SAG HARBOR CINEMA

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Celebrate A Year of Sag Harbor Cinema This Memorial Day Weekend

SAG HARBOR - It has been one year! Come and celebrate the first anniversary of Sag Harbor Cinema's historic Grand Opening with a special program that reflects SHC's intrepid, adventurous spirit, bringing together airborne blockbusters (*Top Gun: Maverick*) and local shorts; *Popeye* and Vincent Van Gogh; racy Hollywood pre-code comedies (*Baby Face*) and Quentin Tarantino's love letter to blaxploitation's siren Pam Grier, *Jackie Brown.*

"It has been an incredible year. I am so very grateful for the way the audience has embraced our Cinema and our love of film's wildly different incarnations. Programming is also a dialog with the public and the response has been thrilling. In fact, the entire year almost feels like a special program. But birthdays are important – and this is our first one. So we thought we should honor it," says Sag Harbor Cinema's Founding Artistic Director, Giulia D'Agnolo Vallan.

The festivities will kick off on Thursday with early showings of Tom Cruise's return to the big screen as Pete "Maverick" Mitchell, thirty-six years after the daredevil test pilot first hit the skies. One of the most anticipated films of the Summer, fresh from both Cinecom and the Cannes Film Festival, *Top Gun: Maverick* is dedicated to Tony Scott, director of the 1986 original film.

Also back by popular demand is *Sound Visions 2*, our signature showcase of shorts by local filmmakers, curated again by Ms. D'Agnolo Vallan, together with Julia Baylis and Sam Guest, writer/directors of last year's entry, *Wiggle Room*.

The Saturday screening of the "Kids and Families" film of the week, Robert Altman's beloved *Popeye,* starring Robin Williams and Shelley Duvall, will be graced by the presence of legendary cartoonist, screenwriter and author Jules Feiffer. Mr. Feiffer, who wrote the film as a tribute to E.C. Segar's genial comic strip will join in a post screening discussion. The "Feiffer the Sailor Man!" celebrations will continue, after the film, at Julie Keys Gallery, across the street, with the opening of an art exhibit that pays homage to Feiffer's love affair with Show Biz since

he was a child. The selected pieces are his homage to musicals, and the extraordinary dancers Hollywood cultivated in the 30's, 40's and 50's. And of course, the Bob Evans /Jules Feiffer/ Harry Nielsen version of *Popeye* is a musical with lots of singing and dancing!

Film Forum Repertory Director and Rialto Pictures Founder Bruce Goldstein will return to Sag Harbor Cinema with a special presentation of Pre-Code shocker *Baby Face* (1933), starring Barbara Stanwyck, in its prerelease, racier, version –recently rediscovered and premiered at Film Forum in 2005. Mr. Goldstein will precede the screening with a unique introduction to the subversive world of Pre-Code Hollywood, especially designed for Sag Harbor Cinema. *Baby Face* will be screened in a 35mm print courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Artists Love Movies (Summer 2019) was the title of one of the most successful series during our pre-opening phase. And artists **do** love movies, as proven by Julian Schnabel's visionary *At Eternity's Gate*, a film about Vincent Van Gogh's final years. The film premiered at Venice Film Festival, winning three awards including the Volpi Cup for Best Actor, Willem Dafoe. Dafoe was also nominated by the Academy for the role. Schnabel, who describes *At Eternity's Gate* as, "a film about painting and a painter and their relationship to infinity," will participate in a Q&A following the screening with Artistic Director, Giulia D'Agnolo Vallan.

Following the success of our 2021 Grand Opening screenings of *Pulp Fiction*, SHC will offer more Quentin Tarantino in 35mm, with two screenings of *Jackie Brown.*

Tickets to all screenings will be available on Sag Harbor Cinema's website, sagharborcinema.org.

More information on the films is available below:

AT ETERNITY'S GATE
Dir. Julian Schnabel
USA/France, 2018; 110 mins, in English
Rated PG-13

This movie is an accumulation of scenes based on Vincent Van Gogh's paintings, common agreement about events in his life that parade as facts, hearsay, and scenes that are just plain invented. As a painter himself, Schnabel brings audiences into the life and art of Vincent Van Gogh, played superbly by Willem Dafoe, rather than creating a standard biographical film. Schnabel describes it as, "fiction, and in the act of pursuing our goal, if we lean towards the divine light, we might even stumble onto the truth. The only way to describe a work of art is to

make a work of art." French cinematographer Benoît Delhomme, who shot the film, was absorbed in getting the imagery right, taking Schnabel's suggestions of wearing shoes and pants similar to Dafoe's and trudging through the wheat fields, photographing himself. Even with all the violence and tragedy that has been associated with Van Gogh's life, Schnabel and Dafoe portray him as an optimist with a life rich with magic, profound communication with nature and the wonder of being. Despite the number of films featuring Van Gogh as a historical figure, Kenneth Turan says of the film, "'At Eternity's Gate' makes you feel like you've not really seen Van Gogh on screen before," which he attributes to the film's dedication to portraying what it means to be an artist.

