SAG HARBOR CINEMA

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ISHTAR SCREENING AND BOOK SIGNING AT SAG HARBOR CINEMA

Author Carrie Courogen (Miss May Does Not Exist: The Life and Work of Elaine May, Hollywood's Hidden Genius, 2024) will join SHC for a Q&A and book-signing following the screening of Elaine May's 1987 film *Ishtar* on Monday, August 12th at 6PM

Sag Harbor, NY - In celebration of *100 Years of Columbia*, Sag Harbor Cinema will screen Elaine May's 1987 comedy *Ishtar* starring Warren Beatty and Dustin Hoffman on Monday, August 12th at 6pm.

A subversive take on the hugely popular *On the Road* movies with Bob Hope and Bing Crosby, with a nod to American's propensity for meddling in the Middle East, *Ishtar* was a famously tormented production. Shot in Morocco and at Astoria Studios in New York by the great Vittorio Storaro, with its whopping $51 million budget (roughly $141 million today) and an additional $40 million in marketing and releasing costs, *Ishtar* was a box office disaster. The film was mostly panned by critics, with the notable exceptions of Janet Maslin of the "New York Times" and Jonathan Rosenbaum of the "Chicago Reader." However, May's comedic colossal - the last film Hollywood ever allowed her to direct - has been reappraised and has now landed cult classic status.

The August 12th screening at Sag Harbor Cinema will be followed by a Q&A and book signing with Carrie Courgoen, author of the celebrated 2024 biography Miss May Does Not Exist: The Life and Work of Elaine May, Hollywood's Hidden Genius.

"What *Heaven's Gate* did for Michael Cimino, *Ishtar* did for Elaine May - it destroyed her career as a director," says Sag Harbor Cinema's Founding Artistic Director Giulia D'Agnolo Vallan. "Luckily, as per Cimino's film, *Ishtar* has been rediscovered and is now recognized as one of the high marks of 1980s American cinema. We are very lucky to have a chance to revisit it in the presence of Carrie Courogen whose insightful book covers the film amply."

Ishtar is part of Sag Harbor Cinema's *100 Years of Columbia* series. Tickets for the screening and Q&A will be available at the Cinema box office or on the Cinema's website, sagharborcinema.org. The book signing will be on the Cinema's third floor and is open to the public. Courogen's book will be for sale at the Cinema through Canio's Books.

ISHTAR
Directed by Elaine May
USA, 1987; 107 mins, in English
Rated PG-13

Two terrible lounge singers, who dream to become the new Simon and Garfunkel (Warren Beatty and Dustin Hoffman) get booked to play a gig in a Moroccan hotel but somehow become pawns in an international power play between the C.I.A., the Emir of Ishtar, and the rebels trying to overthrow his regime. Also starring Isabelle Adjani, Charles Grodin, Carol Kane, and Aharon Ipalé.

CARRIE COUROGEN BIOGRAPHY:

Carrie Courogen is a New York-based writer, editor, strategist, and director with over a decade of editorial experience in print, digital, and video media.

She is the author of Miss May Does Not Exist: The Life and Work of Elaine May, Hollywood's Hidden Genius. The New York Times praised it as "compulsively readable," The New Yorker said it's "remarkable," the Washington Post deemed it "splendid," and the Los Angeles Times called it "a minor miracle." Not to brag or anything.

Her writing has appeared in publications like *Bright Wall/Dark Room* (where she is an associate editor), *Glamour Magazine, NPR, PAPER, Vanity Fair, Vice*, and many more, in addition to her Substack, *bed crumbs*. She previously was an associate director of creative development, digital video, at Condé Nast.

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About the Sag Harbor Cinema

As a not-for-profit 501(c)3, community-based organization, Sag Harbor Cinema is dedicated to presenting the past, present and future of the Movies and to preserving and educating about films, filmmaking, and 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

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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.