

July 29, 2008

NEWS RELEASE #17

TIFF DOCUMENTARIES EXPLORE WORLDS OF YOUSOU NDOUR, VALENTINO, LEBRON JAMES, JIMMY PAGE, AGNÈS VARDA, ECO-WARRIORS, '68 REBELS, SWINGERS AND MORE!

Toronto – The Toronto International Film Festival announces 26 documentaries to screen in various programmes as part of TIFF08. One documentary will screen in **Mavericks**, two will screen as **Special Presentations**, one as a **Masters** title, and 22 as part of **Real to Reel**, showcasing the finest in non-fiction cinema from around the world. Highlights include a look at a fashion master in **Valentino: The Last Emperor** and a self-portrait of French auteur Agnès Varda in **Les Plages d'Agnès**. Guitar heroes Jimmy Page, The Edge and Jack White are profiled in **It Might Get Loud**. Two films, **Yousou Ndour: I Bring What I Love** and **Soul Power**, explore the musical exchange between Africa and abroad. Three films examine crusading eco-warriors – controversial Canadian activist Paul Watson in **At the Edge of the World**, authors Eric Schlosser and Michael Pollan in **Food, Inc.** and Native Americans of the Hoopa tribe in **Upstream Battle**. Two films revisit cases of injustice – from the courtrooms of California in **Witch Hunt** to a tarnished legacy in Israel in **Killing Kasztner**. Several films intersect with various sports, including kung fu masters in **The Real Shaolin** and LeBron James's high school basketball team in **More Than a Game**. Two films have the backdrop of Ivy League schools in the tumultuous year of 1968, with Tommy Lee Jones playing college football in **Harvard Beats Yale 29-29** and student strikers at Columbia University in **A Time to Stir**. Not to mention the sexual revolution uncovered in **American Swing**.

"Documentary-making continues to flourish," says Thom Powers, Documentary and Mavericks Programmer. "Every year there are more films that command the big screen. There has been a short-sighted focus on the recent lack of a documentary blockbuster. In the larger picture, more docs are getting funded and released theatrically than ever before."

Now live at tiff08.ca/blogs, the Festival's **Doc Blog** returns to offer visitors all of the exciting details and comprehensive information surrounding this year's inspired non-fiction films, and will feature contributions from programmers and filmmakers alike. Ticket packages now on sale. Purchase online at tiff08.ca, by phone at **416-968-FILM** or **1-877-968-FILM** or in person at the **Festival Box Office at Manulife Centre, 55 Bloor Street West** (main floor, north entrance). Box Office hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The 33rd Toronto International Film Festival runs September 4 through 13, 2008.

MAVERICKS

A Time to Stir Paul Cronin, USA

Work in Progress

This epic four-hour work looks at the tumultuous events of the Columbia University student strike in 1968 that ended in police violence and signaled a dramatic political shift between old left and new left. The film captures the intoxicating uprising and sobering aftermath, interviewing students, professors and police. Screening on the last day of the Festival, this special Mavericks presentation will include a discussion with three active participants of the strike: Mark Rudd of Students for a Democratic Society (who later was a member of the Weather Underground), Bill Sales of the Student Afro-American Society and Carolyn Eisenberg, who served on the strike committee.

Communications Department, 2 Carlton Street, Suite 1600 Toronto ON M5B 1J3 Tel: 416-934-3200

Lead Sponsor



Major Sponsor



Major Supporters



Home for film
Now in production
350 King St. W.

FOR THE LOVE OF FILM
belllightbox.ca

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Youssou Ndour: I Bring What I Love Chai Vasarhelyi, USA

World Premiere

One of Africa's most prominent musical exports, Youssou Ndour's distinctive tenor voice became internationally known through a string of popular tracks, including collaborations with Peter Gabriel and the hit "7 Seconds" with Neneh Cherry. Having used his fame to draw attention to a range of political issues, Ndour was named one of *Time Magazine's* 100 most influential people in the world in 2007. Several years in the making, ***Youssou Ndour: I Bring What I Love*** follows Ndour as he releases the deeply personal album *Egypt* as an expression of his Islamic faith, challenging Western stereotypes of the religion while stirring controversy in his home country of Senegal.

