



**Media Contacts:**

Chandra Brin  
Linhart Public Relations  
303-951-2565  
[cbrin@linhartpr.com](mailto:cbrin@linhartpr.com)

Kathy Beeck  
Boulder International Film Festival  
303-449-2289  
[kathy@biff1.com](mailto:kathy@biff1.com)

**55 Films and 31 Filmmakers Slated for  
2009 Boulder International Film Festival Feb. 12-15,  
with a Spotlight on Comedy, Adventure and Music Themes**

*An evening with funny man Chevy Chase and an award-winning documentary about political uprising by Burma's Buddhist monks are among highlights of fifth-annual festival*

**Boulder, Colo. (Jan. 23, 2009)** – Films from around the world, conversations with directors, producers, screenwriters and actors, world-class food, parties and an opportunity to rub elbows with filmmakers in a hip mountain town at the foot of the Rockies can only mean one thing: it's time for the Boulder International Film Festival (BIFF). This year's Festival takes place Feb. 12-15, and brings films, filmmakers and sophisticated cinema fans from around the world to Boulder for a four-day celebration of the fine art of filmmaking.

“The combination of exciting screenings, parties and special events BIFF has become known for has quickly elevated it to a must-attend event,” said Kathy Beeck, director of BIFF. “We’ve screened over 1,000 independent films this year to ensure BIFF attendees see the cream of the crop, many of which truly embody powerful messages sure to resonate with audiences. The Festival will feature films from 28 countries including Iran, Cambodia, India, the Netherlands, Senegal, Brazil and Nepal, among others.”

The Festival will kick off Thursday, Feb. 12 at 6:30 p.m. with an Opening Night Party and screening of “**Nothing But the Truth**,” starring Kate Beckinsale, Alan Alda, Matt Dillon and Angela Bassett. “**Nothing But the Truth**” parallels the jailing of *New York Times* reporter Judith Miller for refusing to name the source of her story blowing the cover of CIA operative Valerie Plame. Director Rod Lurie will attend the screening and participate in a Q&A session after the film, which has been described by *Rolling Stone* as “a fierce, fire-breathing movie laced with stinging laughs.” [View Trailer](#). Prior to the screening of the film, event attendees can enjoy live music by Chris Daniels and the Kings, one of the world’s best “horn bands.”

Those looking for a little bit of romance and laughter, courtesy of Chevy Chase, can find both at BIFF's Red Carpet Valentine's Gala on Saturday, Feb. 14 at 7 p.m. During the event, guests can dine on food from the Cheesecake Factory, sip their favorite drinks and enjoy the music of Hazel Miller, one of Colorado's most sought-after performers. The highlight of the evening will be an appearance by comedic icon Chevy Chase. The *Saturday Night Live* veteran and *National Lampoon* star will be honored with an Award of Excellence in Comedy and participate in a Q&A session with Ron Bostwick, BIFF executive producer, following a retrospective of his work.

BIFF's Closing Night Awards Ceremony, taking place Sunday, Feb. 15 at 6:30 p.m., will include a special screening of **"Burma VJ: Reporting from a Closed Country,"** a top prize winner at IDFA Amsterdam, one of the world's premier documentary festivals. **"Burma VJ: Reporting from a Closed Country"** captures the movement of the "Saffron Revolution," during which 10,000 Buddhist monks risked torture and death to protest a cruel military dictatorship that has held the country hostage for more 40 years. Though Burma was closed off to the world, a small band of video journalists, calling themselves the DVB, were able to capture the abuses inflicted by the dictatorship. As government intelligence begins to understand the power of DVB's footage, the group soon becomes the target in a life-and-death chase, all captured on camera. The film will be followed by a Q&A with Burmese Princess Inge Sargent, author of *Twilight over Burma* and a recipient of the United Nations Association International Human Rights Award. Sargent is a longtime Boulder teacher, and heads a Burmese expatriate organization that raises hundreds of thousands of dollars to fund Burmese refugees in Thailand. [View Trailer.](#)

The event also will include live music and desserts and coffee, as well as an awards ceremony honoring some of the Festival's most captivating films.

