BRAND USA

NEWS RELEASE

MacGillivray Freeman and Brand USA Celebrate the Switzerland Launch Event of “America’s Musical Journey,” the Giant Screen Documentary for IMAX® Theatres Starring Grammy Award-Nominated Singer and Songwriter Aloe Blacc

LUCERNE, SWITZERLAND - October 18, 2018

Swiss audiences to discover the varying musical experiences available throughout the United States

Brand USA, the destination marketing organization for the United States, has rejoined forces with MacGillivray Freeman Films along with global presenting sponsor Expedia Group and Air Canada to introduce their second giant screen film, “America’s Musical Journey,” to audiences in Lucerne, Switzerland. The film’s launch event is scheduled for Thursday, October 18 at the Swiss Museum of Transport.

“America’s Musical Journey” debuted in February 2018, and has received a warm reception from critics and audiences alike in Canada, France, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, Spain, and the United Kingdom. The film reveals the United States’ rich musical heritage as it follows Aloe Blacc while he traces the nation’s unique cultural roots through the footsteps of music legends like Louis Armstrong and Elvis Presley. Blacc experienes the diverse range of colourful locales and cultures at the heart of the United States’ music traditions and visits iconic cities, including New Orleans, La.; Chicago, Ill.; New York City, N.Y.; Nashville and Memphis, Tenn.; and Miami, Fla. The film also examines the collision of cultures that gave birth to distinctly American musical genres such as jazz, blues, country, rock and roll, hip-hop, and more.

The giant-screen IMAX® format immerses audiences in the joyful, tune-filled tour and takes them on adventures like paddle-wheel boating up the Mississippi Delta, flash mob dancing in Chicago, and skydiving with Elvis Presley impersonators over Memphis. Moviegoers will also meet the artists, musicians, and innovators currently shaping American culture, including Jon Batiste, bandleader and musical director of “The Late Show with Stephen Colbert,” Latin music icons Gloria and Emilio Estefan, and many more.

Academy Award-nominated director Greg MacGillivray threads the film together to create an immersive experience of culture and originality, with a soundtrack that showcases the United States’ passion for music. "America’s music has its roots in the diverse cultures that came together from different parts of the world, culminating in a unique blend of sound, culture, and innovation," said MacGillivray. "This trailblazing spirit is what makes American music such a treasured experience around the world. I hope people are inspired to explore their own creativity after seeing the film.”

"Music is an essential part of the human experience, and I look forward to helping audiences discover the unique cultural influences that gave rise to jazz, the blues, folk, and other musical genres in the United States," says Blacc. "I love the freedom of expression in this country, which is a source of creativity and innovation unlike anywhere else."

“America’s Musical Journey” is a cornerstone of Brand USA’s marketing strategy to promote the United States as a world-class travel destination. Ranked 19th in international visitation, Switzerland remains an important inbound market for the United States. According to the most recent forecast from the National Travel and Tourism Office at the U.S. Department of Commerce, the United States is expected to see about a one percent increase in visitor volume over the next five years from Switzerland - an increase year over year. This projected increase in visitation makes it the perfect moment in time to connect with Swiss audiences.

“Switzerland is a top 20 market for international visitation to the USA and we are thrilled the Swiss Museum of Transport is featuring 'America’s Musical Journey,' a cross-country adventure through the musical heritage of America and the cultural cities where American’s music was born.” said Christopher L. Thompson, president and CEO of Brand USA. “We want potential Swiss travelers to experience the diversity of America through music and we hope this film inspires even more Swiss to visit America.”

"Music has the power to bring people together, especially here in the United States where diversity and creative freedom are such an important part of the culture," says Shaun MacGillivray, producer of “America’s Musical Journey” and president of MacGillivray Freeman Films. "We’re using the immersive, visual giant screen experience to tell the story of America’s musical and cultural heritage in a new and powerful way."

"As a longtime partner of Brand USA, we are honored to lend support and raise awareness as a global sponsor and exclusive online travel activation partner of this film," said Wendy Olson Killion, global vice president of Expedia Group Media Solutions. "We believe music has the ability to inspire travellers from all over the world to explore new places and cultures."

“Great music both evokes particular places and transcends borders. As a global airline, Air Canada embraces this spirit and is pleased to partner with Brand USA so everyone can make their own musical journey on North America’s Best airline as rated by Skytrax. We offer easy, one-stop connections from Switzerland to nearly 60 U.S. destinations through our major Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal hubs,” said John MacLeod, vice president of global sales and alliances at Air Canada.

Leveraging the experiential nature of the giant screen to show travellers the nearly limitless experiences that the United States has to offer remains an integral part of Brand USA’s marketing strategies to drive international tourism to communities in all 50 states, five territories, and the District of Columbia. Brand USA’s first giant screen film, “National Parks Adventure,” now available on Netflix, was voted Best Film of the Year by the Giant Screen Cinema Association and became the highest grossing documentary film of 2016. The film is expected to generate more than 172,000 incremental visits and $700 million in incremental spend from 2017-2019. According to a study from Oxford Economics and Phocuswright, the $12 million giant screen film has generated 46,700 trips to the United States so far and $173 million in visitor spending in Fiscal Year 2017 alone.

“America’s Musical Journey” will play in select IMAX® and giant screen theatres across Switzerland. For a current list of theatres showing “America’s Musical Journey” in Switzerland, please click here. To discover more about the USA’s rich musical culture and the diversity of experiences the country has to offer, please visit Brand USA’s consumer website VisitTheUSA.com and follow Visit The USA on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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About MacGillivray Freeman Films
MacGillivray Freeman Films is the world’s foremost independent producer and distributor of giant-screen 70mm films with 40 films for IMAX® and giant-screen theatres to its credit. Throughout the company’s 50-year history, its films have won numerous international awards including two Academy Award® nominations and three films inducted into the IMAX® Hall of Fame. MacGillivray Freeman’s films are known for their artistry and celebration of science and the natural world. It is the first documentary film company to reach the one-billion-dollar benchmark for worldwide box office. For more information about the company, visit MacGillivrayFreemanFilms.com.

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About Brand USA
Brand USA is the nation's destination marketing organization, dedicated to attracting legitimate international inbound travel to strengthen the U.S. economy, increase exports, create quality jobs, and promote community prosperity. By running data-driven campaigns and unifying messaging across industry and government, Brand USA positions the United States as a top global destination while providing current visa and entry information.

Over the past 13 years Brand USA has driven 11.3 million additional international visitors who spent $38.1 billion in the United States, leading to $82.9 billion in total economic impact and sustaining an average of more than 40,000 jobs each year. These efforts have generated nearly $11 billion in attributable tax receipts at the federal, state, and local levels.