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**ORION DONATES TELESCOPE TO CELEBRATE "DARK MATTER " RELEASE-AN AWARD WINNING MOVIE ABOUT ASTRONOMY THAT "STARS" MERYL STREEP**

*An Orion Versa Go 90 Altazimuth Refractor telescope was raffled off at a sneak peek screening of the upcoming science film DARK MATTER on April 29th which opens officially in San Francisco Friday May 2nd. Telescope not required to see the riveting performance of "star" Meryl Streep in the film.*

**/24-7PressRelease/** - LAS VEGAS, NV, May 02, 2008 - An Orion Versa Go 90 Altazimuth Refractor telescope was raffled off at a sneak peek screening of the upcoming science film DARK MATTER on April 29th which opens officially in San Francisco Friday May 2nd . The jubilant winner was San Francisco Bay resident Gloria Miyashiro who will now have a renewed interest in the cosmos..

First Independent Pictures and American Sterling present DARK MATTER, the feature debut of renowned theater and opera director Chen Shi-Zheng, and producer Janet Yang (The People vs. Larry Flynt, The Joy Luck Club). In DARK MATTER, Chinese science student Liu Xing (Liu Ye) arrives at a big U.S university in pursuit of a Ph.D., with plans to study the origins of the universe. When the head of the department (Aidan Quinn) welcomes him into his select cosmology group, it seems that only hard work stands between him and a bright future. Driven by ambition, but unable to navigate academic politics when his teacher turns against him for pursuing a project in opposition to the professor's favorite theory, Liu Xing is pushed over the edge and reacts with violence. Meryl Streep co-stars as a university donor who tries to help the troubled student. Based on a true story, Dark Matter was the Alfred P. Sloan prize winner at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival. Chen Shi-Zheng is a China-born, New York-based director, internationally known for his innovative and provocative staging of operas as diverse as Monteverdi's L'Orfeo and Wagner's The Flying Dutchman. The director sees Dark Matter as "an opportunity to explore the mysterious and powerful forces unleashed when a young Chinese immigrant strives to make his mark in a culture that is at once seductive and impenetrable."

The Orion VersaGo 90 Altazimuth Refractor telescope and Starry Night Enthusiast software were donated by Orion Telescopes & Binoculars to be used in a raffle for attendees at the theatrical release of DARK MATTER and to help promote interest in the science of astronomy. The Orion VersaGo 90 Altazimuth Refractor is unique because Sharp refractor optics combined with the elegantly simple VersaGo altazimuth mount provide nearly unlimited possibilities for viewing landscapes or starscapes. The VersaGo's Teflon bearings and foam-grip panning handle need just a gentle tug to guide the telescope smoothly to your viewing target. With this setup you're freed up simply to enjoy the splendid surroundings rather than struggle with the equipment.

Movie lovers and science buffs are encouraged to get out and support this independent film set in the world of science. Telescope not required! . DARK MATTER opens in San Francisco and Oakland on May 2, 2008 at the Landmark's Lumiere Theatre, 1572 California St., San Francisco Landmark's Shattuck Cinemas, 2230 Shattuck Ave. OPENING WEEKEND SPECIAL GUESTS: director Chen Shi-Zheng and producer Janet Yang will appear for Q&As; on Friday evening at Shattuck in Berkeley, and Saturday evening at Lumiere in San Francisco (specific times tbd.) SF AFTERPARTY: after the Q&A at Lumiere on Saturday May 2,, all are invited to the afterparty at Hukilau, San Francisco's top Hawaiian spot, located at 5 Masonic and Geary. Meet producer Janet Yang and director Chen Shi-Zheng. Event is free; no-host. DARK MATTER opened in NYC on April 11th and is playing in select cities nationwide. The film is released by FIP. It was produced by American Sterling Productions/ For more information about DARK MATTER please visit:

[www.darkmatterthefilm.com](http://www.darkmatterthefilm.com) [www.myspace.com/darkmattermovie](http://www.myspace.com/darkmattermovie)

About First Independent Pictures

Gary Rubin, when he formed First Independent Pictures, designed the company to release 4 to 6 films a year, most to the theatrical marketplace and others to be given premiere treatment in the ancillary world. FIP is beginning its 2nd tranche of private fundraising. FIP distributes to the DVD universe through its label deal with the Vivendi/Universal Music Group. Its releases include the David Mamet-penned "Edmond" starring William H. Macy and Julia Stiles; Danny Leiner's ("Harold and Kumar") "The Great New Wonderful" starring Maggie Gyllenhaal, Tony Shalhoub, and Edie Falco; the acclaimed '05 Sundance selection "New York Doll;" and "Everything's Gone Green," the first screenplay by Douglas Coupland, author and creator of "Generation X." FIP also provides selected consulting and repping services.

<http://www.firstindependentpictures.com/>

About American Sterling Productions produces and invests in independent feature films and made-for-television movies.

American Sterling Productions is a division of the American Sterling Group, a privately-held enterprise with operating divisions in banking, insurance, real estate, entertainment and technology. American Sterling executive Joe Braier is working with First Independent in overseeing the release.

#### About Imaginova

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