15 January 2019 - San Francisco, CA: From the open seas to the Great Lakes, San Francisco’s International Ocean Film Festival (www.intloceanfilmfest.org) continues its mission of saving and educating about our marine heritage. For the Thunder Bay International Film Festival, 42 films from the IOFF will be featured as part of the seventh annual event in Alpena, Michigan at the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center, January 23 – 27.

“North America’s Great Lakes are truly inland seas with vibrant, yet often threatened ecosystems,” said Ana Blanco, Executive Director of the International Ocean Film Festival, this year celebrating their 16th anniversary in March. “We are thrilled to share works that fulfill our mission of ‘saving the world’s oceans, one film at a time.’ This is a perfect partnership to highlight the important work being done by the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary.”

Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary encompasses 4,300 square miles in northwestern Lake Huron. Designated in 2000, the sanctuary exists to preserve our Great Lakes maritime heritage, including a significant collection of historic shipwrecks. Through innovative, accessible educational programs and community outreach, the sanctuary strives to protect our Great Lakes for future generations. The sanctuary’s visitor center, the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center, is open year-round. The center is a popular destination for residents and visitors of all ages, allowing the public to experience and appreciate the estimated 200 shipwrecks in and around Thunder Bay in an area known as "Shipwreck Alley". Visitors can also see shipwrecks from a glass bottom boat, or paddle, snorkel, and dive the wrecks in the sanctuary.

The Thunder Bay International Film festival screens more than fifty films, ranging in length from one minute to feature-length. Most of the films and events are scheduled at the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center in downtown Alpena, with satellite events in Harrisville and Rogers City. Film screenings are complemented by social events, educational activities, and opportunities to meet filmmakers. Topics of the film festival include Great Lakes issues, shark
conservation, deep sea exploration, lighthouse history, surfing, and much more.

Since its launch in 2004, the San Francisco-based International Ocean Film Festival has attracted thousands of spectators of all ages from around the world, including film enthusiasts, sea athletes, educators, and environmental supporters. Since then, the Festival has presented over 50 films from 15 different countries and featured post-film Q&A sessions with visiting filmmakers, special panel discussions with content experts, and the Annual Free Student Education Program. It was the first event of its kind in North America, inspired by the well-established ocean festival in Toulon, France, which has continued to draw large audiences for more than 40 years.

The 16th Annual International Ocean Film Festival will take place March 7-10, 2019 at venues around San Francisco. The International Ocean Film Festival is a registered 501(c) 3 non-profit.

Below is the complete list of the films from the International Ocean Film Festival being show at the Thunder Bay Festival.

- 68 Voices
- A Herring Opera
- Adaptation Bangladesh: Sea Level Rise
- The Agave Gun
- Albatross
- Alice in Borneo's Wonderland
- The Amazing Lifecycle of the European Eel
- Art for a Sea Change
- Big Pacific
- The Big Wave Project
- Blue Bon Voyage
- Chiripajas
- Cuban Wave Riders
- Dedicate: Diving Free
- Dive to Be Alive
- Fishpeople
- From the Shadows
- How do Pelicans Survive Their Death-Defying Dives?
- The Hundred Year-Old Whale
- Irreparable Harm
- The Islands and the Whales
- Islands from Mexico: Revillagigedo Archipelago
- Kim Swims
- Lionfish: New Pirates of the Caribbean
- Melting Stars
- Mexican Fishing Bats
- The Mystery of the Gnaraloo Sea Turtles
• Nonoy and the Sea Monster
• Oceanic Aliens
• One Breath: A Life Without Gravity
• Patterns of the Ocean: Protecting Indonesia's Manta Rays
• Reefs at Risk
• Return of the Harbor Porpoises
• Seeking Sanctuary
• Shark Wedding PSA
• Souls of the Vermilion Sea
• Stars
• The Story of Force Blue
• These Fish Are All About Sex on the Beach
• Touched by the Ocean
• Two Ocean Minutes with Jim Toomey: Land-Sea Connection
• Water, Blood and Spermaceti