

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 10, 2017

**Media Contacts:**

Jessie Cohen

[jessie@jessieiscohen.com](mailto:jessie@jessieiscohen.com)

+1 415 623 0150

**FIRST-EVER HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR TESTIMONIAL IN ROOM-SCALE VR, FOR ARCHIVAL AND PRESERVATION, THE LAST GOODBYE, TO WORLD PREMIERE AT 2017 TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL®**

First-person testimonial of the Holocaust, co-created by United Nations senior creative advisor Gabo Arora and produced by executive director of USC Shoah Foundation, Stephen Smith, is an official selection of festival's Tribeca Immersive, in Storyscapes, presented by AT&T, April 21-29, 2017

**Los Angeles (March 10, 2017)** – Virtual reality lab LightShed, in partnership with USC Shoah Foundation, MPC VR, OTOY, Inc., and HERE BE DRAGONS, proudly announce the world premiere of the first-ever Holocaust survivor testimony in room-scale VR, THE LAST GOODBYE, at the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival, presented by AT&T. The experience will premiere within the Festival's cutting edge new media program, Tribeca Immersive, in the Storyscapes section, running April 21st through April 29th, 2017.

In The Last Goodbye, powerful testimony of the tragedy of the Holocaust is preserved for the first time in poignant, room-scale VR, as survivor Pinchas Gutter takes audiences with him on his final visit to Majdanek Concentration Camp where his parents and sister were murdered during World War II.

"It has been an honor to be able to help share and preserve Pinchas' testimony in virtual reality for future generations," said Arora. "With intolerance and xenophobia on the rise again, and the worst refugee crisis since WW2, his story, and those of countless victims has never been more important or relevant."

"Today when I see suffering of genocide victims and refugees, I feel their pain. I want my testimony to speak to the world to help avoid that pain. If my interactive (VR) testimony can be a warning to the world, it would make my sharing of my own pain worthwhile." - Pinchas Gutter

The team traveled with Gutter to Poland this summer to capture tens of thousands of photos and hours of 3D video on site, to create an experience that enables viewers to virtually walk with Gutter as he tours the railway car, gas chamber, shower room and barracks of Majdanek. The groundbreaking collaboration of the industry's top talent integrated a capture pipeline created by OTOY with HERE BE DRAGONS' 3D video testimony and brought to life with dozens of photogrammetry artists and engineers from MPC.

Tim Dillon, Head of VR & Immersive Content at MPC said, “Our ambition is to push the needle on what’s possible within a narrative and room scale mix, in a documentary format. We’re faithfully recreating the rooms of the Majdanek camp so you can inhabit them with Pinchas, you can feel his story by being there with him, eye to eye.”

“The power of VR is transportive and immersive. To achieve true presence in a place such as the Majdanek Concentration Camp, the senses must be fully engaged so one feels fully engrossed within the space they’re inhabiting,” said Patrick Milling Smith, president and co-founder, HERE BE DRAGONS. “It was important that we go beyond spherical 360 video for this particular piece to allow the viewer to physically walk around and experience the camp with real agency. This freedom of movement contributes to an even more powerful sense of presence while heightening the emotional impact.”

The photoreal experience presents a new way of capturing truth for the future, encouraging viewers to explore the spaces it brings to life. Gutter stands inside each vivid environment recounting his heartbreaking story of suffering and loss, which ends as a testament to the strength of the human heart and the enduring twin powers of hope and perseverance.

USC Shoah Foundation will archive and preserve Gutter’s testimony in support of the UN’s mission to counter future genocide and support refugees in the present day.

“Just as USC Shoah Foundation forged new frontiers by amassing the world’s largest searchable archive of video testimony from genocide survivors, so too are we proud to be a part of this pioneering project,” said Smith, executive director of USC Shoah Foundation. “But as technologically different as the two formats are, the goal is the same: to use one person’s story to inspire compassion and warn against the perils of intolerance. At its core ‘The Last Goodbye’ is a message in a bottle, placed in the long stream of time for future generations. The message is simple: Don’t let this happen.”

