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Photos Available Upon Request:

RIIFF GOES TO THE OSCARS®

Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival hosts retrospective screenings of Oscar shorts at venues throughout the state of Rhode Island.

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (February 20, 2014) – There are literally thousands of film festivals worldwide but only 26 of them have a rather unique accolade; they are nominating Festivals for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in both the short film and documentary short division. The **Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival** (RIIFF) is one of these 26 Festivals and the only Festival in New England with these distinctions.

Every year, the RIIFF kicks off its annual August Festival with an opening night program that salutes the art of the short film. Every year, several of these films have ended up receiving Oscar® nominations. In 2012, five Festival films were nominated with two wins. In 2013, four films were nominated. And in 2014, three films have been nominated with the winner(s) to be announced on Sunday, March 2nd at the 86th Annual Academy Awards.

In celebration of this year's Oscar® nominations, the **Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival**, in collaboration with the **RI Film & Television Office**, will be presenting a special collection of Oscar® nominated short films that have screened at RIIFF over the past 18 years. The program called "**RIIFF Goes to the Oscars**," will take place from Wednesday, February 26th through Friday, February 28th.

Since 1998, the Festival has seen 33 of its premieres receive Academy nominations and six awarded the coveted Oscar®.

Going into its vaults, RIIFF will be presenting a retrospective of some of these amazing Oscar® nominees, winners and even films that made the Academy short-list. Of note is a special screening of early work by this year's Academy Award nominated director, **Daniel Sousa**, a professor at Rhode Island School of Design, which will include this year's nominated animated short film "**Feral**."

The program will be hosted at **Roger Williams University** in Bristol, the **Rochambeau Library** and the **Providence Public Library** in Providence. All screenings will be free to the general public and feature a raffle where attendees will be able to win tickets to this summer's Festival which runs August 5-10th.

"We are thrilled to have the opportunity to highlight some of our best films from years past and thank Steven Feinberg of the RI Film & Television Office for this opportunity. Short film retrospectives are quite rare, so it's wonderful to share some of the world's greatest short films with our local Rhode Island community" said **Shawn Quirk**, Programming Director at Flickers.

Here is the schedule for **RIIFF Goes to the Oscars®**:

Date: Wednesday, February 26th

Location: Global Heritage Hall, GH01, Roger Williams University, Bristol

Hosted by the RWU Film Production Club

Time: 6:00 p.m.

www.rwu.edu

Date: Thursday, February 27th

Location: Rochambeau Library, 708 Hope St, Providence, RI 02906, 401.272.3780

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Date: Friday, February 28th

Location: Providence Public Library, 150 Empire Street, Providence, RI 02903, 401.455.8000

Time: 2:00 p.m.

www.provlib.org

These are all Free Events

This unique selection of short films will be featured in conjunction with Flickers' annual **Red Carpet Experience: Providence** event,

This year's special **Red Carpet Guests** include: **Elizabeth Delude-Dix**; Flaherty Documentary Institute; **Winifred Brownell**, University of Rhode Island; **Maia Farish**, Roger Williams University, **Kristen Adamo**, Providence/Warwick CVB; and **Letitia Carter**, VMA Foundation/Carter Foundation.

At the **Red Carpet Experience: Providence** guests may feel like stars themselves from a red carpet entrance photographed by paparazzi, interviews by reporters from ABC6, a welcoming reception celebrating this year's Producer Circle Awards, amazing hors d'oeuvres and beverages, live music, silent auction, a gourmet dinner, unforgettable desserts and of course a screening of the 86th Annual Academy Awards.

The Honorary Chairs for the event are **Steven Feinberg**, Executive Director/RI Film & Television Office and **Michael Drywa, Esq.** RIFF Advisory Board President. Hosts for the evening are **Doreen Scanlon** and **Mark Curtis** of ABC 6.

Benefiting **Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival**, Providence's Red Carpet Experience celebration will be held at **The Vets**, One Avenue of the Arts with doors opening at 6:00 p.m. Tickets are now on sale online at www.RIFilmFest.org or by calling 401.861.4445. The cost per ticket is \$100. Student and Table discounts are available.

