

The Cross and Bones: where science, faith and rock'n roll collide in steaming irony
A film by Paul Carrière, produced by Amérimage-Spectra,
is chosen to open the Canadian programming series at Hot Docs

Montreal, April 18, 2005 – For the first time since its début 12 years ago, **The Hot Docs International Documentary Festival** has chosen a Québec production to open its Canadian programming series (the Canadian Spectrum Program). The world premiere of ***The Cross and Bones***, a film by **Paul Carrière** produced by **Amérimage-Spectra** will therefore take place in Toronto on Saturday, April 23 at 7 p.m. at the Bloor Cinema, with a second presentation on Monday, April 25 at 4 p.m. at the Isabel Bader Theatre. The film is in competition with 25 other Canadian documentaries being screened at Hot Docs between April 22 and May 1.

Each year, this world-renowned event, North America's premier documentary film festival, welcomes more than a thousand delegates from around the world – producers, directors, buyers, network representatives and distributors - to celebrate the world's finest documentaries. Out of some 1400 films submitted, Hot Docs presents approximately 100 documentaries, produced in Canada and around the world.

"We are particularly proud that our documentary has been chosen to open the Canadian Spectrum category, which presents a selection of the finest documentary films made in Canada this year," says Amérimage-Spectra producer **Lisa Cochrane**. Director Paul Carrière adds: "It's my hope that the film will have resonance, particularly in the context of the recent rise of the religious right. Hopefully, *The Cross and Bones* will question our need to believe in something bigger than ourselves, through science or religion". As for the Hot Docs Canadian Spectrum programmer, **David McIntosh**, he explained that "Paul has accomplished something truly remarkable with this film. He's probed deep into the range of fundamental belief systems of a small Canadian town and connected them to a cosmic debate over the very origins of life. And he's done it all with a superbly paradoxical sense of absurdity and respect."

The Cross and Bones was filmed in the Drumheller Valley in southern Alberta, in the heart of the Canadian Badlands. In Drumheller, three groups of pilgrims with diametrically opposed convictions and interests – fervent Christians, world class paleontologists, and 3000 bikers – reflect upon the origins of humanity and their relationship to the mythical landscape they find themselves in. The film's colorful characters include amateur actors who stage *The Passion of Christ*, among them a Calgary real-estate agent in the role of Jesus, his wife who plays the Virgin Mary, and a Christian ex-convict playing Barrabas. We also meet a theologian-turned-paleontologist and an entrepreneur who specializes in reconstructing dinosaur fossils – he has rediscovered his faith at a time when he is also on the brink of bankruptcy.

Using paradoxical metaphors for faith, hedonism and science, *The Cross and Bones* questions humanity's strongest beliefs and value systems but never takes sides, leaving audience members to do their own thinking. Fresh and satirical in its outlook, brimming with delicious irony and subtle humor, the film loosely examines the beliefs that fundamentally divide all creationists and evolutionists.

The Cross and Bones was produced by Amérimage-Spectra, in association with CBC Newsworld and in collaboration with Canal D, the Knowledge Network and SCN. The film's producers are **Lisa Cochrane**, **Pierre L. Touchette** and **Alain Simard** and the executive producer is **Luc Châtelain**. Director **Paul Carrière**, who co-wrote the film with Lisa Cochrane, has directed documentaries, television series and fiction films. Winner of a Genie Award in 1996 for his documentary *Maman et Eve*, Mr. Carrière has also directed the short films *The Green*, *Sway* and *Landscaping*. For television, he has directed the dramatic series *Naked Josh* and *Les Choix de Sophie*.

This film is generously supported by the **Canadian Television Fund - Created by the Government of Canada and the Canadian Cable Industry - CTF : Licence Fee Program - Telefilm Canada : Equity Investment Program, Quebec - Film and Television Tax Credit - Gestion SODEC** and **The Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit – Canada**, and **PRIM Media Arts Centre**.

Over the past 10 years, *Amerimage-Spectra* has established itself as a major figure in international markets. A member of the **Équipe Spectra** since 1998, the company is known internationally for its know-how and expertise in high-profile performing arts productions, like **The Planets**, based **Gustav Holst** famous musical work, la **Traversée du Miroir**, featuring **les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal**, **The Lord of the Rings Symphony**, by composer **Howard Shore**, **Midnight Sun**, co-produced with **Cirque du Soleil Images** and “**Live at the Montreal Jazz Festival**”, starring **Diana Krall**. Amerimage-Spectra has also won a number of prestigious awards over the years (Rockie Award, Silver Hugo, Rose d’Or, etc.) for its magnificent productions, including **Amelia** by **Edouard Lock** and **La La La Human Steps** (in co-production with **Media Principia**).

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