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**TORONTO INTERNATIONAL DEAF FILM & ARTS FESTIVAL (TIDFAF) www.tidfaf.ca
May 10-14, 2006**

The first annual Toronto International Deaf Film & Arts Festival (TIDFAF) hosted by The Ontario Cultural Society of the Deaf (OCSD) is days away from taking the Toronto arts scene by storm.

"With world renowned directors attending TIDFAF hailing from Japan, Italy and America just to name a few we are thrilled to be the first international festival to be bridging the gap between Canada's Deaf Culture and our neighbours across the globe," says Catherine MacKinnon, TIDFAF Festival Director. "TIDFAF does not only represent the story of Deaf people...TIDFAF represents the human experience of love, hate, togetherness, abandonment, meaning and discovery..themes we are all familiar with," says MacKinnon.

TIDFAF's 4-day line-up of films, visual arts exhibits, panel discussions and schmoozing will kick off with the May 11th Opening Night Gala & Film Screening of *"It's All Gone Pete Tong"* (2004 Canada, Michael Dowse) made possible through TIDFAF's collaboration with the Toronto International Film Festival Group (TIFFG). All films will screen at the Isabel Bader Theatre.

"It's All Gone Pete Tong" cockney slang for *It's All Gone Wrong* is the mocumentary 'sex, drugs and rock 'n roll' story of DJ Frankie Wilde (Paul Kaye)--one of the top DJs in the industry and the toast of Ibiza--party capital of Spain and rave mecca of the world. As Frankie begins to suddenly loose his hearing, he must confront his world and all its guilty pleasures he has come to take for granted. Celebrity cameos include DJ Pete Tong, Sara Main and Carl Cox.

Vanessa Vaughan will unveil her work at TIDFAF's arts exhibit held at the Deaf Culture Centre, The Distillery District. Vaughan, an accomplished visual artist, screen and stage actor has recently wrapped up a starring role in Sarah Polley's directorial feature film debut *"Away From Her."*

Dr. Jane Norman, Ph.D., Gallaudet University (Washington, DC) professor, with over two decades of television series, production and activism work in, for and with the Deaf community will be TIDFAF's Keynote Speaker. Norman has also served as television consultant for series Sue Thomas FBEye and the Emmy-award winning series Deaf Images among others.

Celebrated films at TIDFAF include *Pinky Tells the Real Story: Videophone & Video Relay Services* (Pinky Aiello, 2005 New Haven, Connecticut)--sharing the inside scoop on Deaf culture communication devices and their many technological mishaps, *The Power of Love* (Alessandro Merlini, 2005 Italy) the ultimate story of love and lust..or neither and *That's My Marshmallow*

(Tracey Salaway, Washington, DC, 2005) the whimsical journey of a young girl in search of her identity.

Student films include *I'm Not From Hear* (MacKinnon, 2003 Canada) the story of Adam the hitchhiker who finds himself in a town where everyone signs. He falls in love with a Deaf waitress and must now realize the true meaning behind "actions speak louder than words." Shelia Nykwist's *The Seeing Hand* (2005, Canada) documents the challenges of Elio Riggillo as he confronts the Ontario Government for more funding for people with acquired Deaf-Blindness. Both filmmakers are Ryerson graduates with MacKinnon being the first Deaf film graduate in Canada from a film studies program.

For more on TIDFAF including film synopses, screening times and Jpeg (including film stills) downloads visit www.tidfaf.ca.

Festival Director, TIDFAF board members, filmmakers, visual artists and VIP guests are all available for interview.

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