

**EMBARGOED UNTIL OCTOBER 16**

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Background Information: [HeartlandFilmFestival.org](http://HeartlandFilmFestival.org)

### **Heartland Film Festival Announces 2011 Award Winners**

*Red Dog* receives \$100,000 Grand Prize for Best Narrative Feature, *Crime After Crime* receives \$25,000 Award for Best Documentary Feature and *Thief* receives the \$10,000 Vision Award for Best Short Film

**INDIANAPOLIS (Oct. 15)** – The Heartland Film Festival celebrated and honored some of the world's most talented and inspiring independent filmmakers during the 20th annual Heartland Film Festival Awards Ceremony at the Old National Centre last night. Awards and \$150,000 in cash prizes were presented to 17 films. Heartland announced ***Red Dog* by Nelson Woss as the \$100,000 Grand Prize Award Winner for Best Narrative Feature; *Crime After Crime* by Yoav Potash as the winner of the \$25,000 Award for Best Documentary Feature and *Thief* by Julian Higgins as the winner of the \$10,000 Vision Award for Best Short Film.**

The glamorous black-tie event was emceed by Indiana native Catt Sadler, E! Entertainment Television. Special guests in attendance included **Rudy Ruettiger** ("Rudy"), with the "Rudy" filmmakers **Angelo Pizzo** and **David Anspaugh**, both of whom were presenters. **Corbin Bernsen** is a returning filmmaker who presented an award.

"Each year we have the incredible opportunity at Heartland to celebrate independent filmmakers and recognize them for their significant contribution to the mission of Heartland Truly Moving Pictures," said Jeffrey L. Sparks, president and CEO of Heartland Truly Moving Pictures. "It's our great honor to award the top films for creating beautifully made films that demonstrate excellence in filmmaking and best aligning with Heartland's mission."

During the program, Heartland honored 17 feature-length and short films. Two student films received Jimmy Stewart Memorial Crystal Heart Awards and 15 films were honored with Crystal Heart Awards. These films were selected from a record 858 independent film submissions for best meeting Heartland's mission and demonstrating excellence in filmmaking.

The five narrative feature Award-winning films that vied for the \$100,000 Grand Prize were ***Inuk*, *Kinyarwanda*, *Red Dog*, *Romantics Anonymous* and *The Hammer***. The winner was: *Red Dog*

Five documentary feature Award winners competed for the Festival's \$25,000 prize for Best Documentary Feature. These films were: ***Crime After Crime*, *Elevate*, *Facing Forward*, *Fambul Tok* and *Where Soldiers Come From***. The winner was: *Crime After Crime*

In addition to narrative and documentary feature competitions, Heartland presented the \$10,000 Vision Award for Best Short to ***Thief***, one of the seven Award-winning short films. The films in this category included: ***A Finger Two Dots Then Me*, *Abuelas (Grandmothers)*, *Crescendo*, *From The Ground Up*, *The Candy Shop*, *Den Første Anders (The First Anders)* and *Thief***

For the second year, Heartland Truly Moving Pictures recognized high school age filmmakers through its Heartland Institute program. Aspiring high school filmmakers were encouraged to create a 10-minute film that embodied the 2011 theme: COURAGE. The Grand Prize Award along with a cash prize of \$2,500 was presented to **Director Miguel Lopez** of California for his film, *Sacrifices of My Father*.

Heartland awarded more than \$150,000 in cash prizes and winning filmmakers received a Crystal Heart Award designed by Marc Aronstam and Aronstam Fine Jewelers. The \$25,000 Award for Best Documentary Feature was underwritten by Indianapolis Volkswagen Dealers, the \$10,000 Vision Award for Best Short Film was underwritten by KeyBank, and the Jimmy Stewart Memorial Crystal Heart Awards were underwritten by The Stewart Foundation. To date, Heartland has awarded more than \$2.3 million to support filmmakers in their quest to create uplifting and inspiring films.

### **About Heartland Truly Moving Pictures**

*Heartland Truly Moving Pictures, a non-profit arts organization, seeks to promote positive change in people's lives through the transformative power of film. Its flagship event, the Heartland Film Festival®, launched in 1991 and runs each October in Indianapolis, screening independent films from around the world. Each year, the Festival awards more than \$150,000 in cash prizes and presents its Crystal Heart Awards to the top-judged submissions. Heartland has awarded more than \$2.3 million to support filmmakers during the last 19 years. The organization's Truly Moving Picture Award was created to honor films released theatrically that align with Heartland's mission. By bestowing this award seal to honored films, the award allows studios and distributors to inform audiences of a film's transformative power and appeal. Heartland is also dedicated to cultivating youth, and thus created the Heartland Institute to provide innovative educational and outreach programs that enrich the minds and lives of youth and aspiring filmmakers. For more information, visit [TrulyMovingPictures.org](http://TrulyMovingPictures.org).*

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