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Rhode Island International Film Festival 2007

M E D I A R E L E A S E

For Details, Photographs or Videos about RIFF News Releases,

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RHODE ISLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 11TH ANNUAL OPENING NIGHT GALA

*RIFF 2007 Presents an Extraordinary Night of International
Short Films and Festivities*

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (July 17, 2007)— A brilliant and memorable selection of short films from around the world await audiences at the gala opening night of the 11th Annual **Rhode Island International Film Festival**, August 7th. This year's line up promises to engage while showcasing international film work. Selected from over 2,500 submissions to this year's event, film entries came to RIFF from more than 70 countries and 34 states in the USA. What more fitting tribute can be paid to these exceptional films than to kick off in style at the historically elegant Providence Performing Arts Center (PPAC), 220 Weybosset Street, Providence.

RIFF's Opening Night Program will honor the "Art of the Short Film," a theme that has become a signature for the Festival. Some of the best short films from across the globe will be showcased between 7:00 and 9:00 p.m. on the grand 50-foot screen in PPAC. The films screened will represent an array of genres to salute RIFF's unique status: out of more than 3,000 film festivals world wide, RIFF is one of only 61 qualifying Festivals with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences—the Oscars—the lone Festival in New England with that distinction.

"It looks to be a pretty sensational year for us," said RIFF Executive Director, George T. Marshall, "We have extremely powerful films from all over the world that our audiences will definitely enjoy. One of the most striking things about film festivals is that they have such a diverse range of themes and work that audiences will always get a bit more than popcorn entertainment.

"One of our calling cards is that we have a reputation for screening very thoughtful pieces: work that inspires, and hopefully encourages our audience to take action."

Seven short films will be screened this year which include a US premiere and the directorial debuts by actors Jennifer Aniston, Joseph Mazzello and Bryce Dallas Howard.

Some highlights:

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Making its US premiere is the Belgium short "Personal Spectator," directed by Emmanuel Jaspers. Unique, with an unexpected twist, the film explores what happens when a new and eccentric type of therapy is used and its unpredictable consequences.

Jennifer Aniston's "Room 10" stars Robin Wright Penn and Kris Kristofferson. This is Aniston's directorial debut film and tells the story of 'Frannie', a veteran nurse with a hardened heart and crumbling marriage; until some unexpected situations challenge her to rethink the choices she's made in her life.

"Orchids," is the story of a woman finding a love she did not expect after answering a mysterious personal ad. Actress Bryce Dallas Howard (*The Village, Lady in the Water, Spiderman 3*) makes her writing/directorial debut with stars Alfred Molina and Katherine Waterston.

Audiences loved him as a child actor in "Simon Birch," "Radio Flyer" and "Jurassic Park," now discover Joseph Mazzello as a writer and director. His powerful tribute to 9/11 "Matters of Life and Death," humanizes the event from the point of view of how one family was impacted. The powerful performances by Mazzello, David Strathairn and Rachael Leigh Cook are not easily forgotten.

The Gala Opening Film Screenings will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Providence Performing Arts Center's main theatre. Admission to this event is \$15 per person (a surcharge of \$0.50 will be added to all tickets which will be used for the Columbus Theatre Arts Centre Restoration Fund). The opening night will also serve as a partial fund-raiser for the Patricia Neal Scholarship Fund.

Prior to the screenings the night will begin in the Marquee Room of the Providence Performing Arts Center with the "**OFFICIAL PRE-OPENING RECEPTION**" from 5:00 - 6:45 p.m. The host of the party will be Lisa Churchville, President WJAR-TV10. There will also be musical accompaniment by jazz pianist Louis Vaughan. Catering is by Ellen Loconto Catering. VIP tickets are available to the public for \$100 dollars per person on a limited basis and will provide access to all opening night events and parties.

According to Demetria Carr, RIFF's Associate Producing Director, who has created the evening's events, "This Official Pre-Opening Reception is the 'must attend' event of the festival because it is reserved specifically for filmmakers, sponsors, press, visiting celebrities, and special guests. The opening's exclusive cocktail party allows guests to meet and greet this year's visiting filmmakers and special guests.

Members of the opening night community include Eva Anderson, Thomas Andreozzi, Bob Billington, Paul Brooks, Gary Calvino, Demetria Carr, Lisa Churchville, Mayor David M. Cicilline, Curt Columbus, Michael Corrente, Joyce Dinobile, Barnaby Evans, Barry Fain, Gail & Ed Fogarty, Keven Hawkins, Jack Mcconnell, Lynne McCormack, Matt Montgomery, John Palumbo, Lynn Singleton, Jim Vickers, Deb Walsh and Nate Watson

Following the screenings, the evening is crowned with "**CELEBRATION 11: RIFF's Gala Opening Party.**" This post-premiere party will be held in the lobby area of PPAC. This event is \$35 per person and will start immediately following the screening. It continues until 12 PM.

