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THAT'S A WRAP!

PALM BEACH CLOSSES 15TH ANNUAL FILM FEST

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FILM AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

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INDIEFLIX.COM WINNER ALSO ANNOUNCED

PALM BEACH, FL (April 26, 2010) – It was a true celebration of film as the Palm Beach International Film Festival celebrated its 15th installment. Despite being faced with serious financial adversity, PBIFF thrived in the true spirit of independent film camaraderie as over 70 filmmakers from around the world enjoyed welcoming audiences, shared their experiences and attended fabulous parties!

After a week of screenings, the jury votes were tallied to determine the winners for Best Feature Film, Best Documentary and Best Short Film, while audiences voted for *their* favorite in categories of features, documentaries and shorts. Jury winners and Audience Choice Awards were announced at the Closing Night Awards Ceremony.

The jury for the 13th PBIFF consisted of: documentary filmmaker **Aaron Wells** and **Rob Davis**, Director of the DeSantis Center and film historian, who judged Documentary Films; **Emmanuel Itier**, film producer, and **Debbie Frank**, COO of the Frank Theatres, who voted on Feature Films; actress/producer/director **Meredith Scott Lynn** judged the Short Films. The jury was particularly appreciative of the effort each filmmaker put into their projects and felt they should be commended for the creative energy that went into each film!

The winning films were:

The Award for **Best Feature Film** went to Roadside Attraction's *Winter's Bone*, directed by Debra Granik, about a 17-year-old girl who must battle the Ozark wilderness and the local criminal underworld in order to track down her father and save her family's home.

Said juror Emmanuel Itier, "This visceral tale of survival reminds us how important the welfare of the human spirit and family values are. This movie will move your stomach and soul and inspire you to combat poverty and injustice." Fellow juror Debbie Frank concurred, saying "*Winter's Bone* is a straight up, no chaser slice of life - messy, difficult, and sometimes shocking; despite gut wrenching emotions. I left feeling uplifted and moved. This was ultimately a portrayal of what we would do for the family we love. It is truly a well-crafted feature with outstanding performances that will not go unnoticed.

A **Special Mention** went to *Eli and Ben*, directed by Ori Ravid about twelve-year-old Eli's world that is turned upside down when his father, the City Architect, is charged with taking bribes.

"The film was an emotional ride full of passion...a true moving story that everyone can identify with," said Itier. Added Frank, "I was struck by the performances as well as the writing. This is a director that is equally talented as a writer."

They concluded, "Bravo to all filmmakers who participated. The quality level has been exceptional and we encourage them to endure and keep working hard to claim bigger and better achievements in the future."

The Award for **Best Documentary Feature** went to *The Desert of Forbidden Art*, directed by Amanda Pope and Tchavdar Georgiev. Risking being denounced as an 'enemy of the people,' Igor Savitsky rescues 40,000 forbidden fellow artists' works and creates in a far desert of Soviet Uzbekistan a museum now worth millions.

Documentary jurors Rob Davis and Aaron Wells commented, "This year's documentary category featured an excellent slate of remarkable films dealing with a broad array of fascinating subjects. Having a number of exceptional films is both a blessing and curse to the jury members – it makes watching the films an incredibly enjoyable process, but it makes judging them a very difficult task. This year's winner, tells an engaging story in an innovative, artistic style. The film details one individual's incredible lifetime commitment to preserve works of art representing a nearly forgotten artistic movement and visits the museum in a remote part of the world where the artistic works are preserved and exhibited."

The Award for **Best Short Film** went to *A Curious Thing*, directed by Alain R. Hain. Jared is closeted. Sam is straight. They find a connection in each other that they've never experienced before, but where do they go from there? Using documentary audio

as narration for the film, *A Curious Thing* crosses many boundaries, both in form and subject.

Said shorts juror Meredith Scott Lynn, "Every short deserves its own award for various reasons, so this decision was all the more difficult. However, the filmmaker used a device I've never seen in either short or long form where two real-life people tell a true story in voiceover, which serves as the narration for this fully-cast, beautifully directed visual. It made me cry in under 9 minutes."

The winner of the inaugural **IndieFlix.com Online Short Film Competition** is *The Cemetery Club*, directed by Yitz Brilliant. Over 300 people logged in and watched all 8 films, all diverse and winners in their own right. The winner was closely followed by "Leonardo," who was only .8% away from taking the prize. The online festival with IndieFlix was an opportunity to showcase the 'best of the fest' online, and give PBIFF a global presence in this year's festival circuit. It was also an opportunity for participating filmmakers to promote their film online for a brief interval during their festival circuit, and bring their film to untapped audiences around the world. IndieFlix will share audience demographic information with the filmmakers to help them build their marketing campaigns and prepare for distribution. IndieFlix is pleased to offer non-exclusive distribution offers to all participating filmmakers and wish to congratulate them on their successes.

The Audience Choice Award for Best Feature Film went "*The Yankles*," directed by David R. Brooks.

The Yankles is about Charlie Jones, a professional baseball player who was released from the Los Angeles Spirits because of a drinking problem. Upon being paroled from prison after serving time for his third drunk driving conviction, Charlie endeavors to serve 192 hours mandatory community service by coaching baseball. To Charlie's dismay, however, he is shunned by mainstream society because of the controversy surrounding his early parole and prior convictions. Charlie soon discovers that the only people willing to give him a second chance are a group of Jewish, orthodox, yeshiva students who formed an upstart baseball team called The Yankles.

The Audience Choice Award for Best Documentary Feature went to *The Legend of Pale Male*, directed by Frederic Lillen. When a young Belgian comes to New York City looking for his destiny, he finds a remarkable red-tailed hawk living on the ledge of a posh 5th Avenue building. Inspired by this bold bird, he buys his first video camera and begins to follow the hawk. And so begins a magnificent obsession that embraced the hearts of New Yorkers.

The Audience Choice Award for Best Short Film went to *Cemetery Club*, directed by Yitz Brilliant and starring Bernie Rachele, Emily Mitchell, Larry Swansen, Tom Fenaughty, Thomas Crouch. Edgar, recently deceased and enjoying his afterlife,

discovers that his nagging widow Helen has bought the plot next to his own. Now he must see to it that Helen doesn't die before he can find a way to prevent her from joining 'The Club'-- and ruining his afterlife.

At the center of the Film Festival, which was headquartered at The Omphoy Ocean Resort, was the filmmakers. Randi Emerman, PBIFF Director, commented, "This year, for me, was refreshing and inspiring to have had the honor to discover so many wonderful filmmakers from the corners of the earth. The films unveiled a wide swath of experiences...they entertained and dazzled us, they made us laugh and cry, but more importantly, they made us think!"

Following the awards ceremony, PBIFF closed its 15th edition with the passionate and thought-provoking *Exam*, directed by **Stuart Hazeldine** and starring **Luke Mably** (*28 Days Later*). Eight talented candidates have reached the final stage of selection to join the ranks of a mysterious and powerful corporation. Entering a windowless room, an Invigilator gives them eighty minutes to answer one simple question, outlining three rules they must obey or be disqualified. However, the candidates turn over their papers only to find they're completely blank. The candidates begin to discover what they can and cannot do and agree to cooperate in order to figure out the question; then they can compete to answer it. Soon enough, they begin to uncover each other's background, prejudices and hidden agendas. Tensions rise as the clock steadily descends towards zero, and each candidate must decide how far they are willing to go to secure the ultimate job.

The "Best of the Fest" films will be shown next weekend at the Cobb Jupiter Theatres and will be announced soon.

Photos from the film festival are available at www.PictureGroup.com, the official PBIFF photographer.

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