

DUST BOWLS AND JEWISH SOULS, New Documentary Film About Woody Guthrie, Set for United States Premiere

SAN FRANCISCO , CA, UNITED STATES, July 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [PerlePress Productions](#) and [Menemsha Films](#) are pleased to announce the U.S. premiere of the documentary film Dust Bowls and Jewish Souls: Another Side of Woody Guthrie, which will take place at the upcoming [San Francisco Jewish Film Festival](#).

Dust Bowls and Jewish Souls tells the little-known story of the significant Jewish influences on the iconic folksinger's life and musical career and will be shown twice during the festival, where it is being showcased as the Local Spotlight Film.

The film will screen at San Francisco's famed Castro Theatre on Saturday, July 18 and on Tuesday, July 28 at the Piedmont Theatre in Oakland.

"I am so excited about the film's upcoming premiere," said Steven Pressman, the film's producer and director who is a longtime San Francisco resident. "Given that the entire country is in the midst of celebrating our 250th birthday, I'm especially delighted to have made a film that revisits such a quintessential American whose music continues to remind us of who we are as a nation."

Woody Guthrie (1912-1967) is best known for having written "This Land Is Your Land," along with singing about the plight of the Dust Bowl refugees during the 1930s. Dust Bowls and Jewish Souls shines a light on a very different side of Guthrie's life and music – with a particular focus on his close relationship with his mother-in-law Aliza Greenblatt, who was a prominent Yiddish poet and lyricist.

"My father saw something special in the Jewish tradition that inspired him," Arlo Guthrie, the



Woody Guthrie -- photo credit: Library of Congress

acclaimed folksinger and Woody's son, says in the documentary. "And he and my grandmother had a respect for each other as writers, as thinkers, as people of the heart."

"I was so surprised to discover that Woody had written songs about Hanukkah, and about everything from borscht to bagels and lox," said Pressman, explaining what originally motivated him to make the film. "Here's this very non-Jewish guy who grew up in a tiny town in Oklahoma, and he's writing lyrics about the Holocaust and Jewish history? I figured there must be a really good story here!"

Pressman, a former newspaper and magazine journalist, specializes in documentary films about little-known stories in Jewish-American History. His first film, *50 Children: The Rescue Mission of Mr. and Mrs. Kraus*, premiered on HBO in 2013 and received an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Historical Programming.

The *Toronto Globe and Mail* described *Dust Bowls and Jewish Souls* as an "eye-opening documentary" when it premiered internationally in June at the

Toronto Jewish Film Festival. The film will screen at film festivals, movie theaters and other venues throughout the United States and abroad over the next several months.

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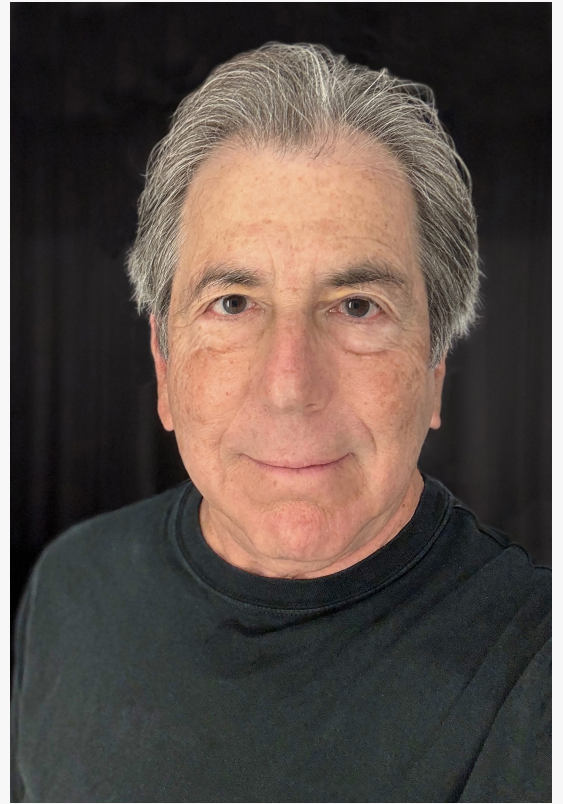
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*Steven Pressman, Film
Director*



Aliza Greenblatt -- photo credit: Woody Guthrie Publications

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Steven Pressman, film director --
photo credit: PerlePress
Productions

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