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**THE PARKING LOT MOVIE CHOSEN AS SEASON OPENER
FOR INDEPENDENT LENS**

Film Explores the Fascinating Culture of a College Town’s Legendary Parking Lot

(San Francisco, CA) — *The Parking Lot Movie*, a droll look at a singular parking lot in Charlottesville, Virginia, has been selected as the season opener for the Emmy® and Peabody Award-winning PBS series *Independent Lens*. A brainy *Slacker* for the post-millennium, Meghan Eckman’s quirky documentary follows a unique rite of passage as a select group of over-educated attendants use their gig at the parking lot as an emotional and philosophical way station on the road to their personal American dream. The film will premiere on Tuesday, October 19 at 10 PM (check local listings).

“*Independent Lens* is committed to supporting new and emerging filmmakers,” said Lois Vossen, series producer. “We want to encourage this next generation of independent filmmakers to produce for public media. We also believe fresh, new voices help attract younger and more diverse audiences to public television with engaging content and through social networking. Meghan’s film is a little out of the box for *Independent Lens*, and that’s one of the reasons we chose it.”

The Corner Parking Lot, located in the University of Virginia college town of Charlottesville, is surrounded by folklore and myth. The attendants are a varied group of men, selected by the unorthodox owner for their personal philosophies more than for their work ethic. Made up of both undergraduate and graduate students, they are intellectuals, musicians, artists, and fringe characters. Three years in the making, *The Parking Lot Movie* follows them through their daily



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rituals, ruminating on the meaning of cars and the semiotics of license plates, capitalism, anger, justice, drunkenness, boredom, spiritual awareness, class struggle, entitlement, and the constant tiny frustrations felt by anyone who has ever worked in a service job, dealing with an infuriating public.

Filling their time playing games and music, as well as painting oddly profound messages on the entrance gate, the attendants see their time at the Parking Lot as the intersection between the status quo and the quest for freedom. As one puts it: “In the parking lot we were dynamos. Whirlwinds. We were rulers. We had it all in a world that had nothing to offer us.”

A graduate from the University of Virginia, filmmaker Eckman says, “I see this film as a coming-of-age story. It shows the attendants working at the Parking Lot during a formative time in their lives. They are a band of brothers coming together for the duration of their employment, growing collectively, and then moving on.”

To learn more about the film, visit *The Parking Lot Movie* interactive companion website (pbs.org/parking-lot-movie), which features detailed information on the film, including an interview with the filmmaker and links and resources pertaining to the film’s subject matter. The site also features a Talkback section, where viewers can share their ideas and opinions, preview clips of the film, and more.

About the Filmmaker

Meghan Eckman (Director/Producer)

The Parking Lot Movie is Meghan Eckman’s directorial debut. Eckman graduated from the University of Virginia in 2000, with a degree in English language and literature. In 2001, she moved to New York. There, Meghan made several short documentaries and worked as a video editor. In 2005, the short film she produced and co-edited, *Planet of the Arabs*, played at the Sundance Film Festival. Eckman now resides in Charlottesville, Virginia, and runs her own post-production company, Redhouse Productions.

About *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing Tuesday nights at 10 PM 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 a unique individual, community, or moment in history. Presented by ITVS, the series is supported by interactive companion websites and national publicity and community engagement campaigns. Further information about the series is available at www.pbs.org/independentlens. *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS, and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), 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.

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