ABOUT FLICKERS:

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 26 festivals worldwide that is a qualifying festival for the **Academy Awards** in both short film and documentary short film through its partnership with the **Academy of Motion Pictures Arts & Sciences**.

For more information about the **FLICKERS: Rhode Island International Film Festival**, running **Aug. 5-10, 2014** at The Vets (formerly Veterans Memorial Auditorium), please visit www.RIFilmFest.org or call **401.861.4445**.

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RIIFF'S 2014 OSCAR SHOWCASE

Fable

Directed by Daniel Sousa

7 min. 2005, USA

A cyclical fairy tale in which a man and a woman are cursed to forever be apart. But when they take on animal forms, their longing for each other is overpowered by their hunting instincts. Lovers become predators.

Feral

Directed by Daniel Sousa

13 min. 2012, USA

A wild boy is found in the woods by a solitary hunter and brought back to civilization. Alienated by a strange new environment, the boy tries to adapt by using the same strategies that kept him safe in the forest.

The Voorman Problem

Directed by Mark Gill

12 min. 2011, United Kingdom

Doctor Williams is called in to examine the enigmatic Mr. Voorman, a prisoner with a peculiar affliction: he believes he is a god. The Doctor must decide on the sanity of Mr Voorman - is he a faker or a lunatic? Diagnose him insane and they can ship him off to the asylum. But before making a decision, the Doctor has several questions in relation to Voorman's claims: why would a god choose to be straitjacketed in a prison, is there a way he can validate his boast and what has any of this got to do with Belgium?

Death of a Shadow (Dood van een Schaduw)

Directed by Tom Van Avermaet

20 min. 2012, Belgium/France

Soldier Nathan died during World War I. A strange collector imprisoned his shadow and gave him a new chance: a second life against 10000 captured shadows. It is love that guides him, as his purpose is to meet Sarah again, the woman he fell in love with before he died. But then he discovers that she's already in love with someone else, jealousy clouds his mind and pushes him towards a bitter decision, not without consequences.

The Lady in No 6

Directed by Malcolm Clarke

39 min. 2013, Canada/U S A/United Kingdom

The Lady In Number 6 is one of the most inspirational and uplifting stories of the year. 109 year old, Alice Herz Sommer, the world's oldest pianist and Holocaust survivor shares her story on how to achieve a long and happy life. She discussed the importance of music, laughter and how to have an optimistic outlook on life.

RIIFF Alumni Showcase

Interview: Director Mark Gill (*The Voorman Problem*)

By: Caroline Miller | January 28th, 2013

One of the Audience Award Nominees from the 2012 Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival, "The Voorman Problem", is an entertaining and thought-provoking short film in which the pragmatic and sensible Dr. Williams is called into a prison to examine a mysterious patient known as Voorman, who believes himself to be God. The doctor must decide whether to diagnose the patient as a lunatic, a faker, or both, however his ensuing conversations with Voorman prove to be as enigmatic as the prisoner himself.

We had the chance to interview director Mark Gill about the success of his film, his inspirations, and his future filmmaking plans. Note: There are elements of "The Voorman Problem" which are talked about, however there are no specifics that are revealed and so this interview is free of spoilers.

RIIFF: What inspired you to make this film?

Mark: My friend recommended me a book called [number9dream](#) by David Mitchell, and he said there was a part in there that I'd really like. He was right, and there's a very small part of this novel, which is a self-contained story within a story, and that story is called 'Panopticon' which I took and adapted into *The Voorman Problem*.

RIIFF: Are there specific filmmakers whose style you try to emulate or draw from when making your films?

Mark: I think every filmmaker starts off using other people's voices but I think that my favorite film, [although] I don't know if it's the best film I've ever seen, but my favorite film is certainly *Blade Runner*. That's what made me want to make films, and I'm looking forward to going there [to Los Angeles]. I love that film and that was what really got me hooked on filmmaking.

RIIFF: Do you prefer to make short films or feature-length films?

