

**Planet in Focus Film Fest Announces Opening Gala, Eco-Heroes, Spotlight Program & Special Series  
– October 21-25 at various venues in Toronto –  
*Finding Farley* Launches Tenth Annual Festival.  
PIF Eco-Heroes Maude Barlow, Ian Clifford Honoured.  
Spotlight Program: Fast Forward Toward a 20/20 Vision.**

Toronto, September 8, 2009- The **tenth anniversary** edition of Canada's preeminent environmental film festival, **Planet in Focus International Environmental Film & Video Festival**, will run **October 21 through October 25** in Toronto with **over 80** of the world's best environmental films by Canadian and international filmmakers. **Planet in Focus** (PIF) showcases films and videos in all forms: documentary, drama, animation, experimental, and new media. The festival is celebrating its 10-year milestone with a timely **Spotlight Program** looking to the future titled *Fast Forward Toward a 20/20 Vision* which looks ahead to the next decade of environmental challenges, innovations and debates. **Tickets go on sale October 1.**

- The **Opening Night Gala** at the Royal Cinema features the Toronto premiere of *Finding Farley* (2009, Canada), written and directed by Gemini Award Winner (*Being Caribou*) **Leanne Allison** and produced by the National Film Board of Canada. The director, along with her husband Karsten Heuer and their two-year-old toddler Zev and dog Willow, retrace the literary footsteps of celebrated author **Farley Mowat** in a 5000 KM journey that sees them trekking, portaging and paddling from the Prairies to their final destination: Mowat's Nova Scotia home to meet the man who inspired their journey. As well as the filmmaker and her family, the screening will feature a **special appearance by Farley Mowat** himself, author of over 40 books, one of Canada's most beloved literary figures and a tireless advocate for environmental issues.
- Also at the opening gala Planet in Focus presents two of its **Eco Hero Awards**: **Maude Barlow**, the National Chairperson of the Council of Canadians, Senior Advisor on Water to the President of the United Nations General Assembly and author of the bestselling book, *Blue Gold* receives the **2009 Planet in Focus International Eco Hero Award** while **Ian Clifford**, CEO of the ZENN Motor Company receives PIF's **Canadian Eco Hero Award**. The awards provide recognition for leadership and outstanding achievements on the environmental front: for Barlow as the tireless international champion of universal water rights and Clifford for his perseverance and entrepreneurial leadership developing the ZENN car. Both **Barlow and Clifford will be in attendance** to accept their awards.
- The **Spotlight Program – Fast Forward Toward a 20/20 Vision** features 10 thought-provoking films from around the world that explore various critical environmental issues with an eye to the future. Contemplating the planetary future and what it will look like for our children and for the generations beyond, the program looks at the challenges we face in the next ten years: energy alternatives, urban environments, soaring extinction rates, global tourism, the future of our oceans, food and the custodianship of our fragile landscape. The festival will also host a panel exploring Toronto's future architectural landscape with some of Canada's leading architects and will offer a range of other timely and topical discussions for the public.
- The festival also includes a unique lineup of **environmental films from China** ranging from superb feature length dramas to documentaries. As well, PIF is engaging in a special collaboration with two other festivals (Voices Forward and the Diaspora Festival) called **Land & Conflict**.

Post-screening discussions, panels, film industry workshops, a School Program and a free children's program at the Bata Shoe Museum round out the offerings at the festival. Additionally, PIF hosts a Green Market that includes access to a business centre with a 400+ environmental film library for industry delegates.

The 2009 Festival programmers, filmmaker **Tina Hahn** and film critic **Joel McConvey** worked with Artistic Director **Candida Paltiel** in developing the 2009 festival lineup which received over 400 submissions from around the world. At Planet in Focus, environmental artistic expression is presented to audiences as a catalyst for public awareness, discussion and appropriate action on the ecological and social health of the planet.

**2009 Planet in Focus International Environmental Film & Video Festival**

**Oct. 21 - Oct. 25, 2009**

**Tickets go on sale October 1, 2009**

**For screening tickets (\$10/\$8 students & seniors), visit [www.planetinfocus.org](http://www.planetinfocus.org) OR**

**call the Box Office at 416-967-1528 OR visit the Box Office in person at 2 Carlton St., West Mezzanine, Toronto.**