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**CLASSIC ITALIAN FILM EXPOSING RUSSIAN
OPPRESSION TO BE SCREENED IN UKRAINE**

Kyiv, Ukraine (August 23, 2023) – In solidarity with the people of Ukraine in their war with Russia, a special screening of the classic Italian film *We the Living* will be held in Kyiv on September 2nd. Originally released during World War II, *We the Living* is a powerful drama about how lives suffocate under totalitarianism.

Two Ukrainian organizations, the Bendukidze Free Market Center (BFMC) and the Ayn Rand Center Ukraine expressed eagerness to have the film seen in their country. They are co-hosting the charity-event screening to raise funds for their countrymen fighting against Russian forces.

Introducing the film will be USA-based Restoration Producer Duncan Scott. The Emmy-award-winning filmmaker, along with Associate Producer Barbara Scott, spent over two years meticulously restoring and rejuvenating the 80-year-old movie frame-by-frame. The result, *We the Living - the 80th Anniversary Restoration* was completed in time to commemorate the movie's 1942 premiere at the Venice Film Festival.

Set in the turbulent years following the Russian Revolution, *We the Living* tells the story of Kira, a defiant young college student who meets a fugitive. The two fall in love and together embark on a fierce struggle to survive under a heartless, oppressive system. When a Soviet secret police agent also falls in love with Kira,

the lives of all three intertwine and spiral toward disaster. At its core *We the Living* is a fierce declaration that every human being has the right to live free.

The movie was based on the semi-autobiographical novel by Ayn Rand (*The Fountainhead, Atlas Shrugged*). It draws from actual conditions and events the author observed while growing up in the Soviet Union. Event organizer Nataliya Melnyk believes the screening will be a magnet event: “We are expecting young people from all over the country to come. Hopefully, air raid sirens and drones will not prevent us from enjoying the movie.”

Scott believes *We the Living* is especially relevant to the Ukraine conflict: “This powerful story illustrates for young Ukrainians what life would be like under Russian domination. Many have no idea because they weren’t even born when Russia ruled Ukraine. And what’s amazing to me is that the movie depicts Russian oppression in the early 1920s and here we are 100 years later and it’s still going on!”

We the Living stars Italian film legends Alida Valli, Rossano Brazzi, and Fosco Giachetti. It was directed by Goffredo Alessandrini. Hailed as a cinematic masterpiece, it became the number one box office film in Italy in 1942. Because the movie’s anti-authoritarian message proved to be an embarrassment to Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini, he had it banned. The long-lost negatives were rediscovered decades after the war and the film was re-released.

When *We the Living* finally reached theaters in America, it garnered widespread praise: *Sneak Preview*’s Michael Medved stated, “An amazing piece of cinema...I loved every minute of it! I think you will also fall under the spell of this film.” *Variety* called it, “Grand and lavish entertainment.” The *Los Angeles Times* claimed, “Hugely entertaining...a swanky historical romance.” And Donald Lyons

of *Details* called it, “The Casablanca of wartime Italy...It’s a superior epic romance, a masterpiece.”

We the Living - the 80th Anniversary Restoration, is currently being screened at festivals, art house theaters and special events around the world and will be available on streaming platforms near the end of the year. For more information go to WeTheLivingMovie.com

Contact: Alfred Hopton

Capstone Communications Company

alfred@capstonecommunicationscompany.com

C: 310.508.8866