

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AFI FEST 2003 CELEBRATES FINALE WITH WORLD PREMIERE OF MONSTER

Top Audience Award Goes to Jim Sheridan's IN AMERICA

November 17, 2003 (Los Angeles)- AFI FEST 2003 - the AFI Los Angeles International Film Festival - concluded Sunday night in the Cinerama Dome at Arclight Hollywood with the world premiere of Newmarket Films' MONSTER. Written and directed by AFI Alumna Patty Jenkins, the film stars Charlize Theron and Christina Ricci who were among those in attendance.

In welcoming remarks, Festival Director of Programming Nancy Collet and Festival Director Christian Gaines announced the winners of the AFI FEST 2003 Audience Awards and congratulated the Jury Award winners who received their prizes at a presentation ceremony on Friday Night at CineSpace.

"Over the last 10 days, we have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from filmmakers, audiences, sponsors and press. AFI FEST 2003 has been extremely successful on every level. It's a thrill to provide a world-class Festival for the people of Los Angeles, and to make a significant impact on the international film community."

A record number of festival-goers responded to the consistently strong programming, the conveniently centralized location of the Festival at Arclight Hollywood and the attendance of many of the filmmakers and actors at AFI FEST 2003.

The 10 days of screenings included a number of sold-out films, including Milos Petricic's AN ALMOST ORDINARY STORY, Denys Arcand's THE BARBARIAN INVASIONS, Steve Anderson's THE BIG EMPTY, Mark Sobel's THE COMMISSION, Robert Altman's THE COMPANY, John Deery's CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE, Amanda Micheli's DOUBLE DARE,

Errol Morris' FOG OF WAR, Pjer Zalica's FUSE, Mike Bencivenga's HAPPY HOUR, Francois Dupeyron's MONSIEUR IBRAHIM, Hugo Rodriguez's NICOTINA and Rodrigo Bellott's SEXUAL DEPENDANCY.

AFI FEST 2003 kicked off with the North American Premiere of CALENDAR GIRLS, directed by Nigel Cole and starring Helen Mirren and Julie Walters, and showcased more than 134 films from 42 countries. The Centerpiece Galas, HOUSE OF SAND AND FOG, directed by Vadim Perelman and THE STATEMENT, directed by Norman Jewison were both World Premieres. In addition, AFI FEST 2003 featured a Tribute to internationally acclaimed actor Omar Sharif and an Evening with Anthony Minghella featuring 20 minutes of previously unseen footage of his upcoming film COLD MOUNTAIN.

An array of luminaries from around the globe attended AFI FEST 2003, including Denys Arcand, Kathy Baker, Angela Bassett, Thora Birch, Jack Black, Nick Broomfield, Neve Campbell, Jennifer Connelly, Dana Delany, Faye Dunaway, John Favreau, Udo Kier, Sir Ben Kingsley, Martin Landau, Anthony LaPaglia, Lucy Lawless, Diego Luna, Ron Mann, Malcolm McDowell, Anthony Minghella, Sydney Pollack, Robert Redford, John C. Reilly, Christina Ricci, Oskar Roehler, Gabriele Salvatores, Omar Sharif, Jim Sheridan, Eric Stoltz, Tilda Swinton, Quentin Tarantino, Charlize Theron, Vince Vaughn, Margarethe von Trotta, Julie Walters, Mike White and many more.

JURY AWARDS

(Presented Friday evening at the Kodak CONNECT Closing reception)

INTERNATIONAL SHORTS COMPETITION, presented by DELL

GRAND JURY PRIZE

DEEP SILENCE / SILENCIO PROFUNDO (Mexico)

Directed by Gustavo Loza

HONORABLE MENTION

AMERICAN MADE (USA)

Directed By Sharat Raju

Jurors: Actor, Chris Klein; filmmaker, Alison Dickey; filmmaker, Gill Holland

Jury Statement: The Short Film Jury would like to congratulate the filmmakers and

programmers for such a strong selection of films this year for the International Shorts competition. The films reflected a wide variety of styles and voices from around the world. We'd like to begin by giving an Honorable Mention to the film "AMERICAN MADE" written and directed by Sharat Raju for outstanding performances in a well-written and directed film.

And now the grand Prize for the International Shorts competition at the 2003 AFI FEST goes to a beautiful film, which captures the short form with both lyrical and stylistic mastery. Congratulations to (SILENCIO PROFUNDO/DEEP SILENCE).

***INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION, presented by
SILVERDOCS: AFI/Discovery Channel Documentary Festival
GRAND JURY PRIZE***

BEAH: A BLACK WOMAN SPEAKS (USA)

Directed by LisaGay Hamilton

Jurors: Actor, Jeremy Sisto; filmmaker, Lianne Skyler; magazine editor, Tom White

Jury Statement: The films in the Documentary Competition that struck us most were those films whose characters drove the story with their bravery, their presence, their honesty. And it was the filmmakers who gave these subjects the space to arrive at some truth about themselves and ourselves, and take us to a deeper place.

Filmmakers have a responsibility to their subjects; it's a responsibility whose foundation is respect and trust, and being true to the work and the story and the message. One film, above the others, embraces the spirit of the relationship between filmmaker and subject. This is a story about the power of storytelling, the idea of passing on, of legacy, of making one's life one's work and one's mission. But this film is more than about its subject. It's about the world that subject engages, embraces and embodies, on the subject's own terms. In the end, the filmmaker passes this story on to us, a passage that is a celebration and an affirmation. Ladies and gentlemen, it is with great pleasure that we present the Grand Jury Prize to BEAH, A BLACK WOMAN SPEAKS.

***INTERNATIONAL FEATURE COMPETITION
GRAND JURY PRIZE***

OLD, NEW, BORROWED AND BLUE (Denmark)

Directed by Natasha Arthy

Jurors: Journalist, Robert Abele, filmmaker, Tony Bui; filmmaker, Karen Kusama

Jury Statement: It's been encouraging to watch all of these films and feel that they all share a clarity of mission and an assured sense of tone. We'd like to congratulate all of the filmmakers for accomplishing such a truly humbling task: to make their films in their own voice. But tonight, unfortunately, we can only recognize one film for the grand prize. The movie we've chosen is one of uncommon truth, humor and humanity. Unlike its lead character, a woman at a critical juncture in her life unable to confront the harsh Realities of her interpersonal relationships, this film approaches its themes with candor and a lack of judgment. We recognize Natasha Arthy's "Old, New, Borrowed and Blue" with the Grand Jury Prize for International Features.

The Jury Award winners above received film-related prizes and in-kind services valued at more than \$75,000 from our sponsors including Eastman Kodak Company, AFM, Panavision, DELL, Aloha Airlines, TriCoast Studios, Avid, CustomFlix and many others.

AUDIENCE AWARDS presented by the Los Angeles Times and LATimes.com

BEST SHORT FILM

FRAGILE (Germany)
Directed by Sikander Goldau

BEST DOCUMENTARY FILM

DOUBLE DARE (USA)
Directed by Amanda Micheli

BEST FEATURE FILM

IN AMERICA (Ireland)
Directed by Jim Sheridan

AFI FEST 2003 is supported, in part, by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission. AFI FEST 2003 is proud to continue its collaborative partnership with the Skirball Cultural Center. Made in Germany is made possible through the cooperation and support of the Export-Union of German Cinema.

Official AFI FEST 2003 sponsors include AFM 2004, Absolut, ArcLight Hollywood, Christie Digital, Chrysler Million Dollar Film Festival, CineSpace, Dell Computers, Los Angeles Times, Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), Roosevelt Hotel - Hollywood, LA Weekly, FormDecor, Inc. and Venice Magazine.

Major Sponsors of the Festival are Adelphia Communications, Aloha Airlines, Eastman Kodak Company, Neutrogena, TriCoast Studios, Hollywood & Highland, Hollywood Sign Trust, Jurlique Australian Film Festival 2004, SILVERDOCS: AFI/Discovery Channel Documentary Festival and Variety.

AFI is the preeminent organization dedicated to advancing and preserving the art of film, television and other forms of the moving image. AFI trains the next generation of filmmakers at its world-renowned Conservatory, provides film preservation leadership and explores new digital technologies in moviemaking. AFI's New Media Ventures programs bring together the creative and digital communities, as the department seeks to develop a literacy program for the 21st century, helping young people learn to read and write screens of all sizes--cinema, television, computer and the Internet. With AFI ON SCREEN, the institute is the largest nonprofit exhibitor in the US, with programs at the AFI Los Angeles International Film Festival (AFI FEST); the AFI National Film Theater at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC; and the AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center in Silver Spring, Maryland. A 49,000 square foot complex with three theatres--one historic, two new state-of-the-art stadium-style theatres--the AFI Silver exhibits film and video generally unavailable elsewhere in the region. AFI's annual almanac for the 21st century, **AFI AWARDS**, honors the most outstanding motion pictures and television programs of the year. **AFI's 100 Years . . . 100 Movies, 100 Stars, 100 Laughs, 100 Thrills, 100 Passions and 100 Heroes & Villains** have ignited extraordinary public interest in classic American movies. During the past 31 years, AFI's Life Achievement Award has become the highest honor for a career in film. More information about AFI can be found by visiting its Web site, located at www.AFI.com.

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