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Flickers in China: Building Partnerships, International Relations and a Creative Economy

Flickers' Personnel Joanne Arnold and Jonathan Friesem are featured speakers at Guangzhou International Documentary Film Festival

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (December 3, 2012) – The **Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival** (RIIFF) has created a unique relationship with the **Guangzhou International Documentary Film Festival, China** (GZ DOC 2012) that may become a model for film festivals across the globe. With contacts established over six years and nurtured by close communication and collaboration, this relationship has blossomed into a partnership where each festival curates work from the other and provides an international platform for independent filmmakers. To solidify and expand upon this relationship, **Joanne Arnold**, the organization's Administrative Director and **Jonathan Friesem**, Flickers' Liaison to the URI Harrington School of Communication and Media, have accepted an invitation to represent the Festival and will be special VIP guest speakers in China. Of special note is that Mr. Friesem is the only foreign representative to be invited to speak at Guangdong Day during the Festival and will present "Digital Storytelling: Creating New Models For Nonfiction Narratives," that features examples from work created by Flickers such as its 7DayPSA program, the KidsEye Summer Filmmaking Camp, and its Emmy-Award winning Public Service Announcements created by Rhode Islanders Eric Latek and William Smyth.

The **Guangzhou International Documentary Film Festival** runs from December 3 to 7th. Founded in 2003, it is the only international documentary festival and film market in China. It is an event that combines competition, screening, seminar, market, training and networking opportunities. (http://www.gzdoc.com/en_2012/index.asp)

"We are very proud of our growing relationship with the **Guangzhou International Documentary Film Festival, China**," said **George T. Marshall**, Flickers' Executive Director. "I am equally proud that both Joanne Arnold and Jonathan Friesem will be representing our Festival. We see this trip as a proactive example of using the arts to build a model for creative economic development and promote film festivals as cultural ambassadors."

This year the **GZ DOC 2012** jury consists of both international and Chinese professionals related to documentary film. The partnership relationship between the **Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival** and **GZ DOC** provides a platform for special screenings of RIFF films at public cinemas in Guangzhou. In exchange, Flickers will present films from GZ DOC during its **Roving Eye International Film Festival** in April at Roger Williams University, Bristol, RI and during the main **Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival**, August 6-11th, 2013.

"I am honored to represent **Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival** at the 2012 Guangzhou International Documentary Film Festival, China. It is a privilege to be invited to speak

before an international audience on the subject of 'Programming Expansion: Using Film to Create New Perspectives on Art,'" said Joanne Arnold.

"Collaborations such as this allows Flickers, a non-profit organization, to represent the state of Rhode Island, deepen international ties and promote an artistic cross-cultural exchange."

"The Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival's role in the GZ Documentary Festival in Guangzhou gives us a great opportunity to increase the visibility of the Harrington School of Communication and Media at the University of Rhode Island," said **Renee Hobbs**, Professor and Founding Director of the Harrington School of Communication and Media

"We are eager to expand cross-cultural exchange opportunities with the next generation of Chinese filmmakers with special interest in documentary and alternative and new media production. Our mission is to work together to use the power of communication and information to make a difference in the world."

Flickers will post daily updates by Ms. Arnold and Mr. Friesem, who will be creating a video blog about their experiences at the Guangzhou International Documentary Festival:
<http://rifilmfest.blogspot.com/>

Representatives of the **Guangzhou International Documentary Film Festival, China** will be coming to Rhode Island during the summer of 2013 to continue the exchange ideas and dialogue.

WHO'S WHO ATTENDING THE GUANGZHOU INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL IN CHINA:

Joanne Arnold earned a Graduate Performance Diploma from Longy School of Music, and a BA in Drama from Franklin Pierce College. For more than fifteen years, Ms. Arnold was actively employed in the Private Pension Industry as a Pension Administrator, Senior Administrator, Team Leader, and Senior Compliance Analyst. She has worked in the retail industry and not-for-profit sector as a Department Manager and Bookkeeper. Currently, she serves as Administrative Director for Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival.

She is a member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) and has served on the Program Planning Committee at the RI NATS Chapter level. In addition to her current position with Flickers, she teaches voice in two (2) active studios. Joanne is in demand as a voice teacher and adjudicator. Her students have gone on to study music and musical theatre colleges and universities such as Emerson, Westchester University, Elizabethtown, Ithaca, Rider University, Skidmore, Syracuse, Wagner College, and Wheaton College.

She is a two-time Rhode Island Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing Festival 1st place winner as well as a two time recipient of the Arts Education Fellowship from the Rhode Island Foundation. Ms. Arnold is a founding member of the chamber ensemble Queens River Trio. Ms. Arnold has appeared with Ocean State Lyric Opera, Opera Providence, Salt Marsh Opera and with Il Piccolo teatro dell'Opera at the Courthouse Center for the Arts. Concert appearances include the Mozart Coronation Mass, Mozart Requiem, Schubert Mass in G, Verdi Te Deum, Trinity Episcopal Church Advent and Lenten Concert Series (Newport, RI), Dunns Corner Summer Series (Westerly, RI), Linden Place Ballroom (Bristol, RI), Courthouse Center for the Arts (West Kingston, RI), and the Rededication Ceremony for the John H. Chafee National Wildlife Refuge at Pettaquamscutt Cove (Narragansett, RI).

Jonathan Friesem is an award-winning producer and media educator from Israel and a Doctoral student, University of Rhode Island/Rhode Island College, Ph.D. in Education program. He is the manager of the Media Education Lab at the Harrington School of communication and Media, the University of Rhode Island. As part of his doctoral research Jonathan studies the psychological and sociological effects of youth media. His goal to bridge cultures around the world is being realized in the Harrington School community media outreach with youth video

production initiatives - starting fifteen years ago working with Muslim and Jewish adolescents leading to his recent workshop with First Star URI Academy with Rhode Island foster kids.

ABOUT FLICKERS: RHODE ISLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL:

The **FLICKERS: Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIIFF)** has secured its place in the global community as the portal for the best in international independent cinema, earning the respect of domestic and foreign filmmakers, filmgoers and trend watchers. This confluence of art and commerce brought together world-class celebrities, award-winning filmmakers, new talent and audience members in record numbers last year. Ranked as one of the top-12 festivals in the United States, **RIIFF** is one of 75 festivals worldwide that is a qualifying festival for the **Academy Awards** through its partnership with the **Academy of Motion Pictures Arts & Sciences**.

For more information about the **FLICKERS: Rhode Island International Film Festival**, running **Aug. 6-11, 2013** at The Vets (formerly Veterans Memorial Auditorium), please visit our website at **www.RIFilmFest.org** or call us at **401.861.4445**.

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