

Heartland Film Festival Announces 2010 Award Winners

The Space Between receives \$50,000 Grand Prize for Best Dramatic Feature, *Freedom Riders* receives \$25,000 Award for Best Documentary Feature and *The Butterfly Circus* receives the \$10,000 Vision Award for Best Short Film

INDIANAPOLIS (Oct. 17, 2010) – The Heartland Film Festival celebrated and honored some of the world's most talented and inspiring independent filmmakers during the 19th annual Heartland Film Festival Awards Ceremony at the Old National Centre last night. Awards and \$150,000 in cash prizes were presented to 17 films. Heartland announced ***The Space Between* by Travis and Kristine Fine** as the **\$50,000 Grand Prize Award Winner for Best Dramatic Feature**; ***Freedom Riders* by Stanley Earl Nelson, Jr.** as the winner of the **\$25,000 Award for Best Documentary Feature** and ***The Butterfly Circus* by Joshua and Rebekah Weigel** as the winner of the **\$10,000 Vision Award for Best Short Film**.

The glamorous black-tie event was emceed by Indiana native and Emmy® award-winning journalist **Catt Sadler** (*E! Entertainment Television*). Special guests **Greg Paul** (Trustee of The Stewart Foundation and President of Castle Rock Entertainment), **Corbin Bernsen** (*Rust, LA Law, General Hospital*) and **Don Most** (*The Yankles, Happy Days*) presented awards. **Quinton Aaron** (*The Blind Side*) presented this year's Pioneering Spirit Award to **Andrew Kosove** and **Broderick Johnson**, the co-founders and co-CEOs of Alcon Entertainment and producers of *The Blind Side*, *My Dog Skip* and *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants* – all Truly Moving Picture Award-winning films. The pair was honored with the award for their creative spirit in filmmaking and their contribution to Heartland's mission to support filmmakers in their quest to create films that bring out the best of the human spirit.

"It's an honor for Heartland to give Andrew, Broderick and everyone at Alcon Entertainment our highest award for their significant contribution to the mission of Heartland Truly Moving Pictures," said Jeffrey L. Sparks, president and CEO of Heartland Truly Moving Pictures. "We're also thrilled to host them in Indianapolis during our Festival which celebrates films like those that Alcon produces: films that entertain and inspire."

During the program, Heartland honored 17 feature-length and short films. Three student films received Jimmy Stewart Memorial Crystal Heart Awards and 14 films were honored with Crystal Heart Awards. These films were selected from a record 832 independent film submissions for best meeting Heartland's mission and demonstrating excellence in filmmaking.

The filmmakers honored with Crystal Heart Awards were: *Bilal's Stand* – **Producer/Director/Writer Sultan Sharrief**; *The Butterfly Circus* – **Producer/Director/Writer Joshua Weigel** and **Producer/Writer Rebekah Weigel**; *Café* –

Producer Chris Wyatt; *Freedom Riders* – Director Stanley Earl Nelson, Jr.; *Frog in the Well* – Producer/Director/Writer Ken Ochiai; *Jamaa* – Producer Brian Bird; *Lt. Dan Band: For the Common Good* – Producer/Director Jonathan Flora and Producer Deborah Flora; *Mister Rogers & Me* – Producer/Director/Writer Benjamin Wagner and Director Christofer Wagner; *The Space Between* – Producer/Director/Writer Travis Fine and Producer Kristine Fine; *Sun Come Up* – Producer/Director Jennifer Redfearn; *Thunder Soul* – Producer/Director Mark Landsman; *Waste Land* – Producer Hank Levine; *Ways to Live Forever* – Director/Writer Gustavo Ron; *The Yankles* – Producer/Director/Writer David R. Brooks. The filmmakers honored with the Jimmy Stewart Memorial Crystal Heart Award were: *God of Love* – **Producer Stefanie Walmsley; *The Road Home* – Producer/Director Rahul Gandotra; *Waiting for a Train: The Toshio Hirano Story* – Producer/Director Oscar Bucher.**

Additional special guests at this year's Heartland Film Festival Awards Ceremony included: *Bilal's Stand* – **Executive Producer Terri Sarris, Associate Producer Micah Bartelme and star Sabrina Quinn; *The Butterfly Circus* – Producer Angie Alvarez, Editor Chris Witt and star Bob Yerkes; *Freedom Riders* – featured individual Genevieve Hughes Houghton; *Lt. Dan Band: For the Common Good* – featured individual Jason Hale; *Mister Rogers & Me* – author and featured individual Amy Hollingsworth and Executive Producer David Wagner; *Sun Come Up* – Producer Tim Metzger; *Thunder Soul* – featured individual Gaila Mitchell; *Ways to Live Forever* – star Alex Ettel and composer Cesar Benito and *The Yankles* – star Don Most.**

New this year, Heartland Truly Moving Pictures introduced a competition specifically for high school age filmmakers through its Heartland Institute program. Aspiring high school filmmakers were encouraged to create a 10-minute film that embodied the 2010 theme: HOPE. The Grand Prize Award along with a cash prize of \$2,500 was presented to **Director John Gordon** of Dallas, Texas for his film, *Clay*.

Heartland awarded a total of \$150,000 in cash prizes and winning filmmakers received a Crystal Heart Award designed by Marc Aronstam and Aronstam Fine Jewelers. The \$25,000 Award for Best Documentary Feature was underwritten by Indianapolis Volkswagen Dealers, the \$10,000 Vision Award for Best Short Film was underwritten by KeyBank, and the Jimmy Stewart Memorial Crystal Heart Awards were underwritten by The Stewart Foundation. To date, Heartland has awarded more than \$2.3 million to support filmmakers in their quest to create uplifting and inspiring films.

Heartland Truly Moving Pictures™, a national, independent, non-profit arts organization, was established in 1991 to recognize and honor filmmakers whose work explores the human journey by artistically expressing hope and respect for the positive values of life. Its flagship event, the Heartland Film Festival®, launched in 1991 and runs each October in Indianapolis, screening independent films from around the world. Each year, the Festival awards \$150,000 in cash prizes and presents its Crystal Heart Awards to the top-

judged submissions. Heartland has awarded more than \$2.3 million to support filmmakers during the last 19 years. The organization's Truly Moving Picture Award was created to honor films released theatrically that align with Heartland's mission. By bestowing a watermark to honored films, the award allows studios and distributors to inform audiences of a film's uplifting message and appeal. Heartland is also dedicated to its relationship with the National Collaboration for Youth and its expanding F.I.L.M., "Finding Inspiration in Literature & Movies," Project. For more information, visit TrulyMovingPictures.org.

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