



For immediate release
November 9, 2015

**Miami Jewish Film Festival Presents
Premiere of “Me, Japanese” at The Betsy Hotel**

***Documentary about Cuban Poet Jose Kozer closes
The Betsy’s annual Holocaust Literature Conference***

MIAMI, FL – The Miami Jewish Film Festival (MJFF), in partnership with The Betsy Hotel, is proud to present the premiere of *Me, Japanese* on Tuesday, November 17th, at 7:00pm, on the closing night of the 2015 Jewish American & Holocaust Literature (JAHLIT) Conference. Local Miami filmmakers and *Me, Japanese* directors Malena Barrios and Marc Schloss will be present to introduce the unique themes addressed in the film and participate in an audience Q/A afterwards. This special event will take place on the Roof Deck at The Betsy Hotel as sunset, and will be free and open to the public. Space is limited to 100 patrons – rsvp to artsandculture@thebetsyhotel.com

Me, Japanese focuses on the life of Jose Kozer, the foremost Cuban poet of the 1960s, who has called Miami home for nearly a decade. Born in 1940 in Havana to Jewish immigrants who fled Eastern Europe to escape the Nazis, he himself became an exile after the Cuban Revolution, settling in New York City where he taught Spanish literature at Queens College. Kozer is associated with the “Neobarroco Movement,” a poetic style similar to Surrealism. *Me, Japanese* introduces us to Kozer in a similar fashion, disregarding narrative and chronology as the poet reads from his work, muses on his philosophy and his search for the truth about his identity as an expatriate. Kozer challenges us to examine our own definition of identity as we question whether he is a literary genius or a deeply troubled individual finding refuge in his poems.

“We are delighted to continue to further our Festival’s efforts to serve the entire arts & cultural scene in Miami and support unique local stories that are at the heart of what makes our city so special,” said Miami Jewish Film Festival Director Igor Shteyrenberg. “*Me, Japanese* is an emotionally rich and complex film, and its dynamic filmmakers bring incredible depth and sensitivity to Jose Kozer’s life story.”

Directors Malena Barrios and Marc Schloss shared the following statement:

"The Me, Japanese team are overjoyed to engage all the lovers of Latin American Poetry and all the admirers of Jewish Cuban Poet, Jose Kozer. We feel excited for the opportunity to present our film with the Miami Jewish Film Festival and the Betsy Hotel, and are grateful to them for continuously showing their support to local artists and hosting important events such as this."

"We're proud to partner with The Miami Jewish Film Festival for an evening that links The Betsy's deep appreciation for poetry and Jewish culture with the life and work of one of the great living Cuban Poets, Jose Kozer", noted Jonathan Plutzik, Chairman of The Betsy-South Beach.

ADDRESS:

The Betsy, 1440 Ocean Drive, Miami Beach, FL 33139

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About the Miami Jewish Film Festival

Miami Jewish Film Festival (MJFF), celebrating its 19th edition January 14-28, 2016, is considered the premier film festival for showcasing Jewish cinema in Florida. The annual Festival, a program of the Center for the Advancement of Jewish Education (CAJE), aims to create a platform designed to engage the public with diverse and award-winning films about Jewish culture, arts and lifestyle. As a gathering of more than 18,500 local and international audience members, this worldwide convening of film aficionados has consistently provided the finest in emerging and established films.

About The Betsy-South Beach

As Miami's only Four Star, Four Diamond boutique hotel, The Betsy is a distinguished landmark property. Believing that public spaces can be more than waiting areas, the transformed boutique hotel has been uniquely recognized by global media for programs that champion the power of community. For information on these and more events, visit www.thebetsyhotel.com

About JAHLIT (Jewish American and Holocaust Literature Conference)

The Betsy is Host Hotel and Philanthropic Underwriter of the The Jewish American and Holocaust Literature Association (JAHLIT) a subsidiary of the American Library Association, comprised of an international body of scholars of Jewish American and Holocaust literature that transcends religious affiliation, denomination, and area of professional scholarly expertise. Fifty scholars will attend the 2015 annual symposium, in JAHLIT's 21th Anniversary year, which will include wide-ranging public programs, including a partnership with the Miami Jewish Film Festival For more information – <http://the-betsy-south-beach.ticketleap.com/jahlit-public-programs-2015/>

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