

TENTH ANNUAL

  
**sidewalk**

MOVING PICTURE FESTIVAL

PRESENTED BY REGIONS

For immediate release:

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## **Celebrating 10 Years of Independents** **Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival** **Announces Competitive Feature Film Line Up**

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – The Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival, recently recognized as one of TIME magazine’s “Film Festivals for the Rest of Us” and featured on STARZ! network, is pleased to announce its competitive feature film line up. “I am extremely excited about this year’s line-up of films. This year promises to be our best yet.” says Catherine Pfitzer, the festival’s Executive Director.

The 2008 Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival presented by Regions Bank will celebrate “Ten Years Of Independents.” This year’s festival will be September 26-28 and is located in downtown Birmingham’s historic Theatre District. Venues include the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, historic theatres such as the Alabama and Carver Theatres, Birmingham Museum of Art, the McWane Science Center, the recently completed Alabama Banquet Room in the Alabama Theatre, Regions Hall and the Sidewalk Music Lounge at the Speakeasy.

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 tenth year.

*Press kits, hi resolution images and DVD screeners of festival films are available (on a limited basis) upon request. Please contact David Barry or Natalie Hummel to request specific screeners and make arrangements to pick films up at the Sidewalk office. Please only request what you can view and return within 48 hours.*

The following is a list of this year’s competitive feature films by category.

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## **NARRATIVE FEATURES**

### **ADVENTURES OF POWER**

Director: Ari Gold

*Adventures of Power* is an epic comedy about a mine-worker named Power whose love of drums and lack of musical skill has turned him into the ridiculed "air drummer" of his small town. But when Power's union-leader father calls a strike at the mine, Power discovers an underground subculture of air-drummers who just might hold the key to changing the world. Power's journey across America brings him face-to-face with his town's greatest enemy, and allows him to discover the beat within his own heart. Starring Ari Gold, Adrian Grenier, Jane Lynch, Michael McKean.

### **COOK COUNTY**

Director: David Pomes

In this coming-of-age story, the absentee father of an alienated teenage boy returns home to a small town in East Texas, to discover a household of crystal meth addicts. The father and son struggle to reconnect and stay clean while sharing their house with an abusive uncle. The uncle's meth-fueled rage increasingly threatens the safety of the entire family, and in the end, father and son are left with only one option.

### **DARK STREETS**

Director: Rachel Samuels

Buoyed by its stunning art direction, wardrobe, and cinematography, and propelled by alluring performances from its multi-talented cast, *Dark Streets* is a neo-noir musical that richly stimulates the senses. Set in a visually dazzling fantasy of the early 1930's, *Dark Streets* tells the story of Chaz Davenport, a dashing but naive playboy who owns the hottest new nightclub in town – "The Tower." Surrounded by blues music and juggling two gorgeous singers, Chaz is the envy of every man. Yet he's up to his neck in bad debts and bad choices, and his father's unexpected suicide gets more mysterious the more Chaz looks into it.

### **FIX**

Director: Tao Ruspoli

*Fix* takes you from Beverly Hills to Watts, and places in between, in one day, as documentary filmmakers Bella (Olivia Wilde) and Milo (Tao Ruspoli) race to get Milo's brother Leo (Shawn Andrews) from jail to rehab before 8pm, or Leo goes to prison for three years.

### **GOLIATH**

Director: David Zellner

What could make an impending divorce and horrible demotion at work worse? A lost cat. Well, that and the discovery that you're living just a few houses down from a convicted sex offender and possible cat killer. When your life is falling apart, what else can you do but roll up your sleeves and use the workplace copy machine to make Missing Cat flyers and paste them all over the suburban wasteland in which you live? *Goliath* is a comedy with a dash of drama, though the film leans mostly to the hilarious side of things (albeit, more often deadpan antics ala *The Office*). If you're wondering whether or not to catch this film, just watch the trailer you'll be sold.

