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SIDEWALK ANNOUNCES COMPETITIVE FEATURE FILM LINE UP

Lineup includes comedy, drama, science fiction, suspense, horror and documentary

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – The Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival, recently recognized as one of TIME magazine’s “Film Festivals for the Rest of Us”, announces the stellar line up for the 9th annual festival, set for September 28-30 in downtown Birmingham.

Included in this year's competitive lineup are 11 narrative features and 19 feature-length documentaries (including 7 documentaries that will be screened as a part of the Life & Liberty sidebar, a new program of films dedicated to human rights in partnership with the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, denoted below*). The competitive feature line-up includes four world premieres and three features made in Alabama.

These films will be eligible for the juried awards in their category, including Best Feature Film and Best Documentary, each accompanied by a cash prize of \$1,000. Additionally, Audience Choice Awards will be presented in both the feature film and documentary categories. Sidewalk's mantra to “bring new films to a new audience” continues for its ninth year.

The competition narrative features, selected from more than 90 entrants, are:

AMERICAN FORK (94 min.) directed by Chris Bowman. A well-meaning but socially awkward grocery clerk struggles with his troubled family and huge waistline as he seeks dignity, a higher purpose in life and, at long last, a driver’s license. Starring Hubbel Palmer (*The Sasquatch Dumpling Gang*), William Baldwin (*The Squid and the Whale*), Mary Lyn Rajskub (*24*), Kathleen Quinlan.

AUGUST THE FIRST (81 min.) directed by Lanre Olabisi, begins as a promising day. Preparations are wrapping up for a college graduation party to celebrate Tunde Ibirinde’s achievement. One guest, however, threatens to upset the day’s festivities. Layer by layer, deceptions and half-truths are peeled away as secrets are uncovered in what will become the most unforgettable day the family has ever experienced.

BLOOD CAR (75 min.) directed by Alex Orr. In the near future gas prices have reached astronomical highs nearing \$40 a gallon. One man, Archie Andrews, an environmentalist elementary school teacher, is trying to discover an alternate fuel source. While experimenting with wheat grass, Archie accidentally stumbles upon a solution. That solution turns out to be blood. Human blood! Starring Anna Chumsky (*My Girl, My Girl 2*)

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HANNAH TAKES THE STAIRS (83 min.) directed by Joe Swanberg. Hannah, a recent college graduate, spends a brutally hot Chicago summer falling in and out of love. As she struggles to find personal and professional fulfillment through various relationships with friends and co-workers, she risks leaving destruction in her wake.

LAST STOP FOR PAUL (80 min) directed by Neil Mandt. When Charlie asks Cliff to go to the Full Moon Party in Thailand, it is no surprise to anyone when Charlie is rejected. Cliff learns his dead best friend had been planning a trip around the world. Cliff decides to make sure his friend still makes that trip, even if it means carrying his ashes in a thermos to do it.

LOW AND BEHOLD (89 min.) directed by Zack Godshall. Turner Stull, an uninspired young man, trying to figure out what he wants to do with his life, arrives in hurricane-ravaged New Orleans to work, quite reluctantly, as an insurance claims adjuster. In a moment of crisis, Turner agrees to help Nixon, a local man, find his lost dog. In exchange, Nixon lends a hand with Turner's insurance claims.

MEXICAN SUNRISE (80 min.) directed by Rowdy Stovall. Ryan is getting married tomorrow. His best friends have decided to throw him a bachelor party across the border in Mexico. With the use of flashbacks and flash-forward, we enter the film at its most climactic point: Someone has been buried alive. Who is in the barrel? Will they live? How did a simple bachelor party come to this?

MURDER PARTY (80 min.) directed by Jeremy Saulnier. It is Halloween night in Brooklyn and Chris, a lonesome and unremarkable fellow, finds a mysterious invitation on the street and follows it to what he thinks will be a fun costume party. It turns out to be a lethal trap set by a gang of deranged hipster artists whose plan is to lure someone to their remote warehouse base and ritually murder them as part of an extreme artistic event.

OVERFLOW *World Premiere, Alabama Film* (70 min.) directed by Jana Harris. Six high school seniors from diverse backgrounds are thrown together on the first day of summer vacation. From the experience they learn about their own prejudices, they learn about the consequences of bad choices and for one student, the devastating consequences of a joke gone too far.

