

Annual CineVegas Announces Festival Winners

June 17, 2006

LAS VEGAS â€” Proving its motto as â€œThe Worldâ€™s Most Dangerous Film Festival,â€• the 2006 CineVegas Film Festival spotlighted sex, adultery, drugs and dangerous social circles during its run at the Palms Casino Resort and Brenden Theatres from June 9-17, 2006.

In addition to screening 59 films and several shorts, the fest honored several entertainment icons (Helen Mirren, Taylor Hackford, Laurence Fishburne, Christina Ricci and Sylvester Stallone), screened a dozen highly anticipated world and U.S. premieres, and showcased homegrown Nevada fare.

Commenting on the Festivalâ€™s success, President Robin Greenspun said, â€œThis year's Festival has seen both a rise in attendance and enthusiasm. Not only has the acceptance increased in the local community, but nationally as demonstrated by a remarkable line-up of honorees and the national media attention garnered.â€•

Festival Director of Programming Trevor Groth said, â€œWe are extremely excited about the response to this yearâ€™s films, especially the world premieres which generated an incredible response from audiences and film industry attendees. Our Festival award winners also resonated artistically and inspired insightful dialogue amongst festival goers.â€• G.I. Jesus Receives Grand Jury Prize; Park Receives Audience Award; 5 Up 2 Down Receives Special Award for Cinematography; The Favor and The 4th Dimension Receive Honorable Mentions

AWARDS

This yearâ€™s jury was presided by acclaimed film director Mark Pellington and noted film critics Jean Oppenheimer and FX Feeney.

The Grand Jury Award went to the film G.I. Jesus, directed by Carl Colapert and starring Joe Arquette, Patricia Mota, Maurizio Farhad, Mark Cameron, Telana Lynam. The film recounts the story of a Mexican national, Jesus Feliciano, returning to California from Iraq where he had soldiered in exchange for grant of US citizenship, who suffers trauma related to his battle experience and imagines his family life threatened.

The jury presented honorable mentions to the films The Favor directed and written by Eva Aridjis and The 4th Dimension written and directed by Tom Mattera and Dave Mazzoni.

Park received The Audience Award. Directed and written by Kurt Voelker, the film orchestrates a tempest of change in the lives of a group of Los Angelenos on a seemingly quiet and sunny day in a secluded park. The film stars Billy Baldwin, Ricki Lake and Cheri Oteri.

The Special Award for Cinematography went to 5 Up 2 Down. Directed by Steven Kessler, 5 Up 2 Down is a film about the eternity of the human spirit, set in the clubs, galleries and lofts of New York City as seen through the eyes of two close friends, Hunter and Santo. Struggling with drug addiction and running from reality, the two friends embark on a five-day drug binge and embrace a spiritual journey started 140 years earlier. The title 5 Up 2 Down refers to the week in which the film takes place. Hunter, a painter, and Santo stay up partying for five days and then collapse two days just before Hunterâ€™s first one-man gallery show. During this binge Santo is overwhelmed by visions of a past life that he canâ€™t shake. Unable to tell whether itâ€™s the drugs or something more, Santo continues along his self-destructive path with

Hunter at his side. Before long, time catches up with Santo and Hunter and their own actions, in this life and in another, will soon determine their destiny.

The Shorts Jury selected the following exceptional shorts for recognition: Holidays with Heather, Voicemail, Transaction, One Rat Short, Bugcrush, The Pretty Boy Project, and K-7 (winner). Jury members included Jason Feinberg, FOX 5; David Schmoeller, Assistant Professor of Film at UNLV; and Teller from Penn & Teller.

“19 Miles to Vegas” won Best Nevada Filmmaking Short. The 7-minute film chronicles the journey of three friends who kiss their moms good-bye and move 19 miles to Las Vegas to begin their music career. “19 Miles to Vegas” is the first film made by 25-year-old director Shane Valdez, a Las Vegas native. The short was originally made for the 48 Hour Film Festival in 2005, where it won the Audience Choice and Best Directing Awards. The film also won Best Short Short at the Rebel Hollywood Film Festival and Best Cinematography at the UCLA Film Festival earlier this year.

Since its inception in 1998, the CineVegas has established itself as one of the hottest and fastest growing film festivals in the world, being mentioned in a TIME Magazine cover story as well as listed as one of the top 5 small fests to visit by Canada's Globe and Mail newspaper. The 8th annual festival will be held June 9-17, 2006 at the Palms Casino Resort in Las Vegas highlighting the most exciting offerings from up and coming filmmakers and visionary veterans. CineVegas combines the glamour and energy of world premiere films and the intensity of in-depth celebrity tributes.

Among its milestones, CineVegas has hosted the world premieres of such films as George A. Romero's Land of the Dead, The Devil's Rejects, Spun, The Talent Given Us and Bubba Ho-tep, as well as screenings of other great films such as Napoleon Dynamite, Riding Giants, The Aristocrats, Me, You and Everyone We Know and Gus Van Sant's Last Days. Robin Greenspun serves as the festival's President and Dennis Hopper serves as the Chairman of the Creative Advisory Board, which has honored such film greats as Jack Nicholson, Nicolas Cage, Ann-Margaret, Sean Penn, Dustin Hoffman, Holly Hunter, Christopher Walken and David Lynch. For more information please call (702) 992-7979 or visit www.cinevegas.com.

Photos from the Festival are available upon request at www.gettyimages.com.