### **GOOD DICK**

Director: Marianna Palka

When a lonely young girl named Anna walks into her local independent video store in search of an erotic film, the clerk behind the counter vows to transcend her emotional barriers and win her heart in this quirky relationship comedy written, directed by, and starring Marianna Palka. Though the lovelorn clerk in question (Jason Ritter) is a bit of a creep and perhaps even a potential stalker, the contentious relationship forged between the pair as he repeatedly seeks

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Anna's affections (and is continually shot down) eventually leads to an unusual, yet wholly unavoidable, confrontation that offers offbeat insight into the state of modern romance.

### **HALF-LIFE**

Director: Jennifer Phang

As troubling signs of global cataclysms accelerate, a brother and sister react to their father's desertion and the powerful presence of their mother's new boyfriend.

*\*This film screens as a part of the Life & Liberty Sidebar*

### **THE MAGISTICAL (World Premiere)**

Director: John Cernak

Inspired by classic fairy tales and Disney animations of the 1940s and 50s, *The Magistical* is a unique animated film with a contemporary feel. It has all the makings of a great fairy tale, including dragons, wizards and, of course, the battle between good and evil. The tale centers around a little boy who must learn to conjure up courage in order to save his loved ones. While the film is part of the Children's Film Extravaganza, and little ones are certainly the target audience, this modern fairy tale is not just for kids. *The Magistical* is sure to generate a lot of buzz, so be sure to catch its world premiere.

*\*This film screens as a part of the Children's Film Extravaganza*

### **MAKE-OUT WITH VIOLENCE**

Director: The Deagol Brothers

Newly graduated from high school, brothers Patrick and Carol are united by their unrequited love. When Wendy, the object of Patrick's affection, vanishes, he promises that he will dedicate himself to her. After the discovery of Wendy's mysteriously animated corpse, the boys hope to somehow revive the girl they once knew.

### **MEDICINE FOR MELANCHOLY**

Director: Barry Jenkins

A love story of bikes and one-night stands told through two African-American twenty-somethings dealing with the conundrum of being a minority in a rapidly gentrifying San Francisco.

### **PRESENT COMPANY**

Director: Frank V. Ross

Leading very separate lives, Christy and her boyfriend Buddy live together in her parent's basement with their baby Mikey. As Christy, a waitress and aspiring writer, and Buddy, a plumber's apprentice, struggle with the realities of their lives, questions are formed about obligations, consequences, and all the identities we employ to get through the day.

### **SKIPTRACERS**

Director: Harris Mendheim

JD and Tucker Trawick, bail bonding pee-wee football coaching brothers, discover the hidden and absurd underbelly of the South - and punch it.

## **DOCUMENTARIES**

### **ANVIL! THE STORY OF ANVIL**

Director: Sacha Gervasi

At 14, best friends Robb Reiner and Lips made a pact to rock together forever. Their band, Anvil, hailed as the "demi-gods of Canadian metal," influenced a musical generation that includes Metallica, Slayer, and Anthrax, despite never hitting the big time. Following a calamitous European tour, Lips and Robb, now in their fifties, set off to record their 13th album in one last attempt to fulfill their boyhood dreams.

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## **CRAWFORD**

Director: David Modigliani

In 1999, Governor George W. Bush buys a ranch in Crawford, Texas and calls it "home"; an insular community explodes overnight. Bush soon declares candidacy for President and months later, he thrusts the town of 705 into the spotlight as his token symbol – the President's "Western White House." Crawford is instantly overrun with international press corps and droves of flocking tourists. Shops open; Main St. booms; the locals watch themselves on national TV. But soon, Crawford's boom is busting like the Presidency itself. Left to deal with the aftermath are the real people of Crawford. Their lives are changed forever. And their story is our own.

## **DEAR ZACHARY: A LETTER TO A SON ABOUT HIS FATHER**

Director: Kurt Kuenne

On the evening of Nov. 5, 2001, Dr. Andrew Bagby was murdered in a parking lot in western Pennsylvania; the prime suspect, his ex- girlfriend Dr. Shirley Turner, promptly fled the United States for St. Johns, Newfoundland -- where she announced that she was pregnant with Andrew's child. She named the little boy Zachary. Filmmaker Kurt Kuenne, Andrew's childhood friend, originally began this film as a way for little Zachary to learn about his father -- until Shirley Turner, whom Canada allowed to walk free on bail while awaiting extradition to the United States, killed again.

