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**MARGARITA, WITH A STRAW and IN HARMONY**

**FRAME JCC Manhattan’s 8th ANNUAL REELABILITIES FESTIVAL**

Festival Kicks Off on March 10, 2016

**New York, NY, January 19, 2016**– The 8th Annual ReelAbilities: NY Disabilities Film Festival announces its opening and closing night films: Margarita, with a Straw and In Harmony .  The announcement was made today by ***Isaac Zablocki***and***Ravit Turjeman***, Directors of ReelAbilities.  The 2016 festival will launch in New York City at over 40 venues across nine NY counties and will travel across the country to 15 cities throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Directed by Shonali Bose and Nilesh Maniyar, Margarita, with a Straw is a funky, stereotype-busting coming-of-age tale, based on a true story, about a Punjabi teenage girl with cerebral palsy. Laila, an aspiring writer and secret rebel in a wheelchair, is accepted to New York University and leaves India for Manhattan. After a chance encounter with a fiery female activist, Laila starts to grow emotionally and explore this new world and its liberal sexualities. Tackling subject matter rarely explored with lightheartedness, this award-winning drama starring multi lingual Indian star Kalki Koechlin, is a beautiful, bold and brave portrait of love, identity and sexuality.

Set in the breathtaking landscape of Brittany, Denis Dercourt’s In Harmony focusses on Marc, an equestrian stuntman who is traumatically injured after a serious accident.  He loses all hope of ever getting back on a horse and to make matters worse the insurance company is giving him a hard time.  Until Florence, the insurance representative working on Marc’s case, steps in.   Although they have nothing in common, Marc and Florence’s brief interaction will impact them in more ways than they can imagine.  With impeccable performances by Albert Dupontel and Cecile de France, In Harmony delivers a vibrant life lesson.

Margarita, with a Straw will premiere on March 10 and In Harmony will premiere on March 16.  Both films will be presented at JCC Manhattan 344 Amsterdam Ave at 76th Street.  The complete slate for the festival will be announced in February.

Among the 40+ New York venues where the festival will take place include the new Whitney Museum, New York Public Library branches, the Museum of the Moving Image, and more.  The festival will showcase narrative, documentary, and short films from across the globe, many in their U.S. or NY premieres, all followed by intimate conversations and in-depth discussions with filmmakers and special guests.

For more information on the festival please visit:  [http://ny.reelabilities.org](http://ny.reelabilities.org/)

Tickets for JCC Manhattan’s 8th Annual ReelAbilities: NY Disabilities Film Festival go on sale February 12, and can be purchased online at ny.reelabilities.org or by phone (646) 505-5708.

About ReelAbilities: NY Disabilities Film Festival
Initiated by JCC Manhattan in 2007, ReelAbilities: NY Disabilities Film Festival is the largest festival in the country dedicated to promoting awareness and appreciation of the lives, stories and artistic expressions of people with different disabilities. The festival presents award winning films by and about people with disabilities in multiple locations throughout each hosting city. Post-screening discussions and other engaging programs bring together the community to explore, discuss, embrace, and celebrate the diversity of our shared human experience. In 2014, JCC Manhattan collaborated with the Cincinnati-based agency, Living Arrangements for the Developmentally Disabled (LADD, Inc), to operate the National program of the film festival.

About JCC Manhattan
Located on 76th Street and Amsterdam, the JCC is a vibrant non-profit community center on the Upper West Side. The cornerstone of progressive programming in Manhattan, the JCC serves over 55,000 people annually through 1,200 programs each season that educate, inspire, and transform participants' minds, bodies, and spirits. Since its inception, the JCC has been committed to serving the community by offering programs and services that reach beyond neighborhood boundaries. Programs at the JCC reach people at all stages of their lives, and serve the entire family and community.

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