

Julia Verdin's Social Impact Thriller "MAYA" Set for January 26th 2024 Release

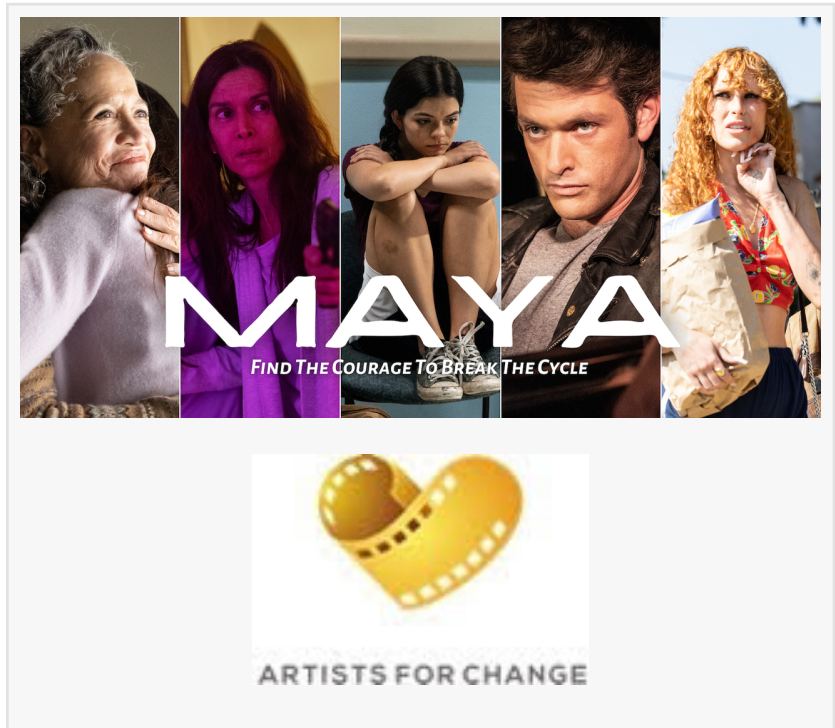
Social Impact Feature on Human Trafficking Makes Simultaneous Theatrical and Digital Day and Date Debut in North America Beginning January 26, 2024

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, January 23, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- MAYA, written, directed by Julia Verdin, is presented by the non-profit social impact organization Artists for Change. The release coincides with Human Trafficking Awareness Month. In the film, teenager Maya (Isabella Feliciano) is raised in a household stricken by her father's abandonment and her

mother's (Patricia Velasquez) ensuing alcoholism. She seeks an escape from her mother's abusive boyfriend by confiding in a man she meets online, who convinces her to run away. Unbeknownst to Maya, she has been lured into a child trafficking scheme where her confidant quickly becomes her pimp, along with an older captive Kayla (Rumer Willis). While Maya fights to understand the difference between love and manipulation, her mother must fight through her addiction to bring her daughter home.

MAYA will be released in several U.S. theatrical markets on January 26, 2024—including Minneapolis, Detroit, Dallas, Miami, Los Angeles, and San Antonio so far. MAYA will be available to rent/own on the same date (January 26, 2024) on all digital HD internet, cable, and satellite platforms in North America. The film will also have a community release program for churches, community groups, and nonprofits. MAYA will be available to own on DVD on March 12, 2024.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many people shifted online, including human traffickers. Social media sites have allowed traffickers a faster and more effective way to recruit young victims. Online recruitment and grooming increased as children spent more time online for virtual learning, often with little parental supervision. This led to dramatic increases in online



commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking, including online sexual exploitation of children, and demand for and distribution of child sexual exploitation material.

Maya's story is a call to action for the audience to mobilize against the epidemic of sex trafficking and online predators and support the work of organizations already involved in the fight.

It also highlights the growing problem of domestic abuse.

Verdin says, "I was inspired to write MAYA after hearing many stories from survivors of trafficking about the Stockholm syndrome-type relationships they had with their traffickers. They had been manipulated into believing that their trafficker was the only person who was trustworthy and truly cared for them. Often the survivors had also come from situations where there was domestic abuse happening in the home too. To represent these realities of human trafficking in the most authentic way possible, I made sure to meet with anti-trafficking groups, domestic violence groups and trafficking task force detectives, in addition to survivors. My hope is that MAYA will help educate teenagers and parents as to what trafficking looks like—when people join their voices on an issue, change is possible!" It's also a story about the cycle of abuse that can happen and the need to break it and courage and healing.

For more info on Maya and where to watch: <https://www.artists4change.org/filmprojects/maya/>

British filmmaker Julia Verdin is an award-winning multi-hyphenate writer, director, and producer. She has produced dozens of films, including THE MERCHANT OF VENICE, with Al Pacino and Jeremy Irons, and 2 JACKS, with Sienna Miller, Danny Huston, Jack Huston, and Jacqueline Bisset. Previous films she has directed include LOST GIRLS (Best Social Impact Film at the Culver City Film Festival) and the award-winning crime drama ANGIE: LOST GIRLS. Verdin is currently in post-production on another social impact film she wrote and directed, NO ADDRESS, which is about homelessness in America, and will be directing an upcoming feature about the opioid crisis from another script she wrote.

MAYA made its World Premiere at the Raindance Film Festival in London on October 30, 2023 and won best social impact film award.

Artists for Change is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a mission to create impact film, television, and multimedia projects that inspire individuals and communities to bring about positive social change. Narrative media is unique in its ability to engage emotions with multidimensional characters moving through evocative worlds, allowing for a transformative understanding of messages, values, and actions. Socially conscious stories developed by diverse artists across our global sociopolitical landscape can help us visualize grounded solutions with vital empathy, mobilizing people to stand up for what they believe in.

MAYA Trailer :<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFFLXOQXfGw>

MAYA Poster/Keyart <https://app.box.com/s/pkxadcb9s0nlz57vpy342qio0ltn0kki>

MAYA Still Photos <https://app.box.com/s/v95jr19ta5qb3zp1vrojbf9afrd6v1fq>

press kit: <https://www.artists4change.org/filmprojects/maya/>

MAYA

A Julia Verdin Film presented by Artists for Change in association with Fibonacci Films and Rough Diamond Productions

Running Time: 104 minutes

Writer/Director/Producer: Julia Verdin, p.g.a.

Producers: Jason Piette, p.g.a., Sean Acosta, Robert Craig, Morris S. Levy

Executive Producers: John Jacobs, Victoria Hill, Greg Clark, Kim Robson, John Lewis, Jet Lewis, Luanne Morrow, Tom Wallerstein, Lucy Lewis, Tara Smith, Julian Lennon, John Manly

Co-Producers: Antonio Michael, Corinne Jayaweera

Associate Producers: Laura Nickowitz, Angela Lujan,

Patricia Velasquez, Suzanne Ordas-Curry, Sally Becker, Jonathan Lourie

Cinematographer: Aakash Raj

Editor: Tom Wallerstein

Composer: Michelangelo Sosnowitz

Costume Designer: Camille Jumelle

Production Designer: Joseph P. Zubor

Cast: Patricia Velasquez, Isabella Feliciano, Billy Budinich, Rumer Willis, Gian Franco Rodriguez, Betzaida Landin, and Basilio Cerdan Jr., with Rena Owen and Anthony Montgomery

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#) | [TikTok](#)

Advance screeners available for media.

FOR MEDIA ENQUIRES OR TO SCHEDULE AND INTERVIEW WITH CAST OR WRITER/ DIRECTOR :
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AndersonPR

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