



***Locative Cinema* comes to Life with Commission from Sundance Film Festival, The Banff Centre, and Silicon Valley's ZERO1**

Commission winner UK-based art group **Blast Theory**, known for mixing artistic risk with technological innovation, stresses open source phone systems, virtual worlds & participatory cinema

PREMIERES AT ZERO1'S 2010 01SJ BIENNIAL,

2011 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL AND 2011 BANFF SUMMER ARTS FESTIVAL

October 28, 2009 – ZERO1: The Art & Technology Network in conjunction with the **Sundance Film Festival's** New Frontiers Initiative and Banff New Media Institute at **The Banff Centre** is pleased to announce the winner of the first ever *Locative Cinema Commission*. The UK-based art group Blast Theory has been awarded \$4,500 for the art commission with an additional \$5,000 available for production and residency costs to be undertaken at The Banff New Media Institute, as well as substantial in kind support from The Banff Centre.

'Locative cinema' has been conceived as a 'platform agnostic apparatus' through which artists can use their location as something both specific and generic in order to share a vision of *place*.

The 2009 winner of the commission, Blast Theory, is renowned internationally for their use of interactive media in creating groundbreaking new forms of performance and interactive art that explores the social and political aspects of technology. Led by Matt Adams, Ju Row Farr and Nick Tandavanitj, the group most recently created *Ulrike and Eamon Compliant*, an ambulatory work commissioned for the 2009 Venice Biennale.

Blast Theory's *Locative Cinema* work will premiere at the ZERO1 01SJ Biennial scheduled to take place in San Jose in September of 2010. This will be followed by exhibition at the 2011 edition of New Frontier at the Sundance Film Festival and the 2011 Banff Summer Arts Festival.

Following an international call for submissions put out by three partnering organizations, a multiplicity of artists, works and presentation variations were considered. All were evaluated by the Commission's jury on an ability to engage people using *place* as a key element of the experience, via platforms that ranged from cell phones to the black box of the cinema, from mixed reality to street theatre, from GPS to

handhelds, from distributed to ambient. Notes Commission jury member and ZER01 Artistic Director Steve Dietz, "Blast Theory is one of the most innovative artist groups in the world working in the overlap of participatory art, virtual worlds, and public space. Their work constantly expands our notion of what a narrative experience can be, and we are thrilled that their next 'movie' will be the result of the first ZER01-Banff-Sundance Locative Cinema commission."

Based in Brighton, UK, Blast Theory has a strong track record of taking major artistic risks based on its belief that true innovation requires it. Agile and highly responsive to new ideas and opportunities, Blast Theory received a BAFTA nomination for Technological and Social Innovation. "ZER01, Sundance Institute and the Banff New Media Institute all have proven commitment to supporting emerging forms of creative practice," said Susan Kennard, Director and Executive Producer at The Banff New Media Institute. "We're excited that this collaboration has inspired Blast Theory to create a dynamic new work that will be exhibited to wide and diverse audiences in San Jose, Park City, and Banff and engage the public in a manner that exemplifies the new and changing ways one can experience art."

"In this moment, when the entire film industry is undergoing a sea change, it is incredibly important to support artists and filmmakers who are moved to invent new ways of cinematic storytelling that adapt to the new landscape. The work of Blast Theory exemplifies an artistic vision that is located at the crossroads of art, film, and new media technology, and suggests a fresh new direction as our cinematic culture evolves." said Shari Frilot, Senior Programmer, Sundance Film Festival.

Blast Theory's commission is based on how strategic intervention of our everyday portable sound devices, like the cell phone and music players, can transform the experience of one's surroundings. Through the use of an open source phone management system technology that triggers simultaneous calls to participant's cell phones, the commissioned work will engage participants in a fictional frame of reality, placing participants in a socially constructed, interactive movie as they walk through the city. Closely timed calls to the different participants will build tension and drive the story forward through overheard fragments and brief moments of unscripted interaction. As the narrative reaches its apex, its status as fiction will come into question, leaving participants to ponder Blast Theory's overarching query: as locative media and city based games develop, in what sense are the participants 'present' in their societies?

With the launch of the first *Locative Cinema Commission* at the ZER01 01SJ Biennial in San Jose during September 2010, followed by New Frontier at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City and the Summer Arts Festival in Banff in 2011, this collaborative venture will realize its foremost goal to generalize the platform of specific places, through artistic imagination and technological tools that provide access to ideas, methods for exchanging new interpretations, and markers that allow people to navigate between mixed reality and hard imagination. In response to the news of their *Locative Cinema Commission* Blast Theory art group members commented, "To have received the Locative Cinema Commission from three such distinguished partners is a career highlight for us. It gives us an important opportunity to extend our practice and to create a new work within the context of cinema, narrative and urban space."

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About the Banff New Media Institute

The Banff New Media Institute (BNMI) is an internationally respected arts production and research institute. Fundamental to BNMI is the belief that the creative sector flourishes through collaboration and that the links and tensions across art, technology, science, and research have a critical role to play in describing new ways to see the world, participating in contemporary cultures, and shaping the future. BNMI offers thematic and self-directed artists residencies, partners on research initiatives and provides training, and offers professional development and production support in a multi-disciplinary development environment. For more information on the Banff New Media Institute at The Banff Centre visit: www.banffcentre.ca/bnmi/.

About the Sundance Film Festival

The Sundance Film Festival is the premier showcase for U.S. and international independent film, held each January in and around Park City, Utah. Presenting dramatic and documentary feature-length films from emerging and established artists, innovative short films, filmmaker forums and panels, live music performances ranging from solo acts to film composer events, cutting-edge media installations, and engaging community and student programs, the Festival brings together the most original storytellers of our time.

Supported by the non-profit Sundance Institute, the Festival has introduced global audiences to some of the most ground-breaking films of the past two decades, including *sex, lies, and videotape*, *Maria Full of Grace*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *An Inconvenient Truth*, *Trouble the Water*, and *Central Station* and, through its New Frontier initiative, has brought the cinematic works of media artists including Isaac Julian, Doug Aitken, Pierre Huyghe, Jennifer Steinkamp, and Matthew Barney. www.sundance.org/festival.

About ZER01: The Art and Technology Network

San Jose-based ZER01 has served as a catalyst and platform for the world's most innovative artists since 2000. The nonprofit focuses on inspiring creativity at the intersection of art, technology and digital culture. As producer of the 01SJ Biennial, a multidisciplinary, multi-venue event of visual and performing arts, the moving image, public art and interactive digital media, ZER01 has showcased the work of 350 artists from more than 40 countries—using such “media” as GPS-equipped pigeons, interactive platform shoe devices, mobile phone and surveillance technologies. For more information about ZER01, visit www.zero1.org.

For more information on the Locative Cinema Commission: <http://zero1.org/01sj/lccall>.

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