Valentino: The Last Emperor Matt Tyrnauer, USA

North American Premiere

Filmmaker Matt Tyrnauer (Special Correspondent for *Vanity Fair* magazine) gains unprecedented access to the renowned fashion designer and his entourage, offering an intimate, engaging, and very funny fly-on-the-wall exploration of the singular world of one of Italy's richest and most famous men. Telling the story of the famous designer's extraordinary life, remarkable artistry and unique relationship with his business partner and companion of 50 years, Giancarlo Giammetti, ***Valentino: The Last Emperor*** documents the colourful and dramatic closing act of Valentino's celebrated career while exploring the larger themes affecting the fashion business today.

MASTERS

Les Plages d'Agnès Agnès Varda, France

North American Premiere

Legendary filmmaker Agnès Varda looks back on her life and work, using beaches as a window to memory. In Belgium, California, the South of France and in Paris, Varda composed her own self-portrait via photographs, film clips and some surprising encounters.

REAL TO REEL

7915 KM Nikolaus Geyrhalter, Austria

World Premiere

Following the tracks of the famous Dakar rally, filmmaker Nikolaus Geyrhalter (*Our Daily Bread*) sets off on a journey from Europe to Africa, documenting European ideas of and prejudices toward Africans, and vice versa.

American Swing Mathew Kaufman and Jon Hart, USA

World Premiere

Chronicling the rise and fall of the legendary swingers club Plato's Retreat and its quixotic owner, ***American Swing*** captures the hedonistic heyday of New York nightlife in the 1970s. As the city hurtled toward bankruptcy and social unrest, its citizens partied on.

At the Edge of the World Dan Stone, USA

World Premiere

Controversial Canadian eco-warrior Paul Watson leads two ships of his Sea Shepherd volunteers on a pirate-like voyage, full of breathless suspense, to stop Japanese whaling vessels in the Antarctica Sea.

The Biggest Chinese Restaurant in the World Weijun Chen, China

World Premiere

The director of last year's crowd-pleaser ***Please Vote For Me*** returns with a look at the West Lake Restaurant in Changsha, China – the world's largest restaurant. With a staff of nearly 1000 (including 300 chefs) and 5000 seats, West Lake is a combination theme park and eatery, offering a cross section of the country's changing society.

Blood Trail Richard Parry, UK

World Premiere

War photographer Robert King let a camera crew follow him for over 15 years. From his first assignment in Bosnia to his breakthrough work in Chechnya, and on to his recent coverage in Iraq, ***Blood Trail*** is an extraordinary look at this difficult and dangerous profession.

Citizen Juling Ing K, Kraisak Choonhavan and Manit Sriwanichpoom; Thailand

World Premiere

A powerfully humanistic documentary that examines the issue of Islamic insurgency in Southern Thailand within the context of the country's unstable democracy, triggered after a Buddhist teacher, Juling, was kidnapped and found lying in a pool of blood.

Communications Department, 2 Carlton Street, Suite 1600 Toronto ON M5B 1J3 Tel: 416-934-3200

Lead Sponsor



Major Sponsor



Major Supporters



Home for film
Now in production
350 King St. W.

FOR THE LOVE OF FILM
belllightbox.ca

The Dungeon Masters Keven McAlester, USA

World Premiere

This whimsical look at three adults deeply involved with Dungeons & Dragons explores how the game affects their lives and relationships, with finely crafted cinematography by Lee Daniel (known for his work with Richard Linklater) and a music score by Blonde Redhead.

