

Media Release
Sunday 14 June 2009

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FOXTEL doubles prize money as Jury awards two winners for the inaugural FOXTEL Australian Documentary Award

In an unexpected outcome, the first FOXTEL Australian Documentary Prize has been awarded to two separate films. When the documentary prize jury led by eminent TV journalist George Negus, announced that **Contact** and **A Good Man** were films of equally high caliber, FOXTEL CEO Kim Williams rose to the occasion by doubling the prize money with \$10,000 going to each film

Contact is written, directed and produced by Bentley Dean and Martin Butler – in 1964 Yuwali was 17 when her first contact with whitefellas was filmed. Now 62 she tells the story behind this extraordinary footage.

A Good Man is direct by Safina Uberoi and produced by Himman Dhamija, Safina Uberoi and Jenny Day, tells of a struggling Australian farmer, his wife who is quadriplegic, and their plans to open a brothel.

“**Contact** and **A Good Man** are both representative of the finest storytelling in Australian documentary filmmaking. Apart from being equally engaging films these documentaries were so very different from one another that the judges were unable to decide on a sole winner. One was a compelling indigenous story of national significance the other a human story of huge heart told with candour and humour. Together, **Contact** and **A Good Man** embody the amazing new breadth of subject matter and style of Australian documentary making” said the jury today.

“FOXTEL is delighted to sponsor this inaugural Australian Documentary prize and to have the opportunity to celebrate fine documentary filmmaking as part of the Sydney Film Festival “ said Malcolm Smith, Office of the CEO, FOXTEL.

Sydney Film Festival thanks FOXTEL for their generosity in awarding two prizes this year and congratulates all the finalists for being selected to screen in the competition. In this inaugural year the FOXTEL Australian Documentary Prize received over 60 entries.

FOXTEL Australia Documentary Prize jury:

Jim Buchan, Group Channel Manager Crime & Investigation Network, The History Channel, GM Factual Acquisitions, **George Negus**, renowned international journalist who has reported for Nine's 60 Minutes, ABC's Foreign Correspondent and currently on SBS Television Dateline and **Olivia Rousset**, winner of the 1997 ABC TV's Race Around the World, Dateline reporter since 2000, two times Walkley Award winner

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About Sydney Film Festival

Sydney Film Festival screens feature films, documentaries, short films and animations across the city at the State Theatre, GU George Street Cinemas, Dendy Opera Quays and the Art Gallery of NSW. The festival is a major event on the New South Wales cultural calendar and is one of the world's longest running film festivals. In 2008, SFF introduced the Official Competition, a FIAPF-accredited competition for 'new directions in film', which rewards courageous and audacious filmmaking. The Official Competition is supported by Events NSW and the \$60,000 cash prize is provided by Hunter Hall Investment Management. Celebrated Australian filmmaker Rolf de Heer heads up the 2009 jury of three international and two Australian industry figures.

Sponsored by the NSW Government through Events NSW

The 56th Sydney Film Festival spools from **Wednesday 3 June – Sunday 14 June 2009.**

For more information visit www.sff.org.au

Stills from films in SFF 2009 are available for media in the festivals and awards folder at www.image.net

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