

For Immediate Release



Peter Scarlet
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**MAVERICK INDEPENDENT NETWORK LINK TV LAUNCHES CINEMONDO
INTERNATIONAL FILM SERIES HOSTED BY PETER SCARLET, EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF THE TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL**

**Ground-Breaking Leader in Mid-East News Coverage and Current Affairs Programming
Expands Line-Up to Include Independent Global Cinema**

**11 Politically and Socially Charged Movies to Premiere on U.S. TV on CINEMONDO
Starting August 26th at 8 p.m. PT/11 p.m. ET**

New York, NY, August 8, 2006 — **Link TV** announced today the launch of **CINEMONDO**, a new world cinema series, to be hosted by **Peter Scarlet**, Executive Director of the **Tribeca Film Festival**. **CINEMONDO** will feature 11 outstanding movies that boldly explore the distinctly human side of critical social and political issues that people face in countries as diverse as Iran, Holland, China, Greece, Palestine, Bosnia and Mauritania. The series will launch on **Link TV** on Saturday, August 26, premiering one film per week through November 4.

Scarlet states, “**Link TV**’s valiant initiative brings a rewarding and challenging selection of films from all over the world into Americans’ living rooms. I’m optimistic that this venture will help prove the existence of a substantial number of people in this country who ARE curious about what’s going on in the rest of the world, and who will discover, if they haven’t done so already, that regardless of the language being spoken by the characters in a film, film itself is a universal language. The **Tribeca Film Festival** offers people the chance to enjoy some of the most exciting works of world cinema every year, but since many Americans cannot make it to downtown Manhattan, I am dedicated to playing a supporting role in this headline-worthy new production that will reach millions of viewers across the nation. I believe that movies — good movies — have an unparalleled ability to remind us all of what it is to be human, and I’m extremely optimistic about the transformative potential of this initiative because it gives people access to some outstanding films they may not be able to see anywhere else.”

The following films will receive their U.S. television premiere on **Link TV** as part of **CINEMONDO**:

- ***Stolen Life*** (China) directed by **Li Shaohong**
- ***Beautiful City*** (Iran) directed by **Asghar Farhadi**
- ***Wrong Side Up*** (Czech Republic) directed by **Petr Zelenka**
- ***The President’s Last Bang*** (South Korea) directed by **Im Sang-soo**

- *Rana's Wedding* (Palestine) directed by **Hany Abu-Assad**
- *Fuse* (Bosnia) directed by **Pjer Zalica**
- *Almost Brothers* (Brazil) directed by **Lúcia Murat**
- *May 6th* (Holland) directed by **Theo van Gogh**
- *Border Café* (Iran) directed by **Kambuzia Partovi**
- *Waiting for Happiness* (Mauritania) written and directed by **Abderrahmane Sissako**
- *Hostage* (Greece) directed by **Constantine Giannaris**

CINEMONDO was conceived and developed by **Steven Lawrence**, **Link TV**'s Director of Music and Cultural Programming, in response to the success of **Link**'s international affairs and world music programming, and audience research indicating viewers' desire to see more foreign films.

Lawrence states, "Every year there are dozens of incredibly moving films made beyond our borders that get little or no exposure in the U.S. Theatrical distributors and cable networks pick up only a tiny number of foreign films because they don't think they can make money on them, and as a result Americans are deprived. That's where **Link** comes in. We have an audience tuning in specifically to learn how the rest of the world thinks and feels, so **CINEMONDO** not only satisfies our viewers, it helps foreign filmmakers break through the wall that blocks them from finding an American audience."

Scarlet adds, "Virtually every one of the films in this series tells a story which is capable of striking a spark of recognition with viewers, regardless of how much or how little they may know at the outset about life in the countries being portrayed. The main character in the Chinese film *Stolen Life*, to take one example, is victimized by a scam artist who convinces her he loves her, encourages her to move in with him, and fathers a child with her — all the while hiding from her the fact that he's already married and has a family. But it's not until she has to give up her baby that she realizes just how nightmarish her situation has become. We had the opportunity to present the World Premiere of this remarkable film at Tribeca two years ago, and our viewers found it shattering and unforgettable, yet up until now no theatrical distributor or network has been willing to take a chance on showing it, and that's precisely why this **CINEMONDO** series has such a vital role to play."

Acclaimed director **Michael Apted**, a member of **Link TV**'s film advisory board and also president of the **Directors Guild of America**, contributes, "It takes guts to air a diverse series with such powerful political and social content. When I was starting out as a filmmaker, foreign films were tremendously influential to me and to a whole generation of directors. Now, because there is much less distribution of world cinema in the U.S., very few people get a chance to see the kind of deeply thought-provoking movies that **Link** is presenting in its **CINEMONDO** series. In a TV universe increasingly ruled by ratings wars, copycat formats and political punditry, **Link** stands out for its independence."

