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The Global Film Initiative Launches *World Cinema Week* and *Wing It!* Student Contest

Nationwide screening event and GFI-Virgin America sponsored contest highlight Education Program expansion

San Francisco, CA – March 11, 2009 – The Global Film Initiative announced today the launch of two new initiatives to mark the continued expansion of its Education Program: *World Cinema Week* and the *Wing It!* arts and culture student contest.

World Cinema Week is an annual screening event created by the Global Film Initiative to promote cultural awareness through the language of cinema. The inaugural *World Cinema Week* will take place on university and college campuses April 19th–25th and feature a week-long, nationwide screening of films from the sixth edition of its critically acclaimed world cinema series – Global Lens 2009.

Wing It! is a quarterly arts and culture student contest created by the Global Film Initiative and sponsored by Virgin America airlines. The contest challenges students to submit creative videos, essays and multimedia presentations on global culture, and is open to high school and college students in the U.S. and Canada. Winners will receive a ticket to anywhere Virgin America flies, and the debut contest – *Be a Tour Guide* – is now accepting entries, with winners to be announced on June 30th, 2009.

“At the core of our Education Program is a creative engagement with other cultures,” says Lisa Hasko, Director of Education and Online Development. “By launching these new initiatives we are furthering that vision—to encourage students to think critically about their world, and the world around them.”

World Cinema Week and *Wing It!* are the most recent examples of the Global Film Initiative’s pioneering approach to film and education. Since its founding, the Initiative has sponsored free educational film screenings, internships and writing opportunities for high school and college students. The Initiative has also created innovative educational resources for teachers and students such as film discussion guides, lesson plans, and online learning tools.

The Initiative is currently scheduling participants for *World Cinema Week*. For more information on how to host films please visit: www.globalfilm.org/bluescreen/world_cinema_week.htm

Entries are now being accepted for *Wing It!* For a full description of the contest and official rules for submission, please visit: www.globalfilm.org/bluescreen/wing_it_contest.htm

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About the Global Film Initiative and Virgin America

In 2008, the Global Film Initiative and Virgin America launched a partnership to bring the Initiative’s traveling world cinema series, Global Lens, to passengers via RED™ – Virgin America’s touch-screen personal in-flight entertainment system. Six Global Lens films per month are available via pay-per-view download on the airline, including selections from *Global Lens* 2009, the sixth edition of the renowned series. To see what’s playing now on Virgin America, visit www.globalfilm.org/partners/virgin_america.htm.

About the Global Film Initiative

The Global Film Initiative is a U.S.-based not-for-profit organization specializing in the support of independent film from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. Founded in 2002 to promote cross-cultural understanding through the language of cinema, the Initiative awards numerous grants to deserving filmmakers from around the world each year, and supports a touring film series entitled Global Lens. For more information about the Global Lens film series and Global Film Initiative programs, please visit: <http://www.globalfilm.org>.



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