all of the competition filmmakers' next film.

Competition Jury members **Scott Feinstein** (42West), **Rafe Fogel** (Falcon Investments/Legendary Pictures), **Maureen Masters** (Magnolia Pictures), **Nile Rodgers** (Musician/Film Composer), **Harper Simon** (Musician).

In addition to the film screenings, FTF will be hosting an array of **Industry Panels** with notable producers, financiers, agents, composers, and other members of the entertainment industry. Panels at FTF are intimate gatherings between attendees and special guests where questions are encouraged and discussion is lively. Among the panels are "**Power Girls! Women in Entertainment;**" "**Show Me the Money;**" "**We Need a Bigger Boat: Producing Independent Cinema;**" and "**From Rock to Score;**" and "**Crystal Ball: The Future of Distribution.**"

"**Big Vision Empty Wallet** <http://bigvisionemptywallet.com/> co-founders Dani Faith Leonard & Alex Cirillo have curated the festival panels, and are offering the Competition filmmakers a free one-year membership to Big Vision Empty Wallet, a curated collective of creators." All panels will

take place at B Bar and Grill except for “From Rock To Score” that will be at the Gansevoort Hotel Meatpacking.

Our world is increasingly less tolerant of the risks associated with supporting films by first time filmmakers. This creates an ever more challenging environment for filmmakers to create truly inspired content without the need to focus on fundraising and economic success. Unfortunately many festivals have become so large they only provide exposure to already prominent filmmakers, while others are too small to attract quality films. As a result, too many great films remain unseen and too many exceptional filmmakers undeveloped.

And so, *FIRST TIME FEST* was born.

Johanna Bennett and Mandy Ward are the co-founders of *FIRST TIME FEST*. As an accomplished philanthropist, actor, and social entrepreneur, as well as the daughter of singer Tony Bennett, Johanna Bennett has immersed herself within the entertainment and artistic community her entire life. Mandy Ward has worked in the film industry for the past decade in varied capacities, namely as a film producer of several projects. The Festival’s programming team includes David Schwartz, Chief Curator of Museum of the Moving Image, and Soo Kim, producer and creator of Team Umizoomi.

No festival happens on its own and we’d like to thank our sponsors and collaborators: Big Vision Empty Wallet; B Bar & Grill; Intandem Creatives; Gansevoort Hotels; Cinema Libre Studio; Raptor Films; Lazar; Gibson; Tascam; DeepEddy Vodka (sponsoring Brunch & Closing Night party); The Circuit.

FIRST TIME FEST schedule:

Thursday March 5th -

4:00pm - Filmmaker & Accredited Media welcome cocktail reception at B Bar & Grill.

9:00pm - FTF will open this year with the “**From Rock To Score**” panel brought to you by Gibson and Tascam, and hosted by Gansevoort Hotel Meatpacking. This year “From Rock to Score” will feature **Wayne Kramer** of *MC5* and **Questlove** of *The Roots*. Moderating will be **Rachel Felder** editor at large of The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal. “Rock to Score” is a discussion of how Rock Stars became film composers and how their process differs in each medium.

10:30pm-1:00am – Opening Night Party at Gansevoort Hotel Meatpacking.

Friday March 6th-

4:30pm – Panel at B Bar& Grill, **Power Girls! Women in Entertainment** round table. Presented by Big Vision Empty Wallet. Moderated by **Dani Faith Leonard & Alex Cirillo**.

Panelists: **Jacqueline Gonzalez**, Executive Director, National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, New York; **Jenny Halper**, Development Executive, Maven Pictures; **Anne Hubbell**, Founder, Tangerine Entertainment; **Terry Lawler**, Executive Director, NYWIFT; **Leah Meyerhoff**, Director & Founder of Film Fatales; **Soo Kim**, Producer, Creator of *Team Umizoomi*.

