



WOMEN IN FILM & TELEVISION VANCOUVER ANNOUNCES THE SPOTLIGHT AWARD™ WINNERS OF 2009

Vancouver, BC

Women In Film & Television Vancouver is thrilled to announce the winners of this year's Spotlight Awards™. The Awards Gala, hosted by Molly Parker, will occur March 7, 2009 at the Vancity Theatre in Vancouver, a highlight of WIFTV's 5-day Women In Film Festival 2009.

“As WIFTV celebrates its 20th Anniversary this year, it's an honour and a privilege to celebrate such well-respected and talented women and men in our industry. This year's winners are an incredibly inspiring group. Congratulations!” said Peggy Thompson, President of Women In Film & Television Vancouver.

The Spotlight Award™ winners, selected by a Jury of Board Members of WIFTV are:

Woman of the Year -- Babz Chula, renowned actor, activist and teacher, for her support of the indie film community for over twenty years, including the recent collaboration on the Carl Bessai film *Mothers and Daughters*. Also, for her mentoring work such as her supportive role on Larry Lynn's film/website and Digital Filmmaking and Media Literacy Program at the Burnaby Youth Custody Centre, a maximum security prison for youth aged 12 to 18. Babz continues to build community awareness about cancer with her project Artists for Life and was an early Board Member of WIFTV.

Woman of Vision (Special Jury Prize) -- Amanda Tapping, actor, director, and producer, for her ground-breaking work on *Sanctuary* and having the vision to grow the series from webcast to broadcast. Amanda is also a well-known mentor in the Vancouver film community and a great teller of women's stories.

Artistic Achievement Award -- Maureen Medved, screenwriter, for the great rendering of a female story in *The Tracey Fragments*, a fearless exploration into the heart and mind of a young woman, starring Ellen Page. “Fierce, enigmatic and affecting” A.O. Scott, the New York Times.



The Wayne Black Service Award -- Shauna Hardy Mishaw, Director of the Whistler Film Festival, for her behind the scenes and yet crucial role in creating a destination festival celebrating Canadian indie filmmakers and bolstering the BC film industry.

Honorary Friend -- John Dippong, Telefilm Canada, for his decades-long advocacy for and guidance of the Vancouver independent film community. John has worked hard and long to support emerging and western talent and established veterans.

Sharon Gibbon Lifetime Member Award –Jacqui Ellis, accountant, for unstinting volunteer efforts at countless WIFTV events over an extended period of time.

The Kodak Image Award – Moira Simpson, one of Canada’s most respected documentary DOP/ directors. As Filmmaker in Residence with Fearless City Mobile, Moira is facilitating the use of mobile phone technology with residents of the Downtown Eastside. Through interactive live streaming and creating short video documentaries, they are crossing the digital divide and telling their own stories.

Special Jury Award for Lifetime Contribution – Al Parsons, recently retired from the National Film Board of Canada, for his support of Vancouver filmmakers for over thirty years. Al is known for his generous assistance to emerging filmmakers and producers and is an enormous ally of Women In Film & Television Vancouver.

Established in 1988, The Spotlight Awards™ have brought together filmmakers, the film industry, government and media to celebrate the outstanding achievements of BC women and men in screen-based media. Conceived as an event to recognize and promote exceptional professionals in film and television, The Spotlight Awards™ are acknowledged today as one of the industry’s most prestigious accolades.

Since 1988, more than 100 remarkable people have received Spotlight Awards. Many of today’s outstanding filmmakers and industry leaders are past recipients of a Spotlight Award – a testament to women’s contributions to Canada’s entertainment community.

This year’s awards will be presented at a Gala Ceremony on March 7th at the Vancity Theatre.

For updates, keep your eye on the WIFTV website: www.womeninfilm.ca

