

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Sept. 16, 2002

Contact: Margot Gerber

Tel: (323) 461-2020, ext. 115



DENZEL WASHINGTON TO RECEIVE
17TH AMERICAN CINEMATHEQUE AWARD
AT GALA TRIBUTE ON DECEMBER 6
AT THE BEVERLY HILTON HOTEL

Hollywood – The 17th American Cinematheque Award will be presented to Denzel Washington at the Cinematheque's annual benefit gala, American Cinematheque co-chairmen Peter Dekom and Mike Medavoy announced today. The presentation takes place Friday, December 6, 2002 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel's International Ballroom in Beverly Hills.

"Denzel's career has been exemplary; encompassing every genre from drama to comedy, film noir to action, science fiction to Shakespeare, horror to history, and demonstrating enormous taste and respect for the art with roles that show a remarkable versatility from powerful leaders to slaves, authority figures to law-breakers, and beyond," said the co-chairmen. "And while Denzel has been much honored for his individual accomplishments, the American Cinematheque Award is for his entire body of work: acknowledging all that has gone before and yet anticipating what is still to come. We are looking forward to a wonderful evening honoring this extraordinary artist."

The award show is produced by Robert Dalrymple and Paul Flattery.

Washington was the unanimous choice of the Cinematheque Board of Directors selection committee, which since 1986, has annually honored an extraordinary artist (actor, director or writer) in the entertainment industry, who is fully engaged in his or her work and is committed to making a significant contribution to the art of the motion picture.

Two time Academy Award-winning actor Denzel Washington is a man constantly on the move. Never comfortable repeating himself or his successes, Washington is always in search of new challenges and his numerous and varied film and stage portrayals bear this out. From Trip, an embittered runaway slave in "Glory," to South African freedom fighter Steven Biko in "Cry Freedom;" From Shakespeare's tragic historical figure "Richard III," to the womanizing trumpet player, Bleek Gilliam in Spike Lee's "Mo' Better Blues," Washington has amazed and entertained us with a rich and colorful array of characters distinctly his own.

But, perhaps one of his most critically acclaimed performances to date was the Academy-Award winning performance in the Warner Bros. release "Training Day," (Oct. 5, 2001) directed by Antoine Fuqua. The story revolves around a

Page 2 – American Cinematheque Award

grizzled LAPD veteran, played by Washington, who shows a rookie narcotics cop, played by Ethan Hawke, the ropes on his first day of the soul-city beat. The film opened number one at the box office with the highest weekend gross in Washington's illustrious career.

Washington continues to play a diverse range of characters evidenced by his recent films. Most recently, he was seen in "John Q", a story about a down-on-his-luck father whose son is in need of a heart transplant. When the insurance company won't cover the operation, the father takes matters into his own hands until the doctors agree to operate. The film, released by New Line Cinema, established an opening day record for President's Day weekend.

In September of 2000, he starred in Jerry Bruckheimer's box-office sensation (\$115 million domestic gross) "Remember the Titans," a fact-based film about the integration of a high school football team in Alexandria VA in 1971. Earlier that year, he starred in Universal's "The Hurricane," re-teaming with director Norman Jewison. Washington received a Golden Globe Award for Best Actor and an Academy Award nomination (his fourth) for his portrayal of Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, the world middleweight champion boxer during the 1960s, who was wrongfully imprisoned twice for the June 17, 1966, murder of three whites in a New Jersey bar.

In November of 1999, he starred in Universal's "The Bone Collector," the adaptation of Jeffrey Deaver's novel about the search for a serial killer, co-starring Angelina Jolie and directed by Phillip Noyce. He played the role of a quadriplegic police detective who is a forensics expert.

In 1998, he starred in the crime thriller "Fallen" (Warner Bros.), for director Greg Hoblit, and in Spike Lee's "He Got Game," released by Touchstone (Disney). Also, he reteamed with director Ed Zwick in the 20th Century-Fox terrorist thriller "The Siege," co-starring Annette Bening and Bruce Willis.

