

NEWS RELEASE



**AFI FEST 2008 PRESENTED BY AUDI ANNOUNCES  
AWARD WINNERS**

**“ACNE” RECEIVES GRAND JURY PRIZE FOR FEATURE**

**“KASSIM THE DREAM” NAMED BEST DOCUMENTARY**

**“THE LEGLESS BOY CANNOT DANCE” WINS GRAND JURY  
PRIZE FOR SHORT**

**AND**

**AUDIENCE AWARDS GO TO “A NECESSARY DEATH” FOR  
FEATURE**

**“THE WORLD WE WANT” AND KASSIM THE DREAM” SHARE  
THE AWARD FOR DOCUMENTARY**

**“BUSCO PERSONAS: THE FACES OF COLUMBIA’S WAR”  
RECEIVES AUDIENCE AWARD FOR SHORT**

HOLLYWOOD (November 9, 2008)—AFI FEST 2008 presented by Audi today announced the 2008 award winners with Federico Veiroj’s ACNE named as the recipient of the Grand Jury Prize for International Feature Competition. Special Mention went to Igor Voloshin’s NIRVANA.

Kief Davidson’s KASSIM THE DREAM took the International Documentary Grand Jury Prize. Special Mention went to Jan Louter’s THE LAST DAYS OF SHISHMAREF.

The Shorts Jury Prize went to Michel Lipkes’s THE LEGLESS BOY CANNOT DANCE. Special mention went to James Lees’ THE APOLOGY LINE.

Daniel Stamm’s A NECESSARY DEATH won the Audience Award for best feature film, while Davidson’s KASSIM THE DREAM and Patrick Davidson’s THE WORLD WE WANT shared the Audience Award for best documentary. Lagan

Sebert's and Sandra Sampayo's BUSCO PERSONAS: THE FACES OF COLOMBIA'S WAR won the Audience Award for the Short section.

The three Jury Award winners each receive prizes of Fuji Film stock.

AFI FEST Artistic Director Rose Kuo said, "This year, AFI FEST featured an exciting lineup of films in the competitive categories featuring really accomplished and inspired work from a diverse group of talented filmmakers. Our jury had their work cut out for them to single out one film from each group."

## **JURY AWARDS**

### **INTERNATIONAL FEATURE COMPETITION**

#### **GRAND JURY PRIZE: ACNE**

DIR: Federico Veiroj Cast: Alejandro Tocar, Julia Catala, Gustavo Melnik, Belen Pouchan PROD: Fernando Epstein EXEC PROD: Fernando Epstein  
*Uruguay/Argentina/Spain/Mexico*

#### **SPECIAL MENTION: NIRVANA**

DIR: Igor Volshin Cast: Olga Sutulova, Mariya Shalayeva, Arthur Smolyaninov, Mikhail Evlanov PROD: Sergei Selyanov *Russia*

### **INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION**

#### **GRAND JURY PRIZE: KASSIM THE DREAM**

DIR: Kief Davidson PROD: Kief Davidson, Liz Silver EXEC PROD: Joshua A. Green, Luke Thornton, Forest Whitaker, Keisha Whitaker *Uganda/USA*

#### **SPECIAL MENTION: THE LAST DAYS OF SHISHMAREF**

DIR: Jan Louter PROD: Juul Kappelhof EXEC PROD: Renske Meertens  
*Netherlands*

### **INTERNATIONAL SHORTS COMPETITION**

#### **GRAND JURY PRIZE: THE LEGLESS BOY CANNOT DANCE (EL NINO SIN PIERNAS NO PUEDE BAILAR)**

DIR: Michel Lipkes SCR: Michel Lipkes and Maximiliano Cruz PROD: Milko Luis Coronel DP: Gerardo Barroso ED: Leon Felipe Gonzalez MUS: Gala Duran Cast: Sebastian Alvarado, Domingo Diaz Ordaz, Pumba

#### **SPECIAL MENTION: THE APOLOGY LINE**

DIR/PROD/SCR: James Lees SCR: William Bridges DP: Mattias Nyberg ED: Tony Norto

## **AUDIENCE AWARDS**

### **FEATURE: A NECESSARY DEATH**

DIR: Daniel Stamm Cast: Gilbert John, Matt Tilley, Valerie Hurt, Michael Traynor, Konima Parkinson-Jones PROD: Brian Udovich, GJ Echternkamp *USA*

### **DOCUMENTARY FEATURE: KASSIM THE DREAM**

DIR: Kief Davidson PROD: Kief Davidson, Liz Silver EXEC PROD: Joshua A. Green, Luke Thornton, Forest Whitaker, Keisha Whitaker *Uganda/USA*

