

On November 10th, 2005 the Toronto International Deaf Film and Arts Festival (TIDFAF) hosted a **Media Launch party** at the Prefix Contemporary Institute of the Art at 401 Richmond Street West.

Our special guests of the evening were Terrylene, Deaf actress and her hearing director husband, Robert Manganelli from Los Angeles, California. Terrylene starred in the Sundance selection and Miramax release of "**AfterImage**". The film directed by Robert Manganelli also features singer/actor John Mellencamp and Oscar winning actress Louise Fletcher ("One Flew over a Cuckoo's Nest"). They did an amazing behind the scenes of production presentation of the film "Afterimage" to our launch party audience. They also talked about how deaf and hearing communities can bridge the gaps of cultural understanding in the film world. The 30 second trailer of "**AfterImage**" was shown as well.

There were over 130 attendees and the launch was a huge hit. Many from the film and television industry, National Film Board, McLuhan's Festival of the Future, Fortune Five Entertainment, Trinity Square Video, JAM Productions, Images Festival, Playback magazine, Toronto International Film Festival Group (TIFFG), Canwest Global media et cetera. There were various representatives from community organizations such as the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association Ontario Chapter, Ontario Association of the Deaf, Canadian Hearing Society, Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf, OCS D Board of Directors, Deaf Culture Center Board of Directors, et cetera.

The highlight of the evening was the "**Official Media Sponsor**" announcement from Canwest Mediaworks (a division of Canwest Global Communication). Karen Clout, from Canwest Mediaworks took to the stage to say a few words in her and Global's support of TIDFAF.

TIDFAF Public Service Announcement (PSA) will be shown on the Global Ontario Channel 25 times and 20 PSA's will be shown on CH Global Hamilton station!

This is reportedly the first time a Deaf film and arts festival has received PSA support on mainstream television. Not only is TIDFAF a first for the city--but it is making broadcast history as well.

The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association Ontario Chapter, is one of our organizational sponsors of TIDFAF. Miguel Aguayo, President of CHHA Ontario came up and said a few words in solidarity to TIDFAF and to OCS D to bridge the communities to work together to put on a dynamic festival.

Our Community liaison partner is the Mix Community Club, Caroline Ayala, the Volunteer co ordinator came up and spoke in celebration of the future partnership for community awareness that TIDFAF and The Mix will have in 2006. The Mix Community Club is North America's first social and entertainment club for people with disabilities. TIDFAF will be hosting an event in collaboration with them in November 2006.

Deaf Culture Center Executives, Joanne Cripps and Anita Small were also in attendance and gave rousing speeches as to their support and excitement about TIDFAF and its ability to place Deaf culture and arts recognition on the map.

Deaf Culture Center will be providing the space to showcase the visual arts exhibits for five months from May to October 2006.

Kelly Halligan, TIDFAF Arts Director is responsible for the Arts Submissions being showcased at the Deaf Culture Center. Catherine MacKinnon is responsible for the Film/videos submissions to be screened at the Isabel Bader Theatre, Victoria College, University of Toronto.

A BIG Thank you to the OCS D board of directors for attending the launch event especially to Karyn Goldstein Rosner, TIDFAF General Manager/Cultural Arts Director and Darren Holst, President of OCS D, who have been actively involved with our Board of Directors/planning committee from the very beginning.

Also a special thank you to Peggy Ann Moore, OCS D Vice President, and Staff Lori Archer who assisted in getting the wine for the evening. This launch party has been about people coming together and we have all made it possible in the face of many challenges along the way.

A special extra thank you to Anselmo DeSousa who worked hard producing the film clips on dvd for the evening, and an excellent job in shooting promotional footage of TIDFAF with me--a project which took an entire summer to complete. It was a labour of love! The promo will be used on our TIDFAF website for the public to see where the events will be taking place in the City of Toronto! Anselmo also recruited the Silent Auction items as well.

Jill Andrew, our wonderful Director of Media Relations who worked very hard on getting the media's attention to TIDFAF and the launch event. Jill Andrew appeared on CP24 on behalf of TIDFAF and was interviewed by David Onley. TIDFAF also received recognition from Metro Toronto Daily Newspaper. Jill Andrew is our only hearing member on the TIDFAF board and she shared her experiences in that role as well as a new found understanding of the many commonalities and differences within both hearing and Deaf communities; minority groups and the Deaf. TIDFAF, as she said at the launch, is helping to build 'community' regardless of differences.

A very very extra special thank you to the TIDFAF Board of Directors for their hard work and creativity in pulling the event together, Vanessa Vaughan, Vanessa Floros, Megan McHugh, Anselmo DeSousa, Karyn Rosner, Kelly Halligan, Jill Andrew, Darren Holst, and Krista Sutton (Honorary Board member). We did not forget our International members, who were there with us in spirit: Tracy Salaway, professor, Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C. and Omeima Mudawi, artist, London, England.

On behalf of TIDFAF Board of Directors I would also like to thank the ASL/English interpreters, to StageHands Unlimited: Gus Mancini, Sean Powers, Francine Herkowitz and Kathy Borys for their outstanding job in making sure all bases of communication were covered, Deaf blind Intervenors Robyn and Chris and George Brown College Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure program, for their outstanding job in catering the wine and cheese reception to the guests. Thank you Maggie Van horst for the production of the t-shirts volunteers to wear and the printing of the promo cards. Fantastic job! Phil Pendry and William McQueen of Fireweed Media Productions who offered and donated the services of camera work, and shot outstanding footage of the launch event, Farah Fay Photography (FFFOTO), for amazing pictures to capture the night and lastly to Prefix Contemporary Institute of Art for the superb space. Jill, Kelly and I saw the space way back in March and loved it from the moment we saw it.

We also knew an art gallery would be the perfect visual space to host the event equipped with a mini kitchenette! Without all of you, this would not be possible!

In Winter 2006, TIDFAF and Images Festival will host a pre screening fundraiser and Silent Auction. Please check out the pictures of the launch event on our website at: www.tidfaf.ca for further information: email: info@tidfaf.ca
For interested volunteers: volunteer@tidfaf.ca
For media inquiries:
media@tidfaf.ca Cc: info@jillandrewmedia.com

OUR FINAL LAST CALL FOR SUBMISSION ENTRY IS JANUARY 30th, 2006!

See you all at the Festival, May 10-14th, 2006!!!!

Culturally yours,

Catherine MacKinnon
Festival Director
Karyn Goldstein Rosner, General Manager, Kelly Halligan, Arts Director
and Jill Andrew, Director of Media Relations