



AFI FEST 2003

AFI LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
NOV 6-16

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 30, 2003

AFI FEST 2003 ANNOUNCES

**A TRIBUTE TO OMAR SHARIF
THE LEGENDARY ACTOR WILL ALSO PRESENT
THE US PREMIERE OF MONSIEUR IBRAHIM**

**COLD MOUNTAIN AND THE COLLABORATIVE
ART OF ANTHONY MINGHELLA
FEATURING 20 MINUTES OF FOOTAGE
FROM THE UPCOMING FILM**

September 30, 2003 (Los Angeles)— AFI FEST 2003—the AFI Los Angeles International Film Festival (November 6 – 16)—will honor Omar Sharif in its annual AFI FEST Tribute on Tuesday, November 11, 7:30 p.m., at ArLight Hollywood. A TRIBUTE TO OMAR SHARIF will feature film clips, anecdotes and lively onstage conversation with **Variety's Vice President and Editor-in-Chief Peter Bart**. A TRIBUTE TO OMAR SHARIF is made possible through a collaborative partnership with the Skirball Cultural Center.

From his early days as an actor in Arab cinema in films such as Youssef Chahine's THE BLAZING SUN (1954) to his emergence as one of Hollywood's most sought-after movie stars, Omar Sharif's career has spanned 50 years, with appearances in more than 70 films, including LAWRENCE OF ARABIA (1962), DR. ZHIVAGO (1965), FUNNY GIRL (1968) and THE TAMARIND SEED (1974). He appears in the upcoming HIDALGO, set for a March 2004 release from Touchstone Pictures. Previous recipients of the AFI FEST Tribute have included Michael Caine (2002) and Ang Lee (2001). Major sponsors of the Tribute include Venice Magazine, The Magic Castle and Absolut.

As part of the Tribute, AFI FEST 2003 will host the US Premiere of MONSIEUR IBRAHIM from noted French director François Dupeyron. Set in Paris in the 1960s, Sharif shines as a neighborhood shopkeeper whose friendship with a young boy changes their lives forever. MONSIEUR IBRAHIM will screen at AFI FEST 2003 on Monday, November 10, 7:00 p.m., at ArLight Hollywood.

Rounding out the program, an OMAR SHARIF RETROSPECTIVE is planned for November 12 and 13 at the Skirball Cultural Center. The retrospective will include J. Lee Thompson's MACKENNA'S GOLD, (1969), William Wyler's FUNNY GIRL (1968), Youssef Chahine's THE BLAZING SUN (1954) and Hani Lachine's PUPPETEER (1969).

AFI FEST 2003 also presents **COLD MOUNTAIN AND THE COLLABORATIVE ART OF ANTHONY MINGHELLA** on Thursday, November 13, 7:00 p.m., at ArcLight Hollywood.

Academy Award®-winning director Anthony Minghella (THE ENGLISH PATIENT, THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY) joins the host of KCET's Cinema Series, film critic **Peter Hammond**, and surprise guests in a candid onstage interview focusing on the collaborative spirit of filmmaking. In addition to clips from his award-winning work, Minghella will introduce for the first time 20 minutes of never-before-seen footage from his brand new film COLD MOUNTAIN from Miramax Films, starring Nicole Kidman and Jude Law.

Writer/director ANTHONY MINGHELLA's film THE ENGLISH PATIENT, which he wrote and directed, won nine Academy Awards in 1996, including those for Best Picture and Best Director. Minghella won the 1999 Best Director Award from the National Board of Review for his film THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY. His first film as a writer/director—TRULY, MADLY, DEEPLY—starring Juliet Stevenson and Alan Rickman, was a success in Britain and America, winning several prizes including a BAFTA and a Writer's Guild Award. Minghella has also directed MR. WONDERFUL with Matt Dillon, Mary Louise Parker and William Hurt. Since 2000, he has been with Sydney Pollack as joint-owner of Mirage Enterprises serving as executive producer on the company's films HEAVEN, IRIS and THE QUIET AMERICAN. Minghella was recently named Chairman of the British Film Institute.

AFI FEST 2003—the AFI Los Angeles International Film Festival—runs from November 6 – 16. The Festival opens on November 6, 2003, with the North American Premiere of CALENDAR GIRLS, from director Nigel Cole. The Centerpiece Galas will be on November 9 with the World Premiere of Vadim Perelman's HOUSE OF SAND AND FOG and on November 12 with the World Premiere of Norman Jewison's THE STATEMENT. The Festival's Closing Night Gala, November 16, 2003, will be the World Premiere of MONSTER, directed by AFI alumnus Patty Jenkins.

Luminaries expected to attend AFI FEST 2003 include Denys Arcand, Ruben Blades, Jennifer Connelly, Rachel Leigh Cook, Dana Delany, Jon Favreau, Kelsey Grammer, Lisa Gay Hamilton, Daryl Hannah, Norman Jewison, Ben Kingsley, Chris Klein, Martin Landau, Anthony LaPaglia, Diego Luna, Malcolm McDowell, Michael Pressman, Brett Ratner, Christina Ricci, Martin Sheen, Jeremy Sisto, Eric Stoltz, Charlize Theron, Stanley Tucci and many more.

For Festival ticket sales and information, please call 1.866.AFI FEST or visit the AFI FEST Web site at www.AFI.com.

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.

###

PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Contact: Rebecca Fisher, AFI FEST, at 323.856.7673
Kristian Salinas, AFI FEST, at 323.856.7718
Michael Lawson, mPRm, at 323.933.3399