Other film highlights from the Festival include:

### **"Buddha Collapsed Out of Shame"**

Premiering in Colorado at BIFF, and winner of Michael Moore's Founders Prize, awarded at the Traverse City Film Festival, this feature film, made by an 18 year-old Iranian woman, was shot in war-torn Afghanistan near the ruins of the 100-foot-tall Buddhas destroyed by the Taliban. Armed only with a notebook and her mother's lipstick for a pencil, 6-year-old Bakhtay (the film's narrator) travels a long, dangerous journey to a recently opened girls' school. Along the way, she is harassed by ruthless boys that imitate the violence they've witnessed their whole lives. These same boys threaten to stone her, blow her up the same way the Taliban blew up the Buddha, and to shoot her "like Americans do." [View Trailer.](#)

### **"American Outrage"**

This powerful film tells the story of two elderly Western Shoshone sisters persecuted and prosecuted by the U.S. government for grazing a few hundred horses and cows on desolate open-range desert lands outside their Nevada ranch. Directors Beth and George Gage and Carrie Dann, one of the sisters featured in the film, will join movie-goers at the screening. [Read more.](#)

### **"Sunshine Cleaning"**

Starring Colorado native Amy Adams and Emily Blunt, this film delves into the story of two sisters so desperate to change their lives and circumstances they decide to go into the crime scene

clean-up business. In no time, the women are up to their elbows in murders, suicides and other...specialized situations. As they climb the ranks in a very dirty job, the sisters find a true respect for one another and the closeness they have always craved finally blossoms. [View Trailer.](#)

### **“Revanche”**

Nominated for the 2009 Academy Award for Best Foreign Film, this graphic, hyper-realistic film explores two very different couples whose fates are intertwined by a single stray bullet. Tamara, who seeks to escape the Vienna brothel in which she works, falls in love with ex-con Alex, who believes their ticket out is through robbing a bank in the sleepy Austrian village of his ancestors. When the plan backfires, Alex finds refuge at the desolate farm of his elderly grandfather. Intertwining relationships are revealed as events converge in this surprising, challenging and mesmerizing film. [View Trailer.](#)

### **“The Unwinking Gaze: The Inside Story of the Dalai Lama’s Struggle for Tibet”**

This unforgettable feature documentary was conceived as an opportunity to show the Chinese the unfiltered, unedited Dalai Lama. Through the film, the Dalai Lama is shown to be a gentle, funny, deeply spiritual man trying to make space in the People’s Republic for Tibetan culture. Director Joshua Dugdale was given unprecedented access to the Dalai Lama’s daily life and activities to create what is perhaps the most honest and genuine film likely to be released in his lifetime. The screening of the film will be followed by a conversation with Rep. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, the Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the Americas, and head of the Office of Tibet in New York. [Read more.](#)

### **“Glass: A Portrait of Philip in Twelve Parts”**

Making its first Colorado appearance at BIFF, this musically sumptuous film directed by Scott Hicks, seven-time Oscar nominee, profiles Philip Glass, one of the great composers of classical music of the past 50 years. Though Glass’s music has made him so famous that he’s even been featured as a character on “The Simpsons,” he doesn’t allow it to consume him. Even as Glass focuses on the pre-production of his opera adaptation, “Waiting For The Barbarians,” audiences see him on a roller coaster, making pizza with his kids and hanging out with friends. Special appearances include Chuck Close, Martin Scorsese, Woody Allen and Errol Morris. [View Trailer.](#)

