



## NEWS RELEASE

### **CANNES FESTIVAL HIT “WHISKY” TO BE DISTRIBUTED IN U.S. BY GLOBAL FILM INITIATIVE**

- Premiere in New York at MoMA in December 2004 to Be Followed by 2005 Cross-Country Global Lens Tour
- First Run Features To Handle Commercial Distribution at Close of Global Lens as Part of Previously-Announced Collaboration

(July 8, 2004) — “Whisky” by Juan Pablo Rebella and Pablo Stoll, winner of two prestigious prizes at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival, will be distributed in the United States by The Global Film Initiative, the U.S.-based charitable foundation dedicated to cross-cultural understanding through cinema. At Cannes, “Whisky” won the Prize of Regard Original from the Un Certain Regard Jury and the Fipresci (International Critics’ Association) Award.

The distribution announcement was made today in Los Angeles by Susan Weeks Coulter, the Initiative’s Chairperson, and in New York by Holly Ornstein Carter, the Initiative’s Executive Director. The Global Film Initiative established a relationship with Uruguayan filmmakers Rebella and Stoll when the Initiative granted post-production funding to “Whisky” in the Fall of 2003.

The Initiative and the Museum of Modern Art have agreed to hold the New York premiere of “Whisky” in early December 2004 as part of MoMA’s 10-week series of world, U.S. and New York premieres of new films, videos and restorations, celebrating its gala reopening in newly expanded quarters and state-of-the-art theatres.

“Whisky” will then be featured as part of the Initiative’s second annual touring film series, Global Lens, which will be screened throughout 2005 at cultural institutions across the United States. The Global Lens tour begins in January 2005, and includes collaboration with ongoing partner MoMA, which will host Global Lens in New York in March. A total of 14 cities hosted Global Lens in 2003/04; more will be announced for 2005.

The Initiative’s previously-announced distribution deal with First Run Features ensures that “Whisky” will be considered for extended theatrical runs in cities hosting Global Lens as well as others, and will be released on home video under the combined Global Film Initiative and First Run Features label.

First Run's sister company, First Run/Icarus Films, will handle educational film sales to libraries and universities.

"Whisky" is the story of Jacobo and Marta, the owner and his employee of a sock factory in Montevideo, whose lives are changed by the visit of Jacobo's brother Herman. Following many years of estrangement, the two brothers are reunited one year after their mother's death. Suddenly, Jacobo wants Herman to believe he is married, and he and Marta, who have barely communicated over the years, must now pose as a long-married couple.

The Initiative's post-production support to "Whisky" is part of the Initiative's four ongoing programs — granting, acquisitions, distribution, and education. Through the Initiative's education program, special Global Lens screenings are made available to high school students and teachers at the exhibition venues. "These arrangements provide a logical foundation for discussions about different societies and a shared humanity," Carter said.

In 2003, The Global Film Initiative awarded its first completion funds to seven projects. In addition to "Whisky," others have been completed and have received acclaim — at the 23rd International Istanbul Film Festival ("What's A Human Anyway?" by Reha Erdem), the 2004 International Film Festival Rotterdam ("Hollow City" by Maria João Ganga), and other festivals to be announced.

"In just over a year of operation, the Global Film Initiative has put a great team together," emphasized Coulter. "We identify great films, we assist filmmakers from developing countries with completion funds, and we have a touring series in place that includes cultural institutions in major cities.

"Now our partnership with First Run Features takes full advantage of First Run's expertise in theatrical bookings, the home video market, and educational sales. All of this helps us bring new cultures to Americans young and old," added Coulter. "We're justifiably proud of what we have accomplished in such a short time."

The Initiative's current 2003/04 Global Lens tour continues in September in Chicago and Salt Lake City, concluding in October in Houston.

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