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**ARPA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
TO FETE FRANCES FISHER, THE USC SHOAH FOUNDATION, LUSINE SAHAKYAN
and HRACH TITIZIAN AT AWARDS GALA ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2**

2012 JURORS ANNOUNCED

“AWAKENING WORLD” AND “ZENNE DANCER” ADDED AS CENTERPIECE PROGRAMS

LOS ANGELES, CA (November 8, 2012) - The 15th Annual Arpa International Film Festival (<http://affma.org>) announced today it will honor stage and film actress Frances Fisher with their Career Achievement Award, the USC Shoah Foundation – The Institute for Visual History and Education with the Festival's Foundation Award, and Lusine Sahakyan with their prestigious Armin T. Wegner Award at its Awards Gala at the Sheraton Universal in Universal City, CA on Sunday, December 2, 2012. It was announced today by Festival topper Alex Kalognomos.

The Awards are the final event of the 2012 Arpa International Film Festival which will screen over 32 films, documentaries and shorts from throughout the world November 29-December 2 at the Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood. The event's Master of Ceremonies will be actress and television personality, Marla Maples.

Award winning actress **Frances Fisher** (UNFORGIVEN, TITANIC, HOUSE OF SAND AND FOG) will receive Arpa's 2012 **Career Achievement Award**. Fisher receives this honor for her past commitment to the Festival and to honor her expansive body of work. Fisher appears in the Festival's Centerpiece documentary film, the North American premiere of AWAKENING WORLD, directed by Sebastian Siegel.

Lusine Sahakyan will receive the Festival's **ARMIN T. WEGNER HUMANITARIAN AWARD**, for the documentary **HAMSHEN AT THE CROSSROADS OF PAST AND PRESENT**. The film will be recognized in honor of the German author and human rights activist Armin Theophil Wegner (October 16, 1886 – May 17, 1978), whose life and human rights activism reflects the spirit in which the award was founded on in 2002. Festival founder Sylvia Minassian said, "This is the first time in the Festival's history that the Award will be given to recipients from Armenia. This Award is given to filmmakers throughout the world whose work reflects commitment to championing human rights causes and we are honored to recognize Lusine's work this year." Past recipients include Bryan Single (CHILDREN OF WAR), Ted Braun (DARFUR NOW), and Carla Garapedian (SCREAMERS).

USC SHOAH FOUNDATION – The Institute for Visual History and Education is the 2012 recipient of the **ARPA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL FOUNDATION AWARD**. Inspired by his experience

making SCHINDLER'S LIST, Steven Spielberg established the Shoah Foundation in 1994 to gather video testimonies from survivors and other witnesses of the Holocaust. Currently, the Institute's Visual History Archive (VHA) holds nearly 52,000 video testimonies that were recorded in 56 countries and in 32 languages. The VHA is the largest digital collection of its kind in the world and is accessible worldwide for research and education at sfi.usc.edu.

Stage, screen, and television actor **Hrach Titizian** (THE MEN WHO STARE AT GOATS, "Homeland", *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*) will receive the Festival's **BREAKTHROUGH ACTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD**. "We first recognized Titizian in 2008 as a gifted actor as well as filmmaker, in FLOAT, which premiered at the Festival," says Kalognomos. "He moves deftly from project to project across the genre lines, from producing FLOAT, to starring opposite Robin Williams on Broadway in *Bengal Tiger*, to recurring television roles on such programs as the Emmy® award-winning, 'Homeland.' For our 15th Anniversary, we wanted to celebrate one of the most exciting actors coming up in Hollywood."

Arpa International Film Festival's Board Member, Sonia Keshishian, announced the members of the 2012 Jury who will select the Best Narrative Film, Documentary and Short from the nominated films. The prestigious members are, Filmmaker **Debra Attoinese** ("Zoe"), Actor and filmmaker **Charles Davis**, consulting Executive Producer **Max Howard** (SPIRIT: STALLION OF THE CIMARRON, SAVING SANTA), Inferno Entertainment EVP of Production and Development **Ara Keshishian**, entertainment lawyer **JD Larson**, Motion Picture Literary Agent at Creative Artists Agency (CAA) **Stuart Manashil** and Award winning Executive Producer and Motion Picture Executive **Howard Rosenman** (COMMON THREADS: STORIES FROM THE QUILT, SPARKLE, FATHER OF THE BRIDE, THE FAMILY MAN).

Adding to the prestigious list in this year's program screening at the Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood November 29-December 2 is Sebastian Siegel's documentary **AWAKENING WORLD** (the 1st installment of his project www.LoveSexGod.com). This North American Premier is Friday, November 30, 7:30 PM. Through tackling questions on Purpose, Love, Heaven, Hell and Intimacy, the film advocates a specific methodology to perpetuate widespread human joy. Siegel interviewed such notables as the late James Whitmore, producer John Daly, philosopher Ken Wilber, Marianne Williamson, Rebel Buddha Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche, Ed Begley, MMA legend Ken Shamrock, Frances Fisher, designer Karl Kani, art aficionado Eugenio Lopez and many more extraordinary artists and leaders, all to uncover what contributes to an AWAKENING WORLD.

