

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In the Spotlight: Global Social Change Film Festival & Institute

www.globalsocialchangeilmfestival.org

Contact: colleen@socialchangeilmfestival.org

March 24, 2011

With the Global Social Change Film Festival & Institute's (GSCFFI) inaugural festival in beautiful Ubud, Bali just weeks away, energy and excitement are flowing strong! The festival features eight powerful social change films from international filmmakers and workshops from leaders in the field, including many from Indonesia. Designed to foster social change and support socially-conscious filmmaking, the festival promises to be a great success!

The Global Social Change Film Festival & Institute (GSCFFI) aims to create a space where activists, filmmakers, and local communities can come together to promote progressive social change and intercultural understandings. In addition to its annual festival featuring the most critical and creative social change films in the world, the GSCFFI hosts workshops, screenings, classes and other events throughout the year to support activist filmmakers and storytellers. The theme for the Bali 2011 is "Women & Film."

"We created this film festival and institute to promote and inspire film and media that entertain and engage audiences. The quality of storytelling is especially important for us as is the potential of a film to reach a wide audience and inspire social action," says GSCFFI Founder and Director Cynthia Phillips. *"The inaugural GSCFFI Film Festival in Bali is already creating an international community of filmmakers and activists working for environmental and social justice and a support network for aspiring activist filmmakers everywhere,"* continues Phillips.

The festival will feature eight films from filmmakers in Sierra Leone, Korea, Australia, the Pacific Islands, the Middle East and the U.S. The finalists include Michael Nash's "Climate Refugees," Jen Gilomen and Sally Rubin's "Deep Down,"

Hossein Keshavarz's "Dog Sweat," Sara Terry's "Fambul Tok," Deanne Borshay Liem's "In the Matter of Cha Jung Hee," Suzy Bates's "Nothing Rhymes with Ngaparjti," Briar March's "There Once Was an Island" and S. Leo Chiang's "A Village Called Versailles."

Terry's "Fambul Tok" follows John Caulker, founder of the Famul Tok, a grassroots reconciliation organization in West Africa's Sierra Leone that brings perpetrators and victims together in truth-telling and forgiveness ceremonies. Set in the aftermath of the brutal civil war that devastated the country, the film weaves together stories of redemption, healing and community made possible through their culture of forgiveness. Revealing a side of Africa left untouched by mainstream international media, Famul Tok provides a powerful portrait of the strength and beauty of African culture and community that serves as a lesson to us all.

Nash's "Climate Refugees" focuses on the displacement of entire communities worldwide by climate-induced environmental disasters, such as droughts, desertification, hurricanes, cyclones, fires, flooding and tornadoes. Exploring the plight of these diasporic communities, the film challenges viewers to imagine climate change as a significant human rights issue.

Nia Dinata, Indonesia born filmmaker, producer, director and screenplay writer is this year's GSCFFI Filmmaker Honoree. In addition to her own film work as socially conscious award-winning filmmaker, Dinata works to support aspiring and independent film throughout Indonesia. She will be presenting a workshop on film during the festival.

The Women and Children Crisis Centre of Tonga (WCC) is the recipient of the first GSCFFI Activist Award. The WCCC was chosen for their dedication to promoting gender equality and eliminating violence against women and children. The WCCC works to help victims and survivors of rape, sexual harassment, attempted suicide, child abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and sexual assault. WCCC provides 24-hour counseling, the Mo'ui Fiefia Safe House, legal support, financial counseling, male advocacy, community outreach and awareness, research and communication. The WCCC by the GSCFFI was selected in partnership with The

Global Fund for Women, a human rights organization that supports women-led worldwide.

The winner of the GSCFFI Innovator Award is EngageMedia, an organization chosen for their ground-breaking work in empowering social movements and activists in the Asia Pacific. With offices in Australia and Indonesia, EngageMedia is at the forefront of the social justice, environmental and new media movements in the Asia Pacific. Engage Media aims to help activists effectively produce and distribute content related to climate change, gender equality, poverty, globalization, social justice, indigenous rights, diasporas, alternative energy and animal rights.

Working with independent filmmakers, video activists, technologists, campaigners and social movements, EngageMedia creates wider audiences for movement messages through a peer network of video makers, educators and screening organizations. Their distribution network consists of EngageMedia.org, an online video sharing site, Plumi, a free and open source video sharing platform, and Transmission, a global network of media activists developing online video distribution tools.

The GSCFFI is also pleased to announce that it will be offering a tour of the Green School in Ubud. The Green School is a cutting-edge school that focuses on training students in sustainability and education.

Covering both the festival and the tour of the Green School is Global Girl Media (GGM), an organization that trains under-served communities of high school age girls on becoming digital journalists and communicating their everyday experiences; experiences so often eclipsed by media tales dominated by crime, violence, and celebrity.

Sponsors include Ford Foundation, Abigail Disney, Earth Protect, Luna Fest, You by crocs, C.A. Phillips & Co., A World Institute for a Sustainable Humanity (A W.I.S.H.), the Solet Initiative and The 2020 Fund.

The GSCFFI 2012 will be held in New Orleans, LA.

#