

Please find below our latest release. For further information, please contact: Joan Shenton - Tel: [07957 585 515](tel:07957585515), Email: [joanshenton@clara.co.uk](mailto:joanshenton@clara.co.uk)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## SUBJECTS IN BANNED DOCUMENTARY, POSITIVE HELL, TO ATTEND LONDON SCREENING

- \* Film Positive Hell controversially selected then banned by London Independent Film Festival
- \* Screening, happening in defiance of ban, to be attended by film's HIV+ subjects from northern Spain
- \* Both men fit and well after more than 30 years of HIV+ without antiviral drug regimes, unlike those given antivirals

London, UK. Dr Manuel Garrido and Manoel Penin - two of the five Spanish HIV-positive subjects of the film documentary Positive Hell, which was controversially banned a week ago by the London Independent Film Festival (LIFF) but is to be shown in defiance of the ban - are to attend the film's screening at noon tomorrow (Sunday) in Soho, London, and will then be available for interview.

The film's writer, narrator and co-producer, Joan Shenton, said: "The fact that Dr Garrido and Sr Penin are able to fly over from northern Spain for the screening presents a major opportunity. We featured them in the film because, like others we met, they were diagnosed

HIV positive well over 30 years ago and have gone on to live complete and fulfilling lives without a regime of antivirals. Dr Garrido has never taken any antivirals. Sr Penin took them for one or two periods over the last 30 years but felt so ill he had to stop, having lost feeling in his hands and suffered serious headaches.

"Dr Garrido and Sr Penin are both fit and well. None of their HIV+ contemporaries who were in their follow-up groups and were given the antiviral AZT are still alive."

She continued: "The men form part of the evidence base for questioning the wisdom of automatically prescribing unpleasant, debilitating and sometimes life-wrecking antivirals after HIV+ diagnosis. That is at the heart of what how we describe our challenge to the HIV/AIDS hypothesis - this questioning of the orthodox approach to drug prescription - and is what we explore in the film Positive Hell.

"It is this challenge to orthodoxy that led to the London Independent Film Festival's highly controversial banning of Positive Hell, despite its earlier endorsement."

Dr Garrido and Sr Penin will be available for interview tomorrow (Sunday) afternoon and on Monday, by prior arrangement. Neither of the men, both from Northern Spain, is a fluent English speaker but an interpreter will be available.

The screening will take place at Soho Screening Rooms, 14 D'Arbly St, London W1F 8DY. Doors will open at noon for a 12.30 showing, followed by panel discussion and Q&A. For all interview requests, press passes and general ticket requests, please email [joanshenton@clara.co.uk](mailto:joanshenton@clara.co.uk) . Joan will confirm seat

reservations by email.

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## NOTES FOR EDITORS

Dr Manuel Garrido, Manoel Penin and Joan Shenton are available for interviews on Sunday and Monday, April 17 and 18, 2016.

Positive Hell is a 30 minute documentary written and narrated by journalist Joan Shenton and co-produced in 2015 with director Andi Reiss.

\* Nominated for best documentary at Marbella International Film Festival

\* Selected for

o Los Angeles CineFest

o Digital Griffix online festival

o Indie Festival 01

\* Selected for - then banned from - 2016 London Independent Film Festival

Positive Hell tells the stories of five individuals in the north of Spain who had been intravenous drug users or alcoholics in their teens. They were treated in rehab units and overcame their addictions but tested "HIV" antibody positive. Thirty years on, they were fit and well, despite no regime of antiviral medication. One of them, physician Dr Manuel Garrido, had never taken any antiviral medication, consciously swimming against the tide of HIV orthodoxy for three decades. Another, Manoel Penin, took antivirals for short periods of time but gave them up. Raquel Sanz stopped taking antivirals because they made her feel so ill. She married and had two daughters. Both daughters inherited their mother's HIV antibodies but (as

is common) lost them after eighteen months. Raquel's eldest daughter went on to have six children and her younger daughter followed a successful career. Both daughters were immensely grateful to have been kept out of the "AIDS zone".

Positive Hell may be viewed  
at <http://www.positivehell.com> .

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Joan Shenton

Tel: [07957 585 515](tel:07957585515)

Email: [joanshenton@clara.co.uk](mailto:joanshenton@clara.co.uk)

Site: [www.positivehell.com](http://www.positivehell.com)