

AFI vision is Project 20/20

By PAMELA McCLINTOCK

The American Film Institute will use the upcoming AFI Fest 2006 in Los Angeles to announce the first class of filmmakers participating in a new cultural exchange program that's part of a broader initiative unveiled Monday by first lady Laura Bush.

All filmmakers chosen for AFI Project 20/20 will have pics bowing at the fest, which runs Nov. 1-12, concurrently with the American Film Market. Up to 20 filmmakers will be asked to participate.

At a press confab in Washington, Bush said the Global Cultural Initiative is intended to expose international audiences to American artists and art forms.

The State Dept. will work with the National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, AFI and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in launching the initiative.

The filmmakers chosen for Project 20/20 will collaborate with each other and tour with their films in the U.S. and abroad. The AFI Fest will be considered the first stop on the tour. AFI also intends to hold outreach and educational programs at universities, film archives and libraries.

Project 20/20 also honors the 20th anniversary of AFI's L.A. fest.

Last week, IFTA held its annual board elections. Newly elected executive committee members are Mark Damon, Lewis Horwitz, Ehud Bleiberg and Lloyd Kaufman. Newly elected board members are Richard Guardian, Tony Kandah, Brad Kembel, Albert Lee, David Shoshan and Andrew Stevens.