



NEWS RELEASE

AFI FEST AND AUDI ANNOUNCE "STEP AHEAD WITH AUDI A3: PERSONAL JOURNEYS WITH AFI FEST FILMMAKERS"

*Three Filmmakers, Three Weeks, Three Distinct Journeys to be Documented
as Part of Unique Film Competition*

April 21, 2005 (Los Angeles, CA)—AFI FEST and Audi of America, Inc. announced today a challenging three-week, cross-country competition involving three rising directors assigned to capture emerging trends across the nation—in the form of a 15-minute short film shot while completing a cross-country drive. The competition, *Step Ahead with Audi A3: Personal Journeys with AFI FEST Filmmakers*, officially kicks-off as the contestants and their crews hit the road in Los Angeles on May 4.

A group of select filmmakers whose films were screened in competition at AFI FEST 2004—one of the most influential film festivals in North America—were invited to participate in the film project. Three up-and-coming Los Angeles-based filmmakers—Shawn Ku (36, *PRETTY DEAD GIRL*), Jonathan Levine (28, *SHARDS*) and Kristina Robbins-Higgins (37, *WET FUR*)—were selected from the pool of submissions to embark on a cross-country journey to make a short film uncovering emerging trends in American cities—while driving the new Audi A3.

"At AFI FEST, we're always looking for ways to provide our filmmakers with opportunities to gather new experiences and gain exposure, whether through the Festival's Kodak CONNECT program, our recent alliance with the AFM or through this unique Audi program," states Christian Gaines, Festival Director, AFI FEST. "The *Step Ahead* program offers these three lucky filmmakers and their teams an incredible amount of freedom to explore, experiment, experience and ultimately express themselves in a way that's creative, inventive and fun. We look forward to seeing the resulting films."

"We are proud to continue our affiliation with AFI FEST and support of the filmmaking community with the *Step Ahead* competition," said Stephen Berkov, Audi's director of marketing. "We see these filmmakers as bringing an uncanny ability to see 'what's next' around them and illustrate emerging lifestyle trends."

During the three-week adventure, teams will depart from Los Angeles and likely visit San Francisco, Austin, Miami, Boston and Washington, DC, before reaching their final destination of New York. While traveling, the teams will each create a 15-minute short film detailing their personal experiences and documenting their vision of what's hot... be it people, places or things. Complementing the A3, an assortment of products from Sony, Apple and Bose will be provided to each filmmaker.

Behind-the-scenes crews travel with each filmmaker to document their journeys. These crews will also keep an online community actively involved with the filmmaking process through regular updates of footage that can be viewed on www.audiusa.com/A3. During their trip, the filmmakers will keep blogs to record their personal experiences, which will be posted to the site as well.

Once their cross-country journeys are complete, the filmmakers will have three weeks to edit their films and submit them to a panel of judges that includes actors Joshua Jackson (*A LIFE IN THE THEATRE*, *AURORA BOREALIS*) and Emily Mortimer (*THE PINK PANTHER*, *LOVELY & AMAZING*), as well as representatives from Audi and AFI FEST. In July, the films will be posted online so the public can vote for its choice. The competition, *Step Ahead with Audi A3: Personal Journeys with AFI FEST Filmmakers*, concludes when the winning film is announced in August at a fete in Los Angeles. The winner will receive \$10,000 and a 2006 Audi A3. All three filmmakers will get to keep the equipment they use during editing.

A star-studded bash at the world famous SKYBAR (located in the Mondrian Hotel, Los Angeles) will be held on May 3 to celebrate the selected filmmakers before the official competition kicks off the next day. The *Step Ahead with Audi A3* journey begins on May 4 and concludes once the filmmakers finish their three-week adventure with a wrap party on May 25 in New York.

About Audi

Audi of America is headquartered in Auburn Hills, Michigan, and markets performance-oriented European luxury vehicles: the A3, A4, A6, A8, and TT. For more information about additional Audi-related events and corporate news, visit www.audiusa.com.

About AFI FEST

AFI is a national institute providing leadership in screen education and the recognition and celebration of excellence in the art of film, television and digital media. Now in its 19th year, AFI FEST presented by Audi—the AFI Los Angeles International Film Festival—is the longest-running film festival in Los Angeles and one of the most influential film festivals in North America. Additional information about AFI is available at www.AFI.com.

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PHOTOS/ART AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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