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Cohen Named Director Of San Francisco Fest, Set To Open March 19

By HERB MICHELSON

San Francisco — ~~Slade~~ Cohen, credentialed more heavily in fundraising than pics, is the new director of the San Francisco Intl. Film Festival, replacing Shelley Alexander, who ankled to become g.m. of the Pasadena Chamber Orch.

Under Alexander's one-year topmanship, the Friscofest managed to erase the bulk of its longrunning

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deficit. Alexander, too, brought a background of fundraising to the fest job.

Cohen's arrival marks the fourth change of top management at the Friscofest in the past five years. The fest, nation's oldest, holds its 29th stanza in three venues March 19-30. Cohen has been a member of the fest board of directors since 1984 and has worked as development director of Mt. Zion Hospital here and in same slot for pubcaster KQED.

Peter Scarlet stays on as programmer, with title of artistic director. New fest flacks will be Mother Lode p.r. firm here, whose principals are Dick Robertson and Nola Armijo. Previous fest pubber Karen Larsen was pinkslipped in the management changeover, a move which brought a letter of protest from the film media community in the Bay area. Robertson said Larsen might be retained as a consultant during fest time.

The '86 fest again will be headquartered at the Palace of Fine Arts Theater, with other sites at Renaissance Rialto's Opera Plaza fourplex and across the Bay at Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley.

Opening pic will be "Artie Shaw: Time Is All You've Got," tribute to jazzman by Canadian indie filmmaker Brigitte Berman. Pic also unspooled at London fest. Screening here is tied to an on-stage appearance by Shaw, whose orchestra will play at post-unspooling dinner dance.

Also booked are Agnes Varda's "Vagabonde," a Venice fest prize-winner; "Come And See," Elem Klimov's Moscowfest honoree; a tribute to cinematographer Nestor Almendros, and two Latin American pics which shared the top prize at the Havana fest: "Tangos: The Exile Of Gardel," Fernando Solanas' French-Argentine production, and Paul Leduc's "Frida," from Mexico.