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Juche Rules short film brings realistic North Korea experience to Pasadena

Pasadena, California - July 20, 2010 – The first-ever English-language dramatic short to be set in North Korea will be screening at the Action on Film International Film Festival in Pasadena this month. “Juche Rules,” which is inspired by true events, follows the story of a young American journalist who gains special access to the hermit kingdom.

“I traveled to North Korea once by boat, and another time by bus straight through the DMZ,” said Screenwriter Mark Niu. “Both trips were so controlled and so frustrating because I wasn’t allowed to talk directly with North Korean people to learn about their true feelings. This film allowed me to revisit my trip and ask the question, ‘What if I had made a real human connection? And even more, how would I have responded if that connection was put to the test?’”

“Juche Rules,” is named after the North Korean philosophy of *Juche*, which is used by North Korean Leader Kim Jong-Il to govern his isolated country. The story has eerie similarities to the recent incident where journalists Laura Ling and Euna Lee were taken prisoner in North Korea. A year before that incident, Niu penned “Juche Rules” as a play, which won a USC play festival staged at East-West Players Theater.

“We were startled to find out how closely some of the themes in our film mirrored news headlines,” said Director Kristina Romero, a former actress on *As The World Turns*. “Some say truth is stranger than fiction. But in our eyes, fiction is often truer than real life.”

“Juche Rules” stars Roy Vongtama and Ryun Yu and was produced by Resonant Entertainment, LLC. The film recently won runner-up for Best Short Narrative at the Mt. Rainier Film Festival in Washington State and was nominated for Best Screenplay at the Edgemar Short Film Festival in Santa Monica. It screens at the AOF International Film Festival on Wednesday, July 28 at 6 p.m. at the Regency Academy Theater located at 1003 E. Colorado Blvd in Pasadena.

Contact:

Roy Vongtama

Resonant Entertainment

321 S. Doheny Dr., Suite 4

Beverly Hills, CA 90211

(310) 403-8349

Vongtama@gmail.com

<http://www.jucherules.com>

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