

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, September 21, 2009

Media Contact:  
Lincoln Jacobs, 808.237.3676  
Chimaine Pouteau, 808.237.3678

**2009 HAWAII INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL  
SECURES HIGHLY-ANTICIPATED  
KOREAN DRAMA 'MOTHER' FOR OPENING NIGHT**

**Spotlight On Korea to Include Five Films Two Documentaries and  
Gala Screening Of 'SCANDAL MAKERS'**

HONOLULU, HI (Monday, September 21, 2009) – The 2009 Hawaii International Film Festival (HIFF) is pleased to host the Hawaii premiere of MOTHER by Korean director Bong Joon-ho ('BARKING DOGS NEVER BITE', 'MEMORIES OF MURDER', 'THE HOST' AND 'TOKYO!') as the opening night film. The highly anticipated film, featuring veteran Korean actress [[http://www.hancinema.net/korean\\_Kim\\_Hye-ja.php](http://www.hancinema.net/korean_Kim_Hye-ja.php)] Kim Hye-ja, is the story of a mother setting out on a lonely fight to clear her son of a murder charge. It will screen at Regal Dole Cannery Stadium 18 Cinemas on Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 p.m. The screening of MOTHER is sponsored by KBF-D-TV.

The film received a standing ovation after premiering at this year's Cannes International Film Festival in May and also garnered attention at the Toronto International Film Festival. "Bong Joon-ho is a master director with an abundance of ideas, energy and provocative vision. We are very honored to share his latest masterpiece with our audiences," states Chuck Boller, HIFF's executive director.

**MOTHER**

Following the smash success of his 2006 film THE HOST, Korean sensation Bong Joon-ho returns with a stylish thriller that is both detective story and psychological horror. Pushing past the bounds of conventional film noir, MOTHER shows Bong refining his talent for popular entertainment even as he crafts a new grammar of imagery to depict his disturbing yet always thought-provoking ideas.

Kim Hye-ja plays the mother of a grown son with a slight mental disability. Childlike and slow, Do-joon (Korean heartthrob Won Bin in a raw

performance) has grown up under the fierce protection of his mother's formidable love. When a pretty young student is brutally murdered and Do-joon is accused of the killing, it's up to his mother to get him out of jail and prove his innocence.

Solving the murder is not necessarily the heart of MOTHER. Like his masterpiece MEMORIES OF MURDER, small town gossip and politics dictates this world. Peppered with savage humor, the circular narration of MOTHER is elegantly colored with visually engaging, carefully composed scenes. This serene beauty contrasts powerfully with the ferocious emotion of one extraordinary mother.

Hawaii Premiere  
South Korea 2009 | Korean w/ English subtitles | 128m

Director: Bong Joon-ho  
Producer: Choi Jae-Won, Seo Woo-sik  
Cinematographer: Hong Kyeong-pyo  
Script: Park Eun-kyo, Bong Joon-ho, Park Wun-kyo  
Cast: Won Bin, Jin Ku, Kim Hye-ja

15-Oct                8:00 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas

#### GALA SCREENING & SPOTLIGHT ON KOREA

HIFF is also pleased to showcase a number of other Korean films in this year's 29<sup>th</sup> annual festival, including HIFF's gala screening of SCANDAL MAKERS, which has become the most successful comedy in Korea with more than 8 million tickets sold and has catapulted its young star Park Bo-young to household-name status. Plus, HIFF's Spotlight on Korea, sponsored by Kbfd-TV, will feature other recognized movies, including RUNNING TURTLE, A MILLION, FROZEN FLOWER, PRIVATE EYE AND ANTIQUE. Two other Korean films will be screened in HIFF's Reel Life category. They include the Korean box office smash hit, OLD PARTNER, and HOME FROM HOME.

