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***Sound Opinions at the Movies* screening:
Almost Famous
at Music Box Theatre, Wednesday, April 23**

***Sound Opinions'* Greg Kot & Jim DeRogatis celebrate the memory of the late great
Lester Bangs and Phillip Seymour Hoffman**

March 21, 2013 – The popular *Sound Opinions at the Movies* series continues with a screening of ***Almost Famous***, Cameron Crowe's semi-autobiographical rock 'n' roll coming of age story of an ambitious 15-year-old (Patrick Fugit) who wheedles an assignment from *Rolling Stone* and goes on the road with an ascending rock band in the 1970s. The movie screens Wednesday, Apr. 23, 7:30 p.m. at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 N. Southport Avenue. Chicago Public Media's *Sound Opinions* broadcast is co-hosted by acclaimed pop music critics Greg Kot of the *Chicago Tribune* and Jim DeRogatis of WBEZ and reaches more than 400,000 tastemakers each week through national radio broadcasts and a popular podcast. www.soundopinions.org.

Almost Famous, Crowe's personal rock 'n' roll love letter to a bygone era also stars Billy Crudup as the leader of the touring band, Kate Hudson as a groupie and the Phillip Seymour Hoffman as *Creem* editor Lester Bangs. Like the young protagonist of *Almost Famous*, DeRogatis – author of 2000's *Let it Blurt: The Life and Times of Lester Bangs* – met with Bangs and taped their conversations while still a high-schooler in New Jersey. The interview was one of Bangs' last, two weeks before his death in 1982. Hoffman and Crowe used DeRogatis' tapes in creating Bangs' character for the movie. Kot and DeRogatis will play some of this audio for the audience before the screening.



"*Almost Famous* is the first (and probably last) movie in history with, not one, but two rock journalist/critic heroes: Cameron Crowe's autobiographical stand-in, Patrick Fugit as the young William Miller, and of course the late, great Phillip Seymour Hoffman as the immortal Lester Bangs," says DeRogatis. "'You *are* home,' indeed!"

"In *Almost Famous*, music is a reason – perhaps *the* reason – to live." says Kot. "There is a super-fan's awe ("It's all happening") and a critic's cynicism ("You'll meet them all again on a long journey to the middle") and, in between, a road trip, a love story and a rite of passage with a note-perfect soundtrack."

For his Academy Award-winning screenplay, *Almost Famous* writer-director Cameron Crowe (*Jerry Maguire*, *Say Anything*) draws on his real-life experience as a teenager on the road with such icons as Led Zeppelin, David Bowie, The Who, The Allman Brothers and Lynyrd Skynyrd to tell the story of a young journalist touring with fictional band Stillwater. Crowe co-wrote three of the band's songs with his wife Nancy Wilson (Heart), while technical consultant Peter Frampton wrote two more. Roger Ebert gave *Almost Famous* four stars and named it one of the top ten films of the decade.

Tickets for the *Sound Opinions at the Movies* screening of ***Almost Famous*** at the Music Box are \$10 in advance (\$9 for WBEZ members) by purchase online at <http://sndo.ps/almostfamousmovie>. Tickets will also be available at the door for \$12.

Chicago Public Media is an institution that creates award-winning content for people seeking to learn more about the issues and ideas that affect our community, our nation, and our world. In addition to *Sound Opinions*, Chicago Public Media produces programs such as *This American Life*, *Wait, Wait...Don't Tell Me!* (a co-production with NPR), *The Morning Shift*, *The Afternoon Shift*, *Worldview*, and *Radio M*. Chicago Public Media operates WBEZ 91.5 FM, one of the country's premiere public radio stations, and Vocalo 89.5 FM and 90.7 FM, a next generation service that seeks to expand the reach of public media. For more information, visit www.soundopinions.org.

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