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THE GI FILM FESTIVAL MARCHES BACK TO WASHINGTON, D.C. **11th ANNUAL "SUNDANCE FOR THE TROOPS" RUNS MAY 24th – 28th**

The Nation's Only Military Film Festival Announces 2017 Lineup

Fest Program includes 50+ film premieres and scheduled appearances by Tom Berenger, Judd Nelson, Jamie Kaler, Ayla Brown, VA Secretary Dr. David Shulkin, Rep. Tim Walz, and Rep. Jack Bergman

WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 2, 2017) – The GI Film Festival (GIFF), the nation's premiere entertainment enterprise exclusively dedicated to presenting the veteran experience through film, television and special events, today announced its lineup for the 11th annual event, running May 24 – 28, 2017 in Washington, D.C. (See www.gifilmfestival.com.)

This year's five-day program boasts a dynamic lineup of 50+ films, interactive Q&As with filmmakers and on-screen talent, an embassy soiree, live music, stand-up comedy, star-studded red carpets, and awards ceremonies, all honoring and lending a voice to the veteran community.

"The quality, depth and diversity of this year's GI Film Festival film line-up is staggering," says GI Film Festival Chairman and Co-Founder Brandon Millett. "We have packed this year's fest schedule with films of every genre, from action films to historical documentaries, animated comedies to dramas, thrillers to sci-fi films. Start to finish this is the best group of films we've ever showcased."

Hailed by *Bloomberg News* as "Sundance for the Troops," the GI Film Festival's mission is to preserve the stories of military veterans through film, television and dynamic live special events. Since 2007, the GIFF has spearheaded the lead-up to Memorial Day in our nation's capital by offering the country's most expansive view of military themes on film.

In addition to its film line-up, the festival also provides a wide range of other entertainment and educational experiences. Including, for the first time, a live two-hour variety show entitled, "The Cinematic Salute to the Troops" on Saturday night, May 27th at the Howard Theater. Hosted by Navy veteran, television host and comic Jamie Kaler, the event will also feature appearances by actors Tom Berenger and Judd Nelson, a musical appearance by former American Idol contestant Ayla Brown, a short film presentation and awards.

The festival will also hosts a Congressional Reception, "Veteran Health: A New Hope," featuring guest speakers Dr. David Shulkin, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and Congressmen Tim Walz and Jack Bergman. On Friday, May 26th, GIFF will host a "Pitchfest" where filmmakers will present their best film and television ideas to top industry professionals. Sunday night, May 28th, the festival will close with a special sneak peek of the epic 18-hour documentary series *The Vietnam War*, including a special message from Director Ken Burns during the festival's "Best of Fest" Awards show.

Ticket prices range from \$15 for a matinee screening with filmmaker Q&A to \$375 for a festival "all access" pass providing access to select official GIFF screenings and special events. See www.gifilmfestival.com for a full schedule of events and to purchase tickets.

GI FILM FESTIVAL 2017 SELECT FILMS AND DESCRIPTIONS:

For the full 2017 festival and events schedule, please visit: www.gifilmfestival.com.

(Note: Details, including screening times, subject to adjustment.)

- **2 SIDES PROJECT** (Documentary Feature): American and Vietnamese sons and daughters—who had all lost fathers fighting on opposite sides during the war—gather together in Vietnam seeking healing, closure and peace. [Thursday, May 25, 2:30 – 4:30 pm, U.S. Navy Memorial Theater.]
- **AMERICAN VETERAN** (Documentary Feature): An intimate documentary portrait of Army Sergeant Nick Mendes, who was paralyzed from the neck down by a massive improvised explosive device in Afghanistan in 2011, when he was 21 years old. The film weaves together Nick’s past and present to show a nuanced portrait of a quadriplegic soldier’s sometimes harrowing, sometimes romantic and often surprisingly funny life. [Friday, May 26, 2:50 – 4:30 pm, U.S. Navy Memorial Theater.]
- **AFTER FIRE** (Documentary Feature): AFTER FIRE highlights the challenges faced by the fastest-growing group of American veterans: women, who now account for one in five new recruits to the U.S. Armed Forces. Demonstrating courage during their military service and resilience in its aftermath, these women warriors confront the fallout of their experiences on their personal lives as they adjust to the civilian world. [Saturday, May 27, 12:30 – 2:30 pm, U.S. Navy Memorial Theater. Part of “Women Warriors” film block.]
- **COMEDY BOOTCAMP** (Documentary Short): Meet the newest class of veteran comedians as they learn to use humor as a way to share their journeys and connect their stories to others. With a concluding White House performance, the participants share their stories of resilience, hope and humor. [Saturday, May 27, 3:00 – 5:00 pm, U.S. Navy Memorial Theater. Part of “Returning Home” film block.]
- **THE JOCKSTRAP RAIDERS** (Animated/Narrative Short): THE JOCKSTRAP RAIDERS takes place during World War I in Leeds, England. A group of underdog misfits are excluded from the war due to various abnormalities. Threatened by the invading German Kaiser and his army, they must learn to become a team and overcome their deficiencies in order to save Britain and the world. [Saturday, May 27, 6:45 – 9:15 pm, The Howard Theater. Part of the “Cinematic Salute to the Troops.”]
- **THE COLONEL** (Narrative Short): THE COLONEL begins in 1969 when a heralded Marine, Hap Tasker, on the brink of promotion to Brigadier, is told he has a deficient heart that prevents him from future military service. Crestfallen, he turns his disappointment into determination to continue serving his country through instructing his nation’s youth in his “time honored values,” by building a football program at a private high school battling rebellion, entitlement and bankruptcy. Based on a true story. Starring Kevin Durand. [Sunday, May 28, 12:30 – 2:30 pm, U.S. Navy Memorial Theater. Part of “Honor and Sacrifice” film block.]
- **STEALING VALOR** (Documentary Short): This film examines military impostors and the phenomenon known as “stolen valor.” Veterans who make up an informal network of watchdogs work to expose these impostors and bring their lies to public exposure. [Sunday, May 28, 12:30 – 2:30 pm, U.S. Navy Memorial Theater. Part of “Honor and Sacrifice” film block.]
- **GARY SINISE: ALWAYS DO A LITTLE MORE** (Documentary Short): Long before his role as Lt. Dan in the wildly successful film FOREST GUMP, Gary Sinise had developed a passion for the men and women who step into harm’s way to secure the freedom we enjoy as Americans. This film takes a look at the origins

of Sinise's commitment to the U.S. Military community, Veterans, First Responders and their families, and his unwavering dedication to serve them at every opportunity. [Sunday, May 27, 3:00 – 5:00 pm, U.S. Navy Memorial Theater. Part of "Honor and Sacrifice" film block.]

- **THE LIBERATION OF KUWAIT** (Documentary Feature): Twenty-five years after the tanks of Saddam Hussein's vaunted Republican Guard rolled into Kuwait, THE LIBERATION OF KUWAIT tells the story of a resilient Kuwaiti people skilled in diplomacy, and one of the most stunning, lopsided military victories in history, led by a brilliant American military. [Sunday, May 27, 5:30 – 7:30 pm, U.S. Navy Memorial Theater. Part of "Remembrance" film block.]

2017 GIFF XI sponsors include: TriWest Healthcare Alliance, USAA, The Military Times, The Gary Sinise Foundation, American Airlines, Pentagon Federal Credit Union, Got Your 6, Stars and Stripes, WMAL, and many more sponsors and partners. See here: <https://giffilmfestival.com/sponsors-2017/>.

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