

July 10, 2008

NEWS RELEASE #4

GALA AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS ADDED TO THE FESTIVAL LINEUP

Toronto – The Toronto International Film Festival is pleased to announce the addition of two **Gala Presentations** and seven **Special Presentations** to the programming lineup for the Festival, which runs September 4 through 13. Included are works from critically acclaimed filmmakers Larry Charles, Mike Leigh, Guy Ritchie and Wong Kar-wai featuring performances by Keira Knightley, Dakota Fanning, Queen Latifah, Alicia Keys, Thandie Newton, Ricky Gervais, Greg Kinnear, Bill Maher, Ralph Fiennes, Gerard Butler, Tom Wilkinson and Jeremy Piven. Previously announced, *Waltz with Bashir* is now a Special Presentation. Ticket packages for TIFF08 are now available for purchase by Visa® cardholders. Ticket packages will be available for purchase by cash, debit or Visa as of 10 a.m. on Monday, July 14, 2008. 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.

GALA PRESENTATIONS

Secret Life of Bees Gina Prince-Bythewood, USA

World Premiere

Based on the bestselling novel *The Secret Life of Bees* and set in South Carolina in 1964, the film is the moving tale of Lily Owens (Dakota Fanning), a 14-year-old girl who is haunted by the memory of her late mother (Hilary Burton). To escape her lonely life and troubled relationship with her father (Paul Bettany), Lily flees with Rosaleen (Jennifer Hudson), her caregiver and only friend, to a South Carolina town that holds the secret to her mother's past. Taken in by the intelligent and independent Boatwright sisters (Queen Latifah, Sophie Okonedo and Alicia Keys), Lily finds solace in their mesmerizing world of beekeeping, honey and the Black Madonna. **Secret Life of Bees** is a Fox Searchlight Pictures presentation.

The Duchess Saul Dibb, United Kingdom

International Premiere

Long before the concept existed, the Duchess of Devonshire, Georgiana Spencer (Keira Knightley), was the original "It Girl" -- ravishing, glamorous and adored by an entire country. Determined to be a player in the wider affairs of the world, she helped usher in sweeping changes to England as a leader of the forward-thinking Whig Party. But even as her power and popularity grew, she was haunted by the fact that the only man in England she seemingly could not seduce was her very own husband, the Duke (Ralph Fiennes). Directed by Saul Dibb (*Bullet Boy*, *The Line of Beauty*), **The Duchess** is the story of an extraordinary woman who rose to fame by staying true to her passions in a world of protocol, gossip and social rules – and paid the price. Academy Award™ nominees Knightley and Fiennes head an international cast that also includes Dominic Cooper, Hayley Atwell and Charlotte Rampling. Based on the award-winning biography *Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire* by Amanda Foreman, *The Duchess* is written by Dibb, Jeffrey Hatcher and Anders Thomas Jensen. **The Duchess** is a Paramount Vantage presentation.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Every Little Step James Stern, Adam Del Deo, USA

World Premiere

Every Little Step is a theatrical documentary on the making of Broadway's greatest hit and current revival of "A Chorus Line." The film culls behind-the-scenes footage of the auditions, rehearsals and performances of the 1975 original and the 2006 Broadway revival – revealing how life imitates art as performers from both productions undergo intense experiences similar to the roles in the show itself. **Every Little Step**, directed by James Stern and Adam Del Deo (...So Goes the Nation, TIFF 2006 and The Year of the Yao, TIFF 2004) spotlights the similarities and the differences between the two shows separated by a generation, the enduring popularity of "A Chorus Line," and the creative minds behind one of the longest running musicals in Broadway history.

Ghost Town David Koepp, USA

World Premiere

Bertram Pincus (Ricky Gervais) is a man whose people skills leave much to be desired. When Pincus dies unexpectedly, but is miraculously revived after seven minutes, he wakes up to discover that he now has the annoying ability to see ghosts. Even worse, they all want something from him, particularly Frank Herlihy (Greg Kinnear), who pesters him into breaking up the impending marriage of his widow Gwen (Téa Leoni). Also starring Billy Campbell, Kristen Wiig and Dana Ivey.

Religulous Larry Charles, USA

World Premiere

Religulous follows political humorist and author Bill Maher (*Real Time with Bill Maher, Politically Incorrect*) as he travels around the globe interviewing people about God and religion. Known for his astute analytical skills, irreverent wit and commitment to never pulling a punch, Maher brings his characteristic honesty to an unusual spiritual journey. Directed by Larry Charles, **Religulous** will mark Charles's first feature project since the critically acclaimed, wildly successful *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan* (TIFF 2006). Teaser clips of **Religulous** were presented as a special Mavericks presentation at TIFF 2007 with Maher and Charles in attendance.

Ashes of Time Redux Wong Kar-wai, Hong Kong, China

North American Premiere

Wong Kar-wai works his magic in this long-planned "reworking" of his legendary, romantic and one and only martial arts film, previously unreleased in North America. Set in ancient China, Ouyang Feng (Leslie Cheung) is a fallen swordsman who is afraid of love after having his heart broken. But the bounty hunters that work for him, like "Blind Swordsman" (Tony Leung Chiu Wai) and Hung Chi (Jacky Cheung), discover the intangible secret of true love while Ouyang retains his attitude towards his fighters and the precious lessons that they have taught.

Happy-Go-Lucky Mike Leigh, United Kingdom

North American Premiere

Poppy (Sally Hawkins), is an irrepressibly free-spirited school teacher who brings an infectious laugh and an unsinkable sense of optimism to every situation she encounters as a single woman in London. When Poppy's commuter bike is stolen, she enthusiastically signs up for driving lessons with Scott (Eddie Marsan), who turns out to be her polar opposite – a fuming, uptight cynic. As the tension of their weekly lessons builds, Poppy's story takes alternately hilarious and serious turns, becoming a touching, truthful and deeply life-affirming exploration of one of the most mysterious of all human qualities: happiness. **Happy-Go-Lucky** is a new comedy from director Mike Leigh.

RocknRolla Guy Ritchie

North American Premiere

When a Russian mobster orchestrates a crooked land deal, millions of dollars are up for grabs, and all of London's criminal underworld wants in on the action. Everyone from a dangerous crime lord to a sexy accountant, a corrupt politician and down-on-their-luck petty thieves conspire, collude and collide with one another in an effort to get rich quick. Written and directed by Guy Ritchie, **RocknRolla** stars Gerard Butler, Tom Wilkinson, Thandie Newton, Chris Bridges, Jeremy Piven and Idris Elba.

Waltz with Bashir Ari Folman, Israel/France/Germany

North American Premiere

One night in a bar, an old friend tells director Ari Folman about a recurring nightmare. The two men conclude that there is a connection to their Israeli Army mission in the Lebanon War in the early 1980s. An astonishing and powerful animated feature that journeys into the director's memory in search of some missing pieces.

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

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. Visit belllightbox.ca for more information.

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 Slaight Family, The Brian Linehan Charitable Foundation, CIBC, and many other individuals and corporations. The TIFFG 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.

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

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