

JACOB BURNS FILM CENTER

WESTCHESTER 9  
JEWISH 2009  
FILM FESTIVAL 2

Sponsored by AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

MARCH 12 - APRIL 2

[www.burnsfilmcenter.org](http://www.burnsfilmcenter.org) Pleasantville, NY





## The Gift to Stalin

March 12: 7:15\*, March 15: 7:30

The moving tale of a Jewish boy's exile to the hinterlands of Kazakhstan in 1949. There, at the ends of the earth, he is raised by the gruff Kasym, who is Muslim, and Verka, who is Christian. *Rustem Abdrashev. 2008. 97 m. NR. With subtitles.*

**\* OPENING NIGHT WITH RECEPTION**

Tickets: \$10 (members), \$15 (nonmembers)



## Lemon Tree

March 13: 5:05, March 14: 7:15

A story of a border conflict between a Palestinian widow with a generations-old lemon grove and the Israeli defense minister who wants the trees removed. *Eran Riklis. 2008. 106 m. NR. With subtitles.*



## Lost Islands

March 13: 7:15, March 17: 5:00\*

A semi-autobiographical comedy drama about a rambunctious, quarrelsome family in 1980s Israel. It's a coming-of-age story about twin brothers and their competition for the attentions of a girl. *Reshef Levy. 2008. 103 m. NR. With subtitles.*



## Empty Nest

March 13: 9:15, March 19: 5:00

This is the story of a cultured, and enviable middle-aged Buenos Aires couple. But when their youngest daughter moves to Israel to live with her husband, the apartment is suddenly very empty. *Daniel Burman. 2008. 91 m. NR. With subtitles.*

## Waiting For Armageddon

March 14: 1:45, March 15: 2:15, March 18: 7:30\*

Some US citizens believe in signs pointing to the End of Times, when Israel will stand at center stage. They hold Israel and the Jewish people in a strange embrace, donating more than \$75 million annually. *Kate Davis/David Heilbronner/Franco Sacchi. 2008. 74 m. NR. US.*

**\* Q&A Gary Greenebaum, the U.S. Director for Interreligious Affairs for AJC, and Gary Rosenblatt, editor/publisher of The Jewish Week, with RECEPTION**

Tickets: \$9 (members), \$13 (nonmembers)

Cosponsored by *The Jewish Week* and AJC

## Holy Land Hardball

March 14: 5:30, March 17: 7:30\*

Bostonian Larry Baras figured that after 5,767 years, it was time to create a baseball league in Israel—and this entertaining film chronicles the progress of his scheme. *Brett Rapkin/Erik Kesten. 2008. 75 m. NR. US.*

**\* Q&A Filmmaker Erik Kesten and ballplayers Nate Fish, Scott Perlman, and Dan Rootenberg with baseball historian Joseph Wallace**



## In Search Of Memory: The Neuroscientist Eric Kandel

March 14: 3:30, March 24: 7:30\*

This documentary is not only an exploration into the science of memory, it is also a trip into the scientist's own past as a Jew growing up in Vienna in the 1930s. *Petra Seeger. 2008. 95 m. NR. With subtitles.*

**\* Q&A Neuroscientist Eric Kandel**



## The Beetle

March 14: 9:30, March 16: 7:15

Israeli film director Orián is about to become a father. His attachment to incipient parenthood is weaker than his love for his VW Beetle, so he sets out on a journey to uncover the car's history. *Yishai Orián. 2008. 70 m. NR. With subtitles.*

## Father's Footsteps

March 15: 12:05, March 21: 4:00

A Tunisian Jewish family comes to France to seek their fortune. But the father finds that he must resort to a life of crime, and when he gets in over his head, his wife has to summon the strength to hold the family together. *Marco Carmel. 2007. 95 m. NR. With subtitles.*



## The First Basket

March 15: 4:45\*, March 24: 5:00, March 26: 5:00

European Jewish immigrants don't get much recognition as basketball players, but the fact is that they were the earliest stars of the game. And it's actually an obscure player for the New York Knickerbockers, Ossie Schectman, who scored the first basket in what would eventually become the NBA. This documentary examines the role of Jewish players in basketball's evolution and the impact of the game on the assimilation of American Jews. *David Vyorst. 2007. 86 m. NR. US.*

