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2013 TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES THE 2013 TRIBECA/ESPN SPORTS FILM FESTIVAL LINEUP

World Premiere of Kevin Connolly's *Big Shot* to Serve as Program's Gala Premiere

Program to Include Selections from ESPN Films' Upcoming Series "Nine for IX" Highlighting Women in Sports

[New York, NY – March 12, 2013] – The Tribeca Film Festival (TFF) today announced the lineup for the seventh annual Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival. Founded to broaden the audience for independent film through stories about sports and competition, this year's Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival will consist of nine films, including four titles from ESPN Films' highly anticipated "Nine for IX" series which celebrates the fortieth anniversary of Title IX with nine documentary films about women in sports directed by outstanding female filmmakers. The 2013 Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival will run during the 12th edition of TFF, presented by American Express, April 17 – April 28 at locations around New York City.

The Festival revealed that the world premiere of *Big Shot*, directed by Kevin Connolly, will serve as the gala premiere of the program on Friday, April 19. Connolly is returning to Tribeca having debuted his feature film *Gardener of Eden* in 2007. In *Big Shot*, Connolly chronicles John Spano's fraudulent purchase of the New York Islanders. In 1997, Spano bought the New York Islanders for a staggering \$165 million. The scheme behind Spano's acquisition of the team is revealed as *Big Shot* takes viewers behind the scenes of the biggest fraud in hockey history.

"The sports film offerings at this year's Festival give sports fans and movie buffs tremendous opportunities to experience the many ways that sports intersect with our culture," said Genna Terranova, Tribeca Film Festival Director of Programming. "We are excited that *Big Shot*, which chronicles one of the most infamous sagas in professional sports management history, will kick-off this year's Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival, and to share the range of these personal stories seen through the lens of sports."

"I've always thought the expression 'passion project' was kind of a cliché until I started working on *Big Shot* for ESPN," said Kevin Connolly. "Working side by side and spending time with guys that I literally grew up idolizing has been a once in a lifetime opportunity. The whole experience, including having the film premiere in New York at the festival, has been a dream come true."

"There are many vibrant, independent voices out there telling incredible sports stories and we're honored to be involved with the Tribeca Film Festival where together we can shine a light on these documentaries and filmmakers," said Connor Schell, vice president of ESPN Films. "We produce our films with the intention of capturing both the glory and the heartbreak of what sports mean to so many people and we are very proud of the creative, story-driven documentaries that were selected for this year's Festival."

The Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival has become the premier showcase for independent films about sports and competition. The titles that will screen as part of the Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival include documentary films that explore stories of an extreme skiing legend; the world's top professional skateboarders; an overhyped high school basketball player; the battle in the ring and the courts of the greatest boxing legend; the personal struggles of college sports' most successful coach ever; the largely

unknown history of an Olympic gold medalist and her link with East Germany's secret police; the unyielding quest of a world-class diver to reach new depths; and the gender politics of post-game locker room interviews.

All of this year's Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival films will screen at Tribeca Cinemas on Saturday, April 27. The films also screen prior to April 27 throughout the Festival.

In addition to the film series, the Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival will present Sports Day as part of the Tribeca Family Festival Street Fair. Sports Day, which will take place on Saturday, April 27, offers fans an opportunity to engage in a variety of free, sports-related games and activities. In addition, some of New York's most popular athletes, mascots and sports personalities will make guest appearances throughout the day. Sports Day is free and open to the public and will take place on North Moore Street, between Greenwich and West Streets, in Manhattan.

The following are the films featured in the 2013 Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival.

TRIBECA/ESPN SPORTS FILM FESTIVAL LINE-UP

Gala

- **Big Shot**, directed by Kevin Connolly. (USA) – World Premiere, Documentary. In 1997, John Spano, a previously unknown Dallas business mogul, bought the New York Islanders for a whopping \$165 million. The future looked bright for the once-legendary team. Then Spano took his seat in the front office. *Entourage's* Kevin Connolly takes us behind the scenes of the biggest fraud in hockey history, as Spano's wealth is revealed to be a lie and his rise to power a brilliantly concocted scheme.

The following Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival titles have been announced in their respective sections as part of the 2013 TFF film program:

- **McConkey**, directed and written by Steve Winter, Murray Wais, Scott Gaffney, David Zieff, and Rob Bruce. (USA) – World Premiere, Documentary. An all-star roster of sports movie-making talent directs this heartfelt biography of extreme ski trailblazer Shane McConkey, once described as "the most influential skier ever." *McConkey* covers forty years and countless high places to track Shane's conversion from downhill racer to freeskiing marvel to pioneer of a hair-raising new discipline—ski BASE jumping—giving new meaning to the question, how do you live your life to the fullest?
- **Lenny Cooke**, directed by Benny Safdie and Joshua Safdie. (USA) – World Premiere, Documentary. In 2001, Lenny Cooke was the most hyped high school basketball player in the country, ranked above future greats LeBron James, Amar'e Stoudemire and Carmelo Anthony. A decade later, Lenny has never played a minute in the NBA. In this quintessentially American documentary, filmmaking brothers Joshua and Benny Safdie track the unfulfilled destiny of a man for whom superstardom was only just out of reach.
- **The Trials of Muhammad Ali**, directed by Bill Siegel. (USA) – World Premiere, Documentary. Brash boxer Cassius Clay burst into the American consciousness in the early 1960s, just ahead of the Civil Rights movement. His transformation into the spiritually enlightened heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali is legendary, but this religious awakening also led to a bitter legal battle with the U.S. government after he refused to serve in the Vietnam War. This film reveals the perfect storm of race, religion and politics that shaped one of the most recognizable figures in sports history.
- **The Motivation**, directed by Adam Bhala Lough. (USA) – World Premiere, Documentary. Go inside the lives and training regimes of eight of the world's gutsiest professional skateboarders. These fearless stars face unique obstacles on the way to the Street League Championship and the coveted title of best street skateboarder in the world. Adam Bhala Lough, creator of the independent hit *Bomb the System* (TFF 2003), directs this fresh, energetic documentary search

for that elusive quality that separates winners from the pack. *In English, Portuguese with subtitles.*