PARK (86 min.) directed by Kurt Voelker. During their lunch break, twelve offbeat characters converge on a secluded public park in the hills above Los Angeles. Sex, love, suicide, betrayal, nudism, sushi and dog grooming -- and you thought it was just a quiet little park. Starring William Baldwin, Ricki Lake, and Cheri Oteri

TRUE LOVE *World Premiere* (90 min.) directed by Henry Barrial. The fragility and difficulty of love and relationships is explored through the intersecting lives of several modern Angelinos.

The competitive documentary features, selected from more than 100 entrants, are:

BACKSTAGE *World Premiere, Alabama Film* (60 min) directed by Andrew Grace. *Backstage* tells the humorous and thought-provoking story of a small community theater in north Alabama staging an adaptation of Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird."

***BEYOND THE CALL** (82 min.) directed by Adrian Belic. In an Indiana Jones meets Mother Teresa adventure, three middle-aged men, former soldiers and modern-day knights travel the world delivering life-saving humanitarian aid directly into the hands of civilians and doctors.

***COME WALK IN MY SHOES** (56 min.) directed by Robin Smith. Congressman John Lewis (D-GA) leads colleagues from the House and Senate on an emotional pilgrimage to "sacred sites of the Civil Rights Movement" in Alabama. The journey begins in Montgomery where an 18-year-old Lewis first met Martin Luther King, Jr. and ends on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma where the future congressman was brutally beaten leading a march for the right to vote.

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COMPañERAS (59 min.) directed by Matthew Buzzell and Elizabeth Massie. This documentary feature film profiles America's first all-female mariachi band, Mariachi Reyna de Los Angeles. In a culture and a musical tradition that has always been male-dominated, these women are true pioneers, literally giving voice to Latinas.

***DARIUS GOES WEST: THE ROLL OF HIS LIFE** (87 min.) directed by Logan Smalley. Eleven college students rent an RV to take Darius Weems, 15, who has Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, on a cross-country road trip. Their goal is to convince MTV's 'Pimp My Ride' to customize Darius's wheelchair. Along the way, they find joy, brotherhood and the knowledge that life, even when imperfect, is always worth the ride.

DIRTY COUNTRY (71 min.) directed by Joe Pickett and Nick Prueher. Meet Larry Pierce: a small-town factory worker and family man who happens to be the raunchiest country music singer in America. Since 1993, Larry has quietly released over a dozen dirty country albums at truck stops across the country. With commentary from leading authors, experts and social critics, the film poses the question: is America a nation of prudes or are we living in a dirty country?

***A DREAM IN DOUBT** (57 min.) directed by Tami Yeager. When his brother is murdered in America's first post-9/11 revenge killing, Rana Singh Sodhi begins a journey to reclaim his American dream and fight the hate that continues to threaten his community.

FISH KILL FLEA (51 min.) directed by Brian Cassidy, Aaron Hillis, and Jennifer Loeber. Once thriving, a dead mall in upstate New York is now home to a ragtag flea market, living proof that the American Dream is in perpetual decay.

***GREENSBORO: CLOSER TO THE TRUTH** (83 min.) directed by Adam Zucker. A documentary film chronicling the participants in the Greensboro Massacre—a 1979 attack in which the Ku Klux Klan killed five Communists in broad daylight, and no one was convicted. Klansmen and former Communists converge in the first Truth and Reconciliation Commission to be held in the U.S. in 2004-2006.

HELLFIGHTERS (86 min.) directed by Jon Frankel. In their third season, the Harlem Hellfighters try to prove that they deserve to become Harlem's high school football team, providing a path to college and to maturity.

THE JESUS GUY *World Premiere* (66 min.) directed by Sean Tracey. He looks like Jesus Christ. And preaches like St. Francis of Assisi. Some say he's a kook, others, a blessing from God. Clad in a white robe, he's walked through 47 states and 13 countries on a 12-year mission that's captured the media attention for *20/20*, *Time*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.

