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**Record-breaking Turnout to Register for 11th edition of Crazy8s!
Triple Dog Dare energizes women filmmakers.**

Vancouver (Dec. 15, 2009) – This year for the first time, Crazy8s invited an unlimited number of filmmakers to sign up to pitch their short film ideas by video – and an astonishing 115 teams took up that invitation at the Pitch Registration and Info Session Sunday Dec. 13th at the Vancity Theatre. Crazy8s is Vancouver’s premier short film event, which challenges local filmmakers to prepare, shoot and edit a short film in just 8 days with \$800 and 60 minutes of HD tape.

“Crazy8s has grown so much in popularity and reputation over the years, we knew we needed to find a way to open the competition up to wider participation, thus the idea of the video pitch. But it was still a fantastic surprise to see just how many people braved the cold and the snow to come out and sign up,” says event producer **Marc Stephenson**. *“And to give everyone the best chance of success, we were happy to offer a value-added, three-hour workshop on how to craft a great short film and a great pitch.”*

The 115 teams who registered for Crazy8s now have until Jan. 15 to submit a 5-minute video pitch of their film idea. The top 40 will be invited back to pitch in person Jan. 29 and 30th. The jury will select the top 12 teams and pair them up with professional story editors to hone their scripts. In the end, the top 6 teams will be selected for a package of support that includes tens of thousands of dollars worth of production and post-production services generously donated by the local film community. The six successful teams will shoot their films between March 18 – 26, and the finished films will premier at a gala screening at the Vogue Theatre on March 27, 2010.

“Our goal with Crazy8s is to provide opportunities to emerging filmmakers. Even those who don’t move forward to make their films with us will still have a chance to hone their concepts and develop their pitching skills, which is such an important part of the film business,” says event producer **Erik Paulsson**. *“Crazy8s has provided the spark which has ignited the creative filmmaking force in Vancouver. I can’t wait to see what this firestorm of creation will bring to our screens this year!”*

In an effort to encourage more women’s voices in the media, this year also saw a unique and sassy grassroots initiative, in which a number of prominent women in the local film community signed and forwarded a “Triple Dog Dare” letter, inviting and challenging women writers and directors to apply to Crazy8s, and to forward the challenge on. The email quickly went viral - one applicant reported having received it from 12 different women!

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“Our hope was to encourage, motivate and DARE women throw their hats in the ring, and that by sending the email around, we could nudge a few more candidates to put themselves on the line!” says **Sue Biely**, a participant in the initiative, who has also been a Crazy8s juror for the past several years. *“We’re thrilled that it energized women in the local community, and helped raise awareness of the under-representation of women in these roles. I’m looking forward to hearing all the great stories that both the men and the women bring to the live pitch sessions.”*

Crazy8s short films have screened at over 150 international film festivals, have won numerous awards, secured international distribution deals, and been licensed on-line, and for national and international television broadcast. The two most recent Crazy8s films to achieve this kind of success are last year’s *Cash AtoM*, and *Mike Inc.*, which recently received a broadcast license offer from CBC TV’s *Canadian Reflections*.

“There is nothing like Crazy8s anywhere else in Canada,” says event producer **Erik Paulsson**. *“We are developing a reputation for producing some of the strongest short films coming out of this country. That has led a significant number of our alumni going on to make their first feature films.”*

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