### **DOCUMENTARY FEATURE: THE WORLD WE WANT**

DIR/PROD: Patrick Davidson *USA*

### **SHORT: BUSCO PERSONAS: THE FACES OF COLOMBIA'S WAR**

DIR/PROD: Lagan Sebert, Sandra Sampayo ED: Lagan Sebert MUS: JUANes, ChocQibTown, Aterciopelados

## **AFI FEST 2008 JURY MEMBERS**

- INTERNATIONAL FEATURE COMPETITION JURY includes:

### **SEBASTIAN GUTIERREZ**

Writer/Director Sebastian Gutierrez was born and raised in Caracas, Venezuela. His feature credits as a screenwriter include: *THE BIG BOUNCE* (starring Morgan Freeman and Owen Wilson), *GOTHIKA* (starring Halle Berry), *SNAKES ON A PLANE* (starring Samuel Jackson) and *THE EYE* (starring Jessica Alba). As a director his credits include: *JUDAS KISS* (starring Emma Thompson and Alan Rickman), HBO's *SHE CREATURE* (starring Rufus Sewell), *RISE* (starring Lucy Liu and Michael Chiklis) and the upcoming *WOMEN IN TROUBLE* (starring Carla Gugino, Josh Brolin, Emmanuelle Chriqui and Joseph Gordon-Levitt). He lives in Los Angeles.

### **AZAZEL JACOBS**

#### **Screenwriter/Director**

Azazel Jacobs, son of avant-garde filmmaker Ken Jacobs, was born in 1972 and raised in New York's lower Manhattan surrounded by important and innovative artists. He went to undergraduate school at the film department of SUNY Purchase and received a Masters in Directing from the American Film Institute. While attending AFI, he made his first feature-length film, *NOBODY NEEDS TO KNOW*, which had its world premiere at the Rotterdam Film Festival in 2003. Two years later he premiered his second feature, *THEGOODTIMESKID*, at the AFI Film Festival in Los Angeles. The film was co-written with Gerardo

Naranjo (director of DRAMA/MEX and the upcoming VOY A EXPLOTAR) who also starred alongside Azazel's longtime girlfriend Sara Diaz. The super low-budget film was a hit with critics and audiences alike and was placed in the Top Ten Films of 2008 by the New York Post. It is scheduled for a DVD release by Benten Films early 2009.

In 2008, Azazel premiered his third feature, MOMMA'S MAN at the Sundance Film Festival. It was acquired by Kino International who began its theatrical rollout at the end of August and continues today. It has played in numerous festivals, picking up many awards and been hailed by critics throughout. Manohla Dargis in the New York Times called it "Independent film, defined." Also in 2008, Azazel was honored with a full retrospective of his work at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

### **MICHELLE TRACHTENBERG**

Michelle Trachtenberg impressed audiences at the age of 10 starring as Harriet in HARRIET THE SPY, which garnered her a Best Lead Actress in a Feature Film Award from Young Artists of Hollywood. Trachtenberg recently had a recurring role as Blake Lively's arch nemesis Giorgana on The CW show GOSSIP GIRL, but she is best known for her role as Dawn on the television series BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER, for which she received a Young Artists of Hollywood Award for Best Supporting Actress. Trachtenberg was also the host/narrator for Discovery Network's TRUTH OR SCARE, which garnered her a 2004 Daytime Emmy Award nomination. Her upcoming work includes a lead role opposite Zac Efron in SEVENTEEN AGAIN and in AGAINST THE CURRENT, opposite Mary Tyler Moore. Recently named by Teen People as one of "20 Teens Who Will Change the World," Trachtenberg has been an active spokesperson for R.A.D.D., DARE America and The Starlight Foundation.

### **BEN LYONS**

Lyons is one of the most sought after young film critics in Hollywood. At the ripe age of 26, Ben is the resident film critic and entertainment correspondent on The E! Network, co-host of Nickelodeons "My Family's Got Guts" and is one of the new hosts of television's most popular and respected movie review programs, "At The Movies."

Lyons has taken over the reigns from Roger Ebert and Richard Roeper and is currently starring in the next generation of the acclaimed series "At The Movies" alongside Ben Mankiewicz. Ben's movie reviews and celebrity interviews are seen on "E! News", "The Daily 10", and E! Online as well as in his signature segment and webpage called, "The Lyons Den". In addition Ben covers film festivals, award shows, red carpet premieres, and visits movie sets with Hollywood's biggest stars for the E! Entertainment Network.

- INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION DOCUMENTARY JURY includes:

## **GYULA GAZDA**

Gyula Gazdag is an iconoclastic Hungarian director. His numerous feature films include A HUNGARIAN FAIRY TALE, winner of a Special Jury Prize at the Locarno Film Festival, Best Feature Film of the Year of the Hungarian Film Critics, one of the year's 10 best films on The Village Voice's list, and which screened in 20 film festivals worldwide, including Cannes, Directors' Fortnight.

