



Three world premieres – six Canadian premieres – 24 B.C. premieres, at four downtown venues

The Victoria Independent Film & Video Festival has announced its largest lineup to date for its 10-day celebration of film, February 2 to 11. 140 of the world's best new films are ready to be screened in an intriguing combination of features and shorts. Picking up a program guide or visiting www.vifvf.com is essential to savour all the offerings.

"We're bringing the world to Victoria and at the same time showcasing Canadian and B.C. homegrown work," said Festival Director Kathy Kay. "The festival continues to grow stronger, more dynamic and multifaceted. Our phones are ringing off the hook with the announcement of *Away With Her* as our Gala opening Canadian feature February 2. Gordon Pinsent is gracing us with his presence and the word is getting out about our Film Forum of panels and chats February 3 for budding filmmakers."

With the Festival's strong focus on Canadian films, festival hits like *Run Robot Run* directed by Daniel O'Connor, *Books of James* directed by local filmmaker Ho Tam, *Brocket 99* - the latest film by Nilesh Patel that is developing a cult following; the NFB gem documenting the life and work of legendary animator Norman McLaren and more listed in the program guide.

Several local filmmakers have short films being screened that made the cut from the 1,200 submissions to the festival. Marjorie Celona's *Nicht Angeben* is an homage to the late Russian filmmaker Andrei Tarkovsky in Polish with English subtitles; Sandy

Mayzell wrote and produced *Singing The Bones* about Metis poet Greg Scofield, presented by the Victoria Independent Film Producers Association. A delightful animation *Four Seasons* by Gilbert Taggart features music by Karel Roessong.

World premieres are varied and interesting: *Tram* is dark, terrifying story from Turkey; *Store*, directed by Cami Kidder (US) is a fascinating look at stuff and the curious meanings behind what is in all those commercial storage buildings that are springing up everywhere. Kidder will introduce her film at the festival. *Under The Mud* (UK) is a little *Trainspotting*, and a lot of Liverpool working class family drama. Written by teenagers collectively, the film has been well received.

Australian Highlights celebrates the latest in Australian filmmaking with three offerings: *Candy* starring Heath Ledger of *Brokeback Mountain* fame in very different role; *2:32* by 22 year old director Murali Thallun is a painful look at high school alienation and *10 Canoes* the oral tale in visual form of an aboriginal community. It won a jury prize at Cannes and is an Oscar submission.

For details visit www.vifvf.com or pick up a program guide at libraries, the Festival Office at 808 View Street or Yo Video. Tickets are on sale January 15 at the new Mayfair Shopping Centre Kiosk opposite HMV, the Festival office 808 View Street, on line or by phone at 389-0444.



The 13th annual Victoria Independent Film and Video Festival presents an incredible lineup of 140 of the world's best new films. Be sure to pick up a program guide or check out the website at www.vifvf.com to see all that's offered.

David Foster is the kind of celebrity that, despite world-wide fame and the inevitable Hollywood hype, always finds the time to come home to Victoria. On Sat. Feb. 3 7 p.m. the Victoria Independent Film & Video Festival pays tribute to him with "A Night With David Foster" at the Cineplex Odeon Theatre. To order tickets visit www.vifvf.com or after January 15 drop by the new Mayfair Shopping Centre kiosk opposite HMV, the Festival Offices at 808 View Street or order by phone at 389-0444.

Tastings, classes at the second annual Victoria Whisky Festival

Last year's sell-out event established Victoria's Whisky Festival as one of the best-run whisky festivals anywhere. Offering an expanded line-up of four tastings, 15 master classes, and the Aberlour Distillery five-course dinner – Aberlour Distillery has hosted only two other dinners, one in London and the other in Paris – this year's event is proving to be just as popular. Tickets sold out soon after going on sale last November, but disappointed purchasers can now take advantage of several new tastings and master classes that have been added.

Internationally renowned whisky expert, Jim Murray, author of *The Whisky Bible*, will present tastings on Wed. Jan. 24 and Thurs. Jan. 25 in the Hotel Grand Pacific's Pender Island ballroom. Participants will be able to try a selection of 12 to 14 different whiskies – bourbon, rye, blends, single malt, or Irish – during these three-and-a-half to four-hour presentations, while Murray entertains and educates in his trademark high-energy style. All whisky's are served neat, or with only bottled water. Favourites can be ordered at the festival through Strath Ale, Wine and Spirit Merchants. Signed copies of *The Whisky Bible* will be available for purchase.

Newly added master classes from Glenfarclas Distillery and Dewar Rattray are scheduled for Sat. Jan. 27. Glenfarclas Distillery was named Distiller of the Year for 2006 at the whisky industry's Icons of Whisky dinner. Robert Ransom, sales manager from the Glenfarclas Distillery in Spey-



side, Scotland, will educate attendees on the various expressions of this famous and independent Scottish distillery.

In the first of two master classes for A. Dewar Rattray, Sales Director James Cowan will officially launch the Dewar Rattray line of single malt whiskies into British Columbia with the first public tasting of these interesting single malts, as well as touch on the history of Dewar Rattray. In the second of the classes, Cowan will lead a tasting of un-chill filtered single cask whiskies, describing the process and how it affects flavour.

Tickets are \$55 for tastings, \$25 for the master classes, and are available through Strath Ale, Wine and Spirit Merchants at 919 Douglas Street. Proceeds go to Rock Solid and 100.3 the Q's TLC Fund.