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KIDS FIRST! ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF SIXTH ANNUAL BEST AWARDS

To Be Presented At The 28th Annual Starz Denver International Film Festival™

Ceremony To Take Place November 19th At Denver Performing Arts Complex

(Santa Fe, NM)—Barbie and the Magic of Pegasus, Mad Hot Ballroom and Because of Winn Dixie are among the big winners of this year's Annual KIDS FIRST! Best Awards, to be presented on Saturday, November 19th as part of the Starz Denver International Film Festival™ (SDIFF28). Awards in 15 categories—plus "Best of Fest" winners—will be presented throughout the morning screenings on Saturday, November 19th, and the five Best of the Fest Awards will be presented as part of the SDIFF Closing Awards Ceremony at the world-class Ellie Caulkins Opera House.

"We're pleased to have the opportunity to present this year's awards as part of a live ceremony during the prestigious Starz Denver International Film Festival," said Ranny Levy, Founder and President, Coalition for Quality Children's Media, producers of the KIDS FIRST! Best Awards. "With so many quality titles from both studios and independent producers, it was quite a task for our voters. We're very proud of the winners selected and are grateful for everyone's participation in making these important selections."

The winners of this year's KIDS FIRST! Best Awards are:

Best of the Fest:

Barbie and the Magic of Pegasus, *Lions Gate Home Entertainment*— Barbie takes flight in her first original fairy tale movie: Barbie and the Magic of Pegasus! Princess Annika (Barbie) escapes the clutches of the evil wizard, explores the wonders of Cloud Kingdom, and teams up with a magnificent winged horse – who turns out to be her sister, Princess Brietta - to defeat the wizard and break the spells that imprisoned her family. Spectacular 3-D scenes add magic to this extraordinary adventure.

Danger Rangers, Mission 547, The Safety Rules, *Educational Adventures*— Empowering safety information is taught to children as they are entertained by the loveable animal superheroes' adventures, comedy and songs. The Danger Rangers mission is to make the world a safer place by stopping one potential hazard at a time. Along the way, the characters encounter unsafe actions, dangerous settings and risky behaviors which they correct. Safety tips are folded directly into the action-driven stories, gags, and songs.

Dora the Explorer, *Paramount Home Entertainment/Nickelodeon*— Dora The Explorer is designed to engage pre-schoolers in a play along adventure. Join Dora and her band of animal friends as she journeys through the Spooky Forest, Crocodile Lake, and other exciting places. The series is designed to actively encourage pre-schoolers in a play along adventure. Dora The Explorer builds on Nick Jr's promise to 'Play, Laugh and Learn.' Each day Dora and her monkey companion Boots go on a high stakes journey – a quest filled with funny friends and puzzling problems.

Mad Hot Ballroom, *Paramount Classics/Paramount Home Entertainment*— An insightful, inspiring and often hilarious look at a group of eleven-year-old New York City public school kids who journey into the world of ballroom dancing. Along the way, they reveal themselves and their world as they compete in the final citywide competition. Told from their candid perspectives, these kids are transformed from reluctant participants to determined competitors, from typical urban kids to "ladies and gentlemen." Directed by Marilyn Agrelo and written by Amy Sewell.

Because of Winn Dixie, *Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment*— Based on the best-selling book, this is the heartwarming 'tail' of a young girl (Annasophia Robb) whose life is changed by a scruffy, fun-loving pooch she names Winn-Dixie. The special bond between them works magic on her reserved dad (Jeff Daniels) and the eccentric townspeople they meet during one unforgettable summer. Director: Wayne Wang; Original music by Rachel Portman; Actors: Annasophia Robb, Jeff Daniels, Cicely Tyson, Eva Marie Saint; Dave Matthews.

Best TV Series for ages 2-5—Peep and the Big Wide World, *Discovery Kids/WGBH*

Best Feature for ages 2-5—Land Before Time 11: Invasion of the Tinysauruses, *Universal Studios Home Entertainment*

Best TV Series for ages 2-8—Fairly Odd Parents, *Paramount Home Entertainment*

Best Feature for ages 5-8—Robots, *Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment*

Best TV Series for ages 8-12—SpongeBob SquarePants, *Paramount Home Entertainment/Nickelodeon*

Best Feature for ages 8-12—Because of Winn Dixie—*Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment*

Best Feature for ages 12-18—Ghosts of Rwanda, *Paramount Home Entertainment/PBS*

Best Independent Short for ages 2-5—Room to Grow, *The Krislin Co.*

Best Independent Short for ages 5-8—Danger Rangers, Mission 547, The Safety Rules, *Educational Adventures*

Best Independent Series for ages 5-8 (tie)—The Trevor Romain Collection, *The Comical Sense Co.*; Reading Rainbow, *GPN/WNED-TV*

Best Independent Short for ages 8-12—Raven Tales: Raven Steals the Sun, *Raven Tales Productions*

Best Independent Short for ages 12-18—Stealing Innocence, *American Girl Productions*

Best Independent Feature—Sho’Nuff: A Nu’Awlins Jazz Story, *JuJu Films International*

Best Student Film by a K-12 Student—What’s with the Hijab?, *TVbyGIRLS*

Best Student Film by a College Student (tie)—Past Whispers, *Brett Rhuland; United, TXL Films*

President’s Award—The Entertainment Project

President’s Award—Starz Denver International Film Festival

Also on Saturday, November 19th, at 2:00 p.m., KIDS FIRST! will hold a Red Carpet event at the King Center, hosting a special preview screening of “The Blue Butterfly,” a film by Léa Pool, starring Academy Award® winner William Hurt.

SDIFF28 DETAILS

For the 28th Starz Denver International Film Festival, November 10th through 20th, all regular screenings will take place at the Denver Film Society’s permanent home, the Starz FilmCenter at the Tivoli on the Auraria Campus. Opening Night, Big Night, and Closing Night events will take place at the new Ellie Caulkins Opera House at the Denver Performing Arts Complex.

The official film schedule will be announced online at www.denverfilm.org on Monday, October 24th. Denver Film Society Members will be able to purchase tickets starting on October 26th. Become a member today to take advantage of early ticket buying opportunities and discounts.

On October 28th, the schedule will be published as a special advertising section in *The Denver Post* and *Rocky Mountain News*. It will also be available at various Denver retail stores and restaurants. For a listing of these participating outlets, visit www.denverfilm.org.

Festival tickets will go on sale to the general public on October 28th. Tickets will be available online at www.denverfilm.org, in person at the Starz FilmCenter box office (11AM – 9PM daily) or by phone at 303.534.1339.

Denver Film Society is a membership-based, nonprofit cultural institution dedicated to cultivating film as art. Founded in 1978, Denver Film Society produces the Starz Denver International Film Festival. Denver Film Society’s home theatre and cinematic education center is open daily at Starz FilmCenter at the Tivoli, Denver’s first and only year-round cinematheque.

The KIDS FIRST! FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL is an initiative of the not-for-profit Coalition for Quality Children’s Media. The Coalition’s goal is to empower children to make wise media choices and to promote quality media products that enrich their lives. <http://www.kidsfirst.org>.

The Children’s Museum of Denver is an essential learning resource that engages the young children of the Denver community in play and active exploration, together with their parents and other adults to expand their capacity to learn. The Children’s Museum of Denver has served millions of children and adults throughout the metro Denver area for more than 30 years. For more information, visit www.mychildsmuseum.org.