

Montréal, Wednesday March 24, 2010

PRESS RELEASE-FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION



5th Montreal Human Rights Film Festival

A necessary festival in the Québec landscape contributing to giving a meaning to our lives

Charles Binamé, spokesperson for the 5th edition

4903 spectators: 44% more than in 2009

Prizes launching women directors on the front scene!

Audience Prize: *Ghosts, by the Iranian Morvary Samare*

Documentary Grand Prize: *City of Borders, by the South Korean Yun Suh*

Two honorary mentions:

Kalandia, a Checkpoint's Story, by the Israeli Neta Efrony

Rough Aunties, by the British Kim Longinotto

*"The MHRFF's fifth edition ends beautifully; the public has been present in a way that gives hope to all the filmmakers who came to meet the Montrealers with their films and topics. Theatres were full; in fact some screenings were sold out (Weapon of War, Birmanie l'indomptable, résistance d'un peuple, Rights Undermined – In the Open Sky). The debates with the **41 guests** were strong and particularly dynamic moments; the one with **Rebiya Kadeer**, spokesperson of the Uyghur people was filled with emotion; the **Cine-conferences**, initiated this year were a real success, and the **Youth Program** met its public. And just like it was the case for the 4th edition, the younger public came in great number.*

*Thanks to the curious public and to the media for having been associated spokes persons thus contributing to the 5th edition's success". **Charles Binamé, spoke person for this MHRFF's 5th edition.***

The **Montreal Human Rights Film Festival's 5th edition** (MHRFF) closing night took place in a particularly festive atmosphere in front of a full house at Cinéma du Parc, with the World Première of **Magnus Isacsson's *Les Super Mémés***. Produced by les **Films de l'Isle** the film was shown in the presence of the director, producers and several members of both "les mémés déchaînées" and "the Raging Grannies". It portrays these colourful and inspiring women who, with their contagious energy rage to keep people's conscience awake and devote themselves to preserve the beauty of the world. *"It's the beginning of peace. Yes we are raging"*, do they proclaim loud and clear. These standing women invite us to start moving.

On this occasion the festival gave out its **awards** under the guidance of the program directress, **Diya Angeli**, in the presence of her partners, the jury, guests and the audience. Nine films were competing for the Documentary Grand Prize and 22 for the Audience Prize. **Women win the honours since both MHRFF awards and two mentions went to four women filmmakers.**

The MHRFF Audience Prize, along with **\$2000**, from **Amnistie internationale, Canada francophone**, went to the Iranian-born filmmaker, **Morvary Samare**, for ***Ghosts***, a powerful documentary about three Canadian Muslims tortured during their detention in Syria and Egypt with the complicity of the Canadian government, and their struggle to forget the horror they have lived, and to

obtain reparation.

For her delicate interweaving of the intimate and the collective from authentic and moving portraits, **the MHRFF Documentary Grand Prize**, along with \$2500 from the **CIDIHCA (Centre international de documentation et d'information haïtienne, caribéenne et afro-canadienne)**, was received by the South Korean director **Yun Suh** for her film **City of Borders**. In this underground place, in the heart of a gay bar, at the border of East and West Jerusalem, people from diverse nationalities, religions and sexual orientations, usually perceived as “enemies”, create a united community.

Two honorary mentions were also given by the jury:

To the British filmmaker Kim Longinotto for her film **Rough Aunties**, a superb portrait of a group of exceptional women determined to make a difference in the daily life of their community in South Africa, reminding us that the struggle for human rights still represents a challenge.

To the Israeli filmmaker Neta Efrony for **Kalandia, a Checkpoint Story**, and her implacable observation, during six years of the reality of the Checkpoints, essential for the understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and for her day to day diary of Palestinians gradually deprived of their dignity.

The jury for 2010 was comprised of **Maryse Alcindor**, lawyer, former deputy minister for the Québec Immigration and cultural Communities, **Élie Castiel**, chief editor of the cinema magazine Séquences and chairman of the AQCC (Québec Association of film Critics); and **Alexandre Trudeau**, filmmaker, journalist and director for the Montreal production company Juju Films.

Member of the Human Rights Film Network, the MHRFF presented for its 5th edition (March 11-21, 2010) 63 films from 20 countries on the screens of Cinéma du Parc, NFB Cinema, Cinéma Parallèle, Centre culturel Simon Bolivar and UQAM. It had opened with the North American première of **Le jour où Dieu est parti en voyage (the Day that God Walked Away)** in the presence of the director, **Philippe Van Leeuw**. During a special ceremony, the MHRFF's **Board of Governors** gave the **2010 Arthur Lamothe Prize to Macumba International [Richard Cornellier, Patricio Henriquez and Raymonde Provencher]**, for their outstanding work for human rights.

The exhibition Finger Pointing Racism will go on until March 31st at the Cinéma du Parc, presenting 42 drawings from press cartoonists from all over the world, on racism and intolerance.

The MHRFF will continue to present the monthly Human Rights Encounters and hopes to be able to present a 6th edition in March 2011; because beyond the organisers' personal engagement which deserves to be honoured, presenting such an event with too small a budget for each edition is a huge challenge, according to the MHRFF's president and founder, Alix Laurent.

Do not miss the **Colloque “Plan Nord, Plan Sud; mêmes menaces – Mines et barrages hydroélectriques dans les Amériques”**, on the threats of mines and dams in the Americas, that will be presented by the IEIM (Institut d'Études Internationales de Montréal).

Attend the screening of **Tierra Sublevada, Oro Impuro** (2009– 92', Spanish, EST), by Fernando Pino Solanas, **Aguasabajo. El Proyecto de la presa paso de la reina** (2009 – 28' – Spanish), by Roberto Stefani, and **Tambogrande, Mangué, meurtre et mine** (2007 – 85' – Spanish FST), by Ernesto Cabellos Damian and Stéphanie Boyd.

On Friday March 26, 2010, from 7 to 9 PM at the Pavillon Sherbrooke of UQAM:

200, West Sherbrooke street– Métro Place des Arts – Ticket: \$5

Info: info@cdhal.org / www.cdhal.org / 514.387.5550

The 5th MHRFF was presented thanks to the support of Images Interculturelles, Centre international de documentation et d'information haïtienne, caraïbéenne et afro-canadienne (CIDIHCA), Amnistie Internationale Canada francophone, Rights and Democracy, of the French General Consulate in Québec city, Institut de coopération pour l'éducation des adultes (ICÉA), the Swiss General Consulate, Ville de Montréal, Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles, de la Société de transport de Montréal (STM), Conseil des Relations Interculturelles, Institut National de l'Image et du Son (INIS), CSN, l'Office Franco-Québécoise pour la jeunesse (OFQJ), Musée de la Civilisation, Equitas, CSQ, FIQ, the Spanish General Consulate, PRIM, des Rencontres internationales du documentaire de Montréal (RIDM), Institut d'études internationales de Montréal (IEIM), Chaire de recherche en immigration, ethnicité et citoyenneté (CRIEC) and of Reporters without Borders Canada.

www.ffdpm.com (Pictures for all films in the media section)