### **“Johnny Cash at Folsom Prison”**

This powerful film, directed by Bestor Cram and making its Colorado premiere at BIFF, tells the story of the making of “Johnny Cash at Folsom Prison,” one of the greatest live albums ever produced. It was January 1968, a few days before the Tet offensive in Vietnam, in a prison cafeteria in Northern California, when hard men doing hard time witnessed the making of the electrifying masterpiece. The album catapulted Johnny Cash into international fame, and gave a voice to society’s outcast and forgotten. One line became indelible: “I shot a man in Reno/Just to watch him die/When I hear that whistle blowing/I hang my head and cry,” and showed that Cash's own struggle with demons meant that he understood the guilt, pain and sorrow of losing control of one's life. [View Trailer.](#)

Other BIFF films not to be missed:

- “**American Harmony**,” follows Max Q, a barbershop quartet, through the high-stakes, high-pressure world of competitive barbershop singing. Director Aengus James will appear in-person at the BIFF screening. [View Trailer](#).
- “**Garrison Keillor: The Man on the Radio in the Red Shoes**,” presents a year in the life of famous humorist and radio personality Garrison Keillor. Emmy-winning director Peter Rosen will be present during the screening of the documentary. [Read more](#).
- “**Pirate for the Sea**,” profiles the legendary, bare-knuckled environmentalist Paul Watson, one of the founders of Greenpeace, as he patrols the sea using any means necessary to thwart the illegal harvesting of whales, dolphins, sharks and the clubbing of seals. Director Ron Colby and producer Patricia Van Ryker will both attend the film’s screening at BIFF.
- “**Anvil: The Story of Anvil**,” documents Canadian metal demigods from the ‘70s, who inspired the likes of Metallica, Slayer and Anthrax, and their quest for a Great Comeback Tour. [Read more](#).
- “**The Last Days of Shishmaref**,” captures the struggles of the ancient Inupiaq village of Shishmaref, said to be the first real victims of global warming. [View website](#).

“The Boulder International Film Festival is one of Boulder’s crown jewel events,” said Mayor Shaun McGrath of Boulder. “Thanks to BIFF, Boulder has continued to attract more visitors every winter, stimulating our local economy and introducing more new people to the beauty of our hometown located in the Rocky Mountain foothills.”

Festival tickets go on sale Friday, Jan. 23 and are \$10 for adults and \$8 for students and seniors 65 and older. All-access Festival VIP passes, including tickets and access to the Red Carpet Valentine’s Gala and the Closing Night Awards Ceremony, can be purchased for \$345 or for a discounted rate of \$295 if purchased before Sunday, Feb.1. Tickets for the Opening Night Party and Closing Night Awards Ceremony can be purchased for \$35. Individual tickets for the Red Carpet Valentine’s Day Gala with Chevy Chase are \$85. Tickets can be purchased at [www.bouldertheater.com](http://www.bouldertheater.com) or by calling (303) 786-7030. For more information about the Festival please go to [www.biff1.com](http://www.biff1.com).

**Sponsors of this year’s Festival include:** KBCO, Comcast, *Daily Camera*, Linhart PR, People Productions, *Backpacker* Magazine, Flowcreative, St Julien Hotel and Spa, Hotel Boulderado, Brock Publishing, America Free TV, Flatirons Subaru, Ball Aerospace, The Millstone Evans Group, Downtown Boulder, Inc., Cheesecake Factory, 14<sup>th</sup> Street Bar & Grill, Alpine Audio & Visual, Outdoor Cinema, The Draft House, Roche Colorado, Best Buy, and KUNC Radio, among others.

### **About The Boulder International Film Festival**

BIFF is presented by the Colorado Film Society, a nonprofit organization founded by local filmmakers Kathy and Robin Beeck. BIFF is dedicated to providing the large, urban, film-hip audiences of the Boulder/Denver metro area with an early look at the best new films in international cinema, along with conversations with directors, producers and actors, world-class food, parties, and an opportunity to rub elbows with filmmakers in a winter wonderland. BIFF has hosted more than 150 filmmakers from around the world since the Boulder-based Beeck sisters lead the inaugural event in 2005.

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