Over 170 films from 36 different countries will be featured at this year's festival. HIFF's 2009 program is being held at the Regal Dole Cannery Stadium 18 Cinemas from October 15–25. Tickets go on sale Thursday, October 1<sup>st</sup> for HIFF Ohana members and Monday, October 5<sup>th</sup> to the public. General admission tickets are available for \$10 or \$9 for students, seniors, children and military. Tickets may be purchased in person at HIFF's box office at 650 Iwilei Road #101 across from Regal Dole Cannery Stadium 18 Cinemas or by phone at (808) 548-5905. For more information please visit [www.hiff.org](http://www.hiff.org).

#### FILM SYNOPSES

##### SCANDAL MAKERS

Nam Hyun-soo was once a popular idol star among teens and worshiped like a god. Although he's in his mid-thirties now, he's still a sought-after celebrity and the host of a popular radio show. But one day a very young single mom named Jung-nam sends her stories to the radio show that Hyun-soo hosts. Her stories about her longing to meet her father whom she's never seen before grips the nation and catapults the ratings to make it the most popular program. But to his surprise, Hyun-soo later confronts none other than Jung-nam and her 7 year-old boy, Gi-dong who invade Hyun-soo's home and his radio station, claiming that Hyun-soo is her father.  
South Korea 2008 | Korean w/ English subtitles | 108m

Director: Hyeong-Cheol Kang  
Producer: Byeong-ki Ahn, Hye-Yeon Sin  
Cinematographer: Young-jun Kim  
Script: Hyeong-Cheol Kang  
Cast: Tae-hyun Cha, Il-Kwon Ahn, Kyeong-min Hong, Seok-hyeon Hwang

18-Oct 6:45 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas  
19-Oct 4:15 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas

## RUNNING TURTLE

Becoming one of the biggest hits this past summer in Korea, **RUNNING TURTLE** showcases the quirky nuances of the Korean cop drama. A series of painful setbacks await Detective Pil-seong (Kim Yoon-seok) when legendary escape artist, Gi-tae (Chung Kyung-ho), swoops into town and gets entangled with the detective who has too much easy money in his not-so-clean hands overnight. The initial showdown between the two characters results in a humiliating defeat for Pil-seong, who loses his money, job and dignity. In order to redeem his honor and gain back his job, the disgraced Pil-seong makes it his mission to capture the elusive Gi-tae. Kim Yoon-seok, who showcased his talent in **THE CHASER** (HIFF 2008), brings to life a flawed yet believable character, and director Lee Yun-woo makes a refreshing and innovative film with **RUNNING TURTLE**.

North American Premiere  
2009 | Korean w/ English subtitles | 117m

Director: Lee Yeon-woo  
Producer: Lee Jun-yeon, Nam Jeong-il, Lee Mi-yeong  
Cinematographer: Jo Yong-gyu  
Script: Lee Yeon-woo  
Cast: Kim Yoon-seok, Jeong Kyeong-ho, Seon Woo-seon, Kyeon Miri

22-Oct 8:30 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas  
24-Oct 3:30 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas

## A MILLION

In **A MILLION**, director Min-ho Jo offers something brilliantly noir and dramatically stimulating. The director of **LES FORMIDABLES** offers a story about a reality TV show gone awry ? or rather, just as planned in all its hardboiled horror. How far would one go to win \$1 million? Eight lucky ? or not so lucky ? people from different walks of life are chosen in a draw to take part in a sensational televised game program. They all have come to Perth, Australia for one thing, to win a million bucks. Soon, however, they discover that the reality TV program's producer Jang (charismatic screen personality Park Heui-soon) really meant it when he said it was a survival game, and the kooky-eyed man makes no secret of it as contestants are soon dropping like flies. With a tightly knit script, seamless acting and layers of tense, involving drama, **A MILLION** will keep the audience at the edge of their seats.