Special Screenings from the “Nine for IX” series

- **Pat XO**, directed by Lisa Lax and Nancy Stern Winters. Produced by Robin Roberts. (USA) – World Premiere, Documentary. In August 2011, Pat Summitt, NCAA basketball’s winningest coach, made the stunning announcement that she had early-onset Alzheimer’s disease. Before and after resigning in April 2012, the legendary coach and her son, Tyler, have set out to beat this challenge as they had every other—with grace, humor and, most of all, each other. *Pat XO* tells the remarkable story of this incomparable coach as it has never been told before, straight from the people who knew her best.
- **The Diplomat**, directed by Senain Kheshgi and Jennifer Arnold. (USA) – World Premiere, Documentary. At the height of the Cold War, Katarina Witt became one of East Germany’s most famous athletes, winning six European titles, four world championships and back-to-back Olympic gold medals. Known as “the most beautiful face of socialism,” she earned unique benefits in East Germany but also constant surveillance from the Stasi, the notorious secret police force.
- **No Limits**, directed by Alison Ellwood. (USA) – World Premiere, Documentary. Suffering from scoliosis as a teenager, Audrey Mestre found freedom in the ocean. Years later, she discovered another reason to love the water: the elusive, often raucous free diver Pipin Ferreras. As Mestre follows Ferreras’s almost spiritual quest to push his limits underwater, she moves from supporter to ardent free diver to world-class competitor. Then a challenge from a rival pushes the couple to the brink of what is possible, both above and below the surface.
- **Let Them Wear Towels**, directed by Ricki Stern and Annie Sundberg. (USA) – World Premiere, Documentary. During the 1977 World Series, *Sports Illustrated* reporter Melissa Ludtke was denied access to the players’ locker room. After a very public fight, the door was opened, but the debate about female journalists in the male sanctum of the clubhouse remained. Through interviews with pioneering female sports writers, *Let Them Wear Towels* captures the raw behavior, humorous retaliation, angry lawsuits and remarkable resolve that went into the struggle for equal access for women reporters.

About the Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival

The Tribeca/ESPN Sports Film Festival is a partnership between Tribeca Enterprises, the parent company of the Tribeca Film Festival, and ESPN Inc. The Festival, founded in 2006, is the premiere showcase for independent sports films.

Tickets for the 2013 Festival:

Advance selection ticket packages and passes, as well as discount ticket packages are now on sale. All Festival packages and passes can be purchased online at www.tribecafilm.com/festival, or by telephone at (646) 502-5296 or toll free at (866) 941-FEST (3378).

Tickets for the Festival will be \$16.00 for evening and weekend screenings, and \$8.00 for all late-night and weekday matinee screenings. Single ticket sales begin Tuesday, April 9 for American Express Cardmembers, Sunday, April 14 for downtown residents, and Monday, April 15 for the general public. Single tickets can be purchased online, by telephone, or at one of the Ticket Outlets, with locations at Tribeca Cinemas at 54 Varick Street, Clearview Cinemas Chelsea at 260 W. 23rd Street, and AMC Loews Village 7 at 66 3rd Avenue. The 2013 Festival will continue offering ticket discounts for evening and weekend screenings for students, seniors and select downtown Manhattan residents. Discounted tickets are available at Ticket Outlet locations only. Additional information and further details on the Festival can be found at www.tribecafilm.com.

About the Tribeca Film Festival:

The Tribeca Film Festival helps filmmakers reach the broadest possible audience, enabling the international film community and general public to experience the power of cinema and promote New

York City as a major filmmaking center. It is well known for being a diverse international film festival that supports emerging and established directors.

Founded by Robert De Niro, Jane Rosenthal and Craig Hatkoff in 2001 following the attacks on the World Trade Center, to spur the economic and cultural revitalization of the lower Manhattan district through an annual celebration of film, music and culture, the Festival brings the industry and community together around storytelling.

The Tribeca Film Festival has screened more than 1,400 films from more than 80 countries since its first edition in 2002. Since inception, it has attracted an international audience of more than 4.0 million attendees and has generated an estimated \$750 million in economic activity for New York City.

About the 2013 Festival Sponsors

As Founding Sponsor of the Tribeca Film Festival, American Express is committed to supporting the Festival and the art of filmmaking, bringing business and energy to New York City and offering Cardmembers and festivalgoers the opportunity to enjoy the best of storytelling through film.

The Tribeca Film Festival is pleased to announce the return of its Signature Sponsors: Accenture, Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Bloomberg, BOMBAY SAPPHIRE® Gin, Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC), Brookfield, Cadillac, Conrad Hotels & Resorts, ESPN, GE FOCUS FORWARD (in partnership with cinelan), Hilton Hotels & Resorts, Heineken USA, JetBlue, Magnum® Ice Cream, NBC 4 New York, NCM Media Networks, The New York Times, and OppenheimerFunds. The Festival is also honored to welcome the following new Signature Sponsors: IWC Schaffhausen, PepsiCo, and Sony Electronics.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Film stills for the 2013 Tribeca Film Festival are available at www.image.net. If you are not an image.net media user yet, please register using the following referral code: 2604.

Contacts for all these feature-length films can be viewed in the press section of the Tribeca Film Festival website: www.tribecafilm.com/festival/media.

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