

 **AFI FEST 2005**

NOV 3-13

PRESENTED BY  Audi

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**AFI FEST 2005 PRESENTED BY AUDI ANNOUNCES
NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE OF "CASANOVA" AS
CLOSING NIGHT GALA**

**FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES US PREMIERES,
ADDS WORLD AND NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERES**

**SPECIAL SCREENING PRESENTATION
OF ELIA KAZAN'S WILD RIVER**

September 29, 2005 (Los Angeles)—AFI FEST 2005 presented by Audi: AFI Los Angeles International Film Festival announces Touchstone Pictures' CASANOVA as its Closing Night Gala on November 13, 2005. This will be the North American premiere of CASANOVA, directed by Oscar®-nominated Lasse Hallström (CHOCOLAT, THE CIDER HOUSE RULES) and starring Heath Ledger as the notorious lothario.

"CASANOVA is a wild and whimsical cinematic tour de force," says Nancy Collet, AFI FEST's Director of Programming. "We're so looking forward to welcoming back Lasse Hallström, whose CIDER HOUSE RULES made its US premiere at AFI FEST in 1999."

Set in 18th century Venice, CASANOVA also stars Sienna Miller, Lena Olin, Oliver Platt and Jeremy Irons. This sharp, sophisticated comedy gives the legend of Giacomo Casanova a contemporary edge as Casanova meets his ultimate romantic match in Francesca Bruni (Sienna Miller), succumbing to the only woman to ever refuse his charms. The film was produced by Mark Gordon, Betsy Beers and Leslie Holleran, based on a script by Jeffrey Hatcher and Kimberly Simi from a story by Kimberly Simi and Michael Cristofer.

"Being selected for Closing Night is a true honor. AFI is such a great institution and a champion of our craft," says CASANOVA director Lasse Hallström. "We're thrilled to be a part of their Festival."

CASANOVA will close AFI FEST 2005 on Sunday, November 13, 2005, at ArLight Hollywood's Cinerama Dome.

In addition, AFI FEST 2005 announces 15 US Premieres (all narrative features).

AFI FEST 2005's US Premieres are:

7 VIRGINS (Spain, narrative) - directed by Alberto Rodríguez

06/05 THE SIXTH OF MAY (Netherlands, narrative) - directed by Theo Van Gogh

BAM BAM AND CELESTE (USA, narrative) - directed by Lorene Machado
C.R.A.Z.Y. (Canada, narrative) - directed by Jean-Marc Vallée
DEAD RUN (Japan, narrative) - directed by Sabu
HELL (France/Italy/Belgium/Japan, narrative) - directed by Danis Tanovic
KISSED BY WINTER (Norway, narrative) - directed by Sara Johnsen
LIFE WITH MY FATHER (Canada, narrative) - directed by Sebastien Rose
MERRY CHRISTMAS (Belgium/France/Germany/Romania/UK, narrative) - directed by Christian Carion
RYNA (Switzerland/Romania, narrative) - directed by Ruxandra Zenide
SPL (Hong Kong/China, narrative) - directed by Wilson Yip
SORRY, HATERS (USA, narrative) - directed by Jeff Stanzler
TATTOOED (Argentina, narrative) - directed by Eduardo Raspo
TSOTSI (South Africa/UK, narrative) - directed by Gavin Hood
ZOZO (Sweden/UK/Denmark, narrative) - directed by Josef Fares

AFI FEST will also screen the World Premieres of the documentaries BURNING MAN: BEYOND BLACK ROCK (USA), directed by Damon Brown and DESIRE, directed by Julie Gustafson, plus the North American Premieres of THE SUSPECT (Japan), directed by Ryoichi Kimizuka, GEMINIS (Argentina/France), directed by Albertina Carri, and THE WEDDING PARTY (Belgium/Germany), directed by Dominique Deruddere.

Lastly, AFI FEST 2005 is announcing a special presentation of Elia Kazan's WILD RIVER as part of the Festival's Special Screening Series on Friday, November 11, at Arclight Hollywood with an introduction and Q&A by Richard Schickel, author of *Elia Kazan: A Biography*. A remarkable 1960s drama starring Montgomery Clift and Lee Remick, the rarely seen WILD RIVER is finally being given its due through a Fox DVD release early next year, but was poorly received during its initial release and is still underappreciated by critics.

Set during the New Deal, this ahead-of-its-time film concerns the controlled flooding of the Tennessee River by the newly established Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), and the relocation of its residents, in particular one salty old lady (brilliantly played by Jo Van Fleet) who refuses to leave.

AFI FEST 2005 presented by Audi will run November 3-13, 2005. Passes are on sale now and individual event tickets go on sale to the public on Friday, October 14, 2005. To order passes and tickets and to get more information, visit www.AFI.com or call 1.866.AFI.FEST.

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: 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. The Festival spans 10 days each November, featuring international competitions of brand new films from emerging filmmakers, global showcases of the latest work from the great film masters and nightly red-carpet gala premieres.

In 2004, AFI FEST and the American Film Market established a strategic alliance, creating

the only festival/market combination in North America. This alliance has successfully resulted in a unique combination of commerce and culture. The AFM runs November 2-9, 2005. For more information, visit www.americanfilmmarket.com.

AFI FEST 2005 presented by Audi is supported in part by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, the Cultural Affairs Department of the City of Los Angeles and the Hollywood Sign Trust. Special support is provided by the Academy Foundation of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. AFI FEST is proud to continue its collaborative partnership with the Skirball Cultural Center. Made in Germany is made possible through the cooperation and support of the German Film Services + Marketing GMBH. NEW FACES IN EUROPEAN CINEMA is made possible through the cooperation and support of European Film Promotion.

AFI FEST 2005 presented by Audi is sponsored in part by American Airlines, ArcLight Hollywood, Absolut Vodka, Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, Best Buy, Eastman Kodak Company, Midway Car Rental, Aquafina and Stella Artois. The New York Times is the Festival's Presenting Media Partner. Additional partners include Indie 103.1, LA Weekly and Univision.

About Audi of America

Audi of America is headquartered in Auburn Hills, Michigan, and markets performance-oriented European luxury vehicles: the all-new versatile A3; the sporty A4 sedan, A4 Avant and A4 Cabriolet models—the perfect union of power and control; the everyday sports car in the form of the S4 sedan, S4 Avant and the S4 Cabriolet; the birth of Audi's sports car tradition—the TT Coupe and Roadster; the broad range of bold A6 sedans—the beautiful new A6 Avant; and the most progressive premium flagship sedan, the A8 in both extended and normal wheelbase versions. For more information about additional Audi-related events and corporate news, visit www.audiusa.com.

###

PRESS CONTACT:

Annalee Paulo, AFI FEST, 323.468.3740, apaulo@AFI.com
Alison Deknatel, AFI, 323.856.7896, adeknatel@AFI.com