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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HOMING INSTINCT

An immersive cinematic Installation by

Lydia Dean Pilcher

Woodstock Byrdcliffe Guild

Kleinert/James Center for the Arts

36 Tinker Street

Woodstock, NY 12498

September 27 - October 1, 2023

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(Woodstock, NY) - The Woodstock Byrdcliffe Guild is pleased to present *Homing Instinct*, written & directed by Lydia Dean Pilcher on view September 27 - October 1, 2023, 10am - 6pm in conjunction with the Woodstock Film Festival at the Kleinert/James Center for the Arts, 36 Tinker Street, Woodstock, NY. *Homing Instinct* is 26 minutes playing on a continuous loop every half hour. A reception for the artist will be held on Friday, September 29, 4 - 6pm.

An immersive cinematic installation, *Homing Instinct* is based on the story by Dani McClain published in the anthology, *Octavia's Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements*. The exhibition is supported by a Silver Sun Foundation residency.

Homing Instinct evokes a world of shifting layers, juxtaposing neorealism with the vast metaphysical sweep of nature. The audience is invited into a poetic and powerful aesthetic experience to imagine an interconnectedness as a species of nature in our changing world.

The story is set in the near future in a desperate moment of rising sea level. Two friends face a federal executive order to evacuate New York City and relocate within 30 days. The metaphorical question arises, "Are you a fish or a bird?" Raven, a psychologist studying the roots of extremism, and Paloma, a marine biologist at the Coney Island Aquarium, encounter a time traveler in different ways. Existential questions around government authority and the individual are explored using the language of dance to reimagine our relationship with nature.

The starring roles are played by Barrett Doss (*Station 19*, *Grey's Anatomy*) and Kineta Kunutu (*The Blacklist*, *Citadel*), alongside a cast of accomplished talent. A steel sculpture, "Queen Coils," by the artist's brother, sculptor/welder Jay Bradley Pilcher, is featured in *Homing Instinct*, as a thematic symbol of the creative spirit of human change and nature. "Queen Coils" will be on display in the exhibition.

Artist quote material: *As a motion picture installation artist, I am inspired by the natural world, neuroscience, culture, and our relationship to the future. My films are about strong female characters whose lives are entangled in political events that seem beyond their control. "Homing Instinct" explores the questions: How do we define our future in this urgent era of human-driven global warming? Will we adapt fast enough and evolve as humans? Can we re-conceive our relationship to the natural world, and re-imagine our communities and our future together?*

About the ARTIST: **Lydia Dean Pilcher** is a visual artist and director, building on her established career as a two time Emmy-winning and Academy Award-nominated producer in

film & television. As a filmmaker she has lived and worked all over the world in complex cultures with different histories, traditions, and languages, listening to and experiencing the micro & macro systems of life. Her current work explores human relationship to change.

Pilcher has produced over 40 feature films and series, including “The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks,” “Queen of Katwe,” “The Namesake,” “Cutie & The Boxer,” and “The Darjeeling Limited,” collaborating with notable directors including Kathryn Bigelow, Wes Anderson, Gina Prince-Bythewood, George Wolfe, Barry Levinson, and twelve films in a longstanding relationship with internationally acclaimed director Mira Nair.

In 2018 Pilcher made a move into directing with true stories about extraordinary women: the feature films “A Call To Spy” (Netflix) in which three female International spies work for Churchill’s SOE in the French Resistance of WWII; and “Radium Girls” (Amazon) co-directed with writer Ginny Mohler and starring Joey King, about the 1928 radium factory watch dial painters who stood up to corporate owners when they suffered radium poisoning.

As an ambassador for sustainability in the entertainment industry for over 15 years, Pilcher is a team leader of the Writers Guild of America (WGA)/Producers Guild of America (PGA) Climate Storytelling Group; and Co-Chair of The Director’s Guild of America (DGA) Sustainable Future Committee. She was recently named by Forbes as one of *68 Climate leaders Changing the Film and TV Industry*.

About the AUTHOR: Dani McClain reports on race, parenting and reproductive health. McClain's writing has appeared in outlets including The New York Times, The Atlantic, TIME, and Colorlines. McClain is a contributing writer at The Nation and a Puffin Fellow at Type Media Center. She was a staff reporter at the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and has worked as a strategist with organizations including Color of Change and Drug Policy Alliance. Her book, *We Live for the We: The Political Power of Black Motherhood*, was published in 2019 by Bold Type Books and was shortlisted in 2020 for a Hurston/Wright Legacy Award.

TEAM Credits: Lydia Dean Pilcher & Che Chisolm (Producers); Lisa Rinzler (Cinematographer); Lillie Rebecca McDonough (Composer); Stephanie Carroll (Production Designer); Noelia D. Rodriguez & Lydia Dean Pilcher (Editors); Kimberly Bridgewater (Choreographer); Thomas Schuster (Costume Designer).

About the Woodstock Film Festival: Founded in 2000, the Woodstock Film Festival (WFF) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization that nurtures and supports emerging and established filmmakers, sharing their creative voices through an annual festival and year-round programming to promote culture, diversity, community, educational opportunities, and economic growth. WFF provides innovative mentoring and inspired educational programs benefitting filmmakers, students and diverse audiences, while serving as a powerful cultural and economic engine for New York’s Hudson Valley and beyond. Such efforts have consistently resulted in the festival being hailed as one of the top regional film festivals worldwide. The Woodstock Film Festival is an Oscar®-qualifying festival in the short film categories - Live Action Short Film, Animated Short Film, and Documentary Short Film.

About the Woodstock Byrdcliffe Guild: The Woodstock Byrdcliffe Guild is a regional center for the arts located in Woodstock, New York. From its 250-acre mountainside campus and its arts and performance venue located in the Kleinert/James Center for

the Arts in the village of Woodstock, Byrdcliffe offers an integrated program of exhibitions, performances, classes, workshops, symposia, and artists' residencies. The Kleinert/James Center for the Arts presents exhibitions and organizes events that honor both the cultural legacy established by the Byrdcliffe Arts Colony in 1902 as well as contemporary artists in a variety of disciplines. All exhibitions, opening receptions, and gallery talks are free and open to the public

About the Silver Sun Foundation: The Silver Sun Foundation is a family philanthropy dedicated to providing support for creative artists, cultural organizations, educator and social change makers.