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THE DOCYARD ANNOUNCES ITS 2014 WINTER SEASON

The Award Winning Series Held at The Brattle Theatre Begins January 13

CAMBRIDGE, MA — The DocYard, Boston's award-winning showcase for documentary film, has announced its 2014 winter program. The series will take viewers from the frozen laplands of Finland to the corridors of American politics and will begin Monday, January 13 and run through April 14 at the Brattle, Boston's oldest art-house cinema. The DocYard will once again invite audiences to discover and celebrate what is innovative, interesting and inspiring in documentary by screening a selection of award-winning films from some of the most highly-respected filmmakers working today.

The DocYard's winter season will open with **BENDING STEEL**, the Audience Award Winner and Emerging Cinematic Vision winner from the 2013 Camden International Film Festival. The film tells the story of Chris Shoeck, a Queens, NY native training to become a professional Oldetime Strongman. We follow Chris' journey from his early days training in a small basement storage unit, to his very first performance on the big stage at New York's historic Coney Island.

The series will screen new work from around the world, including **THE SQUARE** from award-winning director, **Jehane Noujaim (The Control Room)**, which tells the story of the Egyptian Revolution from the 2011 overthrow of the country's dictator, to the forced military removal of the Muslim Brotherhood president in the summer of 2013. **THE SQUARE** is the winner of the audience award for best documentary at Sundance, Toronto, and RIDM, and The New York Times has called it "[a story] that has not yet been told with such rousing and heartbreaking clarity". The series will also present **FIRST COUSIN, ONCE REMOVED**, which was recently short-listed for a 2014 Academy Award for Best Documentary, and was shot entirely in Providence, Rhode Island. Acclaimed filmmaker Alan Berliner paints a deeply personal portrait of his "good friend, cousin and mentor" Edwin Honig, a distinguished poet, translator, critic and teacher, as he journeys through the ravages of Alzheimer's disease and memory loss. A stark reminder of the profound role memory plays in everyone's life, **FIRST COUSIN**,

ONCE REMOVED is a moving essay on the fragility of being human.

The DocYard is also pleased to feature a special collaboration with **the Flaherty Seminar** this winter, celebrating its 60th year. In the spirit of the Flaherty tradition, the program of the evening will not be revealed until it is projected on the screen. The screening will be followed by a conversation on non-fiction film with the Flaherty Executive Director Anita Reher.

This winter's DocYard season also features exciting co-presentations. The DocYard is working with the Harvard Film Archive and the Balagan Film Series in presenting a special two-night program of work by internationally acclaimed artists Ben Rivers and Ben Russell (Ben Russell in attendance on both nights). The first evening will include a screening of their collaborative feature-length film *A SPELL TO WARD OFF THE DARKNESS*, which follows an unnamed character through three seemingly disparate moments in his life. Marked by loneliness, ecstatic beauty and an optimism of the darkest sort, *A SPELL* is a radical proposition for the existence of utopia in the present. The second evening will include a selection of short films by Rivers and Russell. The DocYard and the Museum of Fine Arts Boston are working together to unearth a hidden nonfiction gem. *COUSIN JULES* was the result of five years (1968-1973) of painstaking work by director Dominique Benicheti and cinematographer Pierre-William Glenn. Over that period, the team photographed and recorded the daily lives of Jules (Benicheti's distant cousin) and his wife, Felicie, French farmers living alone in the countryside.

The series will continue to showcase cinema highlighting New England's rich documentary film history with a screening of **HEARTS AND MINDS** (1974) by Boston-based filmmaker Peter Davis. The controversial winner of the 1974 Academy Award for Best Documentary, Davis's landmark work unflinchingly confronts the United States' involvement in Vietnam. Using a wealth of sources—from interviews to newsreels to documentary footage of the conflict at home and abroad—Davis constructs a powerfully affecting portrait of the disastrous effects of war.

In collaboration with **The New York Times**, the DocYard will theatrically present one Op-Doc short prior to each feature screening during its Winter program. **Op-Docs** is the editorial department's forum for short opinion-driven documentaries, produced with wide creative latitude by independent filmmakers, featuring thoughtful and outspoken commentary on issues big and small. Since launching in November 2011, the series is approaching its 100th Op-Doc. Curated by the Op-Docs Series Producer Jason Spingarn-Koff and the DocYard programmers.

All screenings will begin at 7PM (check for times on screenings taking place at locations other than the Brattle Theatre), and will be followed by Q&A moderated by Erin Trahan, film journalist and editor of *The Independent*. As a DocYard tradition, the discussion will continue in a local pub or restaurant following the screening.

Season passes are \$70 (\$60 if purchased before December 25!) and are for sale online at www.thedocyard.com. Passes guarantee individuals access to all screenings (except the co-presentations off-site). Individual tickets for each film are \$10 and can be purchased online at www.brattlefilm.org or prior to show time at the Brattle Theatre box office.

