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Academy Awards Organization Presents \$10,000 Grant to Indie Memphis Film Fest

MEMPHIS, Tennessee, November 20, 2009 – Indie Memphis, which marked its 12th annual event last month with record-breaking attendance, has been awarded a \$10,000 grant by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, the organization that holds the Academy Awards.

The amount was the maximum that could be awarded to Indie Memphis. It was also the first grant that the Oscar organization’s educational and cultural committee has given to a Memphis organization.

Erik Jambor, executive director of Indie Memphis, said the funds would be used to “help increase the participation of regional and national filmmakers and expand its outreach into schools, low-income communities and other underrepresented areas.”

A total of \$450,000 was presented by the Academy to a total of 24 film festivals. About 130 festivals applied for funding.

Last month’s festival set a new Indie Memphis attendance record by drawing 7,200 to the eight-day event. It was an increase of 35 percent from the previous high of 5,300 in 2008, according to Jambor.

More than 150 films were screened last month at the festival, named one of the world’s “25 Coolest Film Festivals” by *MovieMaker*, a New York-based bimonthly magazine that covers the art and business of making movies.

The ten-day festival included two performances by the nationally acclaimed Alloy Orchestra, the first exhibition of Robert King photography and the first films screened at the Levitt Shell in more than a decade – *Elvis: '68 Special*, presented by Elvis Presley Enterprises and co-presented by the Levitt Shell and the *Memphis Flyer*, and the Coen Brothers' cult-classic, *The Big Lebowski*. Robyn Hitchcock, internationally renowned singer and songwriter, closed the festival with a solo, acoustic performance at Malco Theatres' Studio on the Square on the closing night of last month's event.

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