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CONTACT

Voleine Amilcar, ITVS	415-356-8383 x 244	voleine_amilcar@itvs.org
Mary Lugo	770-623-8190	lugo@negia.net
Cara White	843-881-1480	cara.white@mac.com

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**STACY PERALTA'S
CRIPS AND BLOODS: Made In America
PREMIERES TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2009, ON THE
EMMY® AWARD-WINNING PBS SERIES *INDEPENDENT LENS***

*Film Chronicles the Reasons Behind the Rise of
Gang Culture in South Central Los Angeles*

“One thing you have to realize. If you opened them up, there would be a stamp under their shirt that says ‘Made in America.’ They weren’t made in Taiwan or Indonesia. They were made in America.”

—Kumasi, former gang member

(San Francisco, CA)—In the southern portion of the richest city in the richest state in America, a civil war has been raging for more than 40 years. This war has taken more than 15,000 lives, and it passes its legacy from father to son. The battlefield is South Central Los Angeles, an area surrounded by geographical icons of California—Rodeo Drive, Hollywood and Vine, the beaches of Santa Monica and Disneyland. The most violent outbreaks of civil unrest in U.S. history have erupted on its streets twice—27 years and just three miles apart.

CRIPS AND BLOODS: Made in America searches for answers by providing a historical and sociological context for the rise of the devastating gang violence. Directed by Stacy Peralta and narrated by Forest Whitaker, the film will premiere on the PBS series *Independent Lens*, hosted by Terrence Howard, on Tuesday, May 12, 2009, at 10 PM (check local listings).



Scenes from CRIPS AND BLOODS: Made in America, coming to Independent Lens May 2009.

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Peralta, whose films *Riding Giants* and *Dogtown and Z-Boys* also explored the cultures of young male tribes, tracks the ascension of gangs through a history of South Central, a once peaceful and prosperous African American neighborhood. Young black men, shut out of youth organizations like the Boy Scouts, formed their own clubs where they found acceptance and social status by using their fists to rule the streets. As fists turned into guns, the death toll mounted, and now five generations of urban soldiers have carved the streets into a grid of rival territories. South Central, one of the most violent places in the world, is home to 12-year-olds who carry automatic weapons and children who exhibit higher post-traumatic stress levels than those of children in Baghdad.

Combining unprecedented access to active gangs with political and social commentary and gripping archival footage, **CRIPS AND BLOODS** is a compassionate examination of the men and women for whom the promise of the American dream has crumbled away year by year, brick by brick, hope by hope and child by child. In 1992, as he watched the city burn after the Rodney King trial, Peralta questioned why this was happening again for a second time and why the two most infamous African American gangs were born in L.A. Sixteen years later, he brings his trademark dynamic visual style and storytelling ability to this often-ignored chapter of America's history. Hard-hitting, yet ultimately hopeful, the film not only documents the emergence of the Bloods and the Crips and their growth beyond the borders of South Central, but also offers insight as to how this ongoing tragedy might be resolved.

The broadcast of **CRIPS AND BLOODS: Made in America** will be supported by *Independent Lens*'s groundbreaking community engagement program, Community Cinema. More than 50 community outreach screenings across the country will include panel discussions and guest speakers and will provide a valuable context for understanding the film's impact as well as an opportunity for audiences to participate in the conversation.

To learn more about the film, visit the **CRIPS AND BLOODS: Made in America** companion website (www.pbs.org/independentlens/cripsandbloods/), which features detailed information on the film, including an interview with the filmmakers and links and resources pertaining to the film's subject matter. The site also features a Talkback section for viewers to share their ideas and opinions, preview clips of the film, and more.

CRIPS AND BLOODS: Made in America is directed by Stacy Peralta and written by Peralta and Sam George. The film is produced by Baron Davis, Cash Warren, Dan Halsted, Shaun Murphy and Gus Roxburgh. Executive producers are Steve Luczo and Quincy D. Jones III.

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About Stacy Peralta (Director)

Stacy Peralta was born and raised in West Los Angeles, growing up on the beaches of Venice and Santa Monica. But Peralta was also a product of the streets, where he and a band of fellow “Dogtown” teenagers became the vanguard of the 1970s skateboard culture. Peralta rolled this status into a real profession, earning product endorsements, television and film appearances, and a Skateboarding World Championship—all by the age of 19.

During the early 1980s, Peralta chose to “retire” as a professional skateboarder and joined George Powell to form Powell-Peralta, then the leading manufacturer of skateboard-related products. Producing, directing and editing 1984’s *Bones Brigade Video Show*, Peralta literally created an entirely new genre of film. Equal parts action, entertainment and personality, Peralta’s series of eight “straight-to-video” skate films revolutionized sports media, establishing a template that has become the standard in today’s action sports industry.

In 1990, Peralta left Powell-Peralta to become a full-time writer/director in network television, producing documentaries, comedies, series and specials. In 2000, Peralta wrote and directed the critically acclaimed

Dogtown and Z-Boys, an unflinching chronicle of the birth of modern skateboard culture. *Dogtown and Z-Boys* won both the prestigious Directors Award and the Audience Award at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival. The film then went on to win Best Documentary at the Independent Spirit Awards as well as an international release through Sony Pictures Classics.

Riding Giants, his second feature documentary, a dramatic examination of the world of big wave surfing, was chosen for the opening night premiere at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival. It, too, went on to an international run via Sony Pictures Classics.

CRIPS AND BLOODS: Made in America not only is Peralta’s most personal project, but also has been his most difficult. After a very long road, he has created the film he set out to create 15 years ago, an insider’s look on a subject that very few on the outside know anything about.

About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award–winning weekly series airing on PBS. The acclaimed anthology series features documentaries and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement and unflinching visions of their independent producers. *Independent Lens* features unforgettable stories about unique individuals, communities and moments in history. Presented by Independent Television Service (ITVS), the series is supported by interactive companion websites and national publicity and community engagement campaigns. *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts. The series producer is Lois Vossen. Further information about the series is available at www.pbs.org/independentlens.

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