

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**“THE RIFLEMAN’S VIOLIN,” NOW AVAILABLE FOR FILM FESTIVALS**

***Documentary on the violinist who played for Truman and Stalin  
is centerpiece of Citizen Film / Hoover Institution collaboration***

**SAN FRANCISCO** – “**The Rifleman’s Violin**” is a 12-minute documentary that revisits an extraordinary intersection of history and music that took place in July 1945 as Harry Truman, Winston Churchill and Josef Stalin prepared to negotiate the post-WWII fate of the world. With wit and verve, 90-year-old virtuoso violinist Stuart Canin recounts how, as a 19-year-old GI, he deployed to the German front with his rifle and violin on his back, “because you never know.” After Germany capitulated, Canin was once again pressed into service, this time as a musician in the Army’s 6718th Soldiers Show Company. In a secret garden on the outskirts of Berlin in ruins, he performed privately for the Big Three—at President Truman’s request—to break the ice of tense negotiations over the division of Europe between East and West, and the prosecution of the war against Japan. The film is directed by Sam Ball and produced by Abraham D. Sofaer.

After the war, Canin became a world-renowned violinist and the first American to win the coveted Paganini Prize (1959). Canin served as concertmaster for many prestigious orchestras, including the San Francisco Symphony and the New Japan Symphony under Seiji Ozawa. Canin also enjoyed a prolific career in Hollywood as concertmaster/first violinist in Hollywood’s top orchestral recordings including the scores of *Titanic*, *Forrest Gump*, and *Schindler’s List* under conductor John Williams. Canin’s film career includes playing himself as Zoe Trainer’s mentor in Robert Altman’s “**Short Cuts**” (1993).

“When (producer) Abe Sofaer and I met Stuart we were immediately taken by his charisma, and by the fact that, at 90-years-old, he is still a virtuoso violinist,” said Ball. “We knew we had the elements of a great film.”

“The Rifleman’s Violin” is the centerpiece of a larger multimedia collaboration between [Citizen Film](http://CitizenFilm.org) and the Hoover Institution Archives at Stanford University to create a physical and online multimedia archive entitled “**Potsdam Revisited: Overture to the Cold War**” preserving Canin’s extraordinary story. Included in the archive will be dozens of photos Canin took with his Leica as he walked amid the ruins of Berlin between concerts (Canin performed at Potsdam three times in July, 1945). The archive also includes “Potsdam Serenade,” a film reprising the first concert Canin gave at Potsdam, as well as original documents including letters home, a handwritten note from Truman and other memorabilia Canin collected.

“We hope ‘The Rifleman’s Violin’ and the online archive that will accompany the film will provide excellent source materials for scholars, not only of Potsdam, but also of the mysterious power of music to unlock shared human emotions, even under the most trying circumstances,” said Ball.

To access the work-in-progress archive and for additional information on “The Rifleman’s Violin”, visit

[potsdamrevisited.org](http://potsdamrevisited.org)

For more information on Citizen Film, please visit [www.citizenfilm.org](http://www.citizenfilm.org)

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