**with Snapshots: Maccabi Tel-Aviv, 1977**

The most magical year of all in Israeli basketball is re-enacted here. The fabulous basketball team beats the Russian giant, CSKA Moscow, and brings home the European Cup for the first time ever. *Dov Gil-Har/Uri Rozen. 2008. Approx. 10 m. NR. With subtitles.*

**\* Q&A Filmmaker David Vyorst, with RECEPTION**

Tickets: \$12 (members), \$16 (nonmembers)



## Cycles

March 16: 5:15, March 21: 7:45

A rich interweaving of family life following three generations of Parisian Jews at the crossroads. An impressive cast, which also includes Charles Berling and Giovanna Mezzogiorno, anchors this complex and satisfying film. *Cyril Gelblat. 2008. 92 m. NR. With subtitles.*



## Bon-Papa, A Man Under German Occupation

March 18: 5:15, March 21: 6:00

In a meditative documentary, director Leïla Férault sets out to explore the mystery of her non-Jewish paternal grandfather and the strange family silence surrounding his activity in Vichy, France, during the War. *2007. 69 m. NR. With subtitles.*

## What If? The Helena Mayer Story

March 19: 7:30\*

The greatest woman fencer of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Helena Mayer was a German Jew who won the Olympic gold medal for Germany in 1928. She then moved to the US, after being kicked out of a German fencing club. Yet when Nazi Germany asked her to represent them in the 1936 Olympics, her agreement helped to whitewash Nazi racial policies.

*Semyon Pinkhasov. 2008. 47 m. NR. US.*

**\* Q&A Filmmaker Semyon Pinkhasov, John Nonna, who competed on the 1972 and 1980 US Olympic fencing teams, and Jonathan Wachtel, a consultant on the film**

## At Home In Utopia

March 20: 5:15, March 23: 5:00

Founded by Russian Jewish immigrants in 1925, the Bronx housing "coops" were an oasis of progressive social values and radical ideals. Full of great archival footage, the film plays like a mini-history of the Left in America. *Michal Goldman. 2008. 57 m. NR. US.*

**with Yosli Cutler and His Puppets**

Yiddish Art Theater designer Cutler performs with marionettes he designed and brought to life. *1935. 18 m. NR. US. 92 m. NR. With subtitles.*



## A Road To Mecca: The Journey Of Muhammad Asad

March 20: 7:15, March 21: 9:40, March 23: 7:30

The extraordinary story of Leopold Weiss, a Viennese Talmudic scholar and descendant of Orthodox rabbis who in 1921 rejected Western materialism and became Muhammad Asad, one of the most influential Muslim scholars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. *Georg Misch. 2008. 92 m. NR. With subtitles.*



## Two Lives Plus One

March 20: 9:15, March 21: 2:00

Parisian Eliane Weiss, who, overwhelmed by her life, work, and family, seeks something different. She decides to become a serious writer—but then, oh, how things change. A coming-of-age story for women...or anyone who thinks it's just too late. *Idit Cébula. 2007. 90 m. NR. With subtitles.*



## The Woman From Sarajevo

March 22: 12:30\*, March 25: 7:30\*\*

Zineba Hardaga was the first Muslim woman in Israel honored as "Righteous Among the Nations," for hiding the Jewish Kabilio family in her Sarajevo home during World War II. Fifty years later Zineba needs to be rescued from the ethnic cleansing of the Bosnian conflict. The Kabilios arrange to bring her to Israel. *Ella Alterman. 2007. 66 m. NR. With subtitles.*

with

### Snapshots: The Blind Boy

Photographer David Rubinger meets the blind boy he photographed as a new immigrant from Morocco in 1957. *Dov Gil-Har/Uri Rozen. 2008. Approx. 10 m. NR. With subtitles.*

\* Q&A Leading Israeli film distributor Ruth Diskin

\*\* Q&A AJC Executive Director David Harris, with RECEPTION

Tickets: \$9 (members), \$13 (nonmembers)