International Premiere  
South Korea 2009 | Korean w English Subtitles | 114m

Director: Min-Ho Jo  
Producer: Ji-Yeon Kim  
Cinematographer: Jae-Hun Ryu  
Script: Min-Ho Jo

Cast: Park Hae-il, Shin Min-a, Park Hie-Sun, Lee Min-Gi, Lee Cheon-Hee, Jeon Yu-Mi

17-Oct 4:45 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas  
18-Oct 12:00 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas

#### A FROZEN FLOWER

Set in Korea during the Yuan Dynasty, this visually stunning epic concerns the battle between emotions within our control and those we are powerless against. The King of Goryeo (Joo Jin Mo) has a penchant for young male bodyguards, and lives a blissful "don't ask, don't tell" existence, sharing his bed with handsome Chief Guard Hong Lim (Jo In Sung), a loyal lover the King raised from childhood. Their idyllic life comes to an end when the King, unwilling to consummate with his Queen (Song Ji Hyo), is pressured to produce an heir or consign the throne to his cousin. Choosing duty over love, the King orders Hong Lim to impregnate the Queen. An initially awkward and repugnant act of loyalty leads to a passionate (and sensuously filmed) affair between the Queen and Hong Lim. Honor becomes betrayal, as the King/Queen/Servant love triangle is juxtaposed against the backdrop of the country's political turmoil. Erotic trysts, sweeping vistas, colorful costumes and thrilling swordfights compliment the very human aspects of this outstanding film.

U.S. Premiere  
South Korea 2008 | Korean w/ English subtitles | 133m

Director: Ha Yoo  
Producer: Ryu Jeong-hun, LeeTae Hun  
Cinematographer: Choi Hyeon-ki  
Script: Ha Yoo  
Cast: Jo In-seong, Ju Jin-mo, Song Ji-hyo, ShimJi-ho

18-Oct 3:00 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas  
22-Oct 1:15 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas

#### PRIVATE EYE

Kwang-su (Ryu Deok-hwan), an overzealous young medical student, finds a dead body in the middle of a field and brings it home to practice his surgical skills. When the body turns out to be the missing son of a prominent government official, the young student secures the services of Jin-ho (Hwang Jeong-min), a private eye to find the killer before the police accuse him. In the meantime, the killer strikes again. With the help of a brilliant inventor (Uhm Ji-won), the mismatched pair finds themselves at the circus, where the killer might be hiding. Hwang effortlessly pulls off the role of the detective, who, at first glance, appears to be bumbling, but later turns out to be a sharp tack with a keen sixth sense. Ryu is perfect as the meek but ambitious young med student who clashes with, yet complements the detective. Expertly lensed and combining a delicious mix of drama, comedy, and adventure, PRIVATE EYE will keep you guessing until the very last frame.

Hawaii Premiere  
South Korea 2009 | Korean w/ English subtitles | 111m

Director: Dae-min Park  
Producer: Sean Lee  
Cinematographer: Chan-min Choi

Script: Dae-min Park

Cast: Jung-min Hwang, Deok-hwan Ryu, Ji-won Uhm

24-Oct 9:30 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas

25-Oct 7:30 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas

## ANTIQUÉ

Treat yourself to a film that will satisfy your sweet tooth! Director Min Gyoong-dong (MEMENTO MORI) follows a recipe consisting of one part quirky comedy, one part suspenseful mystery, and a sprinkling of imaginative musical numbers, to create a visually delicious adaptation of the bestselling Japanese manga, Antique Bakery. Previously a TV drama and anime in Japan, this Korean interpretation stars heartthrob Joo Ji-hoon (PRINCESS HOURS) as the pampered and overprotected Jin-hyuk, who curiously opens a small neighborhood cake shop named Antique despite his violent dislike of desserts. The success of the shop depends in large part on Sun-woo (Kim Jae-wook), a charismatic genius pastry chef who once had an unrequited crush on Jin-hyuk in high school. Their efforts are helped by an ex-boxer apprentice with a passion for pastry and Jin-hyuk's silent and bumbling childhood friend who fancies himself a bodyguard and assistant. This unlikely four-man operation tirelessly strives for sweet success in the face of bitter personal challenges.