## **THE DHAMMA BROTHERS**

Director: Jenny Phillips

Donaldson Correctional Facility, located in Bessemer, is the highest level prison in Alabama. It's known as a breeding ground for violent behavior and widespread despair. Dr. Ron Cavanaugh, inspired by a prison in India, initiated a Vipassana Meditation program at Donaldson in May of 2002. Based on the Dhamma (teachings of the Buddha), prisoners voluntarily gather together for ten consecutive days of silence and meditation. *The Dhamma Brothers* explores the impact of this controversial program on the prisoners and intimately illustrates the hope and peace they've come to know through meditation.

*\*This film screens as a part of the Life & Liberty Sidebar*

## **FAUBOURG TREMÉ: THE UNTOLD STORY OF BLACK NEW ORLEANS**

Director: Dawn Logsdon

*Faubourg Tremé: The Untold Story of Black New Orleans* takes a fascinating look at one of New Orleans' most mysterious neighborhoods. Long ago, this place was home to the most prosperous and politically active black community in America. Here black and white, free and enslaved, rich and poor cohabitated, and clashed to create much of what defines New Orleans today. Drawing on footage shot before and after Hurricane Katrina, *Faubourg Tremé* uncovers Treme's forgotten past in a riveting tale of hope, heartbreak, endurance and haunting historic parallels.

*\*This film screens as a part of the Life & Liberty Sidebar*

## **FLOW: FOR LOVE OF WATER**

Director: Irena Salina

Water is the very essence of life, sustaining every being on the planet. 'Flow' confronts the disturbing reality that our crucial resource is dwindling and greed just may be the cause.

*\*This film screens as a part of the Life & Liberty Sidebar*

## **I THINK WE'RE ALONE NOW**

Director: Sean Donnelly

*I Think We're Alone Now* is an intimate look at two of the strangest and most interesting diehard fans of the past three decades: Jeff Turner and Kelly McCormick. Both individuals, labeled by the media and other "normal" fans as stalkers, are fixated on 80's pop singer Tiffany. Jeff claims

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that Tiffany communicates with him through psychic messaging and he once visited her with a gift of a samurai sword, an act that landed him in jail. Kelly is a hermaphrodite who emerged from a two-week coma in the late 80's thanks to the help of a Tiffany song. *I Think We're Alone Now* is a strange, sad, at times funny and often disturbing documentary that is not to be missed.

### **INTIMIDAD**

Director: Ashley Sabin

*Intimidad* portrays an in-depth, poetic story of life on the Mexico/Texas border for Cecy and Camillo Ramirez and their daughter Loida, in Reynosa Mexico.

*\*This film screens as a part of the Life & Liberty Sidebar*

### **KING IN CHICAGO**

Director: Seth McClellan

In 1966, Dr. Martin Luther King and the Chicago Freedom Movement faced contradictions and complications. Candid interviews, period photos, and stirring music shine a light on their struggle for justice.

*\*This film screens as a part of the Life & Liberty Sidebar*

### **LA AMERICANA**

Director: Nicholas Bruckman & John Mattiuzzi

Carmen never planned to come to the United States, but when her daughter Carla was only nine-years-old, tragedy struck. Carmen left Carla behind in Bolivia and made the dangerous and illegal journey to New York City where she could earn enough to support her ailing daughter, knowing she may never return home. But after six years of separation, congress proposes 'amnesty' legislation that could allow Carmen and Carla to be reunited again. Filmed in three countries and told through an intimate cinema-verite narrative, her unforgettable story is woven into the current immigration debate in the United States, putting a human face on this timely and controversial issue.

