

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**SHORT FILMS, YOUNG FILMMAKERS AND
MEANINGFUL MESSAGES**
The Seventh Annual Media That Matters Film Festival

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NEW YORK, NY (May 21, 2007)—In less than two weeks, the seventh annual Media That Matters Film Festival will launch with a premiere at IFC Center on May 30th and an awards ceremony at HBO headquarters in midtown Manhattan on May 31st. Why is this important? Short films have gained incredible currency in today's online world. It's also a tremendous platform for young and emerging filmmakers to present a social-issue message using moving images.

This year's sixteen award winners include films about Katrina, recycling in Cairo, standing up to gang violence in Colombia, immigration and the sovereignty of a tribal nation, to name just five fascinating shorts.

Still Standing, the Jury Award winner, tells a story that is as much about young filmmakers from Brooklyn, the Bronx, Queens and Manhattan as it is about Katrina itself. When that hurricane hit the entire nation felt it, and these young filmmakers, all of them under twenty-three-years-old, decided to do something about it.

In December 2005 they began interviewing evacuees who were housed temporarily in hotels in Queens. By February 2006 they were ready to head to New Orleans to capture more stories and determine the one that would eventually become *Still Standing*. There they met Ms. Gertrude Ross, a grandmother, a fighter, a community builder and a woman who was trying to rebuild her ruined home, a place she bought to honor her deceased daughter. Bureaucratic stagnation, insurance malfeasance and even neighborhood hostility posed hurdles she was determined to overcome.

Last fall Ines Morales (18), one of the original six producers of *Still Standing*, went back to New Orleans to document the ultimate destruction of Mrs. Ross' home and her despair. The young filmmaker edited this moving story, which will now win the Jury Award at the seventh annual Media That Matters Film Festival.

Still Standing was produced by EVC's Youth Organizers TV (YO-TV) and supported by Adobe Youth Voices. Starting June 1st, this film, along with fifteen others, will stream online and travel around the country and the world to classrooms, theaters, community centers and homes inspiring dialogue and action on the issues they present.

Descriptions of all sixteen Media That Matters winners are attached at the end of this release.

MORE

ABOUT THE MEDIA THAT MATTERS FILM FESTIVAL

Launching its seventh year, the Media That Matters Film Festival is an interactive, yearlong celebration of short, high impact films on immigration, global warming, fair trade, gay rights, sustainable agriculture and many other pressing social issues. During its highly successful six-year history, Media That Matters has presented films that have gone on to catalyze national legislation, change corporate hiring practices, spur social action and inspire a new generation of filmmakers.

The sixteen winning Media That Matters films will be celebrated with a **premiere at IFC Center in Greenwich Village on May 30th and an awards ceremony at HBO's midtown headquarters on May 31st.** Past awards ceremonies have included presentations by **Tim Robbins, Al Franken, Chuck D,** Woody Harrelson, Academy Award winner Barbara Kopple, legendary filmmaker Al Maysles, Arrested Development's David Cross, Reiko Aylesworth of 24 and comedian Sam Seder.

As with each previous year, these new Media That Matters films will stream online at **www.mediathatmattersfest.org** starting on June 1st, 2007. The site provides high quality video feeds, "take action links" and viewer forums on the social issues addressed in the films. After June 1st, the collection will embark on a tour of 100+ locations across the United States and around the world. With nationwide distribution through Netflix, "do-it-yourself" screenings all over the country, and a high impact outreach campaign, Media That Matters is set to inspire hundreds of thousands of students, teachers, filmmakers, social activists and just about anyone to take action.

ABOUT ARTS ENGINE

Arts Engine supports, produces, and distributes independent media of consequence and promotes the use of independent media by advocates, educators and the general public. By fostering the production and use of independent film, video and new media, Arts Engine connects media makers and active audiences in order to spur critical consideration of pressing social issues. Arts Engine produces the Media That Matters Film Festival and the highly acclaimed MediaRights.org.

www.artsengine.net

www.mediathatmattersfest.org

www.mediarights.org

SPONSORS OF THE FESTIVAL

Adobe Systems

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Netflix

The Small Planet Fund

The Kellogg Foundation

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SEVENTH ANNUAL MEDIA THAT MATTERS WINNERS

GARBAGE DREAMS

Egypt | 2006 | 8:00 | Documentary | Produced & Directed by Mai Iskander
As multinational corporations focus their sights on Cairo's recycling industry, the city's local workers fight for survival.

