

Retracing the Joads' Journey to Celebrate "The Grapes of Wrath" 75th Anniversary

Written by Australian Business

SALINAS, Calif., Oct. 1, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- The National Steinbeck Center will retrace "The Grapes of Wrath" Journey Oct. 4-14 in preparation for the book's 75th anniversary.

The Center will be joined by three award-winning artists - renowned playwright Octavio Solis, literary/community historian and visual artist

Patricia Wakida

, and veteran

Hollywood

and network television filmmaker/producer

P.J. Palmer

. Together, they will embark on the journey the Joad family took along Route 66 through Oklahoma

,
Texas

,
New Mexico

, and
Arizona

, towards
California

and their hope for a better life.

Much like Steinbeck's work, the work of each artist explores social, environmental and cultural themes. The group will collect oral histories along the route. Those stories will inform newly commissioned work to be presented at the 2014 Steinbeck Festival, May 2-4 at the National Steinbeck Center in Salinas, CA.

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The artists will blog throughout the Journey at www.GrapesofWrath75.org . They will invite public collaboration and feedback through multiple social media channels.

While working on "The Grapes of Wrath," John Steinbeck wrote, "If only I could do this book properly it would be one of the really fine books and a truly American book. But I am assailed with my own ignorance and inability." In the end, it sold nearly half a million copies in its first year and began a national conversation about social justice in the United States

"The Grapes of Wrath" brought national attention to the stories of millions of Americans suffering through the Great Depression. It also influenced great social change in the process. Through the Journey, The National Steinbeck Center aspires to share the stories of modern Americans. Those stories will be filtered through the artists' work and the documentary that will be screened at the annual Steinbeck Festival.

The National Steinbeck Center is located in Salinas, CA, the birthplace of Nobel Prize winning author John Steinbeck. In addition to hosting a premier collection of artifacts, books, film clips and new art exhibits, the Center strives to share Steinbeck's values, engage community and celebrate creativity all across the nation.

In a special collaboration, the Penguin Group (USA) Book Truck will travel with the Center and sell Steinbeck titles at selected stops.

On Social Media: Blog – SteinbeckCenter.org/GrapesOfWrath75

Facebook.com/nationalsteinbeckcenter

Twitter.com/steinbeckcenter

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Instagram.com/steinbeckcenter

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SOURCE The National Steinbeck Center