

San Francisco Atheists-- Coming Attractions

July 30 meeting program: In the late '80s, over a span of fourteen months, preacher's kid **Joe Loya** robbed between 32 and 40 banks. (He gave up counting at 32 and the FBI stopped at 40.) In all, it's estimated he made off with a quarter of a million dollars before he was finally caught and sentenced to a demeaning and grueling prison stretch. Incredibly, that was only the beginning of his story.

Unlike most convicts who find religion in prison, Joe lost his there, part of the transformation he describes in his fascinating memoir, **The Man Who Outgrew His Prison Cell**.

Today, Joe is an essayist, playwright, and contributing editor at the Pacific News Service, whose opinion pieces have appeared in the Los Angeles Times, Newsday, the Washington Post, and other national newspapers. He frequently comments on politics, religion, criminal justice issues, and other cultural events.

Come hear his amazing story! Join us on **Saturday July 30** at **Schroeder's Restaurant**, 240 Front St., rear dining room. Gather at **4:30 pm** to eat/drink/socialize, formal program will begin around 5 pm. Near the Embarcadero BART & Muni station. Parking available on the street or at the nearby Embarcadero Center.

Lights! Camera! Action! The Atheist Film Festival is Coming!

It's show time again -- the third annual **Atheist Film Festival** is coming back to the historic **Roxie Theater** on **Sunday, August 21st**. Each year, the world's first and oldest film festival for atheists has grown; last year several screenings were standing room only.

This year the lineup is bigger than ever. Highlighting the festival is **The Ledge**, a new thriller touted as the first drama in Hollywood history to feature an openly atheist hero in a story about religious conflict. **Writer/director Matthew Chapman**, who **will be attending the festival in person**, has impeccable atheist credentials - he is the great-great-grandson of Charles Darwin. The film was nominated for Best US Drama at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival and boasts an impressive cast of A-list stars: Charlie Hunnam (Sons of Anarchy), Liv Tyler (Lord of the Rings), Tony/Emmy/Golden Globe nominee Patrick Wilson (Watchmen), and Oscar nominee Terrence Howard (Crash, Iron Man).

Other features in this year's festival include **The Nature of Existence**, director Roger Nygard's (Trekkies) fascinating documentary that poses the big questions of life, the universe, and everything to a remarkable cross-section of humanity, ranging from scientists like Richard Dawkins and Stanford physicist Leonard Susskind (co-discoverer of string theory), to modern druids, a 24th generation Chinese Taoist Master, and the founder of Ultimate Christian Wrestling.

Like Chapman, **director Roger Nygard will be in attendance** at the Festival, which also screens Spanish director Alejandro Amenábar's **Agora**, the widely acclaimed 2009 biopic of the 4th century female mathematician and astronomer Hypatia of Alexandria, starring Rachel Weisz.

Our third special guest, historian **Dr. Richard Carrier**, will be available for Q&A afterward to discuss the real history behind the film.

Breaking news -- we now have a **THIRD** director who has agreed to come to the festival! Award winning filmmaker **Ondi Timoner** is coming and bringing her powerful documentary film **Join Us**, which tells the story of a family's escape from an abusive church and a searing look at cults in America.

Rounding out the program will be the debut of two collections of live and animated shorts entitled **2011: Year of the Rapture**, and **The First Atheist Musical**. Tickets and special discount festival passes will be available soon. For more details, see the official website at **www.sfatheistfilmfestival.org** and don't forget to 'friend' our page on Facebook. We're counting on you to spread the word to your friends and neighbors, too!

Want to join the AFF team? We still need festival sponsors, donations, film submissions, video editors and volunteers - contact us at **atheistfilmfestival@gmail.com** and be a part of "a film festival you can believe in."

On June 26, a very colorful contingent of local atheists marched down Market Street in the annual Pride Parade in support of the LGBT community. We had an excellent turnout and a loud & enthusiastic reception from the crowds. Thanks to all participants for a very successful event!