BABY FACE
Dir. Alfred Green
USA, 1933; 71 mins, in English

One of the raciest films of Hollywood's Pre-Code era, *Baby Face* stars Barbara Stanwyck as a recognizably modern woman who exploits her sexuality to rise to the top. She begins as the exploited party, working in her father's speakeasy as he purposefully parades her in front of the male patrons. Stanwyck's character, Lily, along with her friend Chico (Theresa Harris), a Black woman who is fired by Lily's father for breaking some plates, escape her abusive father and make their way to Manhattan after taking advice from a Nietzsche-reading cobbler who serves as her mentor: "Exploit yourself! Go to some big city where you will find opportunities. Use men! Be strong! Defiant! Use men to get the things you want!" And she does. Lily's ruthless sleep-to-the-top strategy exemplifies corporate modernity in which white women had to use their bodies to gain access to a male dominated society, a society in which Chico, and other African Americans of the time, had no place. The film was shocking and transgressive when it was released, dividing critics of the time, but a "Pre-Release" version of the film, which was longer and racier, was discovered and had its American premiere at NYC's Film Forum in 2005.

35mm print courtesy Library of Congress.

JACKIE BROWN
Dir. Quentin Tarantino
USA, 1997; 154 mins, in English
Rated R

Inspired by the blaxploitation films that starred a young Pam Grier, Quentin Tarantino brings his own style to this adaptation of Rum Punch by Elmore Leonard. Grier had previously auditioned

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for Pulp Fiction, but Tarantino wanted to write a role that honored her properly in his third feature. Jackie Brown is a flight attendant who gets caught smuggling money into the country for gun runner, Ordell Robbie (Samuel L. Jackson). A bondsman bails out Brown with money from Robbie. With mounting pressure from an ATF agent (Michael Keaton) to become an informant against Robbie, Jackie Brown must ensure her own future with the help of the bondsman who's fallen for her. Roger Ebert wrote that the film secured Tarantino's status as a bona fide filmmaker, saying, "This is the movie that proves Tarantino is the real thing, and not just a two-film wonder boy [...] I wanted these characters to live, talk, deceive and scheme for hours and hours."

Screened in 35mm

POPEYE
Dir. Robert Altman
USA, 1980; 104 mins, in English
Rated PG

Based on the long-running comic strip created by E.C. Segar (and less on the animated cartoons created by Max Fleischer, which were decidedly different in tone and approach), Popeye follows the sailor man with the mighty arms (played by Robin Williams in his first major film role) as he arrives in the seaside community of Sweethaven in search of his long-lost father. Popeye meets and quickly falls for the slender Olive Oyl (Shelley Duvall, in the role she was born to play), but Olive's hand has already been promised to the hulking Bluto (Paul Smith), Director Robert Altman in no way tempered his trademark style for this big-budget family opus, crowding the screen with a variety of characters and allowing his cast to overlap as much dialogue as they want. Written by cartoonist and writer, Jules Fieffer, who stayed loyal to the source material, this is Altman's version of a big Hollywood musical.

In the words of Harry Katz, Feiffer scholar and former head curator of the Department of Graphic Arts of the Library of Congress:

"Segar's Popeye, with paramour Olive Oyl, bete noir Brutus, and good friend Wimpy inspired Feiffer's remarkably early aspirations and achievements as a cartoonist. From the age of five Jules wanted to be a cartoonist and littered the family living room with sketches of Popeye, crime-fighters, super-villains and other characters he found in the "funny pages." He collected comic books and created his own for family and friends. Thankfully, his mother saved some of his earliest artistic productions although the chalk caricatures he sketched on Brooklyn sidewalks are long gone.

Film producer Rob Evans soon asked Feiffer to script a movie based on the life of Popeye. Feiffer responded, "… it depends on which Popeye you mean. If you want the Max Fleischer Popeye, the animated Popeyes—I hated them and I wasn't interested in it. If you want to do the E.C. Segar Popeye—Segar was the original author of Popeye in the newspapers. I said, I'm your guy because I think they're works of genius." Feiffer received Altman's go-ahead and the film opened in winter 1980 after numerous script changes, weather delays and other production challenges created by the director's decision to build an entirely self-contained replica wooden seaport on the island of Malta complete with housing for the actors and production personnel.

Some film critics were quick to criticize Altman's remarkable live-action cartoon movie musical, yet time has corrected their harsh judgment as the film, featuring Robin Williams and Shelley Duvall in signature roles, has evidently become a much-loved classic enjoyed across generations".

SOUND VISIONS 2

Following the success of last year's *Sound Visions*, a collection of shorts by local filmmakers, Sag Harbor Cinema will host another group of young talent from the area to showcase their work and speak about their work. The scope of the selections broaden this year, as the program showcases a wider variety of genres and formats, including experimental, animated and even a western.

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About the Sag Harbor Cinema

As a community based organization, Sag Harbor Cinema is dedicated to presenting the past, present and future of the Movies and to preserving the film-going experience in its three state-of-the-art theaters. The Cinema engages its audiences and the community year-round through dialogue, discovery, and appreciation of the moving image– from blockbusters to student shorts and everything in between. Revitalized and reimagined through unprecedented community efforts to rebuild the iconic Main Street structure after a fire nearly destroyed it in 2016, SHC continues a long historic tradition of entertainment in the heart of Sag Harbor Village. SHC Members enjoy discounts on tickets and merchandise and can purchase food and drink at our concession stand, cafe, as well as our member only rooftop lounge, The Green Room.