6:00pm - Competition Film at Core Club, **I BELIEVE IN UNICORNS** followed by Q&A with Director Leah Meyerhoff. U.S., 2014, 80 mins. Written and directed by Leah Meyerhoff. Produced by Heather Rae. Photographed by Jarin Blaschke. Edited by Rebecca Laks and Michael Taylor. Music by Sasha Gordon. With Natalia Dyer, Peter Vack, Julia Game. Synopsis - Davina is an imaginative and strong-willed teenage girl who often escapes into a beautifully twisted fantasy life. Having grown up as the sole caretaker of her disabled mother, she looks for salvation in a new relationship with an older boy. Davina is swept into a whirlwind of romance and adventure, but the enchantment of her new relationship quickly fades. *I Believe in Unicorns* takes us on a road trip through the stunning and complex landscape of troubled young love. A festival favorite around the world since its premiere in 2014 at SXSW.

6:00pm - Special Screening at Village East Cinema, **THE MIND OF MARK DeFRIEST** followed by Q&A with first-time composer Ronan Coleman and “Rock To Score,” and film’s collaborator Wayne Kramer. U.S., 2015, 100 mins. Written and directed by Gabriel London. Produced by Gabriel London, Daniel Chalfen. Photographed by William Charles Moss, Eric Koretz, Andreas Wagner. Music by Ronan Coleman. Edited by Nick Clark. Synopsis - Once known as Houdini for his multiple and improbable jailbreaks, Mark DeFriest was condemned to Florida's toughest prison after a lone psychiatrist declared he was faking mental illness. When that doctor reaches out 30 years later, DeFriest finds an unlikely ally willing to examine his infamous past and offer new insights to the Parole Commission.

8:30pm - Special Screening at Core Club, **ONE EYED GIRL** (NY Premiere) followed by Q&A with Director Nick Matthews. Australia, 2015, 101 mins. Directed by Nick Matthews. Produced by David Ngo. Written by Craig Behenna and Nick Matthews. Photographed by Jody Muston. Production design by Anny Duff. Edited by David Ngo. With Mark Leonard Winter, Steve Le Marquand, Tilda Cobham-Hervey. Synopsis - Would you risk your life to save your soul? *One Eyed Girl*, is a riveting, accomplished, and dark thriller about Travis, a young psychiatrist who is haunted by the death of a patient. On the brink of a breakdown he meets a teenage girl named Grace, who invites him to a church run by charismatic leader. In search of answers Travis is led deeper and deeper into the underworld of a doomsday cult where he is given one last chance for redemption. Winner of Jury Prize at Austin Film Festival.

Saturday March 7th -

11:00am-2:00pm - A special day of Networking and Master Classes at B Bar & Grill, Presented by Lazar & Raptor Films, and programmed by Big Vision Empty Wallet: **“How Everything Works.”** Moderator: **Steven Beer**. Producing Panelists: **Jessica Caldwell** (*Awol, Happy Baby*); **Frida Torresblanco**, Braven Films; **Katie Stern** (*Listen Up Philip, Francine*); **J.P. Sarni**, Head of Television at Cinema Gypsy Productions; **Rose Ganguzza** (*Kill Your Darlings*,

Margin Call). Finance Panel: **L.A Teodosio**; **Rafe Fogel**, Falcon Investments/Board Member of Legendary Pictures; **Kristen Konvitz**, Indiegogo.

11:00am-12:00pm – “**We Need A Bigger Boat: Producing Independent Cinema**”

12:00-12:45pm - Special Networking Brunch with our panelists, special FTF selected invitees, and members of sponsor organizations The Circuit and Lazar.

12:45-1:15pm – An in-progress look at the funding process – kickstarter, crowd funding, groveling & begging – for the film ***Lonely Whale*** with Director Joshua Zeman. The campaign, with a Goal of 300K, launched February 10th, 2015 is for the cinematic quest to find the “52 Hertz Whale,” whom scientists believe has spent its entire life in solitude, calling out at a frequency that no other whale can understand. As we embark on this engrossing journey, we will explore what this whale’s lonely plight can teach us, not just about our changing relationship to the ocean, but to each other in our hyper-connected world.

1:15-2:00pm – “**Show Me The Money**” where actual check writing FINANCIERS? OR FANCIERS? will speak as to how to get them to write you a check, crowd funding secrets, and tax credits.

