

August 3, 2001

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Peter Gerard
573 449 7504
peter@bbfilm.com
www.bbfilm.com

Columbia's film festival prepares for a second take

(Columbia, MO) – Last year's inaugural Bargain Basement Film Festival was an unqualified success. Upstart fest organizers Aaron Davis and Peter Gerard pushed the boundaries of sleep deprivation to produce a do-it-yourself showcase that all of Columbia could be proud of. This year, they're back again, with three times as many submissions from around the world and a plan to once again wow audiences at Ragtag.

The festival was founded on the belief that Hollywood and big-budget filmmaking are damaging creativity and undermining the artistic nature of cinema. Since underground films have lacked sufficient venues for public display, Davis and Gerard conceived of Bargain Basement in March 2000, hoping to help independent filmmakers share their work. "There are many amazing films made for mere pennies each year," Davis says. "Few are seen by more than a handful of people." Bargain Basement celebrates the low-budget talent that people typically ignore.

Building on last year's experience, Gerard and Davis took advantage of the internet to draw interest in Columbia's film festival. "Most of our submissions came through our website," Gerard explains. "We received films from all over the world—Japan, Australia, Germany, Israel, Britain, and of course the U.S., including Columbia." Gerard and Davis sorted through 120 submissions to make a packed three-day schedule of thirty-three films ranging in length from one minute to an hour and a half.

The festival will be held at Ragtag Cinema at 23 N. 10th St. on August 23, 24, and 25. There will be nine shows, featuring selections of shorts or full-length films. Along with the screenings Davis and Gerard have planned a small concert, an ice cream social and a ramen-noodle cook-off. Tickets will cost from \$3 to \$5 for each screening or \$20 for a complete festival pass.

This year's schedule will include several short films from Israel as well as a new feature from Brazil called *Drought*. "I believe this will be the first time *Drought* is shown in the U.S.," Gerard says. "We are bringing a unique selection of high quality films to Columbia. As a result of the large number of submissions, we have a much better program than last year." Bargain Basement will showcase local films as well. Visit the festival website at www.bbfilm.com for a complete schedule.

Filmmakers from around the country will be attending the festival, hoping to be selected for one of Bargain Basement's awards. In addition to the Jury awards, the audience will vote for its favorite films. Certificates will be awarded at a party after the festival Saturday night.

Peter Gerard, a Columbia native, is a student at Napier University in Edinburgh, Scotland. Aaron Davis lives and works in Columbia, where he is known for his past films. They are currently working on a documentary about the international graffiti-art movement.

###