JOIN US (100 min.) directed by Ondi Timoner. *Join Us* follows four families as they leave a controlling and abusive church in South Carolina and come to realize that they have been members of a cult and enter the only accredited live-in cult treatment facility in the world.

KAMP KATRINA (74 min.) directed by Ashley Sabin and David Redmon. Ms. Pearl, a resident of New Orleans, spontaneously converts her backyard into a tent-village for displaced people for six months in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. *Kamp Katrina* delivers a sometimes-shattering vérité exploration of the very personal daily struggles imposed by this national tragedy on a small group of troubled survivors who live in tents.

LOST & FOUND IN MEXICO (53 min.) directed by Caren Cross. Caren thought she had it all. She was a successful professional. She had two wonderful children and a comfortable lifestyle. But after 30 years of pursuing the American dream, she felt compelled to leave it all behind and start a new life in Mexico.

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***MR. DIAL HAS SOMETHING TO SAY** (60 min.) directed by Celia Carey. This feature high-definition documentary explores the visual arts sibling of jazz, the blues and gospel. As the visual interpretation of life from America's former slave culture, this improvisational style is a unique artistic view in American history—and one of America's few very home-grown artistic styles.

THE PAPER (78 min.) directed by Aaron Matthews. Chronicling a year in the life of Pennsylvania State University's Daily Collegian, the film features first-time journalists tackling the foremost challenges of today's news media. The Collegian's circulation is plummeting and its investigative reporters can't gain access to sources. Amidst this drama, students-- and even the newspaper's own reporters-- question whether the newspaper is adequately covering the communities it is supposed to serve.

ROW HARD, NO EXCUSES (88 min.) directed by Luke Wolbach. Two middle-aged men set out to win "the world's toughest race"—three thousand miles across the Atlantic Ocean in a rowboat. Is it a noble quest or an ill-fated nightmare?

***SOUL OF JUSTICE: THELTON HENDERSON'S AMERICAN JOURNEY** (62 min.) directed by Abby Ginzberg. A story of race, justice, and judgment—both personal & legal. It's a story of the conflicts & contradictions faced by Thelton Henderson whose decisions of affirmative action environmental protection & prison reform cast a spotlight on the complex relations

STRICTLY BACKGROUND (84 min.) directed by Jason Connell. *Strictly Background* is the story of all the little people, the men and woman who become the anonymous faces behind our favorite stars. Find out what life is like for these dedicated aspiring actors, on and off the screen. But what is it really like on set when some actors make fifty dollars a day and others make thousands? This charming and heartfelt documentary opens the door to a world that is rarely seen and usually goes unnoticed.

This year's festival will be September 28-30, 2007 spread throughout nine venues located in the downtown Birmingham theatre district. In addition to the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, venues include historic theatres such as the Alabama and Carver Theatres, Alabama Power, Birmingham Museum of Art, Harbert Center, the McWane Center will once again host the Children's Film Extravaganza, the Sidewalk Café at the Playhouse, and the Sidewalk Music Lounge at the Speakeasy.

The festival's Opening Night film will be **THE TEN**, directed by David Wain and starring Paul Rudd, Jessica Alba, Winona Ryder, Adam Brody, Gretchen Mol, Famke Janssen, Rob Corrdry, Liev Schreiber, Oliver Platt, Justin Theroux and Ken Marino. Opening Night tickets are \$10 in advance / \$13 at the door. Weekend Passes are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door. Discounts for Sidewalk members and students with valid ID. Tickets will be available online at www.sidewalkfest.com. Single Film Tickets will be available for \$7 each or three for \$17 during the festival weekend. Additional information is also available online at www.sidewalkfest.com.

The 2007 Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival is sponsored Alabama Power, Ebsco Industries, Sloss Real Estate Group, Fox 6, Black & White, Bright House, Charter Media, Birmingham Magazine, al.com, Children's Hospital, Vulcan Materials, Haskell Slaughter, Samuel Adams Boston Lager, Southwest Airlines, and is made possible, in part, by the Jefferson County Commission through the Jefferson County Community Arts Fund administered by the Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham.

The Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival is a project of the Alabama Moving Image Association, Inc., a publicly supported 501(c)(3) non-profit organization created to inspire, encourage and support films and filmmaking in Alabama.

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