Hailed by the late **Peter Jennings** on *ABC World News Tonight* as having "found a successful way to satisfy the culturally curious," **Link TV** is renowned for its ground-breaking programming including the Peabody Award-winning daily newscast *Mosaic*, which airs unedited selections of news reports from 22 Middle-Eastern broadcasters, translated into English and broadcast to 28 million American homes every day. Since the onset of recent armed conflict between Israel and Lebanon, *Mosaic* has been regularly producing special live reports, and the program and its executive producer **Jamal Dajani** have been featured in the following news media: *ABC World*

News Tonight, The News Hour with Jim Lehrer, NPR, The New York Times, The International Herald Tribune and The Washington Post, among others.

Dajani comments on *CINEMONDO* saying, “Most people know about the Middle East through news reports and conflicts. Seldom are they exposed to the human element in films like *Rana’s Wedding* where the director turns an utterly bad situation into a beautiful love story sprinkled with humor. If we really want to understand the news, we need to see how it affects people’s daily lives.”

Link TV board member and actor **Danny Glover** states, “There is a new generation of African filmmakers, like Abderrahmane Sissako and Mahamat-Saleh Haroun, doing magnificent work, but very few outlets for African cinema in America, let alone on television. By premiering Sissako’s brilliantly observed film *Waiting for Happiness*, **Link TV** is helping to expose millions of Americans to a new vision of Africa, proving once again that independence goes hand in hand with imagination.”

As part of the *CINEMONDO* initiative to bring cinema of artistic, cultural and political value to the American public, **KOCH Lorber Films** will release two films in the series on home video subsequent to their U.S television premieres on **Link TV**. **KOCH Lorber Films** will release *Hostage* on DVD in January 2007 and *May 6th* on DVD in March 2007. The company’s president **Richard Lorber** noted that, “*CINEMONDO* will be branded as a first window of choice for politically compelling international films, affording the benefits of a wide theatrical launch without the prohibitive costs. We look forward to collaborating in this smart curatorial venture.”

Jack Willis, **Link TV** co-founder and Senior Vice President of Programming, concludes, “The essential role of *CINEMONDO* is to use the power of cinema to put world issues into context for people. Other networks and distributors are either too afraid to show these films because of their political content, or they don’t think they are commercially viable vehicles to garner ratings or box office dollars. We just don’t believe that. Our popularity with viewers and the skyrocketing media exposure of our programming proves that Americans want this perspective, and **Link** is committed to giving it to them.”

ABOUT LINK TV

Link TV is an independent national network providing diverse perspectives on world and national issues, without censorship or commercials. Now available in one out of four U.S. homes, **Link TV** broadcasts a compelling mix of documentaries, global and national news, the music of diverse cultures and innovative participatory programs promoting citizen action. **Link TV** provides a unique platform for civic dialogue and engagement on the issues of our day. Most of **Link TV**’s programs have never been broadcast on American television.

Link TV is a nationwide, non-commercial satellite television network available in more than 28 million U.S. homes as basic service on **DIRECTV channel 375** and **Dish Network channel 9410**. Select programs are streamed on the internet at <http://www.linktv.org>.

Link TV has garnered the support of **Bill Cosby, Dave Matthews, Cher, Danny Glover, Harry Belafonte, Bonnie Raitt, Willie Nelson** and others.

Link TV is operated by **Link Media, Inc.**, a California 501(c)3 organization, with production studios in San Francisco, New York and Washington, DC. The network is funded by viewer

contributions and grants from more than 25 foundations, including the **The Annenberg Foundation, Ford Foundation, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Open Society Institute, Otto Haas Charitable Trust, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Shei'rah Foundation, Surdna Foundation, Wallace Global Fund, and William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.**

For the complete background information, program schedule, and internet streaming, go to <http://www.linktv.org>.

ABOUT THE TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL

The **Tribeca Film Festival** was founded in 2002 by **Robert De Niro, Jane Rosenthal** and **Craig Hatkoff** as a response to the attacks on the World Trade Center. Conceived to foster the economic and cultural revitalization of Lower Manhattan through an annual celebration of film, music and culture, the **Festival's** mission is to promote New York City as a major filmmaking center and help filmmakers reach the broadest possible audience.

The 2007 **Festival**, presented by **American Express**, will take place from April 25 – May 6, 2007. The **Festival** is anchored in Tribeca and takes place in additional neighborhoods throughout Manhattan featuring screenings, special events, concerts, a family street fair and panel discussions. For more information, visit www.tribecafilmfestival.org

As a Founding Sponsor of the **Tribeca Film Festival**, **American Express** is committed to expanding the **Festival** and bringing it to new audiences in compelling ways. As part of a long-term partnership with the **Festival**, **American Express** celebrates filmmakers, facilitates storytelling and is dedicated to bringing energy and business to Lower Manhattan.

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