Other feature credits include STAND OFF, winner of a Special Jury Prize at the San Sebastian Festival; SINGING ON THE TREADMILL, which was banned in Hungary for 10 years; and THE WHISTLING COBBLESTONE, which was banned for foreign exhibition for 12 years and was the winner of Best First Feature Film from the Hungarian Film Critics.

Gazdag has also directed many documentaries, including THE RESOLUTION, which was banned for 12 years and is one of the best 100 documentaries of all time on the International Documentary list. Gazdag currently teaches at UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television, at the Binger Institute and serves as the Artistic Director of the Sundance Filmmakers Lab.

## **EVA ORNER**

Eva Orner relocated from Melbourne, Australia, to the US in 2004. She spent two years producing documentaries at Jigsaw Productions with Academy Award-winning director Alex Gibney, and produced TAXI TO THE DARK SIDE, which won best feature documentary at the 2008 Academy Awards. She also produced the feature documentary GONZO: THE LIFE AND WORK OF DR. HUNTER S. THOMPSON, which premiered in competition at the Sundance Film Festival in January 2008.

Orner also produced THE HUMAN BEHAVIOR EXPERIMENTS for the Sundance Channel and co-produced the feature documentary HERBIE HANCOCK'S POSSIBILITIES. Her Australian credits include producing the AFI, Logie and Human Rights award-winning documentary UNTOLD DESIRES, the feature film JOSH JARMAN and co-producing the feature film STRANGE FITS OF PASSION, which screened in International Critics Week at the Cannes International Film Festival.

## **JAMES D. STERN**

James D. Stern, the CEO of Endgame Entertainment, is currently readying the release of three projects that premiered at the 2008 Toronto International Film Festival: THE BROTHERS BLOOM, starring Rachel Weisz, Adrien Brody and Mark Ruffalo (screening at AFI FEST); EASY VIRTUE, starring Jessica Biel, Colin Firth and Kristin Scott Thomas; and EVERY LITTLE STEP, about the revival of the Broadway smash hit A Chorus Line. A recent release is I'M NOT THERE, a Bob Dylan biopic directed by Todd Haynes, featuring Cate Blanchett, Christian

Bale, Richard Gere and the late Heath Ledger.

Since Endgame's inception, Stern has acted as the executive producer and producer of a number of films including HAROLD AND KUMAR GO TO WHITE CASTLE, HOTEL RWANDA and STAY ALIVE. Stern has also directed and produced two documentary films: THE YEAR OF THE YAO, about Yao Ming's first year in the NBA (2005), and the political documentary SO GOES THE NATION, about the American electoral system and the 2004 presidential campaign.

• INTERNATIONAL SHORTS COMPETITION JURY includes:

### **SAFFRON BURROWS**

Actress Saffron Burrows will next be seen starring in Amy Redford's directorial debut THE GUITAR, which made its debut at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival. During the summer of 2008 she filmed Jonas Pate's SHRINK, starring Kevin Spacey. Earlier this year, she starred in the critically acclaimed heist film THE BANK JOB.

Additional recent films include KLIMT; Hal Hartley's FAY GRIMM; TROY; HOTEL ENIGMA opposite Kate Winslet and Jeremy Northam; Paul McGuigan's GANGSTER NO. 1 with Malcolm McDowell, David Thewlis and Paul Bettany; Mike Figgis's film adaptation of the classic play MISS JULIE; the Australian romantic comedy HOTEL DE LOVE; Renny Harlin's DEEP BLUE SEA; Mark Joffe's THE MATCHMAKER; Pat O'Connor's CIRCLE OF FRIENDS; and Jim Sheridan's IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER opposite Daniel Day Lewis.

Burrows is currently in production on NBC's new drama series MY OWN WORST ENEMY opposite Christian Slater, and was last seen on the small screen in BOSTON LEGAL.

### **BRIAN DANNELLY**

Brian Dannelly was born in Wurtzburg, Germany. At the age of 11, his family relocated to a suburb of Baltimore. Dannelly was a Fellow at AFI and graduated from the Directing program in 1999. His short films have played in festivals around the world. While attending AFI, he co-wrote SAVED!, which was produced by Sandy Stern and Michael Stipe and starred Jena Malone, Mandy Moore, Macaulay Culkin, Eva Amurri, Martin Donovan, and Mary-Louise Parker. SAVED! premiered at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival. In 2008, the musical version of SAVED! premiered in New York and will open in Chicago in 2009.

Dannelly was the creative producer for season one of the Showtime series WEEDS, where he also directed the pilot and subsequent episodes. He has directed several other TV episodes, including the season finale of ABC's PUSHING DAISIES, and is now directing Diablo Cody's new series UNITED

STATES OF TARA starring Toni Collette.