Food, Inc. Robert Kenner, USA

World Premiere

Drawing upon the reportage of Eric Schlosser (*Fast Food Nation*) and Michael Pollan (*The Omnivore's Dilemma*), this searing investigation explores the dramatic changes that big business has imposed on how and what we eat.

From Mother to Daughter Andrea Zambelli, Italy

World Premiere

After the Second World War, many young Italian women earned their living in the rice fields, spending hours every day working under the hot sun. Over 50 years later, having lost none of their spirit, they rekindle their friendships by forming a singing group.

Harvard Beats Yale 29-29 Kevin Rafferty, USA

World Premiere

Kevin Rafferty, co-director of *Atomic Café*, examines the tumult of 1968 through the memories of football players (including Tommy Lee Jones) who took part in a legendary game that year between rival Ivy League schools whose student bodies included Al Gore (Harvard) and George Bush (Yale).

It Might Get Loud Davis Guggenheim, USA

World Premiere

The Academy Award™-winning director of *An Inconvenient Truth* celebrates the electric guitar by examining the creative process of three virtuosos – Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin, The Edge of U2 and Jack White of The White Stripes – including their individual development of songs not yet released.

Killing Kasztner Gaylen Ross, USA

World Premiere

Dr. Israel Kasztner helped rescue over 1,600 Hungarian Jews during the Second World War, yet he was later branded a traitor by right-wing extremists in Israel and assassinated. Uncovering new revelations about the case, this film explores Kasztner's legacy.

More Than a Game Kristopher Belman, USA

World Premiere

First-time filmmaker Kristopher Belman had the foresight to follow the journey of a remarkable high school basketball team in Akron, Ohio, that happened to include future NBA superstar LeBron James.

The Real Shaolin Alexander Sebastien Lee, China/USA

World Premiere

Rich with dazzling displays of Kung Fu, this film follows two Chinese and two western students as they undergo a year of rigorous training in martial arts at the Shaolin temple in Central China.

Sea Point Days François Verster, South Africa

World Premiere

Lying on the coast of Cape Town, there is one public space where everyone seems to come together: the Sea Point Promenade and Municipal Pools. Set between city and ocean, this beautiful strip of “everyman’s land” offers a quirky mix of class, race, gender and religion – a place where South Africans of all backgrounds can experience happiness together. But is all as it appears?

Soul Power Jeffrey Levy-Hinte, USA

World Premiere

With performances by James Brown, B.B. King, Bill Withers, The Spinners and more, **Soul Power** documents the vibrant and powerful concert that accompanied George Foreman and Muhammad Ali’s “Rumble in the Jungle” in Zaire in 1974.

Unmistaken Child Nati Baratz, Israel

World Premiere

Declared the greatest Tibetan master of our time, Lama Konchog passed away in 2001, at the age of 84. In this visually stunning, emotionally gripping documentary, shot over the course of four years, Lama Konchog's shy and devoted disciple, Tenzin Zopa, must search for his master's reincarnation – an “unmistakable child” – and successfully remove him from his parents' care.

Communications Department, 2 Carlton Street, Suite 1600 Toronto ON M5B 1J3 Tel: 416-934-3200

Lead Sponsor



Major Sponsor



Major Supporters



Home for film
Now in production
350 King St. W.

FOR THE LOVE OF FILM
belllightbox.ca

Witch Hunt Dana Nachman and Don Hardy, USA *World Premiere*
Voters in Bakersfield, California, elected a tough-on-crime District Attorney into office for more than 25 years. During his tenure, dozens of innocent working class moms and dads were sent to prison on charges of sexual abuse. Executive producer Sean Penn presents and narrates this gripping indictment of the American justice system told through the lens of one small town.

Yes Madam, Sir Megan Doneman, Australia/India *World Premiere*
Narrated by Helen Mirren, **Yes Madam, Sir** portrays the life story of India's first woman police officer. Adored by the masses and vilified by her critics, Kiran Bedi has publicly fought high-level corruption and brutal opposition, at great personal and professional cost.

