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**DIRECTORS MARC AND NICK FRANCIS WIN FIRST
MARGARET MEAD FILMMAKER AWARD FOR
WHEN CHINA MET AFRICA
AT THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY**

**AWARD HONORS FILMMAKERS WHO EMBODY THE SPIRIT, ENERGY, AND INNOVATION
DEMONSTRATED BY PIONEERING ANTHROPOLOGIST MARGARET MEAD**

The first-ever **Margaret Mead Filmmaker Award** was given to the brothers **Marc and Nick Francis** for their film *When China Met Africa* at closing night ceremony of the 34th annual **Margaret Mead Film & Video Festival** on Sunday, November 14, 2010. Representing the best in documentary, animation, experimental nonfiction, and archival footage, the Mead Festival offers an intimate look at worlds rarely revealed, furthering its mission of bringing awareness of cultural anthropology.

“The Margaret Mead Filmmaker Award was created to recognize, promote, and identify the great contributions of filmmakers who help interpret contemporary culture to audiences here and around the world,” said Ruth Cohen, senior director for education strategic initiatives at the American Museum of Natural History.

“Honoring Margaret Mead’s dedication to cultural preservation and ethnographic filmmaking, the award also recognizes current filmmakers whose work best exemplify her contribution,” added Ariella Ben-Dov, artistic and festival director of the Margaret Mead Film & Video Festival. “The caliber of the award contenders made it an extremely difficult decision.”

When China Met Africa is a hard-hitting and deeply felt story of the clash of cultures that happens when China, the world’s most populous country, seeks investment opportunities in the sparsely populated, landlocked Republic of Zambia in southern Africa. Zambia’s roads need rebuilding, its land needs cultivating, and its copper needs mining, and China’s need for natural resources seems insatiable. British filmmakers Marc Francis and Nick Francis take a closer look at this imperfect union, following the unfolding of international business deals. Zambian government officials adopt a laissez-faire attitude toward Chinese business practices as the Chinese try to meet deadlines and make as much money as possible. Meanwhile, local workers find themselves taking the short end of the stick. In one instance, employees scramble to collect valuable fuel from a worksite oil spill as

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their bosses scurry to cover it up, throwing the vast cultural and economic divide between these two cultures into sharp relief.

Also under consideration for the award were filmmakers Nadav Harel for *The Electric Mind*, Nicola Bellucci for *In the Garden of Sounds*, Eva Eckert for *A Mountain Musical*, Stefan Constantinescu and Julio Soto for *My Beautiful Dacia*, Boris Bertram for *Tankograd*, and Alexander Kleider and Daniela Michel for *When the Mountain Meets Its Shadow*.

The winning filmmakers were chosen by a noteworthy jury: filmmaker, photographer, and anthropologist John Cohen (*High Lonesome Sound*, *New Lost City Ramblers*, and *Roscoe Holcomb: From Daisy, Kentucky*); producer Wendy Ettinger (*The War Room*, *Moon Over Broadway*, and *Eye of God*); filmmaker and animator Emily Hubley (*The Toe Tactic* and *Hedwig and The Angry Inch*); and director Thomas Allen Harris (*Through A Lens Darkly* and *The Twelve Disciples of Nelson Mandela*). The Margaret Mead Filmmaker Award, given for the first time this year, recognizes documentary filmmakers who embody the spirit, energy, and innovation demonstrated by anthropologist Margaret Mead in her research, fieldwork, films, and writings. The award is given to a filmmaker whose feature documentary offers a new perspective on a culture or community remote from the majority of our audiences' experience as well as displays artistic excellence and originality in storytelling technique. Eligible filmmakers must present a U.S. premiere at the Margaret Mead Film Festival.

In the spirit of Margaret Mead, this year's slate of films opened a window into diverse and vanishing cultures. Films and filmmakers from over 30 countries explored the complexity of society, whether by questioning the ethics of artificial intelligence or by telling the extraordinary story of a blind musician working with developmentally challenged children. Post-screening discussions with filmmakers, film subjects, and field experts enhanced the viewers' experience, with conversations focused on interpreting cultures through the film medium.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (AMNH.ORG)

The American Museum of Natural History is one of the world's preeminent scientific, educational, and cultural institutions. Since its founding in 1869, the Museum has advanced its global mission to explore and interpret human cultures and the natural world through a wide-reaching program of scientific research, education, and exhibitions. The Museum accomplishes this ambitious goal through its wide-ranging facilities and resources. The institution houses 45 permanent exhibition halls, state-of-the-art research laboratories, one of the largest natural history libraries in the Western Hemisphere, and a permanent collection of more than 32 million specimens and cultural artifacts. The spectacular **Frederick Phineas and Sandra Priest Rose Center for Earth and Space**, which opened

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in February 2000, features the rebuilt Hayden Planetarium and striking exhibits about the universe and our planet. With a scientific staff of more than 200, the Museum supports research divisions in anthropology, paleontology, invertebrate and vertebrate zoology, and the physical sciences. With the launch of the **Richard Gilder Graduate School** in 2006, the American Museum of Natural History became the first American museum with the authority to grant the Ph.D. degree. The Museum welcomed 5 million visitors from around the world this year and has produced exhibitions and Space Shows that can currently be seen in venues on five continents, reaching an audience of millions more. In addition, the Museum's website, **amnh.org**, extends its collections, exhibitions, and educational programs to millions more beyond the Museum's walls.

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No. 182