



For Immediate Release

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**FOCUS FEATURES' *EVENING* TO OPEN
THE 12TH NANTUCKET FILM FESTIVAL;
ROBERT BENTON TO RECEIVE
NBC UNIVERSAL SCREENWRITER TRIBUTE**

***Rocket Science* to Close Festival (running June 13-17);
Adrienne Shelly Excellence in Filmmaking Award
to be introduced, with cash prize**

MAY 4, 2007 (New York, NY) – You can almost smell the surf in the air as the 12th Annual Nantucket Film Festival gears up for June 13-17, 2007. Plans for the event kicked into gear today as Executive Director Jill Burkhart and Artistic Director Mystelle Brabbée announced key elements of this year's exciting lineup, including the introduction of the Adrienne Shelly Excellence in Filmmaking Award.

Opening this year's festival is Focus Features' highly anticipated *Evening*, directed by Lajos Koltai and adapted by Susan Minot and Michael Cunningham from Ms. Minot's beloved best-selling novel. The mother-and-daughter-themed feature stars a stellar cast – Claire Danes, Toni Collette, Vanessa Redgrave, Patrick Wilson, Hugh Dancy, Natasha Richardson, Mamie Gummer, Eileen Atkins, Meryl Streep, and Glenn Close. Several of the actors will be in attendance for the showing. *Evening* opens in theaters across the country on June 29.

Multi-Academy Award-winning screenwriter Robert Benton will be the NBC Universal Screenwriter Honoree for the 2007 Festival. "We've wanted to honor Robert for the longest time, and I'm proud to announce that this year is our opportunity to do so," said Jill Burkhart.

"Very few writers have a talent of incorporating genuine human drama into such a wide array of films that invoke a variety of feelings in audiences, leaving viewers with a rich and fulfilling experience as they walk away," Mystelle Brabbée added.

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Mr. Benton has created such classic films as *Bonnie and Clyde* (as co-screenwriter), *Kramer vs. Kramer* (as director/screenwriter), and *Places in the Heart* (as director/screenwriter). He has just completed directing the Lakeshore Entertainment film *The Feast of Love*, to be released this fall by MGM.

"It is a great honor to receive the NBC Universal Screenwriters Award, especially when I think of the past recipients; screenwriters of the stature of Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Walter Bernstein, or Ring Lardner Jr.; writers who are as innovative as Charlie Kaufman, or James Schamus, or Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor. It is indeed a privilege to be standing in their company," commented Mr. Benton.

Mr. Benton will be appearing at the NBC Universal Screenwriter's Tribute on Saturday, June 16th, with special guests to be announced.

Past NBC Universal Screenwriter tribute honorees include Steve Martin, Jay Presson Allen, Paul Schrader, and James Schamus.

The newly established Adrienne Shelly Excellence in Filmmaking Award will, in conjunction with The Adrienne Shelly Foundation, give a cash prize annually to a promising female writer/director at the Festival. The foundation was founded by the late filmmaker's husband, Andy Ostroy, to honor her and support the artistic achievements of female writers, directors, and actors through scholarships and grants.

"To continue Adrienne's dream, I started this foundation with the goal of helping women achieve their own filmmaking dreams," said Mr. Ostroy. Members of the Foundation's advisory board include Rosanna Arquette, Hal Hartley, Ted Hope, Bennett Miller, Peter Newman, Paul Rudd, and Keri Russell.

"The Adrienne Shelly Foundation represents a great cause and a great person," said Jill Burkhart. "We're pleased to be working with this organization to support their wonderful purpose while honoring Adrienne at the same time."

Closing the festival will be the high school comedy *Rocket Science*, written and directed by Jeffrey Blitz. Other highlighted films include the Centerpiece *Son of Rambow*, written and directed by Garth Jennings; and the Saturday Night Spotlight feature *I Am An Animal*.

ABOUT THE NANTUCKET FILM FESTIVAL (NFF)

The NFF was founded in 1996 to spotlight screenwriters, screenwriting, and storytelling in today's cinema. The festival takes place over five days in June on the idyllic island of Nantucket, MA.

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Now in its twelfth year, NFF has become a prestigious annual event within the international film industry. Screening over 50 feature-length and short films in all genres that highlight the art of storytelling, the NFF generates significant attraction and draws over 10,000 attendees, screenwriters, producers, agents, and development executives each year.

Screenwriting is further explored through panel discussions, a screenplay competition, an emerging screenwriter's mentorship with the Screenwriters Colony, an educational program for teens, and community beach screenings. The Festival also hosts the popular evening of Late Night Storytelling (hosted by Peter Farrelly and Anne Meara, with past stories told by such talents as Jim Carrey, Tina Fey, Mos Def, and Paul Rudd), in addition to staged screenplay readings.

Past staged readings have included the hilarious *Showstopper*, by Anthony Barille & Geoffrey Nauffts, with Ben Stiller and Academy Award winner Marisa Tomei. Last year's *Spectacle, Part One Of The Mark Rosen Chronicles*, by Stacy Weiss and Dan Chariton, was directed by Mr. Stiller, and the cast included Macaulay Culkin, Amy Sedaris, David Krumholtz, Lake Bell, Robert Sean Leonard, and Mr. Stiller. The coveted *A Confederacy Of Dunces*, by Steven Soderbergh and Scott Kramer, was the centerpiece staged reading of NFF 2003; and featured Will Ferrell in the starring role, with Alan Cumming, Mos Def, and Rosie Perez.

The NFF has been a showcase for some of the top independent films of the past 12 years. The festival was one of the first to find and platform such films as *The Full Monty*, *Next Stop Wonderland*, *Girlfight*, and *Half Nelson*. NFF 2006 featured Nick Doob and Chris Hegedus' documentary *Al Franken: God Spoke*.

Sponsors of this year's festival include NBC Universal, Showtime, Grey Goose, Stella Artois, CN8, Hewlett-Packard, A&E Indie Films, American Airlines, Tradewind Aviation, The New Yorker, Jeep, Alta Cliff Films, Sundance Channel, San Pellegrino, Nantucket Island Resort, and Ralph Lauren.

For more information please visit our website at www.nantucketfilmfestival.org.

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