Screenings at Core Club -

1:00pm - Competition **VOID {WAYNON}** (North American Premiere) followed by Skype Q&A with TBA. Lebanon, 2013, 78 mins. Written by Georges Khabbaz. Directed by Maria Abdel Karim, Naji Bechara, Jad Beyrouthy, Salim Habr, Christelle Ighniades, Tarek Korkomaz, Zeina Makki. Produced by Nicolas Khabbaz, Sam Lahoud, George John Tarabay. Photographed by Kmal Bou Nassar. Music by Cedric Kayem. Edited by Salim Habr. With Carol Abboud, Diamand Bou Abboud, Carmen Lebros, Latife Moultaqa, Takla Chamoun, Nada Abou Farhat. Synopsis - Six Lebanese women, different ages, await the return of their sons, brothers, husbands or lovers, who have been missing since the Civil War. *Void* depicts the events that take place on the eve of the Beirut Parliament Square sit-in, where the women petition to renew the cases of their missing men. The lives of these women revolve around waiting for the men in their lives. A wait filled with uncertainty, and hope. Winner of Best Screenplay, Best Actress (Diamond Bou Abboud), and Best Ensemble Cast at the recent Lebanon film awards.

3:00pm - Competition **BENEATH THE OLIVE TREE** followed by Q&A with Director Stavroula Toske. U.S., 2015, 74 mins. Work-in-progress screening. Directed by Stavroula Toska. Written and produced by Toska and Sophia Antonini. Photographed by Sophia Antonini. Edited by Lauren Beckett Johnson. Music by Tao Zervas. Narrated by Olympia Dukakis. Synopsis - U.S., 2015, 74 mins. Work-in-progress screening. Directed by Stavroula Toska. Written and produced by Toska and Sophia Antonini. Photographed by Sophia Antonini. Edited by Lauren Beckett Johnson. Music by Tao Zervas. Narrated by Olympia Dukakis. Synopsis - This deeply-moving, personal, and eye-opening documentary focuses on the true stories of women exiled to Trikeri Island; the biggest women’s concentration camp during the Greek Civil War (1946-49). Years after the camps were

phased out, seven notebooks written in secrecy and buried under a tree have surfaced, revealing the truth about their suffering and their survival. The women's journals, and Toska's film, bring to light some history the Greek government continues to manipulate and repress.

6:00pm - Competition **THE INTRUDER** (US Premiere) followed by Skype Q&A with Director Shariff Korver. US Premiere. Holland, 2014, 87 mins. Directed by Shariff Korver. Written by Korver and Rogier de Blok. Produced by Eva Eisensioeffel, Joost de Vries, Leontine Petit. Photographed by Alex Wuijts. Production design by Elza Kroonenberg. Edited by Ruben van der Hammen. Music by Helge Slikker. With Nasrdin Dchar, Rachid El Ghazaoul, Walid Benmbarek. Synopsis - In this intelligent and intense thriller, a Dutch cop of Moroccan descent goes undercover to infiltrates a drug-trafficking Moroccan family. His world is turned upside down when he starts to feel at home with his new family, and disillusioned by the police force. Neither is what they seem. This deeply personal film is about a man trying to figure out where he truly belongs. Premiered in Discovery section at Toronto International Film Festival.

8:30pm - Competition **OTHER MADNESSES** (World Premiere) followed by Q&A with Director Jeremy Carr. U.S., 2015, 105 mins. Written, directed, photographed, and edited by Jeremy Carr. Produced by Dawn Fidrick, Music by Stephen Light. With James Moles, Natia Dune. Synopsis - Ed Zimmer is a reclusive, New York City tour guide who suffers from recurring nightmares. The haunting premonitions force him to take violent action against the perceived threats all around him, as he attempts to maintain a relationship with a Russian tourist named Lucy, who just might be the girl of his dreams. Jeremy Carr's mesmerizing debut film is a dark character study that evokes *Taxi Driver* and other 1970s American films. Six years in the making, the film was almost lost to flooding during Hurricane Sandy.