Guests will enjoy a night of food and festivities, all with an international flavor as RIFF will be pays tribute to visiting filmmakers from around the globe. New this year will be a taste of Providence's fabulous restaurants offered by *Biltmore Catering, Blaze, Efendi's, Pizza Pieer, India, Jessie's Dessert Bar, Fresh City, Nick's on Broadway, and Schrodgers Catering.* Refreshments will be provided by Tommy Bahama Rum, Harpoon Beer and Empire Bottling Works. Floral arrangements courtesy of Jephrys of Broadway.

The 11th Annual Rhode Island International Film Festival will run from August 7th-12th with a wide range of films being screened during the week at venues across the state. Recognized as the largest film festival

in New England, RIFF prides itself in celebrating the art of independent filmmaking. The 2007 Festival will screen close to 300 films that reflect a variety of styles, perspectives and genres: documentaries, features, animation, and shorts. Many of the filmmakers are expected to attend the Festival making for a lively audience experience and an opportunity to interact, ask questions and discuss.

The **Rhode Island International Film Festival** is supported in part by the City of Providence, the Providence Tourism Council, the Providence Department of Arts, Culture & Tourism, WJAR TV10, Motif Magazine, Clear Channel Communications, Sony, SAG/INDIE, the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, Amtrak, Rule Broadcast Systems, the Rhode Island Film and Television Office, the Biltmore Hotel, Amtrak, the University of Rhode Island, Radio Disney and contributions from members and community supporters.

The Flickers Arts Collaborative, an organization with 25 years of experience presenting major artistic events as well as independent and foreign films to the public, produces the Rhode Island International Film Festival.

Advance ticket sales for screenings and special events are available through the RIFF website (www.RIFilmFest.org). Student, group, and senior discounts are also available with advance booking. To purchase tickets or obtain more information about any aspect of RIFF, call 401-861-4445; or write RIFF, 268 Broadway, Providence, RI 02903; email info@film-festival.org. or log onto www.RIFilmFest.org.

SELECTIONS FOR THIS YEAR'S OPENING NIGHT SCREENING:

WELCOME HOME

Bill Giannakakis, director

14 min. New Zealand, 2006

Cast: Costa Yiavasis Christie and Dimitris Papadopoulos

Dimitris, a Greek immigrant who has called New Zealand home for over fifty years, is forced to deal with a fellow Greek immigrant who can't seem to accept that the world is changing.

ROOM 10

Jennifer Aniston, director

18 min. USA, 2006

Cast: Robin Wright Penn and Kris Kristofferson

Frannie is a veteran nurse with a hardened heart and a crumbling marriage. It's a typical night in the ER until an unexpected relationship with a patient challenges her to rethink her decisions and choices in life.

PERSONAL SPECTATOR

Emmanuel Jaspers, director

15 min. Belgium, 2007

Cast: Emily Hamilton and Tom Harper

US PREMIERE

In an almost deserted self-service a woman is accosted by a handsome guy, offering her a brand new and quick therapy to cure her seemingly bland existence: Looking at her for 5 minutes, until she starts feeling that she exists. The woman thinks of a joke... It isn't. And it has unpredictable consequences.

MATTERS OF LIFE AND DEATH

Joseph Mazzello, director

29 min. USA, 2007

Cast: David Strathairn, Rachael Leigh Cook, Joseph Mazzello, and Daniel Gillies

The directorial debut of actor Joseph Mazzello (Jurassic Park, Simon Birch, The River Wild) is a powerful story about three siblings struggle to maintain control of their lives after the unexpected death of their parents which thrusts them into an uncertain world of adulthood.

HAPPIEST DAY OF HIS LIFE

Ursula Burton, director

11 min. U S A, 2007

Cast: Jill Eikenberry, Michael Tucker, Harry Groener, Dawn Didawick, Rico Colantoni, Louise Fletcher, Phil LaMarr and Seymour Cassel

A light-hearted film that, through a colorful lens, subtly challenges gender roles and traditions with a sense of humor. Depicting a classic, traditional wedding and following the iconic scenes from typical Hollywood wedding movies like FATHER OF THE BRIDE, THE HAPPIEST DAY OF HIS LIFE reverses both gender roles and our assumptions. With a star-studded cast, this is an entertaining crowd pleaser that's politically relevant and appeals to anyone who's gotten married, thought about getting married, or ever been to a wedding.

TANGHI ARGENTINI

Guido Thys, director

13 min. Belgium, 2006

Cast: Dirk Van Dijck

Despite the faceless and cold atmosphere at his work place, an office clerk tries to make his colleagues happy. Instead of the classical cliché Christmas gifts, he wants to give his colleagues something real and precious. Tanghi Argentini is a modern fairy tale.

ORCHIDS

Bryce Dallas Howard, director

17 min. 2006 USA

Cast: Alfred Molina and Katherine Waterston

When a lonely young woman answers a mysterious personal ad, she discovers that love is not what she expected. This is the directorial debut of actress Bryce Dallas Howard (The Village, Spider Man 3, and Lady in Water.)

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