As a counterpoint to AWAKENING WORLD on Friday evening is **ZENNE DANCER**, directed by Caner Alper, who also serves as writer and producer with Mehmet Binay. The film features the contemporary story of friendship between three men, including a male belly dancer and a German photo-journalist who face institutionalized and culturally embedded homophobia in the award-winning film from Turkey. These films join previously announced Opening Night film, Gor Kirakosian's **LOST & FOUND IN ARMENIA**, a comedy starring Jamie Kennedy and Angela Sarafyan (Thursday, November 29 at 7:30 PM) and Natalya Belyauskene's **IF ONLY EVERYONE**, Armenia's Official Submission for Foreign Language Film at the 85th Academy Awards® (Saturday, December 1 at 7:30 PM)

BOX OFFICE IS OPEN The Arpa Film Fest ALL-ACCESS VIP GOLD PASS, valued at over \$270, is currently on sale for \$90. The GOLD PASS includes all screenings, receptions, and special events at the Egyptian Theatre during the 4-day Festival. The Gala Awards and Dinner Reception is \$150 and tickets may be purchased at <http://www.itsmyseat.com//events/945221.html>. For tickets and more information Visit www.affma.org

ARMIN T. WEGNER HUMANITARIAN AWARD marks its 10th year as one of Arpa International Film Festival's top honors awarded during the festival. First presented by Arpa International Film Festival in 2002, this Award is named after German author and human rights activist Armin Theophil Wegner (October 16, 1886 – May 17, 1978).

/Source Arpa International Film Festival

LUSINE SAHAKYAN, HAMSHEN AT THE CROSSROADS OF PAST AND PRESENT (ARMIN T. WEGNER HUMANITARIAN AWARD) Dedicated to the current state of the descendants of the Armenians of Hamshen (Hamshentsis), the film explores a people who were Islamicized by the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century. Today, they live primarily in the provinces of Rizeh and Artvin, as well as in Istanbul and other cities of Turkey. The film presents unique episodes from the history and culture of the Armenian Principality of Hamshen, and the practice of Islamization, a form of ethnic cleansing. Based on material shot on location, the present-day culture of the Hamshentsis is chronicled: their songs and dances, customs, linguistic situation, as well as their everyday life and occupations, conceptions of their own identity, and the demographic picture.

FRANCES FISHER (ARPA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2012 CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD), whose unforgettable roles in such iconic films as TITANIC, UNFORGIVEN and HOUSE OF SAND AND FOG, began her illustrious theatrical, film and television career by apprenticing at the Barter Theatre in Abingdon, Virginia. She spent 14 years based in New York City, playing leads in over 30 productions of plays by such noted writers as John Arden, Noel Coward, Emily Mann, Joe Orton, Sam Shepard, William Shakespeare, Jean Claude Van Italie, Eudora Welty and Tennessee Williams. She won a Drama League Award - Best Ensemble - for the American Premier of Caryl Churchill's "Three More Sleepless Nights", played in the American premier of Judith Thompson's "The Crackwalker" and originated roles in Elia Kazan's "The Chain" and Arthur Miller's last play, "Finishing the Picture". Besides working with Kazan and Miller, some of Fisher's other theater experiences include creating roles from two great works of literature: George Orwell's "1984" and Victor Hugo's "The Hunchback of Notre Dame". Ms. Fisher played Lucille Ball in CBS's "Lucy & Desi: Before the Laughter", and in LA worked at the Mark Taper Forum alongside Annette Bening and Alfred Molina in Anton Chekhov's "The Cherry Orchard". Fisher recently completed "The Host", "Franny", "Red Wing" "The Makeover" "The M Word" and Catherine Harwicke's "Plush." This month, Fisher begins her 111th film & TV work with Hillary Swank in "You're Not You", and has an arc on Kiefer Sutherland's "Touch". Arpa salutes Fisher's life, career and

humanitarian work with the Festival's 2012 Career Achievement Award. Member of the Actors Studio.
www.IMDb.com

USC SHOAH FOUNDATION – The Institute for Visual History and Education (ARPA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL FOUNDATION AWARD) Inspired by his experience making SCHINDLER'S LIST, Steven Spielberg established the Shoah Foundation in 1994 to gather video testimonies from survivors and other witnesses of the Holocaust. Currently, the Institute's Visual History Archive (VHA) holds nearly 52,000 video testimonies that were recorded in 56 countries and in 32 languages. The VHA is the largest digital collection of its kind in the world and is accessible worldwide for research and education at <http://sfi.usc.edu> .