Program sponsored by AJC



\$9.99 March 22: 3:00

A visually arresting stop-motion animated feature for adults full of existentially quirky characters and sharp dialogue, it's all set within a Sydney apartment complex with unemployed 28-year-old Dave Peck at its center. A world of small wonders based on Etgar Keret's short stories. *Tatia Rosenthal. 2008. 78 m. NR. In English.*

\* Q&A Best-selling Israeli writer and filmmaker Etgar Keret

Program sponsored by AJC



## Being Jewish In France

March 22: 5:45

France was the first country to grant Jews citizenship. This documentary shows interviews, rare news footage, and photos of the Dreyfus Affair, WWII, the absorption of Sephardic Jews from Arab countries in the 60s, and the country's attitudes toward Israel. *Yves Jeuland. 2007. 185 m. NR. With subtitles.*

Tickets: \$9 (members), \$13 (nonmembers)

Amos Oz March 26: 7:30

A poignant portrait of internationally acclaimed Israeli author Amos Oz, one of the country's most fiercely eloquent proponents of peaceful coexistence in the Middle East and author of 18 books and over 400 articles and essays. *Stelios Charalampopoulos. 2008. 52 m. NR. With subtitles.*

BOOK SALON- A discussion about Amos Oz hosted by professor Shuki Cohen, who leads book talks at Dor Chadash and other institutions in NY



## Praying In Her Own Voice

March 27: 9:00, March 28: 7:40, March 31: 7:30\*

The struggle of religious Jewish women for freedom of worship in Israel is the subject of this passionate new documentary. *Yael Katzir. 2007. 60 m. NR. Israel, in English/Hebrew with subtitles.*

with

### Snapshots: The Paratroopers, 1967

Paratroopers return to the Western Wall to reconstruct the moment they raised the Israeli flag during the Six Day War. *Dov Gil-Har/Uri Rozen. 2008. Approx. 10 m. NR. Israel. With subtitles.*

\* Panel Discussion – Devorah Zlochower: Rosh Beit Midrash, Hamidrash Institute (1998 to 2008), Rabbi Susan Mitrani Knapp: Assistant Rabbi at New City Jewish Center, Chen Ben Or Tsfoni: Rabbinic Fellow at Congregation B'nai Jeshurun, Mimi Alperin (Moderator): Chair, Board of Governors – AJC

Tickets: \$9 (members), \$13 (nonmembers)

Program sponsored by AJC

Hugo 2 March 27: 7:15, March 29: 7:45

Two decades ago, filmmaker Yair Lev made Hugo, a film about his father, a survivor of Auschwitz. Lev returns with Hugo 2, the result of his ruminations about his frail son: Would he have survived his grandfather's experience? *Yair Lev. 2008. 70 m. NR. Israel. With subtitles.*



Lake 68 March 27: 5:30, April 1: 7:30\*

A wave of anti-Semitism forced members of the Polish communist elite to emigrate in 1968. They spent their last weeks in a lake house in a small village, the home of filmmaker Irit Shamgar's father. Now she and others who gathered there return to confront their memories. *Irit Shamgar. 2008. 59 m. NR. With subtitles.*

\* Q&A with Polish born filmmaker Andrzej Krakowski, chair, Media and Communication Arts at CCNY



## The Wave

March 28: 5:30, March 31: 5:00

Based on actual events in a 1967 Palo Alto high school, it is the story of a teacher in Berlin who reformulates his class as a dictatorship to better engage his students, he—and we—are stunned at their receptive response, which gains momentum and takes on a life of its own. *Dennis Gansel. 2008. 93 m. NR. With subtitles.*



## Max Minsky And Me

March 28: 3:30, March 30: 7:15, April 1: 5:00

When she learns that her school basketball team is going abroad to compete, studious Nelly gets ballplayer Max Minsky to teach her some skills in exchange for help with her schoolwork, and an unlikely friendship takes root. Meanwhile, all her parents want her to do is prepare for her bat mitzvah. *Anna Justice. 2007. 94 m. NR. With subtitles.*



