

23rd VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL BREAKS RECORDS ***Machuca, What Remains of Us and Being Caribou win audience awards***

Vancouver, BC (October 13, 2004) - For the first time in 23 years, the not-for-profit *Vancouver International Film Festival* has reached the \$1 million mark in revenues. On top of that, the balance of the \$2.5 million expense budget has again been reached through the outstanding support of over 150 private and public-sector sponsors. The festival also surpassed the 150,000 attendance mark once again, reached for the first time in 2002. In all there were 537 public screenings for a total of 373 films including 247 features and mid-lengths, of which there were 7 world premieres, 32 international premieres, 34 North American premieres, 58 Canadian premieres and 25 English-Canadian premieres.

"The interesting trend this year was how little we relied on films with Canadian distribution in place," noted Festival Director Alan Franey. "Despite the increasingly guarded nature of film distribution, we were extremely encouraged to find that audiences responded well to an uncompromising line-up of often quite challenging fare. Political documentaries, Canadian films, unheralded premieres and specialized titles sold the bulk of our tickets. This bodes well for our non-profit film society as we head into year-round programming beginning in the Spring of 2005 at the *Vancouver International Film Centre* and its state-of-the-art, 175-seat *Vancity Theatre*."

The **24th Vancouver International Film Festival** will run **September 29th to October 14th, 2005**, and will be headquartered in the new *Vancouver International Film Centre* at 1181 Seymour Street.

AUDIENCE AWARDS

The AGF People's Choice Award for Most Popular International Film

The **AGF People's Choice Award for Most Popular International Film** goes to **MACHUCA** (Chile) by Andrés Wood, a semi-autobiographical account of the tragic events of Chile's 1973 coup seen through the eyes of two 11-year old boys.

Runners-up:

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO BUSH (Le Monde selon Bush), dir. William Karel (France)
BEAUTIFUL BOXER, dir. Ekachai Uekrongtham (Thailand)
THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES (Diarios de motocicleta), dir. Walter Salles
(Brazil/USA/Argentina/Chile/Peru)
HARI OM, dir. Bharatbala (India)

Following is a list of the 25 next most popular international films of the Festival, in order of popularity. These and the above films were all very well attended, substantially voted for, and averaged between 4 and 5 out of 5 (4 being "very good"; 5 being "excellent") in public voting. Please note that Canadian films have their own separate category.

Thomas Grube and Enrique Sánchez Lansch's **RHYTHM IS IT!** (Germany); Ian Gabriel's **FORGIVENESS** (South Africa); Xiao Jiang's **ELECTRIC SHADOWS** (*Meng Ying Tongnian*) (China); Gastón Biraben's **CAPTIVE** (*Cautiva*) (Argentina); Shona Auerbach's **DEAR FRANKIE** (UK); Jeremy Earp and Sut Jhally's **HIJACKING CATASTROPHE: 9/11, FEAR AND THE SELLING OF AMERICAN EMPIRE** (USA); Richard Eyre's **STAGE BEAUTY** (UK); Nicole Kassell's **THE WOODSMAN** (USA); Kore-eda Hirokazu's **NOBODY KNOWS** (*Daremo Shiranai*) (Japan); Thomas Riedelsheimer's **TOUCH THE SOUND** (UK/Germany); Nimród Antal's **KONTROLL** (Hungary); Itthi-sunthorn Wichailak's **THE OVERTURE** (*Hoam-rong*) (Thailand); Jan Hrebejk's **UP AND DOWN** (*Horem Padem*) (Czech Republic); Ryu Seung-Wan's **ARAHAN** (South Korea); Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche's **TRAVELLERS AND**

MAGICIANS (Bhutan); Lars von Trier and Jørgen Leth's **THE FIVE OBSTRUCTIONS** (Denmark); Vít Klusák and Filip Remunda's **CZECH DREAM** (Czech Republic); Hilmar Oddsson's **COLD LIGHT** (*Kaldajós*) (Iceland); Phil Grabsky's **THE BOY WHO PLAYS ON THE BUDDHAS OF BAMİYAN** (UK); Stefan Fjeldmark, Thorbjørn Christoffersen and Kresten Vestbjerg Andersen's **TERKEL IN TROUBLE** (Terkel I Knibe) (Denmark); Maren Ade's **THE FOREST FOR THE TREES** (*Der Wald Vor Lauter Baumen*) (Germany); Michaela Pavlátova's **FAITHLESS GAMES** (Czech Republic); Joseph Cedar's **CAMPFIRE** (*Medurat Hashevet*) (Israel); Gandulf Hennig's **FALLEN ANGEL: GRAM PARSONS** (Germany/UK); and Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón's **YOUR NEXT LIFE** (*La Vida que te espere*) (Spain).

