

# Baton Rouge Jewish Film Festival Returns with Second Year of Highly Acclaimed Films

**This year's festival to include Sundance-selected short film, star-studded historical drama and internationally acknowledged documentaries**

The Baton Rouge Jewish Film Festival returns to the Manship Theatre for its second year with another award winning lineup. For three days, the Festival, in conjunction with Jewish Cinema South, will present a wide variety of nationally and internationally recognized films. The event kicks off on Thursday, January 17, 2008, and continues through Sunday, January 20, 2008.

The Festival premieres with a screening of *The Rape of Europa*, a remarkable documentary detailing the Nazis' theft and the recovery of Europe's most treasured art. Following the film, Darius Spieth, Assistant Professor of Art History at the LSU School of Art, will discuss with the audience the on-going problems created by this historic event. *The Rape of Europa* is one of the most highly acclaimed films being presented at festivals across the country and will be presented in Baton Rouge on Thursday, January 17 at 7:00 p.m.

On Saturday, January 19, the Festival will continue with two films. The Sundance Film Festival selection *The Tribe* opens the double feature. This unorthodox short film intermingles the histories of the Barbie doll and the Jewish people. Following *The Tribe* is the extraordinary documentary *Blues by the Beach*. Filmmaker Jack Baxter studies the Israeli nightlife scene at Mike's Place, a trendy Tel Aviv bar, to prove that there is more to Israel than terror. Despite a shocking turn of events, the film ultimately proves its intended point. Jack Baxter will speak at the Manship Theatre following the film. This Saturday night double feature begins at 7:00 p.m.

The final day's screenings begin with *A Jumpin' Night in the Garden of Eden*, a documentary tracing the efforts to revitalize the art of Klezmer music. Like the title, you will be hard put to stay in your seat as you experience the world of Klezmer music. The film will be followed by a joyous Klezmer performance from New Orleans's Panorama Jazz Band. The afternoon's events begin at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 20.

Later that evening, the Baton Rouge Jewish Film Festival will screen its final presentation. *Varian's War*, a star-studded historical drama, is based on the true story of American Varian Fry, who saved over two thousand people from the Nazis, including such artists as Marc Chagall, Franz Werfel, Alma Werfel Mahler, and Heinrich Mann. The film features William Hurt, Julia Ormand, Alan Arkin and Lynn Redgrave. Following the film, Kenneth Hoffman, the Director of Education at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans, will separate fact from fiction. *Varian's War* concludes the film festival on Sunday, January 20 at 7:00 p.m.

In addition to films showing at the Manship Theatre, a school presentation will be held at BREC's Independence Park Theater Thursday, January 17. Area middle and high school students will have the opportunity to view *Secret Lives: Hidden Children* and



their *Rescuers During WWII*. This emotional documentary tells the story of Jewish children hidden from the Nazis by non-Jews. After the film, Holocaust survivor Ann Levy of New Orleans, herself a hidden child, will share her incredible story.

A near sellout crowd turned out to enjoy the first Jewish Film Festival's selection of highly acclaimed films, which provided a cultural experience unique to Baton Rouge. "Last year's film festival was a wonderful weekend of entertainment for a variety of people, regardless of religion," said Harvey Hoffman, chairman of the Festival. "The film festival is the perfect opportunity to see award winning films that can't be found anywhere else."

Tickets are available through the Manship Theatre Box Office. Reserved seats are \$8.50. To order tickets, call 225-344-0334, go on line at [www.manshiptheatre.org](http://www.manshiptheatre.org), or send a request to Manship Theatre, 100 Lafayette St., Baton Rouge, LA 70801. Tickets will also be available at the door on a space available basis and will go on sale one hour before each screening.

The Jewish Film Festival is part of the Jewish Cinema South program, in cooperation with the Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life. The Institute is a non-profit organization devoted to preserving and sharing Jewish culture through twelve Southern states.

For more information about the festival visit [www.BRJFF.com](http://www.BRJFF.com).