For more information on the DocYard and its 2013 Winter Season, visit www.thedocyard.com.

THE DOCYARD 2014 WINTER PROGRAM

MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 7PM, Brattle Theatre

BENDING STEEL (2013, 93 min)

In-person Q&A with director Dave Carroll, producer Ryan Scafuro and special guests!

Bending Steel, a deeply moving and inspiring documentary from filmmakers Dave Carroll and Ryan Scafuro, explores the life of 43 year-old Chris Schoeck, a Queens, NY native who is training to become a professional Oldetime Strongman. The story follows Chris' journey from his early days training in a small basement storage unit, to his very first performance on the big stage at New York's historic Coney Island. Alongside his trainer Chris Rider, he meets living legends and heroes within the community—and for the first time ever—he gets a taste of acceptance, something that, since his early childhood, has always felt just out of reach. Suddenly Chris sees an opportunity to finally stand out, to make a name for himself, to find his place in life.

MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 7PM, Brattle Theatre

THE SQUARE (2013, 95 min)

Skype Q&A with director Jehane Noujaim

The Egyptian Revolution has been an ongoing rollercoaster over the past two and a half years. Through the news, we only get a glimpse of the bloodiest battle, an election, or a million man march. At the beginning of July 2013, we witnessed the second president deposed within the space of three years.

The Square is an immersive experience, transporting the viewer deeply into the intense emotional drama and personal stories behind the news. It is the inspirational story of young people claiming their rights, struggling through multiple forces, in the fight to create a society of conscience.

MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 7PM, Brattle Theatre

AATSINKI (2013, 85 min)

In-person Q&A with director Jessica Oreck

Brothers Aarne and Lasse Aatsinki are cowboys of the Arctic. Quiet but good natured, dare-devilish but humble, rugged but gentle, and exceptionally knowledgeable when it comes to their little slice of wilderness. These men are what John Wayne wanted to be. The brothers, along with their wives and

children, live well north of the Arctic Circle in Finnish Lapland, where they are the leaders of a collective of traditional reindeer herders who manage the last group of wild reindeer in all of Finland. *Aatsinki* follows the family for the span of one year, quietly observing their seasonal routines and the difficulties and joys of a life so closely tied to the land.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 7PM, Brattle Theatre

CAUCUS (2013, 109 min)

In-person Q&A with director AJ Schnack

For the past 40 years, the race for the American Presidency has begun in the state of Iowa, where Presidential hopefuls spend months traveling the state's 99 counties hoping to win its "first-in-the-nation" vote and prove themselves a viable candidate. In intimate, funny and sometimes emotional detail, CAUCUS tells the story of the 2011-2012 campaign in Iowa as eight Republicans fight to become their party's standard-bearer and take on Barack Obama. But to win, each must first navigate state fairs, town hall meetings in pizza halls and agitated questions from the increasingly contentious GOP base. CAUCUS is a revealing look at the difficulty of running for office, particularly the Presidency, and features private, human moments of very public figures.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 7PM, Brattle Theatre

THE FLAHERTY AT THE DOCYARD (Secret Screening)

Special Co-presentation with The Flaherty Seminar

In-person Q&A with The Flaherty Executive Director Anita Reher

Experience what it means to sit in a theater without any preconceived notions of what you're about to see and discover cinema as it's meant to be seen. In the spirit of the Flaherty tradition, the program of the evening will not be revealed until it is projected on the screen. It's an opportunity to participate in this unique experience that is the Flaherty, where you are urged to arrive with an open mind and without any preconceptions.

Join us for an evening of screening and discussion. Selections from past Robert Flaherty Film Seminars and Flaherty NYC Series will be screened followed by a conversation on non-fiction film. Explore the creative process of contemporary filmmakers and artists who are expanding the boundaries of documentary filmmaking. Their films will make you laugh, think, and cry.

As always, the conversation will continue over refreshments.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5th, 7:30PM, MFA

COUSIN JULES (1973/2012, 91 min)

Special Co-presentation with THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS BOSTON

A lost masterpiece of cinema, now beautifully restored and available for the first time in years, *Cousin Jules* was the result of five years (1968-1973) painstaking work by director Dominique Benicheti and cinematographer Pierre-William Glenn. Over that period, the team photographed and recorded the daily lives of Jules (Benicheti's distant cousin) and his wife, Felicie, French farmers living alone in the countryside. The result is a ravishing and immersive work, in which we not only enter into the subjects' world but also into the very rhythms of their lives - a record of a time and a way of life that has long ago vanished.