Sunday March 8th -

11:00am – Panel at B Bar and Grill, “**Crystal Ball: The Future of Distribution**”, Presented by Big Vision Empty Wallet. Moderated by **Dani Faith Leonard & Alex Cirillo**. Panelists: **Michael Ben Lawson**, Head of Content, Candy Factory Films; **Alexandra Marvar**, Marketing Director, VHX; **Allie Esslinger**, Founder, Section ii; **Linzee Troubh**, Head of Sales, Cinetic Media; **Jason Sondhi**, Curator, Vimeo.

7:00pm – Competition at Wild Project 195 E. 3rd St., **COME SIMI** (NY Premiere) followed by Q&A with Director Jenica Bergere. U.S., 2015, 82 mins. Directed by Jenica Bergere. Produced by Keth Kjarval, James Portolese, Mary Vernieu. Written by Doc Pedrolie and Jenica Bergere. Photographed by Peter Mosiman. Production designer, Lauree Martel. With Fionulla Flanagan, Jenica Bergere, Joshua Funk, Karen Landry, Tawny Kitaen. Synopsis - A neurotic pregnant woman on the verge of giving birth attempts to reunite her estranged family, which includes a mother riddled deeply with Alzheimer's, an aging porn-star sister and an intense aunt, whom the family hasn't seen in eighteen years. All of this is in an effort to fix her family history before giving birth. The colorful journey travels from Venice to Van Nuys to Simi Valley and in the end, love must win out. The very pregnant writer/director/star Jenica Bergere made the film in ten days, and incorporated actual footage of her own delivery.

Monday March 9th -

6:00pm - **Closing Night Competition Awards and Tribute to Harvey Weinstein** in Honor of His Support of First-Time Filmmakers.

Harvey Weinstein has been a champion of first-time filmmakers at Miramax Films and The Weinstein Company. Among the many first-time films his companies have distributed are *Reservoir Dogs* (Quentin Tarantino), *Sex, Lies, and Videotape* (Steven Soderbergh), *Chicago* (Rob Marshall), *Strictly Ballroom* (Baz Luhrmann), *Kids* (Larry Clark), *Sling Blade* (Billy Bob Thornton), *Confessions of a Dangerous Mind* (George Clooney), *A Single Man* (Tom Ford), *Citizen Ruth* (Alexander Payne), *Fruitvale Station* (Ryan Coogler), and *Bob Roberts* (Tim Robbins). Weinstein will receive a special award from the Festival and participate in a conversation about his support of first-time films. *FIRST TIME FEST* is proud to Honor the visionary Harvey Weinstein.

For Festival Information - Visit The Festival Website at <http://www.firsttimefest.com>

Tickets & Passes For First Time Fest:

Single Ticket Pricing – Screenings – \$12.00 (Competition & *First Exposure*).

25% discount (\$9.00) for Students and Members of the Museum of the Moving Image, Film Society of Lincoln Center, Film Forum, IFP, the Players, and Motion Picture Industry Unions & Guilds, including SAG, DGA, WGA, ICG, MPEG).

FTF Presents: Panels – \$12.00

25% discount (\$9.00) for Students and Members of the Museum of the Moving Image, Film Society of Lincoln Center, Film Forum, IFP, the Players, and Motion Picture Industry Unions & Guilds, including SAG, DGA, WGA, ICG, MPEG).

From Rock To Score - \$20.00

“How Everything Works” Panels & Brunch - \$50.00

Closing Night Awards Ceremony - \$50.00

Passes

All-Access Pass – \$150.00 (Galas, Screenings, *FTF Presents* Panels, Conversations, Tributes, Access to Filmmaker Lounge) 50% (\$75) Discount for Students and Members of the Museum of the Moving Image, Film Society of Lincoln Center, Film Forum, IFP, the Players and Motion Picture Industry Unions & Guilds, including SAG, DGA, WGA, ICG, MPEG)

Programmers Pass (Screenings Only) – \$50.00

Tickets can be purchased online at: www.FirstTimeFest.com

Also at the Core Club Box-Office and B Bar headquarters during First Time Fest

#