HRACH TITIZIAN (ARPA INTERNATIONAL BREAKTHROUGH PERFORMER OF THE YEAR AWARD) Filmmaker and acting school founder, Hrach Titizian recently appeared on Broadway in the award-winning *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*, on television in numerous shows including "Homeland", "24" and "Common Law", and in indie favorites such as FLOAT, featuring Gregory Itzen.
<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1553955/>

ARPA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2012 JURY

DEBORAH ATTOINESE's work as a filmmaker and photographer has spanned the last decade with impressive variation. Originally from New York, her success lies in her informed hands on ability to get the best from her cast-be it an urban landscape or the buried treasure of people's eyes. Her first feature film, ZOE (A Curb Entertainment/Bill Kenwright Production) which she directed and co-wrote features a talented cast (Vanessa Zima, Jenny Seagrove, Gordon Tootosis and Kim Griest) and is available on Net Flix. Currently Deborah is producing several film projects which include an original documentary titled "ON DIRECTING" which features interviews with filmmakers: Billie August, Roland Joffe, Agnes Varda and Wim Wenders. Her second feature film "ALWAYS SAFE" is in the works.

CHARLES GIDEON DAVIS - Actor, Director, Producer has worked in theater, film and television for over forty years. He has had the privilege to work with many great talents: Debra Winger and Denis Quaid in WILDER NAPALM, Brian Dennehy in JULIUS CAESER, Mandy Patinkin in JOAN OF LORRAINE directed by Alan Arkin, with Thomas Hulce in THE ARCHITECT AND THE EMPEROR, Christopher Reeve in THE LION IN WINTER and with Kathleen Turner, Peter Falk, Candace Berger, Danny Devito, Lynn Redgrave, Tony Danza, Suzanne Sommers and many others. For the past 5 years, Charles has also been a reader for the Humanitas Awards.

MAX HOWARD Past-President of the Exodus Film Group whose first production, IGOR was released in the fall of 2008. Max is a consulting Executive Producer, producing a series of animated feature films for them. Max Howard created and ran studios for Disney in London, Paris, Orlando and Los Angeles, working on some of Disney's most memorable films including Who Framed Roger Rabbit, The Little Mermaid, Beauty and the Beast, Aladdin and The Lion King. As President of Warner Bros Feature

Animation he oversaw such hit movies as The Iron Giant and Space Jam. At DreamWorks, he was co-executive producer for Spirit, Stallion of the Cimarron. Throughout his illustrious animation career, Max Howard has worked with UNICEF to bring health and social messages to developing countries in Africa, the Caribbean and South America through the use of animation, underscoring the important role this medium can bring to overcome ethnic and social prejudices. In addition, Max was recently honored with a Doctorate of Arts degree from Teesside University in the United Kingdom in recognition for his services to the animation industry. He is also the Chancellor for Middlesbrough Children's University.

ARA KESHISHIAN works at Inferno Entertainment as the EVP of Production and Development. Keshishian is a graduate of Loyola Law School, and began his entertainment career in the CAA mailroom. As a Motion Picture agent at CAA for the last 8 years, he represented such actors as Natalie Portman, Antonio Banderas, Kate Hudson, Jeffrey Wright, Jay Baruchel, Peter Krause, Miranda Cosgrove, amongst many others. He also worked closely in helping put together independent films such as BLACK SWAN and MARGIN CALL. Inferno has financed and produced such films as THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT, THE GREY, KILLING THEM SOFTLY starring Brad Pitt, GRACE starring Nicole Kidman, and THE HOST based on the Stephenie Meyer novel.

JD LARSON Law Offices of Larson and Associates represents bands, actors, and international models. Works with such promoters as Creative Artists Agency (the largest talent agency in the world), record company executives, and music producers. Company has represented famous rock bands for over thirty years including the following: Kenny Loggins, Steve Perry, Chaka Khan, Michael Jackson, Poco, Iron Butterfly, and Blues Image.

STUART MANASHIL is a Motion Picture Literary Agent at Creative Artists Agency (CAA), an entertainment and sports agency based in Los Angeles with offices in New York, London, Nashville, and Beijing. Manashil works in the Los Angeles office and represents many of the world's leading directors, writers, and actors, including Oliver Stone, Tommy Lee Jones, Ed Zwick, Robert Benton, Brad Furman, Ivan Reitman, Olivier Assayas, Juan Campanella, Art Linson, Lawrence Kasdan, Robert De Niro, Benicio del Toro, Edgar Ramirez, Skip Woods, Chris Landon, among others. Manashil began his career at UTA. He joined CAA in 2007. Manashil graduated from UCLA Summa Cum Laude with a degree in Political Economy and also holds an M.A. in Political Economy and the Classics. He was featured in The Hollywood Reporter's "Next Gen" issue in 2006 and is also a Fulbright Scholar.

HOWARD ROSENMAN is an American producer and motion picture executive. He specializes in producing romantic comedy films and documentary films. Some of his most popular productions include FATHER OF THE BRIDE (1991) starring Steve Martin and Diane Keaton, Joss Whedon's BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER (1992) and THE FAMILY MAN (2000) starring Nicolas Cage. Rosenman's documentary film COMMON THREADS: STORIES FROM THE QUILT won the Peabody Award and the 1990 Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature; his film THE CELLULOID CLOSET also won the Peabody Award.

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