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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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GIFFORD FOUNDATION PRESENTS SPRING “What If...” FILM SERIES

Two free films explore community healing and immigrant experience

(Syracuse, NY) The Gifford Foundation announces the spring films to be screened as part of the **“What if...” Film Series**. Launched in March 2010, the series presents free films showcasing how communities across the nation successfully address issues of concern to residents. The screenings are followed by discussions on how the themes resonate within Central New York.

A committee of community volunteers selected the films which will be shown at **ArtRage Gallery, located at 505 Hawley Avenue in Syracuse**. Each film will be screened twice from **March 6 through April 16; show times vary for each screening**. Each film is about one hour long and is followed by the moderated discussion.

The first film, [*Carved from the Heart*](#), will be shown on **Tuesday March 6 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm** and **Thursday March 15 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm**. The second, [*TRUST: Second Acts in Young Lives*](#), will screen **Wednesday April 4 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm** and **Monday April 16 from 7:00 to 9 pm**.

In *Carved from the Heart*, a man loses his son to a cocaine overdose. Grieving, Stan Marsden, a Tsimpsean wood carver decides to create a totem

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pole in his son's memory and invites the town of Craig, Alaska to help. Before he is done, the pole becomes a communal project, bringing people of diverse backgrounds and ages together. *Carved from the Heart* intertwines the process of carving and erecting the Healing Heart totem pole with the participants' stories of personal loss, grief, substance abuse, suicide and violence. *Carved from the Heart* demonstrates the enormous power of mutual support, culture, art, and ceremony in enabling a community to face tragedy, provide support to its members, and find a path to healing.

Award-winning document filmmaker Nancy Kelly's formidable new documentary *TRUST: Second Acts in Young Lives* allows us an in-depth look at the Albany Park Theatre Projects's story-telling process and how their work helps transform the lives of young people. The story of Marlin, originally from Honduras, is one of sexual violence, separation from her mother, and the harsh realities of immigration. *TRUST* follows her harrowing, personal story that then becomes the basis for an original play. The film captures the respect, support and tenderness that APTP's ensemble members show Marlin and beautifully illustrates the healing power of art and community.

For more information about the "What If..." Film Series contact the Gifford Foundation at 315-474-2489 or visit www.giffordfoundation.org.

About The Gifford Foundation

The Gifford Foundation is a private foundation supporting community needs in Central New York since 1954. Through its grantmaking and initiatives the Foundation supports organizations in an intentionally transformative and flexible manner. This is based on a fundamental belief that change at the individual and/or organizational level holds the potential to institute change at broader community levels.

Stills from the two films follow.

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Image from *Carved from the Heart*



Image from *TRUST: Second Acts in Young Lives*



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