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SLEEP DEALER WINS ALFRED P. SLOAN PRIZE AT 2008 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

Park City, UT – The 2008 Sundance Film Festival is pleased to announce that SLEEP DEALER, directed by Alex Rivera, is the recipient of this year's Alfred P. Sloan Prize. The Prize, which carries a \$20,000 cash award to the filmmaker provided by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, is presented to an outstanding feature film focusing on science or technology as a theme, or depicting a scientist, engineer or mathematician as a major character. The Prize will be presented at the Sundance Film Festival Awards Ceremony on Saturday, January 26. SLEEP DEALER, which is Rivera's feature film debut, was developed at the 2000 and 2001 Sundance Institute Feature Film Program Labs, and was also a recipient of the 2002 Sundance/NHK award and a 2004 Annenberg Feature Film Fellowship.

SLEEP DEALER is a story set in a near future in which technology has re-framed the human condition. The film, which screened in Dramatic Competition, was selected "for its visionary and humane tale of a young man grappling with a technological future in which neural implants, telerobotics and ubiquitous computing serve a global economy rife with fundamental challenges and opportunities, and for its powerful and original storytelling and direction."

The Alfred P. Sloan Prize is a major component of the Sundance Science-in-Film Initiative, which is made possible by a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. The Initiative supports the development and exhibition of new independent film projects that explore science and technology themes or that depict scientists, engineers and mathematicians in engaging and innovative ways.

In addition to the Prize, the Initiative presents a panel discussion at the Festival that brings together scientists and filmmakers to explore compelling, contemporary issues regarding science in film; and, in the Sundance Feature Film Program, the Initiative supports the Sloan Commissioning Fund, which provides resources for Initiative projects early in the development phase; and the Sloan Fellowship, which develops eligible projects at the Sundance Feature Film Labs towards production. This Initiative blends the Sloan Foundation's goal of enhancing public understanding of science and technology with Sundance Institute's mission to foster independent voices and compelling storytelling in film.

The winning film was selected by a committee of film and science professionals based on the quality of the film's presentation of science and technology themes and/or characters. This year's Alfred P. Sloan jury members include:

Alan Alda -- Five-time Emmy Award winner, six-time Golden Globe winner, Academy Award nominee and best-selling author Alan Alda returns to the Sundance Film Festival in this year's DIMINISHED CAPACITY, directed by Terry Kinney. He appeared in last year's Sundance Film Festival in Rod Lurie's RESURECTING THE CHAMP. In addition to the 11 years he spent on the television series M*A*S*H, Alda also starred in ABC's The West Wing. He has acted in, written, and directed many feature films and played vital parts in such diverse works as Woody Allen's CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS (1989) and Martin Scorsese's THE AVIATOR (2004). An accomplished stage veteran, Alda was nominated for Tony Awards for lead roles in the musical The Apple Tree and the play Jake's Women. Other plays include QED, Only in America, Fair Game for Lovers and The Owl and the Pussycat.

Michael Polish -- Michael Polish made his feature film debut at 1999 Sundance Film Festival with TWIN FALLS IDAHO, which he directed, co-wrote and starred in with twin brother Mark Polish. JACKPOT, the brothers' second feature film, won the 2001 Independent Spirit Award. Premiering at Sundance in 2003, NORTHFORK, starring James Woods, Daryl Hannah and Nick Nolte, garnered rave reviews. Recounting their artistic rite of passage for aspiring

moviemakers everywhere, the Polish brothers wrote *The Declaration of Independent Filmmaking*, recently published by Harcourt.

Evan I. Schwartz -- Author Evan I. Schwartz has published four books, the latest of which is *Juice: The Creative Fuel That Drives World-Class Inventors* (Harvard Business School Press). Schwartz's previous book, *The Last Lone Inventor: A Tale of Genius, Deceit, and the Birth of Television* (HarperCollins) was named by *Fortune* as one of the 75 best business books of all time. Evan is a former editor at *BusinessWeek*, where he was part of a team that won a National Magazine Award. He has also written for *The New York Times*, *Wired*, and MIT's *Technology Review*. Most recently, Evan served as a writer and producer for *SAVED BY THE SUN*, airing on PBS as part of the NOVA series.

Benedict Schwegler Jr., Ph.D., M.ASCE -- As chief scientist of Walt Disney Imagineering (WDI) Research & Development, Benedict Schwegler has been involved in nearly all of WDI's construction projects over the past two decades. Under his leadership, a team of engineers uses computerized models to design and manage capital projects for the Disney Enterprises, with an emphasis on energy and water conservation. Schwegler is also a Consulting Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Stanford University, where he has helped create the first university course on Sustainable Engineering.

John Underkoffler -- John Underkoffler is Chief Scientist and co-founder of Oblong Industries, Inc., whose flagship product, *g-speak*, is the world's first mature & robust gestural computing platform. He served as science and technology advisor to the *MINORITY REPORT* (2002), *THE HULK* (2003), and *AEON FLUX* (2005), among others. Underkoffler's engineering and design pursuits in Los Angeles include work for the entertainment, gaming, and music industries, as well as academia. In 2004 he served on a featured panel at Sundance sponsored by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, entitled *The Perils of Prometheus; Ethics in Science and Film*.

Alfred P. Sloan Foundation

This effort at Sundance is part of a broader national program by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to stimulate leading artists in film, television, and theater; to create more authentic and compelling stories about science and technology; and to challenge existing stereotypes about scientists, engineers, and mathematicians in the popular imagination. Over the past ten years, the Foundation has partnered with some of the top film schools in the country – including AFI, Carnegie Mellon, Columbia, NYU, UCLA, and USC – and established annual awards in screenwriting and film production and an annual first-feature award for alumni. The Foundation has also started an annual Sloan Feature Film Prize at the Hamptons International Film Festival and initiated new screenwriting workshops at the Hamptons and TriBeCa Film Festival. In addition, it continues to work with leading writer/producers and major studios to create more films, TV shows and TV movies featuring scientists, mathematicians and engineers.

The New York-based Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, founded in 1934, makes grants in science, technology, and economic performance. The Foundation's program in public understanding of science, directed by Program Director Doron Weber, supports books, radio, film, television, and theatre, including not only *Proof*, *Copenhagen*, and Alan Alda's *QED*, but dozens of new plays from the Ensemble Studio Theatre and the Manhattan Theater Club, including the Broadway-bound play, *The Secret Order*.

Sundance Institute

Dedicated year-round to the development of artists of independent vision and to the exhibition of their new work, Sundance Institute celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2006. Founded by Robert Redford in 1981, the Institute has grown into an internationally recognized resource for thousands of independent artists through its Film Festival and artistic development programs for filmmakers, screenwriters, composers, playwrights, and theatre artists. The original values of independence, creative risk-taking, and discovery continue to define and guide the work of Sundance Institute, both with U.S. artists and, increasingly, with artists from other regions of the world.

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