**PETER MENZIES JR.**

Peter Menzies Jr., was born in Sydney, Australia in 1957. His father, Australian cinematographer Peter Menzies, introduced him to film. Known for his action/drama cinematography, Menzies Jr., recently was the director of photography for THE INCREDIBLE HULK, directed by Louis Leterrier; SHOOTER, directed by Antoine Fuqua; and FOUR BROTHERS, directed by John Singleton. Other credits include DIE HARD: WITH A VENGEANCE and THE 13TH WARRIOR, directed by John McTiernan. Menzies has collaborated three times with director Simon West: LARA CROFT: TOMB RAIDER, THE GENERAL'S DAUGHTER and WHEN A STRANGER CALLS.

Other action thrillers include HARD RAIN (directed by Mikael Salomon), A TIME TO KILL (directed by Joel Schumacher), and the historically based drama THE GREAT RAID (directed by John Dahl). On a lighter note, Menzies has also enjoyed filming comedies such as MISS CONGENIALITY 2: ARMED AND FABULOUS for director John Pasquin, Jerry Bruckheimer's KANGAROO JACK for director David McNally and Disney's THE KID, directed by Jon Turteltaub.

**AFI FEST 2008 OVERVIEW:**

AFI FEST 2008 rolled out the red carpet with the highly anticipated World Premiere of John Patrick Shanley's DOUBT on October 30. Starring Philip Seymour Hoffman, Meryl Streep and Amy Adams, the event featured a surprise appearance by Streep as she joined Shanley and fellow co-star, Adams.

Other highlights of the Festival included Centerpiece screenings of Steven Soderbergh's epic CHE and Darren Aronofsky's THE WRESTLER at Grauman's Chinese Theatre with Benecio Del Toro and Mickey Rourke among other stars in attendance, and the Centerpiece Screening of Joel Hopkins's LAST CHANCE HARVEY at the ArcLight Hollywood Cinerama Dome with stars Dustin Hoffman and Emma Thompson present. Tributes to Tilda Swinton and Danny Boyle, Talk/Show film panels including a command performance by legendary animator Bill Plympton, DigiFest celebrating the AFI Digital Content Lab's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, the first teaming of AFI FEST with LACMA on a Arnaud Desplechin retrospective as well as the joining of efforts with American Cinematheque for the two tributes, and screenings attended by everyone from Joaquin Phoenix and Michelle Williams, Jeff Goldblum, Vinessa Shaw, Sally Hawkins, Julia Ormond, Lou Diamond Phillips, Michelle Trachtenberg, Billy and Lisa Zane, Jacqueline Bisset, Seymour Cassel, Elijah Wood, Zack Galifianakis, Mark Ruffalo, Joanna Cassidy, Bai Ling, Russell Wong, Julia Nickson, Steph Song, Kathleen Quinlan, Jay O. Sanders, Kate Del Castillo, Marisa Tomei, Evan Rachel Wood, Jason Stratham, Jesse Spencer, Kelly Lynch, Jason Priestly, Amil Kapoor, Matthew Modine, Charlie Day, Mary Elizabeth Ellis, Kevin McKidd, Sendhil Ramamurthy made for an exceptionally successful film festival by all accounts.

AFI FEST 2008 will conclude with Sunday's Closing Night Gala, *DEFIANCE*, directed by Edward Zwick and starring Daniel Craig, Liev Schreiber and Jamie Bell. Overall, AFI FEST 2008 showcased 106 features (85 narrative, 21 documentary) and 48 shorts (39 narrative, 9 documentary) for a total of 154 films representing 38 countries.

### **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. Celebrating its 22nd year as a program of the American Film Institute, AFI FEST 2008 presented by Audi will take place October 30-November 9. Kicking off the awards season each year, AFI FEST offers a crucial avenue of exposure to the entertainment community, while providing appreciative audiences with a festive atmosphere and the very best of world film, right in the center of the film capital of the world.

AFI FEST 2008 presented by Audi is supported in part by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, the Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles and the Hollywood Sign Trust. AFI FEST is made possible in part by a grant from 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.

AFI FEST 2008 presented by Audi is sponsored in part by American Airlines, ArcLight Hollywood, RR Donnelley, Farmers Insurance, Samsung, Absolut Vodka, Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, LA.com, and Stella Artois. The Los Angeles Times is the Festival's Presenting Media Partner.

### **About Audi of America, Inc.**

Audi of America Inc. and its 270 dealers offer a full line of German-engineered luxury vehicles. The Audi line-up is one of the freshest in the industry with 23 models, including 12 models launched during model years 2008 and 2009. Audi is among the most successful brands globally. Last year AUDI AG recorded its 12th consecutive record year for sales and profit growth. Visit [www.audiusa.com](http://www.audiusa.com) or [www.audiusanews.com](http://www.audiusanews.com) for more information regarding Audi vehicle and business issues.

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