THE LAST GOODBYE was created by United Nations senior creative advisor and award-winning filmmaker Gabo Arora and Ari Palitz, produced by Arora and Stephen Smith, the executive director of USC Shoah Foundation, and co-produced by HERE BE DRAGONS, MPC VR and OTOY, in partnership with LightShed and USC Shoah Foundation. An original soundtrack is being helmed by audio director Dražen Bošnjak of Q Department. Spatial sound powered by Mach1. 3D stereo stitching by 3D paint\FX.

**For more information contact:**

Jessie Cohen

[jessie@jessieiscohen.com](mailto:jessie@jessieiscohen.com) □

+1 415 623 0150

**About LightShed**

LightShed uses the power of immersive storytelling, and cutting edge technology, to create positive social change. We shed light on the lives of everyday people struggling to survive today's gravest humanitarian crises. Because we believe that immersive

storytelling leads to empathy - and empathy leads to action.

### **About USC Shoah Foundation**

USC Shoah Foundation — The Institute for Visual History and Education is dedicated to making audio-visual interviews with survivors and other witnesses of the Holocaust and other genocides, a compelling voice for education and action. The Institute's current collection of more than 54,000 eyewitness testimonies contained within its Visual History Archive® preserves history as told by the people who lived it, and lived through it. Housed at the University of Southern California, within the Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, the Institute works with partners around the world to advance scholarship and research, to provide resources and online tools for educators, and to disseminate the testimonies for educational purposes.

### **About MPC VR**

MPC (Moving Picture Company) is a global leader in VFX for over 25 years with industry-leading facilities in London, Los Angeles, New York, Vancouver, Bangalore, Montreal, Amsterdam, Shanghai and Paris. In 2015, MPC established a creative and technology-led VR team - MPC VR. The division is focused on production and exploration across industries including Advertising, Original Content, Feature Film, Entertainment and Immersive Experiences. MPC VR's mixed reality dance duet, HEROES, was also an official 2017 Sundance New Frontier selection. They have also recently created multiple music experiences for Sony Music including Kygo, Pentatonix and The Chainsmokers. Other projects include VR for John Lewis, The Nature Conservancy, One Republic, Suicide Squad and Goosebumps.

### **About HERE BE DRAGONS**

HERE BE DRAGONS is a specialized experience studio that is comprised of the world's leading creative innovators in virtual and augmented reality. The HERE BE DRAGONS collective utilizes custom built tools and technology to craft and curate original immersive experiences. Its creative team and production talent are industry leaders in short-form commercials, music videos, feature film, theatre, design, photography and fine arts with a proven track record in creating stories that inspire and truly resonate, collectively earning them numerous Emmys, Cannes Lions, Grand Prixes, Palm d'Ors, AICP, D&AD, One Show, ADC, Tony, Webby Awards and a Grammy.

### **About OTOY, Inc.**

OTOY Inc. is the definitive cloud graphics company pioneering fundamental capture, render, and streaming technology for virtual and mixed reality. OTOY provides an integrated toolset to create and deliver the highest resolution, photorealistic media for next-generation immersive and interactive displays. Over the past decade, OTOY's Academy Award®-winning technology has been used by leading visual effects studios, animators, designers, architects and engineers to achieve unparalleled levels of photorealism and creative freedom, as well as new economics in cloud-based media production and distribution.

## **About Q Department**

Q Department studio was founded by composer, sound designer and inventor Dražen Bošnjak. In 2015 Bošnjak launched Mach1 a spatial audio technology company. Together Q Department and Mach1 have worked on some of the most high profile Virtual Reality titles including Oculus Story Studio's Dear Angelica, 20TH Century Fox's The MartianVR, USA Network's Mr. Robot VR, and The New York Times Great Performers. Mach1 recently launched their patent-pending VR sound format updating The New York Times NYTVR apps for iOS Android and Daydream. The Last Goodbye is powered by Mach1 sound technology.

###