Hawaii Premiere

South Korea 2008 | Korean w/ English subtitles | 109m

Director: Min Kyu-dong

Producer: Ryu Jeong-hun

Cinematographer: Kim Joon-young

Script: Min Kyu-dong

Cast: Ju Ji-hun, Kim Jae Wook, Andy Gillet, Ain Yu, Choi Ji-ho

21-Oct 7:30 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas

24-Oct 5:00 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas

## OLD PARTNER

In a remote, verdant valley in South Korea, old Mr. and Mrs. Lee live on a farm with their rickety ox. For forty years, the animal has served them faithfully—hauling untold firewood loads and dragging the plow through fertile fields. OLD PARTNER playfully and poetically tells the story of the ineffable bond between Mr. Lee and his ox as their lives wind down in tandem. Rain or shine, hunched and gnarled, Mr. Lee tills, weeds, and harvests, often crouching on all fours like the ox that never leaves his side. The camera lingering intimately on the ox's kind eyes and creaky bones allows us to sense the depth of this sentient being's loyalty as he carts Mr. Lee to town at a snail's pace. In return, Mr. Lee collects special fodder by hand and refuses to spray insecticides for fear of poisoning his beloved beast. Meanwhile, the cheeky Greek chorus, Mrs. Lee, complains incessantly from the peanut gallery. A charming, heartbreaking, existential buddy tale, OLD PARTNER conveys the almost mystical inextricability of humans and nature. Surprising the small, indie distributor that released this film in only a handful of theaters, before it took the country by storm and became a sleeper hit, breaking box office records in Korea, OLD PARTNER will touch audience's hearts.

Hawaii Premiere

South Korea 2008 | Korean w/ English subtitles | 77m

Director: Chung-ryoul Lee  
Producer: Young-jae Goh  
Cinematographer: Jae-woo Ji  
Script: Chung-ryoul Lee  
Cast: Won-kyun Choi , Sam-soon Lee

17-Oct 11:45 AM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas  
19-Oct 1:30 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas

#### HOME FROM HOME

Three women, each yearning to go home, return to a Korea that is no longer theirs after thirty years of absence. Back in the 1970's they left everything behind, even their children, to go and work in Germany as "Gastarbeiter". They assimilated quickly in the new country, despite missing the old one. Now they've almost made their dreams come true and have brought their German husbands to Dogil Maeul, the "German Village" set up just for people like themselves. When evening comes round and the sun goes down, a homesickness sets in. That's the way it was back in Germany, where they spent half their lives ultimately remaining foreign. And that's the way it is now in South Korea where they remain severed from their roots. Dressed in traditional Korean garb they inhabit living rooms with wall units of German oak.

North American Premiere

Germany, South Korea 2009 | German w/ English subtitles | 99m

Director: Sung Hyung Cho  
Producer: Helge Albers, Nicole Baum  
Cinematographer: Stefan Grandinetti  
Cast: Armin Theis

16-Oct 3:00 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas  
22-Oct 12:00 PM Regal Dole Cannery Cinemas

#### Festival information

Established in 1981, the Hawaii International Film Festival is dedicated to the advancement of understanding and cultural exchange among the peoples of Asia, the Pacific and North America through the medium of film. HIFF is the premier international film event in the Pacific and has won the praise of governments, filmmakers, scholars, educators, programmers and film industry leaders throughout the world. For the discovery and exhibition of Asian and Pacific features, documentaries and short films in the nation, it is a primary source. The festival has premiered such movies as ONCE WERE WARRIORS, THE PIANO, SHINE, SHALL WE DANCE, Y TU MAMA TAMBIEN and CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON. Plus, DEPARTURES, a Japanese film, had its U.S. premiere at HIFF in 2008, won the HIFF Audience Award and then went on to win the 2009 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film.

HIFF's major sponsors include: Regal Entertainment Group, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Hawaii, Halekulani, Hawaii Tourism Authority and The VILCEK Foundation.

The 2009 Hawaii International Film Festival will be held October 15-25 at the Regal Dole Cannery Stadium 18 Cinemas. Images of the films can be downloaded at

<http://picasaweb.google.com/hiff2009images/2009FallFilmImages?authkey=Gv1sRgCOjSudrp5ob2iwE&feat=directlink>.

For more information please visit our website at [www.hiff.org](http://www.hiff.org).

# # #

-End