

News Release - Thursday 23 October 2008

WANTED: STEVEN SPIELBERG, DAN BROWN, MARIO TESTINO AND
DAMIEN HIRST
FOR FORT WILLIAM MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL 2009

The upcoming film, writing, photography and art competitions at The Fort William Mountain Festival 2009 may well attract international creative stars but that's no reason not to enter yourself. Budding filmmakers, writers, photographers and artists are invited to enter their mountain culture related work into competitions championing outdoor adventure, breathtaking mountain landscape and the culture that surrounds it.

International Adventure Film Competition 2009

The John Muir Trust's Wild Places, Wild Journeys Writing Competition 2009

Fort William Mountain Festival 2009 Photography Competition

Open Art Exhibition and the People's Choice Original Art Competition 2009

Organisers of the Fort William Mountain Festival, presented with Nevis Partnership, have announced details of open film, photography, writing and art competitions that form part of the exciting programme of events at the 2009 festival.

The Fort William Mountain Festival is a festival dedicated to celebrating mountains and the culture that surrounds them and runs from 6 - 14 March 2009. It will have a packed programme of mountain sports, films, lectures, guided walks, workshops, exhibitions, literature, photography and music for residents and visitors who want to learn about and celebrate mountain culture.

The International Adventure Film Competition 2009 will offer the opportunity for both amateur and professional filmmakers from across the globe to showcase their work and share their passion for sport, culture and the environment. Wild places and adventure are important themes within the festival programme and entries for the film competition are invited for submission on these subjects and themes.

A panel will judge the films in the following prize categories: Best Scottish Film (£1000), Best International Film (£1000), Best Short Film (£600) and Young Filmmaker (under 18 - £400). Each prize-winner will have their film screened during the Festival alongside a strong programme of mountain film that includes the Best of the Banff Film Festival. They will also receive a specially commissioned commemorative plate made by Fired Art, Fort William.

The John Muir Trust's Wild Places, Wild Journeys Writing Competition 2009, first introduced for the 2007 festival, will see the winning piece being published in the John Muir Trust Journal, one of the strongest voices in the campaign for the protection and conservation of wild places. The open competition encourages both aspiring and professional writers to share their experiences in either the English or the Gaelic language.

Competition organiser Alison Austin from The John Muir Trust, said: 'We are looking for inspiring short stories with the broad theme of 'experiences in wild places'. Your entry can be factual or fictional and could incorporate a journey, a place, an expedition, a mountain or river, a walk, climb, sail or kayak ... or whatever wild experience has inspired you!'

Entries selected for final consideration will be exhibited at the 2009 Fort William Mountain Festival and first prize is a place on a Writing and Place course, from July 20th - 25th 2009, at Moniack Mhor, Scotland's creative writing centre.

Entries for the 2009 Fort William Mountain Festival Photographic Competition are also now invited. Organisers are looking for both amateur and professional photographers to submit pictures on various themes including Mountain Adventure, Mountain Culture and Mountain Landscape.

The People's Choice Original Art Competition will be held in conjunction with the Open Art and Photography exhibitions at next year's festival. It again promises to be an exciting and intriguing part of the festival. Each artist exhibiting in the Open Art Competition (any mountain themed artwork in any medium) is asked to nominate one piece of their own exhibited artwork for the public visiting the exhibition to vote on as their favourite via a ballot box. There will be an overall cash prize of £200 as well as a junior category prize of £50.

The entry deadlines are:

International Adventure Film Competition 2009 - 12 December 2008

The John Muir Trust's - Wild Places, Wild Journeys Writing Competition 2009 - 26 January 2009

Fort William Mountain Festival 2009 Photography Competition - 31 December 2008

Open Art Exhibition and the People's Choice Original Art Competition 2009 - 13 February 2009

Further details on all the Fort William Mountain Festival 2009 presented with Nevis Partnership competitions, entry forms and rules and regulations can be found at <http://www.mountainfestival.co.uk/competitions.htm>

ENDS

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If you are keen to attend the Fort William Mountain Festival for a commissioned feature or as part of an adventure travel / activity feature please contact Paddy Cuthbert to discuss a press trip to Fort William and Lochaber.

Notes to Editors:

The Fort William Mountain Festival runs from 6 to 14 March 2009 and is a nine-day celebration of mountains and the culture that surrounds them. During the best winter walking and climbing conditions of the year, audiences will be entertained by a varied and very full programme of lectures, films, activities, exhibitions, skills workshops and music. An annual feature of the Lochaber events calendar since 2000, the event was formerly known as the Fort William Mountain Film Festival. The full programme will be announced in late November / Early December 2008 - <http://www.mountainfestival.co.uk>

The Fort William Mountain Festival is part of a worldwide community of Mountain Film and Culture Festivals, the original and most famous being the Banff Mountain Festivals, Canada (www.banffmountainfestivals.ca). Other events in Scotland include the Edinburgh Mountain Film Festival (www.edinburghmountainff.com), Dundee Mountain Film Festival (www.dundeemountainfilm.org.uk) and the Aviemore Mountain Film Festival (www.amff.co.uk)

Nevis Partnership - Presenting Partner

A charitable company formed in 2003 to guide future policies and actions affecting Ben and Glen Nevis and the surrounding area. The Partnership is committed to protecting, managing and maintaining this unique and special environment in a sustainable and balanced way. <http://www.nevispartnership.co.uk>

ELLIS BRIGHAM - The UK's leading Mountain Sports retailer with its heart and soul firmly in the mountains. With over 60 years experience and 16 stores nationwide we cater for the needs of climbers and walkers, skiers and 'boarders, travellers and explorers and all who appreciate being out and about in the great outdoors - www.ellis-brigham.com

HOTSCOT - HotScot is a leading Scottish web site design agency with an established specialism in tourism and the outdoors. Based in Fort William 'The Outdoor Capital of the UK' they have developed an established pedigree with their reference client portfolio and can deliver a high quality solution backed by real experience - www.hotscot.net

NEVIS RANGE - Situated on the slopes of Aonach Mor, Scotland's highest ski area, Nevis Range run the UK's only mountain gondola carrying visitors to 2150ft. Winter climbers can also make the most of a ride up on the climber's chair. The downhill mountain bike track has hosted the Mountain Bike World Cup since 2001 - www.nevisrange.co.uk

The Highland Mountain Culture Association Limited, is a not for profit organisation, whose aim is to promote the understanding and appreciation of the world's mountain places and people, by creating opportunities for people of all ages to share their mountain experiences, ideas and visions. To showcase these ideals, it stages annually

a programme of events within the Lochaber area, called The Fort William Mountain Festival.

Corporate sponsorship is crucial to the future success of The Fort William Mountain Festival and with your help we can maintain this support and the healthy and productive relationships we have with our sponsors by crediting them in print. This makes a real difference to the festival. Mentions are counted and used as an evaluation of sponsored projects. A credit at the foot of an article or a mention as the title sponsorship can make all the difference to us. Please credit our sponsors where you can.

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