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RIFF ANNOUNCES THE WINNERS OF ITS 2015 SCREENPLAY COMPETITION

431 submissions received from throughout the United States and across the globe

(PROVIDENCE, RI) • **Lukas Hassel** from New York City, NY is the **Best Screenplay Grand Prize Winner** for this year's **FLICKERS: Rhode Island International Film Festival (RIIFF) Screenplay Competition**. His winning screenplay is entitled "**Galapagos**." George T. Marshall, RIIFF Executive Director/CEO, made the announcement of the 2015 awards.

The "**Galapagos**" storyline: Year 2437. Earth has frozen over. At the brink of oblivion, Mankind has relocated to the one remaining habitable place - the ocean floor. When Station Galápagos loses its food source, a small group of tight-knit humans faces the question: is life for the sake of living any life at all? Extinction is the rule. Survival, the exception.

"This is an original and inventive screenplay. From exceptionally strong writing to evocative imagery, Lukas has created a microcosm of humankind that represents what storytelling is all about," said Shawn Quirk, RIIFF Program Director.

"What an amazing year for storytelling and our screenplay competition. This year's entries were compelling and engaging, and were scored on criteria that included character, dialogue, setting, plot and technique," added Quirk. "We reviewed the largest entry base in competition's history – 431 submissions – making for difficult decision-making on the part of our international group of judges."

"After extensive and careful deliberation, prize winners were chosen in six distinct categories: Best Screenplay, Best International, Vortex Sci-Fi/Fantasy/Horror, Best LGBTQ, Spotlight on New England and Best Short Screenplay," Quirk noted.

"Our sincere congratulations to this year's winners," stated George T. Marshall. "This competition has introduced us to some of the world's brightest and most talented writers in the craft."

THE 2015 PRIZE WINNERS:

BEST SCREENPLAY

GRAND PRIZE:

"**Galapagos**" | Written by: Lukas Hassel, New York, NY

FIRST PLACE:

"**Welcome to Camelot**" | Written by: Rachel Goldberg, Burbank, CA

INTERNATIONAL SCREENPLAY:

GRAND PRIZE:

“The Searcher” | Written by: Can Kutay, Turkey

FIRST PLACE:

“True Religion” | Written by: Kara Smith, London, UK

VORTEX HORROR/SCI-FI SCREENPLAY:

GRAND PRIZE:

“Stem” | Written by: Iqbal Ahmed, Los Angeles, CA

BARREN BRANCHES LGBTQ SCREENPLAY:

GRAND PRIZE:

“Halle” | Written by: Ben Hatt, Los Angeles, CA

SPOTLIGHT ON NEW ENGLAND:

GRAND PRIZE:

“Rogue Island” | Written by: Duncan Putney, Providence, RI

FIRST PRIZE:

“Fight or Play Basketball” | Written by: Mike Messier, Providence, RI

SHORT SCRIPT:

GRAND PRIZE:

“The Red Chair” | Written by: Alyssa Rallo Bennett, New York, NY

FIRST PLACE:

“Doretha’s Blues” | Written by: Channing Godfrey Peoples, Los Angeles, CA

Prizes awarded to the winners of the screenplay competition (which vary with the specific screenplay category) include: a free year of screenplay promotion services to the winners, through **ScreenwriterShowcase.com**; 1 Script Listing and 1 Magazine Listing from **InkTip**; a 1-year Writers Database membership from **Script Pipeline**; Final Draft software featuring **Final Draft Screenwriting Suites**; and Passes to the **2016 FLICKERS: Rhode Island International Film Festival** and the **ScriptBiz™ Screenwriter’s Workshop**.

The Best Screenplay Grand Prize winner will be brought to Providence to attend the **2016 ScriptBiz program**, where their screenplay will be a central focus of the program, plus receive a private script consultation and an official award on RIIFF’s Opening Night Celebration. Lodging will also be provided.

ABOUT THE 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 10 Festivals in the United States, RIIFF is a qualifying festival for both the Short Narrative and Documentary Short Film Academy Awards through its affiliation with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences and the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA). There are only 6 film festivals worldwide that share this distinction and RIIFF is the only festival in New England. The Festival takes place every August.

For more information about the **FLICKERS: Rhode Island International Film Festival**, running **August 9-14 2016** at The **Providence Performing Arts Center** (PPAC) and **The Vets** (formerly Veterans Memorial Auditorium), please visit our website at **www.RIFilmFest.org** or call **401.861.4445**.

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