*\*This film screens as a part of the Life & Liberty Sidebar*

### **PAGEANT**

Director: Ron Davis & Stewart Halpern-Fingerhut

For 34 years the Miss Gay America Pageant has been the premier pageant system in the art of female impersonation. It is for male artists who create the female "illusion", so no hormones or implants of any kind are permitted. *Pagaent* follows the lives of five everyday men as they strive for one extraordinary goal. It is a movie about setting goals, achieving dreams and accepting who you are. The film will inspire as it exposes one of the country's most dramatic art forms and the men behind it all.

### **PIP & ZASTROW: AN AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP**

Director: Victoria Bruce

*Pip & Zastrow: An American Friendship* is the true story of two men who cross racial boundaries during segregation in the 1940s and form a life-long friendship that takes extraordinary turns against the backdrop of the civil rights movement and a country that has yet to overcome deep-seated racism and social inequity.

*\*This film screens as a part of the Life & Liberty Sidebar*

### **QUE VIVA LAS LUCHA (WRESTLING IN TIJUANA)**

Director: Gustavo Vazquez

Professional wrestlers in Mexico are like mid-level rock stars, especially in the sports capital of Tijuana. But the spectacle in the ring goes far beyond what WWF sanctions. Gustavo Vazquez's affectionate, action-packed documentary exposes the surprising variety of nuances in a seemingly macho culture.

## **THIS AMERICAN GOTHIC**

Director: Sasha Waters Freyer

*This American Gothic* weaves together a cultural history of one of the most famous paintings in the world with a quirky portrait of Eldon, Iowa, population 998, site of the house that inspired it. The film follows local boosters over two years as they work towards their dream of a Gothic House Visitor Center to attract tourists and save their dying small town.

## **WE ARE WIZARDS**

Director: Josh Koury

*We Are Wizards* is an intriguing look at the world of Harry Potter mania and the newly emerging Wizard Rock musical genre. The film delves into complicated and often convoluted issues regarding intellectual property, obsessive fandom, inspiration vs. plagiarism, the collision of art and commerce and life in the age of cultural remixing. It becomes a documentary about finding one's place in a world that often feels as if everything has been done. *We Are Wizards* is funny, poignant, moving and strangely triumphant. It's a charming film that proves -- not only through its endearing look at HP fanatics, but also by its very own existence -- that one ingenious creation can indeed produce equally unique and inspiring art.

This year's festival will be September 26-28, 2008. Opening Night tickets are \$12 in advance / \$15 at the door. Weekend Passes are \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door. Discounts are available for Sidewalk members and students with valid ID. Tickets will be available online at [www.sidewalkfest.com](http://www.sidewalkfest.com). Single film tickets will be available for \$8 each or three for \$20 during the festival weekend. Additional information is also available online at [www.sidewalkfest.com](http://www.sidewalkfest.com).

The 2008 Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival presented by Regions Bank is sponsored Alabama Power, Ebsco Industries, Sloss Real Estate Group, Fox 6, Charter Media, Birmingham Weekly, Bright House, Birmingham Magazine, al.com, Vulcan Materials, Baker Donelson, Slaughter Group, Whole Foods, McWane Science Center, Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, Clarus Consulting Group, and is made possible, in part, by the Hugh Kaul foundation.

The Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival Presented By Regions Bank 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.

## **About Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival Presented By Regions Bank**

The Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival Presented By Regions Bank is a celebration of new independent cinema in downtown Birmingham. This year's festival will be September 26-28, 2008. Since its debut in 1999 filmmakers from across the country and around the world have come to Birmingham to screen their work at Sidewalk and have been thrilled to discover fresh, enthusiastic crowds eager to devour new independent cinema. The atmosphere at Sidewalk is electric with creativity and collaboration as film-lovers and filmmakers mix and mingle between screenings, participate in panel discussions, or simply enjoy food at the Sidewalk Café or live music at the Sidewalk Music Lounge. Don't miss your chance to be a part of what the Ultimate Film Festival Survival Guide calls "One of the Top 10 Film Festival Vacations."

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**For more information about the Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival  
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**Visit us online: [www.sidewalkfest.com](http://www.sidewalkfest.com)**