

For Immediate Release

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VIDFEST highlights power of digital media to create positive change

VIDFEST 2008 seeks to inspire, featuring visionaries from Kiva to Designcanchange.org

Vancouver – The fifth annual Vancouver International Digital Festival (VIDFEST) showcases the power of digital media to achieve altruistic goals, from tackling climate change to enabling entrepreneurs in the developing world.

“There’s a positively charged atmosphere surrounding VIDFEST this year,” says Kirstin Richter, creative director of VIDFEST. “We’ve drawn some of the top minds from across the creative industries — people who are using digital technologies to solve complex problems and give back to others.”

VIDFEST is Canada's biggest annual gathering of visionary creative minds and business leaders leveraging digital technology in new media, film and television, music, interactive design and marketing, publishing and education. It is an inspiring event where participants build business networks, discuss cutting-edge work and ideas, develop new partnerships and charge up their minds by exploring and pushing the boundaries of creative thinking to affect positive change.

VIDFEST 2008 takes place May 21-24 during Vancouver's Digital Week, which also features the Vancouver International Games Summit (VIGS), Convergence 2008 and the PopVox Awards.

"British Columbia is a leader in the global creative economy", says Kenton Low, president of New Media BC. "We created Vancouver's Digital Week to bring together a portfolio of top events focusing on digital media and encourage cross pollination and collaboration to grow our vibrant creative industries".

VIDFEST 2008 speaker highlights include:

- **Tom Williams**, CEO of **GiveMeaning.com**, an online charitable foundation that brings people together to support a charity of their choice
- **Erik Karjaluo**, founder of **DesignCanChange.org**, an online movement to unite designers to collectively address climate change
- **Dylan Higgins**, from **Kiva.org**, the first person-to-person micro-lending website that enables entrepreneurs in the developing world
- **Jason Mogus**, the developer behind **NothingButNets.net**, a website dedicated to preventing the spread of Malaria throughout the African continent
- Super-star bloggers **Heather Armstrong** of **Dooce.com** and **Maggie Mason** of **Mightygirl.com**

VIDFEST programme, registration, passes and ticket information available online at www.vidfest.com, with early bird passes available until May 1. By popular demand, the festival is returning to its home base on Vancouver’s Granville Island.

For the second year running, VIDFEST hosts the annual **PopVox Awards** Gala, a world-class people’s choice awards event for the digital media industry, juried by the voting public.

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The PopVox Awards offers digital content creators the opportunity to showcase their work, review peer submissions and get inspired by some of the top-notch content creation in digital media.

“We’re proud to continue hosting a world-class digital media awards event based on an audience-driven, democratic process,” says Kirstin Richter. “Content creators submit their own work online, and it’s up to the people to decide who wins.”

Nominations for the PopVox Awards are open April 1-30, with content creators submitting work to www.popvoxawards.com and public voting from May 1-12. Winners will be announced at the VIDFEST gala on May 23.

PopVox Award categories for 2008 include: Best Digital Animated Short, Best Digital VFX, Best Game (Console/PC), Best Game (Casual), Best Mobile (Game), Best Mobile (Application), Best Digital Campaign, Best User Generated/Crowd-sourced Content Site, Best Digital Score, Best Do-Gooder site (Social Change Initiative) and Homegrown Award (Best BC-based Venture).

Presented by New Media BC and supported by Telefilm, VIDFEST is Canada’s biggest annual digital content event, drawing participants from across the digital media and creative sectors including games, web 2.0, interactive design, animation and mobile. For more information, visit www.vidfest.com.

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