Indie documentary, “The Prison Within,” narrated by Hill Harper to Premiere at 35th annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The upcoming feature-length documentary film, THE PRISON WITHIN, will make its world premiere at the 35th Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival (SBIFF), one of the leading film festivals in the United States, presented by UGG.

THE PRISON WITHIN is narrated by Hill Harper (The Good Doctor, Homeland, CSI:NY, Covert Affairs) and author of Letters to an Incarcerated Brother, which speaks to the current mass incarceration crisis. Award-winning composer Ruth Mendelson developed the original score for the documentary.

THE PRISON WITHIN is a relevant and timely documentary exploring the destructive impact untreated trauma has on individuals and communities through the powerful stories of survivors of violent crimes and prisoners incarcerated for murder in San Quentin prison. The prisoners and survivors come together and participate in the Victim Offender Education Group (VOEG)—an innovative restorative justice program enabling prisoners to discover how the trauma they’ve experienced contributed to their criminality and to understand the impact their crimes have on their victims. Together, the prisoners and survivors confront and expose the pain and shame caused by the extreme trauma they’ve experienced throughout their lives. Seattle-based Director Katherin Hervey, a former Los Angeles Public Defender and volunteer prison college instructor, is the first filmmaker to gain access to chronicle these intimate and revealing sessions inside San Quentin Prison.

This film serves as an example of how all people can change, how we can evolve as a community, and the power of connecting to the humanity in others, even those who have committed harm. The filmmakers aim to inspire a dialogue about the shared responsibility we all have to collectively heal our mass incarceration crisis; and to motivate definitive community justice reform that breaks the cycle of recidivism and the criminalization of marginalized communities.

THE PRISON WITHIN will premiere at SBIFF, January 16, 2020 at 10:20 a.m. PST at Fiesta Theatre, 916 State Street, Santa Barbara.

Immediately following the premiere, THE PRISON WITHIN documentary Director and Producer Katherin Hervey will join members of the cast in a Q&A.

The film features expert voices from nationally recognized leaders within the restorative justice community. Guest experts include Sonya Shah, sujatha baliga, and Troy Williams.
THE PRISON WITHIN
A Feature Documentary

- **Sonya Shah**, founder and director of The Ahimsa Collective, has over 20 years experience in social justice education and over 10 years experience in restorative justice. She is also an Associate Professor at the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) and recipient of the prestigious Fulbright fellowship and Jacob Javitz fellowship.

- **sujatha baliga**, is the director of The Restorative Justice Project at Impact Justice, and a former victim advocate and public defender, who was awarded a Soros Justice Fellowship in 2008 which she used to launch a pre-charge restorative juvenile diversion program. She was recently awarded the prestigious MacArthur Foundation ‘Genius’ Grant.

- **Troy Williams**, a formerly incarcerated prisoner at San Quentin, is the co-founder of the San Quentin Prison Report (SQPR) and a current Soros Justice Fellow. As SQPR’s producer, founding Chairman, and Chief Executive Officer, Troy spent the last seven years of his incarceration teaching his peers to produce audio works behind prison walls, working out of the same media lab now used by “Ear Hustle.” He also helped develop the curriculum for the Victim-Offender Education Group (VOEG) and has facilitated other restorative justice programs, both inside and outside of San Quentin.

The Santa Barbara International Film Festival attracts 95,000 attendees annually, offering 11 days of 200+ films, tributes and panels, with a mission to engage, enrich, and inspire people through the power of film.

**Screening Times & Locations:**
- January 16, 2020 at 10:20 a.m. PST at Fiesta Theatre, 916 State Street, Santa Barbara.
- January 18, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. PST at Metro Theatre, 618 State Street, Santa Barbara.

A teaser for the film is available for preview at [https://vimeo.com/190048873](https://vimeo.com/190048873)

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Link to Electronic Press Kit: [https://theprisonwithin.org/images/EPK.pdf](https://theprisonwithin.org/images/EPK.pdf)

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