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Great for the fall and winter holidays, 100 Voices: A Journey Home is a human-interest documentary, following six individuals to Poland to walk in the footsteps of their ancestors. The theme of Cantorial music which is prevalent in both Jewish and Christian liturgy is one of the many unifying threads. Article is a rare glimpse into Hollywood greats with history and passion for preserving the past and celebrating it to our present, in hopes of a future of tradition and unity.

Executive Producer METUKA BENJAMIN

Producer MICHAEL LAM and NATHAN LAM

Editor MICHAEL MAYHEW

Written by MATTHEW ASNER, DANNY GOLD, MICHAEL LAM

and MICHAEL MAYHEW

Original Music CHARLES FOX

Produced & Directed by MATTHEW ASNER & DANNY GOLD

100 Voices: A Journey Home

Michele M. Paiva

“Music is a common language that helps heal”, declared Nate Lam, Cantor and one of the Executive Producers of *100 Voices: A Journey Home*, along with his son Michael Lam; the movie, an epic event, never before seen on film, highlighting the Jewish and Polish cultures, woven together like a fine quilt with the thread of music as it’s bond. Cantorial music is often a combined combination of music, voice and liturgy, sometimes it being a focus of voice and music alone. In either case, it is the backbone of introducing prayer and spirituality in a music venue.

The story follows several people back to Poland, highlighting men and women, walking the streets and setting foot on stages that their ancestors once inhabited; a true bridge of past and present, and a true honor of family and cultures. Lam himself, has made this journey before, but never like this.

With over 30 years experience in entertainment under his belt, Lam has to his credit some of the finest and most popular vocalists and actors in the world as his clients in vocal instruction, including groups such as Metallica, Poison, Motley Crue and the Sex Pistols. Lionel Richey, Kenny Rodgers and Linda Rondstadt are a few other household names he has helped hone vocally. An opera teacher for over 10 of those years, he has produced concerts for over two decades, including those in Madison Square Garden, and Cantorial events worldwide. He does not credit himself as being the most instrumental, "The Cantors Assembly sponsored everything but the actual film making; every concert, programming and talent, from the beginning," said Lam humbly, in spite of his obvious fuel of the project.

It was his love of music that led him to Matthew Asner and Danny Gold of

Mod 3 Productions; producers and directors with a span of filmmaking that has encompassed an eclectic visual ménage often for content rich networks such as the History Channel.

Asner and Gold come to the table rich in history themselves; Asner is the son of Ed Asner, while Gold is the son of Metuka Benjamin, also one of the Executive Producers. Creativity is in their blood; as well as an appreciation for history and the arts.

100 Voices: A Journey Home, is a cinematic presentation about music, cultures and reconnection; it celebrates life and remembrance, with healing and resilience as steadfast themes. Although on the surface one may think this is a “Jewish” or “Polish” documentary, it is not. It is a documentary that happens to have a historical exponent of Judaism and Polish cultures, but encompasses many cultures and religions; case point, Pope John Paul II is highlighted in the movie and Charles Fox, acclaimed composer (“I Got a Name”, “Killing me Softly” and more) was asked to take words of Pope John Paul and bring to fruition music to signify the meaning of the movie, in which is heard in the movie with a powerful version at the close of the movie. Fox provides all original music for this histrionic documentary.

Gold stated one of the challenges of this project was that they had to not only find a way to highlight the action itself but to capture the emotion, close up.

“Most documentaries are about the past, while this one was happening in front of us, unfolding. We had to capture close ups to see the emotion on [their] faces, while also capturing shots of groups, places and so on”, said Gold.

Asner agreed, “It was important to get close ups on the stage of the

Warsaw Opera House, while also show the Opera house as it is now. Never in a million years did the people who once were on that stage thing their grandchildren would once stand there. It was very emotional to those on the stage.”

Considering that fact that they were documenting the present as well as post, this makes the project all the more unique.

Another rare aspect of this documentary is that it crosses demographics. Musicians are talking about it, Christians, Jews and other religions are speaking about it, and it’s crossing racial and cultural barriers; it’s bringing people together.

It wasn’t easy though.

With a crew of about 400, Asner and Gold had a lot of technicalities to iron out and worked with both American and Polish crews. Both men rave about the fact that the crew was a wonderful team and that they worked with the crew, they did not feel the crew worked for them per se.

“The sum is greater than the part,” said Gold in explaining the feeling of working with the crew, displaying an authentic appreciation for the people who helped bring the dream to reality. They were not the only ones who had gratitude. Lam mentioned many individuals who helped the cause, and spoke of Judy Greenfield, a peer, who thoughtfully created a spiritual guide for him to travel with. Each day had to denote one spiritual focus, be it a joyous one like the joy of Shabbat or, even one of sorrow such as visiting the death camps. He stated he worked with his own spirituality as he envisioned each day unfold and that is how he retained some of his direction for the documentary.

Lam also stated that the crew, most of whom were not Jewish, blogged often back home to their families at how the experience was life changing for them. "There were often tears from the crew," said Lam. The crew were not the only people immune from the emotional upheaval.

In speaking with Asner and Gold, it is obvious that they carry passion in their own voices for 100 Voices: A Journey Home.

“The most moving moment was in the heart of the Auschwitz concentration camp. The Torah was wrapped around everybody and...” Lam stops to compose himself, and says “It’s hard to even say.” He continues with explaining how it was a powerful moment, to bring people there, where they were wrapped in the Torah, to a place where just about seventy years earlier, people assembled for role call.

With new composure, Lam stated, “This is a movie about humanity; about the best people have in them, in seeing stories up close and personal.” He went on to explain how throughout the movie, the viewer is transported to get to know the people they “meet” on screen, follow them through ancestors footsteps and along the way, learn about themselves and the human condition. One man of Sephardic background, even learns more than he bargained for, captured on film, with respect and honor.

Poland supports Israel, and is also one of America’s strongest allies according to Lam, in many religions those who bless Israel will be blessed by Israel.

“Even Pope John Paul II went to the wall, prayed for Jews, lifted the wrongful accusation that the Jews killed one of their own in Jesus, said a prayer in which we have embraced in lyric within the documentary,” said Lam. The movie explores a bit of the work of Pope John Paul II as well as integral moments in history and celebrations of tradition and sound.

In reciting Psalm 133, Lam, with emotion tied in his voice, “How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity.”

100 Voices: A Journey Home is showing one night only nationwide on September 21st and then on the 22nd through the 28th, will be showing in

NYC and LA, for screening for the Academy Awards.

“From there, we are looking at Theater distribution, foreign release, DVD release and an accompanying CD; it’s about a one year cycle,” said Gold.

100 Voices: A Journey Home is managed by Jon Sheinberg of The Movie Machine www.themoviemachine.com. Jon orchestrated the Fathom Event placement, is handling all rights to 100 Voices and is currently negotiating distribution deals.

An eclectic display of not only Cantorial music and emotionally moving history, but a celebration of tradition and healing with a strong spiritual side as well as a secular component, with Yiddish theater and more.

“It’s about possibilities,” said Lam. He would know, he created from an idea, along with Mod3’s Asner and Gold, a vision that, for the first time in history, may actually break down barriers and celebrate a new unity while celebrating differences.

For more information

www.100voicesmovie.com