



THE GLOBAL FILM INITIATIVE ANNOUNCES Charter Film Board

Leaders of Independent Film Voice Support for Developing World Cinema

New York City, NY – October 18, 2005 – The Global Film Initiative, a non-traditional film distributor specializing in independent films from the developing world, today announced the membership of its Film Board, internationally-recognized filmmakers, producers and visionaries who support the mission of The Initiative. The sixteen charter members of the Film Board span four continents, and share a passion for independent film from the developing world. Through these industry leaders, The Global Film Initiative reaches out to communities of independent filmmakers around the world.

The Global Film Initiative brings internationally-acclaimed films from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East to American audiences through its annual film series, Global Lens. In collaboration with major cultural institutions across America, The Global Film Initiative is, in the words of one of its institutional partners, helping to “create the next generation of filmgoers – informed audiences who not only see film as an art form, but as an essential resource in developing an understanding of the complex world we share.”

“Filmmakers in every corner of the world bring the rich texture of life into their work,” said Susan Weeks Coulter, Chair of Global Film Initiative. “Our challenge is to introduce American audiences to their remarkable stories, as told in the international medium of cinema. We are delighted to welcome these leaders of independent filmmaking in support of this important work.”

The charter members of The Global Film Initiative Film Board are:

Pedro Almodóvar, Spain

Mira Nair, India

Lucy Barreto, Brazil

Carlos Reygadas, Mexico

Jean-Pierre Bekolo, Cameroon

Pierre Rissient, France

Noah Cowan, Canada

Lita Stantic, Argentina

Sandra den Hamer, The Netherlands	Béla Tarr, Hungary
Christopher Doyle, China	Djamshed Usmonov, Tajikistan
Adoor Gopalakrishnan, India	Lars von Trier, Denmark
Rashid Masharawi, Palestine	Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Thailand

Brief biographical details for Film Board members:

Pedro Almodóvar (Spain)

- Co-founder of El Deseo production studios
- As writer, actor, director, producer, composer, he has made internationally-acclaimed films for more than two decades
- Produced Academy Award –nominated *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* (1988), *The Flower of My Secret* (1995), Academy Award-winning *All About My Mother* (1999) and *Talk to Her* (2002), and *Bad Education* (2002)

Lucy Barreto (Brazil)

- Co-producer with her husband, Luiz Carlos Barreto, the Barreto Group
- Collaborated with the Cinema Novo directors, including Glauber Rocha and Nelson Pereira dos Santos
- Produced such films as *Bye Bye Brazil* (1979), *O Quatrilho* (1995), *Four Days in September* (1997), *Bossa Nova* (2000) and *The Middle of the World* (2003)

Jean-Pierre Bekolo (Cameroon)

- A physicist by training, Bekolo studied filmmaking at the Institut National de l'Audiovisuel in France, and taught filmmaking at Duke and the University of North Carolina
- First feature film, *Quartier Mozart* (1992) won the Prix Afrique en Création at Cannes
- Most recent film, *Les Saignantes* (2005), was screened at the Toronto International Film Festival

Noah Cowan (Canada)

- Co-Director of the Toronto International Film Festival
- Co-creator of The Global Film Initiative
- Co-founder of Cowboy Pictures and CodeRed Films

Sandra den Hamer (The Netherlands)

- Director, International Film Festival Rotterdam
- Joined IFFR in 1986 as assistant to Hubert Bals
- Deputy Director, co-Director with Simon Field from 1991 – 2004

Christopher Doyle (China)

- Leading cinematographer in Asia, having developed an intuitive, “away with words” style
- Collaborated with Chinese filmmaker Wong Kar Wai on *Days of Being Wild* (1991), *Chungking Express* (1994), *In the Mood for Love* (2000) and *2046* (2005)
- Director of Photography for *Psycho* (directed by Gus Van Sant, 1998), *Last Life in the Universe* (directed by Pen-ed Ratanarung, 2003), *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (directed by Philip Noyce, 2002) and *Hero* (directed by Zhang Yimou, 2002)

Adoor Gopalakrishnan (India)

- Won the FIPRESCI prize six times, most recently for *Nizhalkkuthu* (*Shadow Kill* – 2002), which was selected for the first Global Lens series
- Received The Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters from French government in 2004
- Makes documentaries on the performing arts, especially the classical arts of Kerala, and has published three books on cinema (in Malayalam)