## Waves Of Freedom

March 28: 2:00, March 30: 5:30, April 2: 7:30\*

In late 1946, young Jewish men in America with sailing experience were needed to help smuggle Holocaust survivors to Palestine. This new documentary is about the Americans who volunteered for a true-life adventure, men just back from service in WWII who knew almost nothing about where it would take them. *Alan Rosenthal. 2008. 52 m. NR. Israel/US, in English.*

with

### Snapshots: The Ink Flag, 1949

A platoon of Palmach soldiers raising the Israeli flag over Eilat at the end of the War of Independence. *Dov Gil-Har/Uri Rozen. 2008. Approx. 10 m. NR. Israel. With subtitles.*

\* Q&A APRIL 2, 7:30: Filmmaker Alan Rosenthal and Paul Kaye, who is featured in Waves of Freedom, sailed as an officer on the Hatikvah in 1947

## Exodus

March 29: 12:15 (with intermission)

Otto Preminger's adaptation of the Leon Uris novel is a must-see on the big screen. With Paul Newman as a Jewish freedom fighter and a cast led by Sal Mineo, David Opatoshu, Eva Marie Saint, and Jill Haworth, this "extraordinarily moving" (New Republic) epic remains the rousing account of the founding of Israel. *Otto Preminger. 1960. 220 m. NR.*

Tickets: \$9 (members), \$13 (nonmembers)



## The Deal

March 28: 9:15, April 2: 5:15

When a hulking African-American action star (LL Cool J) converts to Judaism and wants a Jewish leading role, washed up producer (William H. Macy) sees a last-ditch opportunity to revive his own career and pitches an absurdly inappropriate script. *Steven Schachter. 2008. 98 m. R. US.*



## As Seen Through These Eyes

March 29: 5:15

A new film about the Holocaust as seen through art produced by prisoners in the camps. Determined to remember and document their experience, they used what they could find—charcoal, pencil stubs, shreds of paper—to record the horrors. *Hilary Helstein. 2008. 70 m. NR.*

Q&A Filmmaker Hilary Helstein

## TICKET INFORMATION

- \$6 (members), \$10 (nonmembers) except where noted
- Box Office opens: 4 pm weekdays, 11 am weekends
- Tickets also available online at [www.burnsfilmcen.org](http://www.burnsfilmcen.org)
- For information and group sales 914.773.7663 ext. 410
- Info-line 914.747.5555
- To receive the JBFC member price, AJC members must present their festival pass at the box office when tickets are purchased or website sales redeemed.

## AT-A-GLANCE SCHEDULE March 12-April 2

### THE GIFT TO STALIN

March 12: 7:15\*, March 15: 7:30  
\*Opening Night with RECEPTION

### LEMON TREE

March 13: 5:05, March 14: 7:15

### LOST ISLANDS

March 13: 7:15, March 17: 5:00

### EMPTY NEST

March 13: 9:15, March 19: 5:00

### WAITING FOR ARMAGEDDON

March 14: 1:45, March 15: 2:15,  
March 18: 7:30\*

\*Q&A: Gary Greenebaum and  
Gary Rosenblatt, with RECEPTION

### HOLY LAND HARBALL

March 14: 5:30, March 17: 7:30\*

\*Q&A: Erik Kesten, Nate Fish,  
Scott Perlman, Dan Rootenberg,  
and Joseph Wallace

### IN SEARCH OF MEMORY:

#### The Neuroscientist Eric Kandel

March 14: 3:30, March 24: 7:30\*

\*Q&A: Eric Kandel

### THE BEETLE

March 14: 9:30, March 16: 7:15

### FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

March 15: 12:05, March 21: 4:00

### THE FIRST BASKET

March 15: 4:45\*, March 24: 5:00,  
March 26: 5:00

\*Q&A: David Vyorst, with RECEPTION

### CYCLES

March 16: 5:15, March 21: 7:45

### BON-PAPA, A MAN UNDER GERMAN OCCUPATION

March 18: 5:15, March 21: 6:00

### WHAT IF? THE HELENA MAYER STORY

March 19: 7:30\*

\*Q&A: Semyon Pinkhasov,  
John Nonna, Jonathan Wachtel

### AT HOME IN UTOPIA

March 20: 5:15, March 23: 5:00

### A ROAD TO MECCA: The Journey of Muhammad Asad

March 20: 7:15, March 21: 9:40,  
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### TWO LIVES PLUS ONE

