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Cinema under the stars at Liberty Station this summer

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Grab your picnic blankets, beach chairs and comfy throws to relax beneath the stars at Liberty Station's Second Saturday Summer Film Series on 8 a.m. Saturday, May 13. Screening at Liberty Station's grassy North Promenade, guests will enjoy a free, Academy Award-winning movie – "La La Land" – projected from a 12-foot-high, 20-foot-wide screen.

Curated by Arts District residents, flicks will be shown from May to October. Produced in partnership with Pacific Arts Movement, six feature films will spotlight the Arts District theme, "Heroes of the Arts on Film."

"The Second Saturday Cinema Series will showcase films in dance, music, comedy and drama," said Andrew Waltz, marketing and program manager of the NTC Foundation. "We collaborated with Liberty Station's Arts District resident groups to select movies as creative outlets to highlight their unique and individual missions."

The films are curated by Liberty Station's Arts District resident groups including Outside the Lens, San Diego Dance Theater, Malashock Dance, San Diego Ballet, Neisha's Dance & Music Academy, San Diego Comic Art Gallery, Recreational Music Center, Guitars in the Classroom, Pacific Arts Movement, Comickaze Comics Books and More and San Diego Comic Art Gallery.

"Each film reflects the art forms of Arts District resident groups, lending further voice to the diverse arts and culture community at Liberty Station," continued Waltz. "Our first film, 'La La Land' – based on Hollywood's film and photography – is a perfect match for Outside the Lens. 'Strictly Ballroom,' a high-energy dance film was picked by our dance companies, San Diego Dance Theater, Malashock Dance, San Diego Ballet, and Neisha's Dance & Music Academy."

Sporting a Comic-Con theme July's screening of "Lego Batman," will be curated by Comickaze Comics Books and More, followed by "Sing" in August, chosen by the Recreational Music Center, "Jake Shimabukuro: Life on Four Strings" in September, chosen by Pacific Arts Movement and "Ghostbusters" from San Diego Comic Book Art Gallery in October.

Outside the Lens will also curate a short film series of independent, experimental, and documentary flicks prior to each feature presentation. Outside the Lens is a community program that "empowers" youth to create change through digital media. Writers, journalists, filmmakers, photographers, artists and teachers encourage "disconnected" students to share their stories. Since 2001, Outside the Lens has worked with more than 13,000 "undeserved" or "at-risk" youth from kindergarten to high school.

“‘La La Land’ is the perfect reflection for Outside the Lens,” said Lucy Eagleson, Program Director for Outside the Lens. “‘La La Land’ celebrates the art of making movies, and we teach young people the art of taking a story from stage to screen. We’re also excited to be curating short, independent film-festival films — not always seen in the mainstream — that will be screened before each feature film. We love cinema and story-telling and we’re excited to show the community who we are and what we do.”

Second Saturday Cinema is one facet of The NTC Foundation’s year-long, Arts District’s 10th Anniversary celebration. Events will be conducted through its 100-acre campus exposing its 140 galleries, museums, artists, nonprofits, boutique shops, restaurants and cafés, within the Station’s 45 newly-renovated buildings.

According to Waltz, activities will honor past and present members who aided the Arts District achieve this milestone.

“Celebrations include exciting community programming, public art installations and cultural activities,” he said. “Signature popular events will include Friday Night Liberty Art Walk, Salute the Season and our seasonal Block Parties. New anchor events will also include a free Summer Concert Series.

“If you add up our Arts District programming, celebrations, art fairs and activities of our resident groups and venue users, there’s always something new and exciting happening on our campus,” added Alan Ziter, the NTC Foundation’s Executive Director.

“So, come early and enjoy music and performances that will highlight our Arts District groups in residence,” concluded Waltz. “Visit our art galleries, studios, and museums and our Liberty Public Market with more than 30 vendors hosting grab and go foods.”

Cinema schedule

May 13 – “La La Land” at 8 p.m.

June 10 – “Strictly Ballroom” at 8 p.m.

July 8 – “Lego Batman Movie” at 8 p.m.

Aug. 12 – “Sing” at 5 at 8 p.m.

Sept. 9 – “Jake Shimabukuro: Life on Four Strings” at 7 p.m.

Oct. 14 – “Ghostbusters” at 7 p.m.

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