*** DocYard pass not applicable.**

MONDAY, MARCH 10, 7PM, Brattle Theatre

FIRST COUSIN, ONCE REMOVED (2013, 78 min)

In-person Q&A with director Alan Berliner

A distinguished poet, translator, critic and teacher, Edwin Honig wrote dozens of books and poems that attracted critical praise around the world. His seminal translations awakened English-speaking readers to previously overlooked literary giants, resulting in honorary knighthoods from the king of Spain and the president of Portugal. In *FIRST COUSIN ONCE REMOVED*, acclaimed documentary filmmaker Alan Berliner paints a deeply personal portrait of his "good friend, cousin and mentor" as Honig journeys through the ravages of Alzheimer's disease and memory loss. A stark reminder of the profound role memory plays in everyone's life, this is a moving essay on the fragility of being human.

MARCH 23-24, 7PM, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts and Brattle Theatre

A SPELL TO WARD OFF THE DARKNESS & THE SHORTS OF BEN RIVERS & BEN RUSSELL

Special Co-presentation with the Harvard Film Archive and the Balagan Film Series

In-person Q&A with filmmaker Ben Russell on both nights

March 23, 7PM, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts

A SPELL TO WARD OFF THE DARKNESS (2013, 98 min), by internationally acclaimed artist-filmmakers Ben Rivers and Ben Russell follows an unnamed character through three seemingly disparate moments in his life. Starring artist/musician Robert AA Lowe (best known for his intense live performances under the name LICHENS) in the lead role, *A SPELL* lies somewhere

between fiction and non-fiction - it is at once a document of experience and an experience itself, an inquiry into transcendence that sees the cinema as a site for transformation.

March 24, 7PM, Brattle Theatre

SHORTS BY BEN RIVERS AND BEN RUSSELL includes a variety of short films from Ben Rivers and Ben Russell, the two friends, artists, and makers of *A SPELL TO WARD OFF THE DARKNESS*. Having been exhibited all over the world, their short films have been described as primal, otherworldly, ethnographic, and utopian. The films to be screened include: **TRYPPS #6 (MALOBI)** (Russell, 2009, 12 min), **THE CREATION AS WE SAW IT** (Rivers, 2012, 14 min), **LET US PERSEVERE IN WHAT WE HAVE RESOLVED BEFORE WE FORGET** (Russell, 2013, 20 min), **RIVER RITES** (Russell, 2011, 11:30), **I KNOW WHERE I'M GOING** (Rivers, 2009, 29 min) **(86 min total)**

APRIL 7, 7PM

HEARTS AND MINDS (1974, 112 min)

In-person Q&A with director Peter Davis

A courageous and startling film, Peter Davis's landmark documentary *Hearts and Minds* unflinchingly confronts the United States' involvement in Vietnam. Using a wealth of sources—from interviews to newsreels to documentary footage of the conflict at home and abroad—Davis constructs a powerfully affecting portrait of the disastrous effects of war. Explosive, persuasive, and shocking, *Hearts and Minds* is an overwhelming emotional experience and the controversial winner of the 1974 Academy Award for Best Documentary.

APRIL 14, 7PM

TOWN HALL (2013, 74 min)

In-person Q&A with co-directors Sierra Pettengill and Jamila Wignot

TOWN HALL casts an unflinching eye at Katy and John, two Tea Party activists from the battleground state of Pennsylvania who believe America's salvation lies in a return to true conservative values. In *Katy*, we see a political novice rocketed to media stardom after a sensational confrontation at a town hall meeting with her senator. A young stay-at-home mom turned Tea Party spokesperson, she is gifted a new identity, steeled by the voices of conservative media. For John, a retired former businessman and lifelong Republican living in one of the poorest cities in the country, the America he knows is slipping away. Heading up a local Tea Party group is his last, best chance at stanching the changes he is witnessing all around him, but unable to afford his aging mother's health care, John has to make difficult decisions that reveal the complicated relationship between his principles and the demands of his life. More than a political treatise, *TOWN HALL* is a tone poem that immerses the viewer in Katy and John's world, painting

a portrait of the fears of those who believe they will be left behind by a nation's transition.

THE DOCYARD

Created in 2010 by Sara Archambault, Sean Flynn and Ben Fowlie, the DocYard has quickly become one of Boston's most respected cinematic events, screening a combination of new works from emerging filmmakers and classics from some of the region's most distinguished filmmakers like Frederick Wiseman and Ross McElwee. Now in its fourth year, the series was recently recognized with a special commendation from the Boston Society of Film Critics for "presenting a vibrant forum for the Boston documentary community to see important new non-fiction works and to have meaningful discussions with the filmmakers."

The DocYard is a program of the LEF Foundation. Other series sponsors include the Camden International Film Festival, Center for Independent Documentary, Irving House at Harvard, Rule Boston Camera, the Cambridge Arts Council/Massachusetts Cultural Council, Modulus Studios, MassArt Continuing Education and the Open Documentary Lab at MIT.

For more information on the DocYard, visit www.thedocyard.com