



1st Annual Waterford Film Festival Attracts Strong International Interest

- Inaugural Year of the Waterford Film Festival

Thursday 11th October – Details were announced today for the first Waterford Film Festival which will take place from the 15th – 18th November at a number of venues around the City.

The brainchild of Waterford Film maker Stephen Byrne (25) this Festival will feature the work of key independent film makers films from all over the world including Ireland, the UK, the USA, Spain, Portugal, Canada, Germany and Australia.

Many of the directors and producers of these movies will attend the event including Greg Chwerchak, US Director who will be screening “Greetings from the Shore”, a romantic comedy that makes its Irish debut at the Festival. The movie follows one young girl as she spends her last summer at the Jersey Shore before heading off to college. Mourning the recent death of her Father, her plans for a normal summer soon fall apart and the girl stumbles into a mysterious world of Russian sailors, high-stakes gambling, and unexpected love. “Greetings from the Shore” stars young American actress Kim Shaw in the lead role, but perhaps more notably, also stars Paul Sorvino of “Paul Cicero” fame from Martin Scorsese’s epic mafia movie “Goodfellas”.

Other works of note at the Festival include that of Australian Producer/ Director Jonathan Nolan who will also screen his highly critically acclaimed documentary “Fortunate Sons”, a documentary about the Bush regime and the US leadership in the post 1963 world, with a close look at 9/11 and the War on Terror. The documentary has been written and produced with a modern 'edgy' look and feel, with video-game style editing to appeal to contemporary audiences.

Switching the focus to the other side of the world “Children of Allah” is described as an "an unobtrusive, engaging and affectionate journey that takes us into daily life at a Muslim boys orphanage in Mattancherry, Kerala, India.

The unhurried pace of the narrative coupled with the sensitive approach and unconscious presence of the camera offers a rare opportunity to inhabit the world of this orphanage, a world where the Muslim religion plays such an important part.

As this inviting journey unfolds, the audience get to know some of the boys who live there and how this orphanage provides a home for them, something their own homes could not do. “Children of Allah” is directed by Keith Walsh, who is originally from Waterford and also by Jill Beardsworth. Walsh will be amongst many of the Directors who will travel from abroad to attend the Festival.

Cuba Libre which opens the Festival, has just won the award for “Best Feature” in the Orlando Latino Film Festival. The film is described as an “outrageous comedy” about a group



of radical anarchist squatters who inadvertently overtake the Cuban Embassy in Madrid at the very same time that Fidel Castro announces Cuba's first democratic elections. Lead actors Mario Arias and Sara Deray will be flying in from Spain to attend the film festival, perhaps in the hope of scooping another award.

Closer to home, Irish Director Liam O'Monchain's "W.C." – a story of a blossoming friendship between 2 toilet attendants – will be featured at the Film Festival on foot of its success in the Jameson International Film Festival earlier this year.

Speaking about the Film Festival, Organiser Stephen Byrne said "*Naturally, we are incredibly motivated by the national and international attendance at this, the first year of the Waterford Film Festival. With over 70 different screenings, there really is something for everyone at this year's event including Comedy, Drama, Romance and Documentaries*".

"This festival is not just for filmmakers but for film lovers, and it's people that will make the festival a true success, so I hope that the public will support and enjoy the films over the 3 days".

"We're already receiving queries regarding the details for next year's Festival from some interested parties, which is encouraging to say the least and I look forward to "growing" the event year on year, perhaps adding an extra day each time" added Byrne.

This year's Festival features a first and second cash prizes The Waterford Film Festival will award cash prizes for 1st and 2nd places in all categories, including Best First Irish Short. Entries have been received for the following film competition categories

Short Competition	Best Short Film Best First Irish Short Best Short Documentary Best Short Animation
Feature Competition	Best Feature Film Best Feature Documentary

The films will be screened in Revolution bar, Masons bar and night club, The Tower Hotel and The Granville Hotel.

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Further Press Information:
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Note to Editors

Special thanks to the Festival sponsors: Bord Fáilte, the Tower Hotel Group, CJ Falconer, Start, the Granville Hotel, Beat 102-103FM, Concept, Film Ireland, Waterford City Council, the Munster Express and John Street Village.