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AFI AND LANTERMAN REGIONAL CENTER ANNOUNCE *PERSPECTIVES 2004* COUNCIL OF ADVISORS

Bank CEO, Brother Writing-Directing Team Among Members

Los Angeles – The American Film Institute (AFI) and Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center are pleased to announce the 2004 Council of Advisors for *PERSPECTIVES International Film Festival and Forum Promoting Understanding and Inclusion of People with Developmental Disabilities*.

Building on the success of last year's inaugural festival, *PERSPECTIVES 2004* will be guided by a Council of Advisors representing the entertainment industry, local business and the developmental disabilities community.

Chairman & CEO of City National Bank Russell Goldsmith is the group's Honorary Chairman. He is joined by the writing-directing team of Bobby and Peter Farrelly; Screen Actors Guild President Melissa Gilbert; actors Andrea Fay Friedman and Jason Ritter; Producer Moctesuma Esparza; Yudi Bennett, President Foothill Autism Alliance; and Sam L Grogg, Dean AFI Conservatory.

Returning Council members include Magdalena Beltran del Olmo, Vice President of Communications, The California Wellness Foundation; Ted Braun, University of Southern California; Vince Calandra; Actor Joe Mantegna; Olivia Raynor, Ph.D., UCLA Tarjan Center for Developmental Disabilities; and Gail Williamson, Executive Director, Down Syndrome Association of Los Angeles.

Subtitled "*When you look at me, what do you see?*", *PERSPECTIVES 2004* will take place June 4-6, 2004 at the Arclight Theatre in Hollywood, and will present feature films and documentaries that depict the lives of people with developmental disabilities.

The festival grew out of a conviction that we live in a complex world driven largely by images created and disseminated by the entertainment and news media. These images shape our individual and collective perceptions of who and what we value as a society.

"Film has always been an avenue for opening eyes to experiences that enrich us and make us able to understand life from another point of view," notes Christian Gaines, Director of Festivals AFI, "and AFI is delighted to be partnering with Lanterman Regional Center on this event because it brings together people who will be able to not only share their stories, but also do something about the images we see."

As influential agents of change and powerful molders of public opinion, the media have a major impact on our views.

"Despite all the progress we have made in terms of improving the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families, the one thing they tell us they value the most and find the least is understanding and inclusion," explains Diane Anand, executive director of Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center. "*PERSPECTIVES* is the beginning of an ongoing educational effort to change that."

## MEDIA FORUM

The centerpiece of *PERSPECTIVES* is a Forum for members of the media community. Open to writers, directors, producers, actors, editors and studio executives, the Forum is an opportunity for members of the media and members of the developmental disabilities community to engage in an ongoing creative dialogue that will help inform and deepen the depictions of people with developmental disabilities in the media, while encouraging participants and audience members to be advocates for change.

## MEDIA AWARD

Following the forum is the presentation of the *PERSPECTIVES Media Award*, given to an individual, group or corporate entity in the media who has advanced the cause of understanding and social acceptance by creating sensitive and accurate images of people with developmental disabilities.

Oscar® nominee and Emmy and SAG Award winner, William H. Macy was the recipient of the first *PERSPECTIVES Media Award* in 2003.

The first *PERSPECTIVES* Film Festival in July of 2003 welcomed over 2,000 people to the state-of-the-art Arclight Cinemas in Hollywood, showcasing films such as *MY LEFT FOOT*, *HOW'S YOUR NEWS?*, *DANCE ME TO MY SONG*, and *THE EIGHTH DAY*. Notable guests lending their support and expertise included Jim Sheridan, Joe Mantegna, Melissa Gilbert and William H. Macy.

For more information go to [www.perspectives-iff.org](http://www.perspectives-iff.org) or contact Festival Director Marielle Farnan at 213/383-1300, x6472, or e-mail at [marielle.farnan@lanterman.org](mailto:marielle.farnan@lanterman.org)

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