



## **WOMAN OF HER WORD PROVIDES AUDIO DESCRIPTION FOR UPCOMING 'PAVAROTTI' FILM IN SUPPORT OF ACCESSIBILITY**

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA—June 7, 2019—**Woman Of Her Word, a company founded by international voiceover artist and media accessibility advocate Michele Spitz, has funded, co-produced and narrated the audio description for Ron Howard's upcoming documentary *Pavarotti*, which opens today, June 7. The project that examines the life and career of opera tenor Luciano Pavarotti is one of the select documentaries to be granted an audio description asset in order to make the film fully accessible to low-vision and blind audiences.

Audio description is a visual description of key elements, essentially painting a picture with words to supplement the existing visual media, and will be available in the US, UK and on Blu-ray. Woman Of Her Word is dedicated to making world-class performances and cultural events accessible to people with disabilities, seniors, veterans and members of underserved communities.

The World Health Organization estimates, as of earlier this year, that about 1.3 billion people globally have some form of vision loss. While many big budget features are made with audio description, some independent and documentary films are not. Cinemas are now required to install technology to support audio description, but not every film that is screened is distributed with an audio description track.

While debate has surged in recent years regarding issues like authentic casting and equal employment opportunities in the entertainment field at large, audio description has often gone unnoticed within the larger conversation on inclusion. By contributing the audio description to a landmark music-related film, Spitz is betting that *Pavarotti* will shine a brighter light on not only the importance but urgency of inclusion. The project is a fitting one as Pavarotti himself strongly believed in opera being made available to, and experienced by all audiences—all over the world—despite all else.

"Audio description is one more step toward full inclusivity in media and entertainment," said Spitz. "*Pavarotti* will expose people to opera and beautifully bring them together. Pavarotti would have likely been thrilled to know that one day this documentary profiling his life was going to reach additional audiences of low-vision and blind fans all over the world."

Spitz has focused her work on making great independent and documentary films accessible, and has voiced more than 56, including *Itzhak*, *How Sweet the Sound - The Blind Boys of Alabama*; *CinemAbility: The Art of Inclusion*; *The Beatles: Eight Days A Week - The Touring Years*; and *Miss You Already*. Spitz has provided and designated in-kind post production audio description grants for 80 percent of the films she has worked on.

An important part of Spitz's work is her intent to leverage media accessibility awareness via Woman Of Her Word and other philanthropic endeavors, including public speaking for both industry and consumer audiences.

Since 2014, she has sponsored and voiced the audio description for select films annually for Superfest: SF International Disability Film Festival and provided the same annually for ReelAbilities: NY International Disability Film Festival since 2015. She was a panelist and sponsor for the opening of the 2018 ReelAbilities: LA International Disability Film Festival. Spitz also provides in-kind audio description production grants to prominent museums, such as the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum in 2018.

The select catalog of films and digital media for which Spitz voiced the audio description are listed on IMDb, and can be experienced in cinemas, via broadcast such as PBS, and streaming platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime and iTunes.

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#### ABOUT WOMAN OF HER WORD

Professional voiceover artist, public speaker, advocate and philanthropist, Michele Spitz is dedicated to making the world accessible to all communities by providing her vocal talents to filmmakers, publishers, speaking venues and charitable organizations. Wherever Michele's voice is, her heart is also; short and full-length documentaries, feature films, museums, children's programming, industrial videos, audio manuals and public service announcements.

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