



News Release

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***AFI-DISCOVERY CHANNEL SILVERDOCS DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL
ANNOUNCES INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY CONFERENCE PROGRAM***

Conference Explores “Storytelling In An Always On World”

***Sony Pictures Classics’ Co-Founder and Co-President Tom Bernard
to Give Conference Keynote, “The Future is Strange”***

Silver Spring, Maryland, May 27, 2009—AFI–Discovery Channel SILVERDOCS Documentary Festival today announced highlights of its International Documentary Conference which runs concurrently with the SILVERDOCS Festival June 16-20, 2009. SILVERDOCS is the only event in the US that combines the live exhibition experience of a film festival with a complete professional conference that brings together filmmakers, leaders in the documentary community, private and public media, distributors, commissioning editors, new media innovators, and the philanthropic community. The Conference presents five days of inspiring discussions, strategic market intelligence and trend-setting professional development at more than 60 panels, workshops, master classes and one-on-one meetings with key industry decision makers.

The Conference will explore the challenges and opportunities of “Storytelling in an Always On World” throughout thematic strands including: Documentary Impact; Distribution and Dialogue; Aesthetics, Craft and Excellence in Documentary Filmmaking; and School Docs: The Role of Media in the 21st Century Classroom.

Tom Bernard, Sony Pictures Classics’ co-president and co-founder will present his view of the changing media landscape in a keynote titled “The Future Is Strange”. Sony Pictures Classics is a leading producer and distributor of independent film.

Other highlights include several Doc Talks: Director **AJ Schnack** and the team behind CONVENTION will discuss Ensemble Filmmaking; Director **RJ Cutler** will dish on the making of SEPTEMBER ISSUE and the state of documentary verité; *Entertainment Weekly*’s **Lisa Schwarzbaum** and other top critics and Festival programmers will discuss the changing nature of film criticism. And as previously announced, the Conference will feature a presentation by award-winning filmmaker Thomas Allen Harris who will introduce his new media platform, DIGITAL DIASPORA FAMILY REUNION, which taps into a vast US network of black photographic archives. Harris will discuss how these digital archives are shaping his new film about black photography entitled, THROUGH A LENS DARKLY. Washington-area residents will be invited to become part

of the archive and the film by bringing in samples of their own family photos to be scanned in the AFI Silver Theatre lobby during specific days of the Festival.

“Once again Diana Ingraham has brought together the leading media makers, distributors, funders and exhibitors that are shaping the future of the documentary form in step with the changing media environment and new generation of media makers and consumers,” said Sky Sitney, Artistic Director. “We are particularly pleased this year to present Master Classes given by documentary film legends that focus on the craft of filmmaking.”

STORYTELLING IN AN ALWAYS ON WORLD

DOCUMENTARY IMPACT: THE NEW WAVE OF ACTIVE MEDIA ALLIANCES

Starting with The Good Pitch at SILVERDOCS, a series of pitch sessions, discussions and provocative panel presentations examining the potential for strategic collaboration between documentary storytellers, philanthropists, nonprofits and advocacy groups. Executives from the Sundance Documentary Fund, Brit Doc Foundation, WITNESS, Tribeca Institute/Gucci Finishing Fund, Ford Foundation, GrantMakers in Film and Electronic Media, Amnesty International, Ben & Jerry’s Foundation, Cinereach, Katahdin Foundation, MoveOn.org, Center for Social Media, Impact Partners, Fledgling Fund, and the Ford Foundation will participate.

PUBLIC MEDIA IN ACTION AND IN THE FUTURE

Join executives from PBS, CPB, ITVS, National Black Programming Consortia, commissioning editors from WIDE ANGLE, Center for Social Media, American Documentary: P.O.V., NPR, First Coast Audio Festival, PRX, INDEPENDENT LENS, and major producing stations to explore the public media future.

DISTRIBUTION and DIALOGUE: THEATRICAL, BROADCAST, DVD AND THE DIGITAL BEYOND

Gain strategic counsel from leaders in the distribution field including representatives from HBO, A&E Indie Films, Cinetic, b-side, Indie Pix, Argus Entertainment, New Video/Docurama, AFI Digital Content Lab, Bay Area Video Coalition, National Geographic, Discovery Channel, Planet Green, Sundance Channel, Roadside Attractions, Cactus Three, WE: Women’s Entertainment and others.

AESTHETICS, CRAFT AND EXCELLENCE IN DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKING

A series of master classes with award-winning directors, cinematographers, editors, composers, and representatives from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, the Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards and the George Foster Peabody Awards Program.

SCHOOL DOCS: THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN THE 21ST CENTURY CLASSROOM

AFI SILVER Screen Education presents a strand of hands-on workshops, panel discussions and screenings directed to the needs of the 21st Century educators and their students. Topics include “New creativity in Humanities,” “Ethics in Documentaries,” “Creating Multimedia Lessons,” and “Filmmaking in the Classroom.” The voices of today’s youth filmmakers from all over the world will also be represented.

A full Conference Agenda can be found online at: www.SILVERDOCS.com or <http://silverdocs.bside.com/2009/schedule/week/type/conference>

About SILVERDOCS

AFI-Discovery Channel SILVERDOCS Festival is an eight-day internationally recognized event that honors excellence in filmmaking, supports the diverse voices and free expression of independent storytellers and celebrates the power of documentary to improve our understanding of the world. Now in its seventh year, the Festival runs June 15-22 at the AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center in the Washington, DC, area. The 2008 Festival featured 108 films from 63 countries presented to more than 25,000 attendees, including the influential audiences of the nation's capital and media professionals from around the world. The concurrent five-day SILVERDOCS International Documentary Conference presents thought-provoking presentations and engages a diverse group of more than 1,000 filmmakers and media leaders concerned with the future of nonfiction storytelling, production and distribution. For more information, go to SILVERDOCS.com.

About the American Film Institute

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. Additional information about AFI is available at AFI.com.

About Discovery Communications

Discovery Communications is the world's number-one non-fiction media company reaching more than 1.5 billion cumulative subscribers in over 170 countries. Discovery empowers people to explore their world and satisfy their curiosity through 100-plus worldwide networks, led by Discovery Channel, TLC, Animal Planet, Science Channel, Planet Green, Investigation Discovery and HD Theater, as well as leading consumer and educational products and services, and a diversified portfolio of digital media services including www.HowStuffWorks.com. Discovery Communications is owned by Discovery Holding Company (NASDAQ: DISCA, DISCB), Advance/Newhouse Communications and John S. Hendricks, Discovery's founder and chairman. For more information, please visit www.discoverycommunications.com.