



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Media Contact: John Hill
john@johnhillpr.com
510.435.7128

ODC ANNOUNCES A SPECIAL SCREENING OF THE OSCAR NOMINATED FILM **CLOSE**

*With a pre-screening live performance by ODC/Dance and a post-screening
discussion with Director Lukas Dhont and The Representation Project
Founder Jennifer Siebel Newsom*

March 6, 2023

6:30 p.m. at ODC Theater



FILM STILL COURTESY OF KRIS DEWITTE MENUET/CANNES

odc.dance/close

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, February 14, 2023 – ODC is delighted to announce a special screening of **CLOSE**, a coming-of-age drama which won the Grand Prix at the 2022 Cannes Film Festival, and which was just nominated for the Academy Award for Best International Feature Film. This one-night-only event will take place at ODC Theater on Monday, March 6 at 6:30 p.m. Members of **ODC/Dance** will perform

before the screening, and a discussion with director **Lukas Dhont** will follow. As a fundraiser for ODC, tickets start at \$100 and will go on sale February 20 at odc.dance/close.

Close is Belgian director Lukas Dhont's second feature film, following *Girl* (2018), the critically acclaimed story of a young trans woman who wants to dance on pointe. Written by Dhont and **Angelo Tijssens**, *Close* portrays the friendship between two 13-year-old boys, Léo and Rémi, and the rift that forms between them when they enter high school.

As one of his primary inspirations, Dhont cites psychologist **Niobe Way**'s book, *Deep Secrets: Boys' Friendships and the Crisis of Connection*, which documents her study of intimacy among teenage boys. "It seems emotions are...often seen as feminine or not wanted," said Dhont in an interview for *Variety* magazine. "Many men or women, girls as well, may recognize that fear of intimacy. I wanted to showcase the vulnerable friendship between boys, and what distancing themselves from each other does to them."

Following the screening, Dhont will be joined in conversation by Niobe Way as well as documentary filmmaker **Jennifer Siebel Newsom**, director of *Miss Representation* and *The Mask You Live In* and founder of The Representation Project.

Close stars **Eden Dambrine**, **Gustav de Waele**, **Emilie Dequenne** and **Léa Drucker**. The film premiered at the Cannes Film Festival on May 26, 2022, winning the Grand Jury Prize. On January 24, 2023, *Close* was nominated for Best International Feature Film at the 95th Academy Awards. It also won the André Cavens Award for Best Film by the Belgian Film Critics Association. On January 27, 2023, it was released in U.S. cinemas after a one-week theatrical run in New York and Los Angeles last December. For more information, visit a24films.com/films/close.

ABOUT LUKAS DHONT

Lukas Dhont was born in Ghent, Belgium. He graduated with a diploma in audio-visual arts from the KASK School Of Arts in Ghent. Throughout his studies he focused on fiction, but also explored the possibilities of documentary. In 2016, Dhont participated in the Cannes Cinéfondation residency with the script for his first feature film, *Girl*. This film combines themes the filmmaker had already explored in his short works, including dance, transformation and identity. Dhont collaborates regularly with choreographer and dancer Jan Martens with whom he co-signed a performance titled *The Common People*. In 2018 Lukas' first feature film, *Girl*, was presented at the Cannes Film Festival, in the official selection 'Un Certain Regard' and won, among other awards, the Caméra d'Or for Best First Movie. His second feature film, *Close*, was selected as part of the Official Competition of the 75th Edition of the Cannes Film Festival and won the Grand Prix. It was later nominated for Best International Feature Film at the 95th Academy Awards.

ABOUT JENNIFER SIEBEL NEWSOM

Jennifer Siebel Newsom is an award-winning filmmaker, influential thought leader on gender equality and the First Partner of California. After graduating with honors from Stanford University and Stanford's Graduate School of Business, she wrote, directed and produced the 2011 award-winning documentary *Miss Representation*. As a result of the film's impact, she launched The Representation Project, a nonprofit organization that uses film and media as catalysts for cultural transformation. Her second film as a director, *The Mask You Live In*, explores how America's narrow definition of masculinity is harming boys, men and society at large. Her third film, *The Great American Lie*, unveils the underlying cultural

causes of inequality in America. Newsom's latest film, *Fair Play* (2022), tackles the pressing issue of gender inequality at home and the importance of the care work that is often rendered invisible. She also executive produced the Emmy Award-winning and Academy Award-nominated documentary *The Invisible War* and was an executive producer on the Emmy Award-winning documentary *The Hunting Ground*.

ABOUT NIOBE WAY

Niobe Way is Professor of Developmental Psychology and the founder of the Project for the Advancement of Our Common Humanity at New York University (NYU). She is also past President of the Society for Research on Adolescence and co-director of the Center for Research on Culture, Development and Education at NYU. Her work focuses on social and emotional development, how ideologies shape families and child development in the U.S. and China, and on how to build a more just, humane and connected world. The Listening Project, which she helped create, is a school-based curriculum that aims to address the global crisis of connection (i.e., loneliness, depression, suicide, hate crimes, mass violence) by fostering listening with curiosity in schools, workplaces and homes. Way's latest co-edited book is *The Crisis of Connection: Its Roots, Consequences, and Solution*. Way has also authored nearly a hundred journal articles and books, including *Deep Secrets: Boys' Friendships and the Crisis of Connection* and *Everyday Courage: The Lives and Stories of Urban Teenagers*.

ABOUT ODC

Founded in 1971 by Artistic Director Brenda Way, ODC is a groundbreaking contemporary arts institution: a world-class dance company (ODC/Dance), a theater with year-round presenting and mentorship programs (ODC Theater), a training school for dancers and movers of all levels (ODC School), and a fee-free, educational Healthy Dancers' Clinic. Known nationally for its entrepreneurial savvy and artistic innovation, ODC is unique for its holistic vision, now including a robust digital platform. With its home in San Francisco's Mission District, ODC makes a dynamic contribution to the Bay Area's vibrant dance and arts ecosystem, cultivating artists, inspiring audiences, engaging the community, and fostering diversity and inclusion through dance performance, training and mentorship.

FACT SHEET

WHAT:

ODC presents a special, one-night-only screening of ***CLOSE***, a 2022 coming-of-age drama directed by **Lukas Dhont**. The screening is a benefit for ODC.

Run Time: 105 minutes
Languages: Dutch, French
Rated R

WHEN:

Monday, March 6, 2023

6:30 p.m.: Reception and performance by ODC/Dance
7:30 p.m.: Screening
9:15 p.m.: Discussion with director Lukas Dhont, documentary filmmaker Jennifer Siebel Newsom and author Niobe Way

WHERE:

ODC Theater
3153 17th Street
San Francisco, CA 94110

TICKETS:

\$100 General Admission
\$250 Supporter

A limited number of tickets on sale February 20 at odc.dance/close or call the box office at **415-863-9834**.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

odc.dance
For all press inquiries please contact John Hill at john@johnhillpr.com.