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For Immediate Release

“Beethoven’s Hair” Wins BellFund CyberPitch Award at NextMEDIA in Charlottetown

On Saturday, October 25th, the Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund awarded its latest CyberPitch Award at the nextMEDIA international new media festival in Charlottetown, PEI. After a hotly-contested race of strong submissions, the \$10,000 prize was granted to Toronto’s Xenophile Media for the project “Beethoven’s Hair”.

“Although the competition was tough this year,” said Bell Fund Chair Paul Hoffert, “the jury was impressed by the excellent “Beethoven’s Hair” 5 minute presentation, which conveyed the passion of the producers, the compelling nature of the content, the excellent new media and film partners, and the strong television broadcast commitments.”

Based on Russell Martin’s bestselling book, “Beethoven’s Hair” follows a lock of hair on a 200-year journey that begins when it is cut from the composer’s head at the time of his death. Auctioned at Sotheby’s, transported to America and subjected to forensic tests, the hair reveals many secrets of Beethoven’s life and death.

This interactive story for the web and DVD-ROM will be designed by the prestigious British interactive artist Alex Mayhew. A companion documentary for European broadcasters and the CBC is being created by co-producer Rhombus Media. This competition marked an important stage in the evolution of CyberPitch, as projects were required to involve international co-producers or participation.

“We are very happy to have won the Cyberpitch competition especially in light of the exceptionally high quality of projects being pitched this year at nextMEDIA” said Thomas Wallner, co-partner in Xenophile Media and author of the documentary screenplay for Rhombus Media.

“The Bell Fund has been a key and consistent supporter of Xenophile Media,” adds business partner Patrick Crowe. “Thanks to the Bell Fund’s cash contribution, along with Banff Centre co-production support, Xenophile and Rhombus will now be able to work in person with our international co-production partner Alex Mayhew. This will have an incalculable effect on this exciting interactive project and its potential for success.”

The CyberPitch Award is handed out each year at nextMEDIA and two other international events: Hot Docs and the Banff Television Festival. In addition to the cash award from the Bell Fund, winner receive complimentary registration for the next CyberPitch venue, post-festival mentorship from the Banff New Media Institute at The Banff Centre and the opportunity to attend the Banff New Media Institute’s Interactive Screen programme.

The Bell Broadcast and New Media Fund encourages the development and production of content for digital media and television and aims to stimulate partnerships and learning among members of the new media and television industries. The Bell Fund receives annual contributions from Bell ExpressVu as part of its broadcast distribution undertaking (BDU) contributions to the industry. The Bell Fund is incorporated as a not-for-profit organization, governed by an independent Board of Directors representing various sectors of the television and new media industries.

For more information:

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