



The Greenwich International Film Festival To Honor Renée Zellweger and Christy Turlington Burns As 2017 Changemakers

Zellweger and Turlington Burns will be honored for their humanitarian work

NEW YORK, NY (April, 13, 2017) - The Greenwich International Film Festival today announced the honorees for the 3rd annual Changemaker Gala, which will take place on Thursday, June 1, 2017. The Changemaker Awards honor artists who have used their public platform and the power of film to further positive social change. This year, **Renée Zellweger** and **Christy Turlington Burns**, will be honored for their humanitarian work with ALS and Every Mother Counts, respectively. Past honorees include **Freida Pinto, Trudie Styler, Abigail Breslin, Harry Belafonte** and **Mia Farrow**.

The Greenwich International Film Festival is set to run June 1-4, 2017. Tickets go on sale **Friday, May 5th, 2017** and will be available for purchase at greenwichfilm.org. The Festival's full film slate will be announced in early May. The June 1st Changemaker event, presented by CuisinArt Resorts & Residences and ALS FindingACure, will include a cocktail reception at Betteridge followed by a black tie dinner at L'Escale in Greenwich, CT. As previously announced, the festival will host a special performance open to the public by **Flo Rida** on Friday, June 2nd.

Academy Award-winning actress **Renée Zellweger** will receive the "Changemaker Award" for her leadership and support in the search for effective treatments and a cure for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), in honor of her dear friend Nanci Ryder, veteran publicist and co-founder of BWR Public Relations who was diagnosed in 2014, as well as her work with the SIMS Foundation, a charitable foundation dedicated to support those in the Austin music industry, suffering from depression and mental health illnesses.

Humanitarian, maternal health advocate and model **Christy Turlington Burns** will receive the "Changemaker Award" for her work with Every Mother Counts, an organization that she founded to make pregnancy and childbirth safe for every mother, everywhere. The organization is dedicated to raising awareness about the global maternal health crisis and links mothers to providers of essential care, by addressing these three barriers to maternal health: transportation, education and supplies. A portion of the proceeds from the Changemaker Gala will go to support the fight against ALS, The SIMS Foundation and Every Mother Counts.

“ALS Finding a Cure is honored to be a charity partner of the Greenwich International Film Festival – and their 2017 Changemaker Gala. We are proud to recognize Renee Zellweger for her support of Nanci Ryder’s fight against ALS – and we are proud to support Andrew Niblock in his fight against ALS”, said Peter N. Foss, President of the Advisory Board of ALS Finding a Cure and Dr. Merit Cudkowicz, Chief of Neurology at Massachusetts General Hospital and Chief Scientist for ALS Finding a Cure.

“We are thrilled to be able to present these fabulous women with the 2017 Changemaker Awards. They have been true advocates for those in need throughout their lives, using their voices to create positive change in the world,” said Wendy Stapleton Reyes, Chairman of the Board.

About The Greenwich International Film Festival

Greenwich International Film Festival (GIFF) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that hosts a world-class film festival in Greenwich, CT. The goal of the festival is to bridge the worlds of film, finance and philanthropy. The third annual festival will take place June 1st – 4th, 2017, and will support important human rights initiatives, as part of its social impact focus. The four-day event will feature a star-studded Opening Night Party, film premieres, engaging panels, an honoree gala, and more. For additional information, please visit www.greenwichfilm.org.

About ALS FindingACure

Formed in the spring of 2014, the sole purpose of ALS FindingACure is funding research to find a cure. The goal is to translate this funding into cutting-edge development tools, provide an open platform for neurological research material, understand disease heterogeneity to develop treatments, and promote early detection for those affected by ALS. To break down barriers to finding a cure for people with ALS, we support collaborative science through partnerships including General Electric, ALS Association and ANSWER ALS. General Electric Healthcare, one of our most important collaborators, has developed breakthrough technology to better understand the brain and spinal cord. In partnership, we bring their technology and knowledge to understanding ALS and accelerating therapy development. Our team of researchers is led by our Chief Medical Officer Dr. Merit Cudkowicz and is overseen by president Peter N. Foss. ALS FindingACure is a program of the Leandro P. Rizzuto Foundation and we are proud to report that 100% of donations go directly to funding research. ALS FindingACure is inspired by, and a tribute to, Christie Rizzuto, who was diagnosed with ALS in 2009 at the age of 41. It is Christie, and the many others like her, who drive our work. For more information, please visit www.alsfindingacure.org.

The SIMS Foundation

<https://simsfoundation.org/>

Every Mother Count

www.everymothercounts.org

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