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KIRSCHENBAUM PRODUCTIONS

PROMINENT PROFILES: Filmmaker Gayle Kirschenbaum poses with another famous nose.

continued into adulthood. It is the reason my mother believes that I haven't gotten married. It's that thing she can't help but be critical about."

Kirschenbaum's 82-year-old mother Millie, appears throughout *My Nose*, offering good-natured defenses to why she feels her daughter would look better and do better in life with a smaller nose.

Millie finally convinces Kirschenbaum to visit several cosmetic surgeons, whose advice ranges from get a nose job if you want one, not if your mother wants you to get one, to get a nose job, because you really need one!

"In the end, I kept my nose," Kirschenbaum says ruefully. "But this story, this film is about more than a decades-old spat between mother and daughter over a nose job. It's about criticism from a parent to a child, and about how to cope with that sort of constant criticism."

Kirschenbaum, who gained international acclaim a few years ago for her HBO documentary *A Dog's Life*, in which she strapped a tiny camera onto her dog for part of the film in order to show life from his perspective, is planning a feature-length version of *My Nose*, because of the positive feedback she's received.

"I have had so many

people tell me they understand and they relate," the filmmaker says. "I've even had people approach me after screenings and say 'I hate your mother! How can you love her?' And I love the passion. But I do love her, because love between family is unconditional. And the evolved relationship between my mother and I — we're traveling companions now for the first time in our lives — is something you'll see more of in the longer version of *My Nose*."

To watch *My Nose*, go to: www.kirschenbaumproductions.com/mynose/mynose.mov. It plays at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Regal South Beach Cinemas as part of the Miami Jewish Film Festival.

FILM FESTIVAL

Her film's a winner — by a nose

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Some people say that the mark of a good filmmaker is the ability to get viewers to relate.

So it should be no surprise that Gayle Kirschenbaum's short film, *My Nose*, about her mother's lifelong efforts to convince Kirschenbaum to get a nose job, is an honest, often humorous examination of culture and superficiality.

The 13-minute documen-

tary, which won an Ellie Award for Best Film at the Jewish Women's Film Festival in New York last fall, will be screened Tuesday at the Miami Jewish Film Festival.

"The story goes back to my childhood, my upbringing, and the lifestyle and culture my mother wanted for me," says Kirschenbaum, a daughter of Long Island. "It was very common then for women of my background and in my community to get nose jobs."

Kirschenbaum, who describes her life as hovering somewhere between a Woody Allen film and an episode of *Seinfeld*, says she was about 12 when her mother first commented that she had a bump on the ridge of her nose.

"And it hasn't stopped since," she said, during a recent interview from her home in New York. "It went through my teen years. It has



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FAMILY VALUES: The filmmaker with her 82-year-old mom Millie.

Short documentary's a winner — by a nose