Federal Express Award for Most Popular Canadian Feature Film

This year the voting for the *Federal Express Award for Most Popular Canadian Feature Film* resulted in a tie. Co-winners are François Prévost and Hugo Latulippe for **WHAT REMAINS OF US** (Quebec), a moving documentary that takes viewers to the heart of the 50-year tragedy that has consumed Tibetan society, and Leanne Allison and Diana Wilson for **BEING CARIBOU** (British Columbia), an inspiring northern adventure which reveals the threat posed by American oil and gas drilling to these northern creatures.

Runners-up for Most Popular Canadian Film are: Peter Raymont for **SHAKE HANDS WITH THE DEVIL: THE JOURNEY OF ROMÉO DALLAIRE** (Ontario); Bill Marchant for **EVERYONE** (British Columbia); and Velcrow Ripper for **SCAREDSACRED** (British Columbia).

Also among the most popular Canadian films, in order of voting: Ghyslaine Côté's **ELLES ETAIENT CINQ** (Quebec); István Szabó's **BEING JULIA** (Canada/UK/Hungary); Michael Kot's **SHIPBREAKERS** (Ontario); John L'Écuyer's **LE GOUT DES JEUNES FILLES** (Quebec); Francis Leclerc's **MEMOIRES AFFECTIVES** (Quebec); Mark A. Lewis' **ILL FATED** (British Columbia); Malcolm Guy, Michelle Smith's **TURBULENT WATERS** (Quebec); Vic Sarin's **DELUXE COMBO PLATTER** (British Columbia); Alan Zweig's **I, CURMUDGEON** (Ontario); David Weaver's **SIBLINGS** (Ontario).

JURIED AWARDS

The National Film Board Award for Best Documentary Feature

Jurors John Anderson, Karen Cooper and Rob Nelson gave the *National Film Board Award for Best Documentary Feature* to Jessica Yu's **IN THE REALMS OF THE UNREAL** (USA), an in-depth exploration into the parallel lives of legendary outsider artist Henry Darger. The film was commended by the jurors "for its empathetic and innovative portrayal of a complex and problematic artist in a way that illuminates the convergence of his life and work."

The Dragons & Tigers Award for Young Cinema

Japan's Takahashi Izumi won the *Dragons & Tigers Award for Young Cinema* for his film **THE SOUP, ONE MORNING**. The award, which includes a \$5,000 prize, is sponsored by Brad Birarda. The jury was comprised of: Peggy Chiao from Taiwan, Hong Sang-Soo from Korea, and Christoph Huber from Austria. They issued the following jury statement: "By unanimous decision, this years *Dragons & Tigers Award for Young Cinema* goes to THE SOUP, ONE MORNING, for its visual and emotional precision in mapping out the slow decay of a relationship. The film gradually accumulates an overwhelming power which can only come from feelings that the director and his actors have experienced and inhabited for themselves".

Special mention was also given to: **THE BIG DURIAN** (Amir Muhammad, Malaysia), "for its witty and unusual handling of an incident which ultimately allows deep insights into the racial tensions in Malaysian society, **GOOD MORNING BEIJING** (Pan Jianlin, China), "for its compelling mixture of parallel narratives and its uncompromising depictions of the darkness and frustrations of city existence, and **SUND@Y SEOUL** (Oh Myung-Hoon, Korea), "for taking pieces of real-life experience - pieces never

likely to fit into conventional narrative forms - and holding them together through to the end, creating a resonance that is anything but banal".

Citytv Western Canada Feature Film Award

Gary Yates wins the *Citytv Western Canada Feature Film Award* for his debut feature **SEVEN TIMES LUCKY**, a hustler flick in the classic noir tradition. Yates's film earned praise from jurors John Griffin, Vincent Le Leurch, and Helen Loveridge, "for its economy of cinematic language, consistency of tone and commitment to entertain". The award, sponsored by Citytv, is accompanied by a cash prize of \$12,000.

Keystone Award for Best Young Western Canadian Director of a Short Film

Jennifer Calvert wins the *Keystone Award for Best Young Western Canadian Director of a Short Film* for **RIVERBURN**, which jurors praised "for its surehanded treatment of the familiar themes of adolescent alienation and sexual awakening". The award, sponsored by International Keystone Entertainment, is accompanied by a \$5,000 cash prize.

Special mention was given for the excellence of two animated entries, Steven K.L. Olson's **JUDAS' PANE** and Jason White's **OF BURNING HILLS**.

Women in Film & Video Vancouver's Artistic Merit Award

Joely Collins received the Women in Film & Video Vancouver's Artistic Merit Award for her performance in **THE LOVE CRIMES OF GILLIAN GUESS**. The award is given annually to a B.C. woman filmmaker or performer of distinction.

Media contact:

Jennifer Wesanko, Media Director - 604-646-4770 or jennifer@viff.org