

Sabes Jewish Community Center
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February 18, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Minneapolis Jewish Film Festival presents *Refusenik*, a documentary film
chronicling the thirty-year movement to free Soviet Jews**

Minneapolis, Minn...The Sabes Foundation Minneapolis Jewish Film Festival will screen the documentary film *Refusenik* on Thursday, March 12 at noon at the Sabes JCC, 4330 S. Cedar Lake Road, Minneapolis, MN 55416. *Refusenik*, the first retrospective documentary to chronicle the thirty-year movement to free Soviet Jews, demonstrates how a small grassroots effort bold enough to take on a Cold War superpower blossomed into an international human rights campaign that engaged the disempowered and world leaders alike.

The film will be introduced by St. Paul resident and Soviet Jewry activist Pat Kaplan and followed by Vladimir Posse, journalist and professor of History. While Kaplan will discuss the movement here in the Twin Cities, Posse will tell the story from the other side of the curtain. Were Russian Jews aware of the movement here in the US? How large was the Refusenik movement and how were they viewed by others?

The film is a tapestry of first-person accounts of heroism, sacrifice and ultimately, liberation. Much of the material used in *Refusenik* is unique and exclusive to this film. Interviews with key leaders in the movement are some of the first ever to be recorded. Many of the photographs and covert film footage—some of it smuggled out of the Soviet Union—have never been seen before by a large audience, and help make *Refusenik* a unique portrait of this amazing story.

The film is dedicated to the memory of Stephen Feinstein, Founder of the Center for Holocaust

and Genocide Studies at the University of Minnesota and an activist in the Refusenik movement.

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The Sabes Foundation Minneapolis Jewish Film Festival takes place March 5–15, 2009 and presents the best feature films, documentaries and shorts from around the world on themes of Jewish culture and identity. The film festival is an opportunity to heighten awareness of this diversity to audiences of all backgrounds. Through its eclectic programming of films in different languages, the festival strives to break down stereotypes and racial barriers. It hosts filmmakers from all over the globe, and presents panels, workshops, and a variety of programs as part of the festival's annual programming. For a full list of films and for more information, visit www.mplsjff.org.

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