Rashid Masharawi (Palestine)

- Founded the Mobile Cinema for refugee camps; one of few filmmakers to remain in Palestine to live and work; his most recent film is the acclaimed *Arafat My Brother* (2005)
- Produced more than 15 films, including the BBC documentary *Long Days in Gaza* (1991), *Curfew* (1993), *Haifa* (1995), and *Rabab* (1997)
- The award-winning *Ticket to Jerusalem* (2002) was selected for the first Global Lens series

Mira Nair (India)

- Award-winning documentaries include *So Far From India* (1982) and *India Cabaret* (1985)
- Among her award-winning feature films are *Salaam Bombay!* (1988), *Mississippi Masala* (1991), *Monsoon Wedding* (2001), and *Hysterical Blindness* (2002)
- Founded Mirabai Films, which this year launched *Maisha* , its annual filmmaker's laboratory in support of filmmakers in East Africa and South Asia

Carlos Reygadas (Mexico)

- One of a new wave of successful filmmakers in Mexico, regards cinema as “much closer to music” in its ability to convey feeling without representation
- Debut feature film *Japón* (*Japan* , 2002) received Golden Camera award at Cannes
- Second film *Batalla en el cielo* (*Battle in Heaven* , 2005) made its North American debut at the Toronto International Film Festival

Pierre Rissient (France)

- “Very possibly the least-known man of tremendous influence in the entire world of cinema”
- Since the 1970s he has promoted films from the developing world for the festival at Cannes – launching the careers of filmmakers from Asia, Iran, and more recently, Malaysia
- Tireless discoverer and promoter of talent, including director Jane Campion (*The Piano*), Clint Eastwood, the Filipino Lino Brocka, and King Hu from Taiwan

Lita Stantic (Argentina)

- Founder of Lita Stantic Producciones, providing production and post-production support to the new wave of Argentine filmmakers since the 1990s
- Active in the Cine Liberacion in Argentina in the 1970s
- Produced major films, including *A Red Bear* (*Un Oso Rojo* , 2002) and *The Holy Girl* (*La Niña Santa* , 2004), and co-produced or provided completion support to many others

Béla Tarr (Hungary)

- Legendary film *Sátántangó* (1994) was described by Susan Sontag as one of the “heroic violations of the norms” that will be necessary to shape the future of cinema
- Refers to his films as “anti-movies,” made in reaction to Hungarian cinema available during the Communist era
- *Werckmeister Harmonies* (2000) is his most recent completed project, with *The Man from London* currently in production

Djamshed Usmonov (Tajikistan)

- Studied theater at Dushanbe Fine Arts School in Tajikistan, has been actor, director, producer, screenwriter and editor for fiction, animation and documentary films
- FIPRESCI Prize for *The Flight of the Bee* (1998)
- *Angel on the Right* (2002) – winner of awards at film festivals in Tokyo, London and Wiesbaden – was selected for the first Global Lens series

Lars von Trier (Denmark)

- Leading filmmaker in Denmark, gaining international acclaim through the television program *Medea* and the series *The Kingdom* and *The Kingdom II*, as well as feature films
- Co-founded Dogme, the film collective that brought international attention to filmmaking in Denmark
- Produced such films as *Zentropa* (1991), *Dogville* (2003), and *Mandalay* (2005)

Apichatpong Weerasethakul (Thailand)

- Prizes at Cannes for *Blissfully Yours* (2002) and *Tropical Malady* (2004)
- Studied experimental filmmaking at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago
- Leader of experimental and alternative filmmaking in Thailand, through his studio *Kick the Machine*

The Global Film Initiative

The Global Film Initiative is a non-traditional film distributor specializing in independent films from the developing world. The Global Film Initiative was created to promote cross-cultural understanding through the universal language of cinema during a time of political and social disparity throughout the world. The Global Film Initiative offers grants each year to filmmakers and brings outstanding films to U.S. audiences through a 16-18 city theatrical release entitled *Global Lens* . The theatrical release is supported by an educational outreach program to high school students. The Global Film Initiative is a not-for-profit organization based in New York City. See www.globalfilm.org for more information .

Contact:

The Global Film Initiative
212-206-7790
pr@globalfilm.org

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