Peace Mission Dorothee Wenner, Germany *International Premiere*
The Nigerian home-movie industry has risen to immense popularity throughout Africa. Founder of the African Academy, Peace Anyiam-Fiberesima presents a guided tour through "Nollywood," taking the audience to film locations, markets and celebrity hangouts in Lagos to meet key personalities from the Nigerian film industry.

Shakespeare and Victor Hugo's Intimacies Yulene Olaizola, Mexico *North American Premiere*
Twenty years ago, Rosa met Jorge, a young tenant in her lodging house at the corner of Shakespeare and Victor Hugo streets in Mexico City. But after Jorge's sudden death, Rosa began to discover a darker side of the man who had become her closest friend.

Upstream Battle Ben Kempas, Germany *North American Premiere*
An intricate political battle plays out over water in Northern California, pitting Native American activist Merv George of the Hoopa tribe against one of the world's richest men, billionaire Warren Buffett.

These films join the previously announced **Religulous** (Larry Charles, USA), **Of Time and the City** (Terence Davies, United Kingdom), **Every Little Step** (James Stern and Adam Del Deo, USA), **Not Quite Hollywood** (Mark Hartley, Australia), **Waltz with Bashir** (Ari Folman, Israel/France/Germany), **Blind Loves** (Juraj Lehotský, Slovakia), **Examined Life** (Astra Taylor, Canada), **La Mémoire des anges** (Luc Bourdon, Canada) and **Under Rich Earth** (Malcolm Rogge, Canada) as documentary titles announced to date.

**The Special Presentations programme is made possible through the generous sponsorship of
American Movie Classics Company LLC.**

The Masters programme is made possible through the generous sponsorship of BMO Nesbitt Burns.

The Real to Reel programme is made possible through the generous sponsorship of Discovery Channel.

Bell Lightbox

Construction of Bell Lightbox, soon to be one of the world's leading innovative cultural institutions – a truly global "home for film" – began on February 1, 2007. A five-storey podium building located on Reitman Square in the heart of Toronto's downtown entertainment district, Bell Lightbox is designed by world-renowned Toronto-based architectural firm KPMB. The building includes five cinemas, two galleries, three learning studios, and an enhanced film reference library and archive.

The campaign to build Bell Lightbox is generously supported by founding sponsor Bell. The Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario each have contributed \$25 million to realize Bell Lightbox. A gift of more than \$22 million has been confirmed from the Reitman family – acclaimed filmmaker Ivan Reitman and his sisters Agi Mandel and Susan Michaels – and The Daniels Corporation, who together form the King and John Festival Corporation. The project is also supported by RBC as Major Sponsor and Official Bank, Visa†, Copyright Collective of Canada, NBC Universal Canada, The Allan Slight Family, The Brian Linehan Charitable Foundation, CIBC, and many other individuals and corporations. The Board of Directors, staff and many generous individuals have also contributed to the campaign. The total amount raised to date is \$147 million, three quarters of the total campaign of \$196 million. For more information on the Bell Lightbox campaign, visit belllightbox.ca

Communications Department, 2 Carlton Street, Suite 1600 Toronto ON M5B 1J3 Tel: 416-934-3200

Lead Sponsor



Major Sponsor



Major Supporters



Home for film
Now in production
350 King St. W.

FOR THE LOVE OF FILM
belllightbox.ca

We are a charitable, not-for-profit, cultural organization whose mission is to transform the way people see the world through film. Our vision is to lead the world in creative and cultural discovery through the moving image.

-30-

For information, contact the Communications Department at 416-934-3200 or email proffice@tiffg.ca

Communications Department, 2 Carlton Street, Suite 1600 Toronto ON M5B 1J3 Tel: 416-934-3200

Lead Sponsor



Major Sponsor



Major Supporters



Home for film
Now in production
350 King St. W.

FOR THE LOVE OF FILM
belllightbox.ca