March 20: 9:15, March 21: 2:00

### THE WOMAN FROM SARAJEVO

March 22: 12:30\*, March 25: 7:30\*\*

\*Q&A: Ruth Diskin

\*\*Q&A: David Harris, with  
RECEPTION

### \$9.99

March 22: 3:00

Q&A: Etgar Keret

### BEING JEWISH IN FRANCE

March 22: 5:45

### AMOS OZ

March 26: 7:30

BOOK SALON hosted by Shuki Cohen

### PRAYING IN HER OWN VOICE

March 27: 9:00, March 28: 7:40,  
March 31: 7:30\*

\*Panel Discussion: Devorah  
Zlochower, Rabbi Susan Mitrani  
Knapp, Chen Ben Or Tsoni and Mimi  
Alperin, Moderator with RECEPTION

### HUGO 2

March 27: 7:15, March 29: 7:45

### LAKE 68

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\*Q&A: Andrzej Krakowski

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March 28: 2:00, March 30: 5:30,  
April 2: 7:30\*

\*Q&A: Alan Rosenthal and Paul Kaye

### Otto Preminger's EXODUS

March 29: 12:15 with intermission

### THE DEAL

March 28: 9:15, April 2: 5:15

### AS SEEN THROUGH THESE EYES

March 29: 5:15\*

\*Q&A: Hilary Helstein

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Westchester Chapter

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## JACOB BURNS FILM CENTER

Nonprofit. Film. Education. Community.

Welcome to the JBFC's eighth annual **Westchester Jewish Film Festival** which is bigger (29 films) than ever before. To select the films you see, Brian Ackerman, our Programming Director, and I have viewed over 100 films and two themes have emerged; films that depict a renewed, hopeful vision of a world united despite differences (*The Gift to Stalin* and *The Woman from Sarajevo*), and others that present images of the Jewish community and history that run strongly against stereotypes (*The First Basket* and *A Road To Mecca*). As you read over this program guide you will see a broad gamut of films; ranging from serious, to humorous, to historical, to political, several followed by a Q&A and/or a reception.

My thanks to the American Jewish Committee, Westchester Chapter for once again sponsoring the festival and to the other supporters listed on this page. We couldn't do it without them!

I look forward to seeing you at the movies many times over the next three weeks.

Steve Apkon  
Executive Director  
Jacob Burns Film Center

Jacob Burns Film Center is a nonprofit cultural arts center

364 Manville Road, Pleasantville, NY

Saw Mill Parkway North Exit 30/South Exit 29

Info-line 914.747.5555

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Register for FREE weekly e-bulletins at [www.burnsfilmcenter.org](http://www.burnsfilmcenter.org)

## LETTER FROM DAVID HARRIS

On behalf of AJC, I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome you to **Westchester Jewish Film Festival 2009**.

This three-week festival, now in its eighth year, provides us all with unique insights into important aspects of Jewish culture and history, in Israel, here in America and abroad. The magic of the movies makes film a powerful medium to serve AJC's larger goal—enhancing the quality of American Jewish life by deepening ties among American Jews, Israelis and Jewish communities, big and small, around the world.

As the nation's premiere human relations agency and a global center for Jewish advocacy, AJC, created over a century ago, safeguards the welfare and security of Jews, strengthens the basic principles of democracy and pluralism around the world, and enhances the quality of American Jewish life. We invite you to join with us by contacting Scott Richman, Director of our Westchester Chapter, at [richmans@ajc.org](mailto:richmans@ajc.org).

This year, our festival is more diverse than ever. Whatever your particular faith, background or outlook, we are delighted that you have chosen to attend the festival. Especially in these challenging times, we hope that the experience will bring individuals and communities closer together by promoting greater awareness and understanding.

Enjoy the films.

Sincerely,

David A. Harris  
Executive Director  
American Jewish Committee

## THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT

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