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Northwest Film Forum presents the 5th annual Children's Film Festival Seattle January 22-31, 2010

Seattle—Northwest Film Forum is pleased announce the 5th annual Children's Film Festival Seattle, to be held January 22-31 at the Film Forum's cinemas in Seattle. The largest children's film festival in the Pacific Northwest, Children's Film Festival Seattle celebrates the best and brightest in international children's cinema with a **10-day extravaganza of films from more than 25 countries**. This year's edition includes an impressive blend of programs, including live performances, animation, features, shorts, historical films and hands-on workshops for the filmmakers of tomorrow.

This year's festival will begin with an opening night performance by the Vashon Island-based duo **Lelavision Physical Music**, who combine film, acrobatics, dance, music and science in a performance called "The Accumulation of Change." This variety show, which explores the everlasting question, "Where did we come from?" is based on a scientific paper by Dr. David Lynn, chair of the biochemistry department at Emory University. Lynn will attend and take part in the opening night performance of "The Accumulation of Change."

Elizabeth Shepherd, Festival Director, has designed the program to help kids explore the beautiful and complex world around them.

"Movies are the perfect way to present new cultures and ideas to children, and to help them make sense of their own world. The short films and features in this year's festival are fun and colorful, but many also will expand the horizons of the audience. I want to inspire young people to get involved and make a difference. And besides, it's just fun! What better way to spend the chilly days of January than to come together in community in our cozy cinemas, to see international films made for the next generation of movie lovers?"

Highlights this year include a retrospective of films from the **Latvian animation** studio, called Animation Brigade, a live musical performance with the animated character **Gustafer Yellowgold**, eight short film programs, the North American or West Coast premieres of **five feature films**, an **archival showing** of a new 35mm print of François Truffaut 1975 masterpiece *Small Change* and, of

course, the annual **Pancake Breakfast**, where families enjoy a delicious meal together before watching a special package of short films.

Children's Film Festival Seattle is also pleased to present two short film programs with **Sponge**, a leader in language education that shares CFFS's goal of helping children appreciate the languages and cultures of the world in a fun and accessible way. On January 31, at the beginning of *Creature Comforts* (11am) and *Totally Tall Tales* (3pm), a native Spanish-speaking teacher from Sponge will entertain the audience and teach everyone a few key phrases from one of the subtitled short films. Through activities and song, the audience will learn some language that will help them better understand and learn from these international films.

Other notable bookings in this year's program include:

- A performance of traditional songs by the **Red Eagle Soaring Native Youth Theatre** group at the opening day Pancake Breakfast.
- The **North American premiere of *The Crocodiles***, a new German feature film by Christian Ditter that has captured prizes at several recent festivals, including the Audience Award and the children's jury top prize at Amsterdam's Cinekid Festival. The film was also awarded the German national Kinder Tiger prize for the best script of 2009.
- The **North American premiere of *Moomin and Midsummer Madness***, a Finnish feature based on a beloved children's book by Tove Jansson.
- The **West Coast premiere of *Frogs and Toads***, a Dutch feature film by Simone van Dusseldorp that has garnered five top prizes at festivals worldwide.
- "Green Screen," a short film program aimed at helping kids learn more about climate change. The program features a new film by **Seattle filmmaker SJ Chiro**.
- "Chills and Thrills," a short film program filled aimed at adventurous viewers, filled with exquisite animation and memorable live action films, including *Bob's Knee*, a documentary by **Seattle filmmaker Mike Attie**.
- A **record number of short films**, disbursed throughout the festival short film programs, from Spain and Latin America.

The complete schedule is available online at www.childrensfilmfestivalseattle.org. Check for our newly re-designed website, to be launched at the end of 2009.

As always at Children's Film Festival Seattle, kids will have a chance to delve deeper into moviemaking through hands-on workshops. Author Barbara O'Halloran returns to help kids create film documents of their favorite stuffed animals in the popular workshop "Something to Hold On To." Instructors Clyde Petersen and Forrest Baum will help a new round of youngsters craft next year's festival trailer. To find out more about workshops, including fees, contact David Hanagan at 206.329.2629 or dave@nwfilmforum.org.

Kids will also be important decision-makers on the Festival's Children's Jury. Ten children aged 8-12 will be chosen to see a selection of films and award prizes in several categories. The Jury will

convene during the festival, and announce its awards at the Festival's closing ceremonies, January 31 at 5 pm. To find out more about the Children's Jury, contact Liz Shepherd at liz@nwfilmforum.org.

Admission to most festival programs is only \$6.50 for kids, \$9.00 for adults and \$6 for Northwest Film Forum members, with the exception of special programs such as opening night and the Pancake Breakfast. Tickets to all events may be purchased in advance at Northwest Film Forum's website or call (800) 838-3006. Many screenings sell out—parents and caregivers are encouraged to avoid disappointment, tears and tantrums and get their get their tickets in advance.

Teachers who are interested in bringing school groups to the festival should contact Liz Shepherd, at 206.829.7862 or write liz@nwfilmforum.org for more information. Specially designed screenings for schools, home schools and child care providers are scheduled each weekday morning through February 19.

A press screening will be held Wednesday, January 6 at 12pm at Northwest Film Forum. Screeners may be available for a limited number of festival programs; please email ryan@nwfilmforum.org for more information.

Extensive press information and publicity photos are available at <http://www.nwfilmforum.org/press>. Members of the press interested in talking to the festival director should contact ryan@nwfilmforum.org or call (206) 329-2629.

About Northwest Film Forum

Northwest Film Forum is Seattle's premiere film arts organization, screening over 200 independently made and classic films annually, offering a year-round schedule of filmmaking classes (including summer camps for youth), and supporting filmmakers at all stages of their careers. More information is available at www.nwfilmforum.org.

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