Mark: Well I've never made a feature length yet, so I'm hoping this is the launchpad. I mean, if I can't make a feature off the back of an Oscar nomination I might as well give up (laughs). I do like making short films though, they are good, and especially something like *The Voorman Problem*, which was an incredible experience. I like the form, I think it's a form within itself and I think it's great that the Academy supports it.

RIIFF: Was there a specific message you wished to convey when making *The Voorman Problem*?

Mark: To be honest with you, I don't think there was. It's been interesting because it's a very self-contained and satisfying little story within itself and I suppose it's about metamorphosis in some ways but

essentially it's a very dark comedy, its quite whimsical, and we just wanted to make something that was entertaining.

RIIFF: To what extent is this film an examination of mental illness, and to what extent would you say it's a 'religious film'?

Mark: I'll be honest in that I wasn't thinking that when we made it. Somebody's going to have to write a thesis on this, there's so many different readings of it, its fantastic. I don't think I've ever thought of it that way, and this is just my personal opinion but religion is a type of mental illness, maybe. Certainly I think religion is worth exploring, and if you have a problem with it the best way to do that is with comedy. It sort of de-mystifies it in some ways, you know, comedy is a great vehicle for that [purpose].

RIIFF: This film could be considered a social commentary, was this your intention?

Mark: I'd be interested to know in what way you think it's a social commentary

RIIFF: You know, when I watched it, [I noticed] the way that the State, as a shadow character, was portrayed in the sense that they didn't know how to deal with Voorman and then also [the way] the man running the prison was kind of a shady character too. Those kinds of shadow components I think in some ways could be considered a sort of social commentary on the government but that's just one reading of it.

RIIFF: I think first of all I was trying to make something that was entertaining for a change, and then what I love is that people come back with [different] readings of it, and that's what I love about it. And that's what I love about David Lynch—he never explains anything, and I think I'm going to take the 'Lynchian' view here (laughs).

RIIFF: What would you say is the target audience for this film, and what has been your strategy for marketing this film?

Mark: It was very much geared towards festivals, because that's the natural home for a lot of short-filmmakers and where a lot of people start out. We knew it was going to be easily marketable once we got that cast, and so we made it and then what we did is we didn't do anything with it for about twelve months, and we just sat on it because we knew that Martin [Freeman] was gonna get the *Sherlock* role and then the Bilbo Baggins role. So the strategy really was just to wait till Martin's profile was a little bit bigger--we knew that once we'd shot it and seen the original edit that what we'd got was something special and so it was a case of just strategizing and formulating a plan. So then when the film came out Martin's profile was huge so essentially that did the work for us.

RIIFF: What future projects are you planning?

Mark: We're already in development on our first feature film and we've already received some development money. It's a film I've wanted to make for a long time. I can't really talk too much about it because there's a few legal things I need to sort out, but it's a biopic, it's something I've wanted to make for a long time, and people are quite excited about it, and I've got a couple of other stronger ideas of what I'd like to do after that. Both are adaptations and we're just trying to secure the rights to those at the moment and to see if they're available. One of them will be set in the [United] States, its an American novel, and the other one is a short story which will fall into the science fiction genre but much like *Gravity*, its not really about being in space. It's a small story with a big idea.

RIIFF: Any final comments or thoughts you'd like to share?

Mark: We've received so much generous support from places like Rhode Island [Flickers: Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIIFF)] and for us its been a really humbling experience to have made a piece of work that's gone and been so well received. And then it got a BAFTA nomination and that's as big as its got in this country, but then to top it with the Oscar you know, we are pinching ourselves quite a lot. I just want to say thank you to people like Rhode Island. I think short films are really important and I really sincerely hope the Academy continues to support them because it really helps us as filmmakers get our toe in the door. It's very hard to make any sort of film, and I have total respect whether the film is good or bad for anybody who gets something onscreen. So if an award or a nomination can help any filmmaker and make it easier, then I think it's worthwhile.

Although the film has had great success in the festival circuit and has racked up a number of nominations and wins, its success has been so significant that the film not only received a British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) nomination, but also has been nominated by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for best short film in the fast-approaching 86th Academy Awards, which will be airing live on March 2nd.