RAPPING AT FEAR

Colombia | 2006 | 6:44 | Documentary | Directed by Andres Tabarés, Produced by Listen Up! & Polimorfo
In Andrés Tabarés' barrio in Colombia, "social cleansing" groups wage war. When this thirteen-year-old raps against violence, people listen.

STILL STANDING

USA | 2006 | 7:44 | Documentary | Directed & Produced by EVC Yo-TV
Ms. Gertrude returns to what remains of her New Orleans home and fights to rebuild what she can in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

THE APOLLOS

USA | 2006 | 6:00 | Documentary | Directed by Nick Parker & Jazmin Jones, Produced by BAVC
Meet the trailblazing students who, over twenty years ago, fought to make Martin Luther King Jr. Day a national holiday.

SOVEREIGN NATION / SOVEREIGN NEIGHBOR

USA | 2006 | 7:00 | Documentary | Directed & Produced by Kendall Moore
The Narragansett tribe defends its sovereignty only to encounter violent resistance and entrenched misunderstanding from their home state of Rhode Island.

RIGHTS ON THE LINE: VIGILANTES AT THE BORDER

USA | 2005 | 3:55 | Documentary | Produced by American Friends Service Committee, ACLU and WITNESS
What happens when people cross the line? Vigilantes take the law into their own hands on the U.S.-Mexican border.

POWER UP

Australia | 2006 | 1:39 | Animation | Directed & Produced by Sverre Fredriksen
"Bomber Man" strikes again! Who will stop him this time?

MASSACRE AT MURAMBI

Rwanda & USA | 2007 | 5:00 | Documentary | Directed & Produced by Sam Kauffmann
Does the way we respond to the genocide in Rwanda predict our response to Darfur?

HONORABLE MENTION: OUTLAWED: EXTRAORDINARY RENDITION, TORTURE AND DISAPPEARANCES IN THE "WAR ON TERROR"

USA | 2006 | 8:00 | Documentary | Produced by WITNESS in association with fourteen other human rights groups worldwide
Are there any limits to injustice when innocent people are taken into custody in the name of freedom?

BY-STANDING: THE BEGINNING OF AN AMERICAN LIFETIME

USA | 2006 | 5:00 | Documentary | Directed by Karen Lin, Produced by Karin Chien
Kelly Tsai speaks truth to power as she raises her voice against war and complacency.

GRACE

USA | 2006 | 3:12 | Animation | Directed & Produced by Kathleen Hulka
Three women's lives share an unwanted and violent thread.

I'M NOT A BOY

USA | 2006 | 6:10 | Documentary | Directed by Julie Joyce, Produced by Listen Up! & Frame by Frame Fierce
Julie Joyce is not a boy. As a transgendered youth, she just wants what all young people want—to have a positive space to live and grow.

ASHRAY

USA | 2006 | 6:00 | Documentary | Directed & Produced by Ambika Samarthya
Affected or infected, the children of Ashray, Bombay live together as one family, despite their HIV status.

TYTTÖNEN

Germany | 2006 | 5:03 | Narrative | Directed by Fabian Giessler, Produced by Mika Pettissalo
Trapped by time and age, a woman searches for freedom in her childhood memories.

THE FINAL FRONTIER: EXPLORERS OR WARRIORS?

USA | 2006 | 8:00 | Documentary | Directed & Produced by Trace Gaynor & Stephen Sotor
Two teens from Chicago ask senators, scientists and science fiction fans: Could space be the new battleground where countries will wage war?

SUPERSTAR

USA | 2006 | 6:15 | Documentary | Directed by Naiquan Greene, Produced by Reel Works Teen Filmmaking
With the support and guidance of his family, nothing will stop Naiquan from becoming a superstar.

THE FARM SANCTUARY

USA | 2006 | 5:31 | Documentary | Directed & Produced by Fly Up Media & the Students of Saint Ignatius
Fifth graders from the Bronx go upstate to meet rescued farm animals and try out veganism, at least for the weekend.

SEVENTH ANNUAL MEDIA THAT MATTERS FILM FESTIVAL

Premiere—IFC Center, 7pm on May 30th
Awards Ceremony—HBO, 6pm on May 31st

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