

Family Film "Witt's Daughter" Focuses on the Conflicts of a Homecoming American Soldier with Hope

By Crowded Metro Films

Dated: Apr 20, 2009

A touching timeless tale of a soldier's homecoming: Crowded Metro Films' "Witt's Daughter" is a story that's time has come as an official selection of the Newport Beach Film Festival. 8:00p.m. April 25 2009 for "the Impact of War program"

The sacrifice of our nation's soldiers is made all the more poignant in light of their tireless service so far away from the families they love. As America makes plans for its pull out of Iraq, thoughts turn to what returning GI's may face. Independent filmmaker Carole Holliday explores the theme of homecoming with conflict humor and hope in her film "Witt's Daughter."

"Witt's Daughter" is a bitter sweet tale of a young man who returns from the Korean War and expects everything to be as he left it, but instead finds that his little daughter sees him as an unwelcome stranger. Ms Holliday insists she didn't initially intend on making a war film. "I wanted to create a character piece about conflict between a stubborn father and his tiny headstrong daughter. The issue of war was context, but not the reason for making the film." Carole started the project at a time when the United States was well into the war in Iraq and read some of the stories of events there to get a feeling for her main character. "What the soldiers went through was touching. It gave me tremendous empathy for my flawed hero, so that even if he made stubborn choices, he was still sort of justifiable."

Competition to become an official selection in film festivals can be fierce. At times being a well-produced and entertaining movie may not be enough. Sometimes the old-fashioned, good fortune of being in the right place, at the right time still works. Such is the case with her film. Ms. Holliday was overwhelmed to become the official selections of not one but three film festival because of her soldier's theme. The first of is the 2009 Newport Beach Film Festival's shorts program entitled: "Impact of War." The ninety-minute program showcases a variety of documentaries and narratives- guaranteed to captivate the audience. Topics range from tales of the men who've fought in war, to stories of children and families affected by war; and include scenarios of heroism, intrigue, drama and hope. These short films are slated to screen at the Edward's Island Cinema, in Newport Beach, CA- on Saturday, April 25, at 8:00pm.

Carole Holliday, the writer-director of "Witt's Daughter," and president of Crowded Metro Films, is a former Disney storyboard artist. For this project, she called on her animation sensibilities to direct her first live-action film. "My Cinematographer laughed when I told him one of my references for lighting the film was from the movie 'Bambi.' Of course I had other visuals in mind, but it was easy for me to pull from my animation background for references. I wanted the film to have a warm and colorful look, but at the same time have a sense of sophistication." The proof is on screen in this beautifully lensed and wonderfully acted movie. Shot in High Definition with a look more like film, "Witt's Daughter" is a beautiful and touching period piece set in the 1950's, that's already received wonderful reviews.

"I'm humbled by delighted by the response. Even though my film is set in the fifties, the emotion which the story evokes is just as relevant today," says Ms. Holliday.

Adam Edgar, who portrays the displaced father fresh from the battlefield, does a stellar job in the role. In light of our nation's current events, Edgar had this to say about the film- "I feel that 'Witt's Daughter' is a story about a returning soldier, a man-- and his role in a family that has experienced his prolonged absence.

I think this is a story that relates to any time, and place, and any circumstance. Military service so often separates families and puts tremendous strain on their bonds- making this film an excellent vessel for telling this universal story. "Witt's Daughter is a film that should be seen by everyone, for it tells a tale that's unfolding daily in homes and families, all over the United States, and around the world."

Alia Margaret was four years old when she portrayed the role of Witt's adorable baby girl, Catherine May. When asked what would she tell the children of service men and women who've just returned home from war? Although too young to fully grasp the question's depth about the long absence of a parent-- little Alia Margaret simply smiled, tilted her head demurely and sweetly answered, "You should hug them and kiss them." For some soldiers—that'd be better than any medal they could ever receive.

Other films included in the Newport Beach Film Festival shorts program are director Tim Temple's documentary: "Why We Serve;" that focuses on ten U.S. Air Force officers and their heroic commitment to their country demonstrated by their choice to serve in the military instead of pursuing more lucrative private-sector jobs. Tim O'Hara's Iraqi documentary: "Operation Falcon;" a film that deals with one Marine's quest to get his interpreter safely into the United States against the odds. Also included in the program of short films is Elisabetta Bernardini's narrative coming-of-age story set in Italy during the German occupation of an adolescent named Rosa who plays with her younger siblings while she guards a dangerous secret, entitled "Retreating." A question and answer session will follow the ninety-minute shorts program screening.

Newport Beach Film Festival "Impact of War"

Edwards Island Cinemas address:

999 Newport Center Dr., Newport Beach, CA, 92660

(949) 640-1971

Tickets are \$12.00 and can be bought by going to the link below

http://newportbeach.bside.com/2009/films/impactofwar_newportbeach2009

Other performances of the film will include one in Washington DC as part of the GI film festival on May 15, at 11:30 am as well as a soldier's event as part of the Film Festival Favorites at the Fine Arts theatre in Beverly Hills on May 29th at 7:30 pm.

For trailer, excerpts from the film and additional information please visit the Crowded Metro Films website <http://www.crowdedmetrofilms.com/>

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