



HOT CANADIAN DOC TO KICK OFF SERIES SCAREDSACRED To Open Canadian Images

Vancouver, BC (September 1, 2004) - Velcrow Ripper's **SCAREDSACRED** will kick off the Canadian Images series at the 23rd Vancouver International Film Festival, Canadian Images programmer Diane Burgess announced today. The program includes 33 features, 9 mid-length films and 64 shorts, for a total of 106 Canadian films. The Canadian Images series is graciously sponsored by the Independent Film Channel.

In **SCAREDSACRED**, Velcrow Ripper embarks on a personal journey to visit several of the world's "Ground Zeros." In seeking to discover the transformative power of these tragedies, Ripper unearths unforgettable stories of survival, resilience and recovery. "This remarkably beautiful and unflinching documentary explores what it means to be a global citizen in today's world, without falling prey to the lure of jet-setting. On the heels of last year's *The Corporation*, **SCAREDSACRED** asserts the strength of western Canadian documentary," Burgess noted.

"There's an international flavour to this year's program that reflects a broader understanding of our definition of Canadian film. While we're accustomed to celebrating Canadian documentaries that provide vital insights on global issues, there's a tendency to downplay the industrial realities of transnational filmmaking. With coproductions like **BEING JULIA**, **HEAD IN THE CLOUDS** and **METALLIC BLUES**, we find evidence of the contributions of Canadian talent on the world stage," Burgess said.

CANADIAN IMAGES SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

In actor/writer/director Don McKellar's highly anticipated second feature **CHILDSTAR**, Taylor Brandon Burns (played by Mark Rendall), famous child actor and monstrous brat, is outsourced to Canada to star in the action-comedy blockbuster *The First Son*. The film co-stars Jennifer Jason Leigh and features cameos from Dave Foley, Eric Stoltz and Alan Thicke. **HEAD IN THE CLOUDS** is an epic story of a romance troubled by class origins, the rise of fascism and World War II. Writer/director John Duigan artfully directs a powerful cast including Penelope Cruz, Charlize Theron and Stuart Townsend.

CANADIAN DOCUMENTARIES

As a complement to the Festival's "Changing the World" section, the Canadian Images program offers a strong selection of nonfiction films dealing with issues as varied as the environment, genocide, gender and community. **SHIPBREAKERS** focuses on Alang, India and a growing environmental disaster, where workers with no training earn as little as 8 cents an hour to recycle metal from scrapped ships. In **SHAKE HANDS WITH THE DEVIL: THE JOURNEY OF ROMÉO DALLAIRE**, Peter Raymont returns to Rwanda with the former head of the UN peacekeeping mission, 10 years after the genocide. **BEING CARIBOU** joins newlyweds Leanne Allison (who also co-directed) and Karsten Heuer on an arduous journey following these migratory animals, in order to expose the threat that US oil drilling poses to their existence.

Documentaries on the arts include **JEAN-PIERRE PERRAULT: GIANT STEPS** and **ALTER EGOS**, both of which look at the realities faced by artists, including the very few whose creativity is celebrated during their lifetimes. **ALTER EGOS** looks at Oscar-nominated animators Chris Landreth and Ryan Larkin, the latter serving as the subject of **RYAN**, which chronicles his struggles with addiction. The package includes both animators' Oscar-nominated shorts: **WALKING** (1968) and **THE END** (1995).

Other documentary highlights include: **THE UNSEXING OF EMMA EDMONDS**, which screens with **100% WOMAN**; **THE TIES THAT BIND**, which screens with **PLEASANT STREET**; **PHANTOM OF THE OPERATOR**; **I CURMUDGEON**; and **A WHALE OF A TALE**.

OTHER CANADIAN IMAGES HIGHLIGHTS

Quebec's film industry continues to flourish, as this year's selection demonstrates with impressive breadth. The highly anticipated **ELLES ÉTAIENT CINQ**; the haunting thriller **MÉMOIRES AFFECTIVES**; the indie urban chronicle **HAPPINESS IS A SAD SONG**; the internationally flavoured **LITTORAL**; and the culturally vibrant **LE GOÛT DES JEUNES FILLES**, join **CAMPING SAUVAGE** in demonstrating the growing popularity of Quebec films. **CAMPING SAUVAGE**, a comedy about a stockbroker in the witness protection program has earned more than \$3.5 million at the box office in its first four weeks of release.

The Canadian penchant for irreverent comedy comes through in **SIBLINGS**, which recounts the mishaps of a group of step-siblings who accidentally kill their parents just before Christmas, whilst the more bittersweet **WILBY WONDERFUL** uses a remarkable ensemble cast (Paul Gross, Sandra Oh, Rebecca Jenkins and Callum Keith Rennie) to look at truth and the challenge of finding a quiet place to kill yourself. Others include **THE LIMB SALESMAN**, **SEVEN TIMES LUCKY**, and the World Premiere of **SHOW ME**.

Local films include Bruce McDonald's wildly irreverent **THE LOVE CRIMES OF GILLIAN GUESS**, Mark A. Lewis' darkly comic **ILL FATED**, Blaine Thurier's edgy second feature **MALE FANTASY**, Bill Marchant's debut **EVERYONE**, and Vic Sarin's romantic comedy **DELUXE COMBO PLATTER**. The Canadian Images shorts packages this year have strong local connections featuring films made by students from UBC, SFU and Emily Carr. Covering topics on loss and salvation, love and family, they all explore the issue of connection in today's world.

\$17,000 IN PRIZES FOR WESTERN CANADIAN FILMMAKERS

For the third year, Citytv is generously sponsoring an award for Western Canadian filmmakers. The \$12,000 Citytv Western Canada Feature Film Award for 2004 will be presented to the director of the Best Feature Film from Western Canada. Burgess also announced that for a second year the \$5,000 Keystone Award would be presented to the Best Young Western Canadian Director of a Short Film. This award is graciously sponsored by International Keystone Entertainment.

CANADIAN IMAGES JURY

The jury for the Citytv and Keystone Awards is comprised of: Vincent Le Leurch (journalist, Le Film Francais), Helen Loveridge (director, Seattle International Film Festival) and John Griffin (journalist, Montreal Gazette).

The 23rd annual Vancouver International Film Festival runs from September 23 to October 8. More than 150,000 patrons are expected to attend 500 screenings of over 300 films from 50 countries at 10 Vancouver screens: Cineplex Odeon Granville Cinemas (7 screens); the VISA Screening Room at the Vogue Theatre; The Ridge; and the Pacific Cinémathèque.

All box offices open September 4 for VISA cardholders. VISA and cash sales from September 11. The fastest way to buy advance tickets is at www.viff.org, 24 hours a day, or through the VISA Charge-by-Phone line at 604-685-8297, open noon to 7pm. There are two advance ticket outlets, the Pacific Centre Kiosk (Granville and Georgia) and City Square Mall (Cambie and 12th, mezzanine level). For festival information, call the Starbucks Hotline at 604-683-FILM (3456) starting September 2, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., or see the website.

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