In the summer of 1996, he starred in the critically acclaimed military drama "Courage Under Fire," for his "Glory" director, Ed Zwick. Washington portrayed Lt. Colonel Nathaniel Serling, a tank commander in the Gulf War, who is charged with investigating conflicting reports surrounding the first female nominee for a Medal of Honor. Later that year, Washington starred opposite Whitney Houston in Penny Marshall's romantic comedy "The Preacher's Wife." Washington played an angel who comes to the aid of Reverend Biggs (Courtney B. Vance) whose doubts about his ability to make a difference in his troubled community are also affecting his family.

In 1995, he starred opposite Gene Hackman as Navy Lieutenant Commander Ron Hunter in Tony Scott's underwater action adventure "Crimson Tide;" as ex-cop Parker Barnes, released from prison to track down a computer-generated criminal in the futuristic thriller "Virtuosity;" and as World War II veteran Easy Rawlins, in the 1940's romantic thriller "Devil in a Blue Dress" (which Washington's Mundy Lane Entertainment produced with Jonathan Demme's Clinica Estetico).

Another critically acclaimed performance was his portrayal of Malcolm X, the complex and controversial Black activist from the 1960's, in director Spike Lee's biographical epic, "Malcolm X." Monumental in scope and filmed over a period of six months in the United States and Africa, "Malcolm X" was hailed by critics and audiences alike as one of the best films of 1992. For his portrayal, Denzel received a number of accolades including an Academy Award nomination for Best Actor.

In addition to his accomplishments on screen, Washington took on a very different type of role in 2000. He produced the HBO documentary "Half Past Autumn: The Life and Works of Gordon Parks," nominated for two Emmys. Also, he served

Page 3 – American Cinematheque Award

as executive producer on "Hank Aaron: Chasing The Dream," a biographical documentary for TBS which was nominated for an Emmy Award. Additionally, Washington's narration of the legend of "John Henry" was nominated for a 1996 Grammy Award in the category of Best Spoken Word Album for Children and he was awarded the 1996 NAACP Image Award for his performance in the animated children's special "Happily Ever After: Rumpelstiltskin."

A native of Mt. Vernon, New York, Washington had his career sights set on medicine when he attended Fordham University. During a stint as a summer camp counselor he appeared in one of their theatre productions; Denzel was bitten by the acting bug and returned to Fordham that year seeking the tutelage of Robinson Stone, one of the school's leading professors. Upon graduation from Fordham, Washington was accepted into San Francisco's prestigious American Conservatory Theater. Following an intensive year of study in their theater program, he returned to New York after a brief stop in Los Angeles.

Washington's professional New York theater career began with Joseph Papp's Shakespeare in the Park and was quickly followed by numerous off-Broadway productions including "Ceremonies in Dark Old Men;" "When The Chickens Came Home to Roost (in which he portrayed Malcolm X);" "One Tiger to a Hill;" "Man and Superman;" "Othello;" and "A Soldier's Play," for which he won an Obie Award. Washington's more recent stage appearances include the Broadway production of "Checkmates" and "Richard III," which was produced as part of the 1990 Free Shakespeare in the Park series hosted by Joseph Papp's Public Theatre in New York City.

Washington was 'discovered' by Hollywood when he was cast in 1979 in the television film "Flesh and Blood.. But it was Denzel's award-winning performance on stage in "A Soldier's Play" that captured the attention of the producers of the NBC television series, "St. Elsewhere," and he was soon cast in that long-running hit series as Dr. Phillip Chandler. His other television credits include "The George McKenna Story," "License to Kill," and "Wilma."

In 1982, Washington re-created his role from "A Soldier's Play" for Norman Jewison's film version. Re-titled "A Soldier's Story," Denzel's portrayal of Private Peterson was critically well-received. Washington went on to star in Sidney Lumet's "Power," Richard Attenborough's "Cry Freedom" for which he received his first Oscar nomination, "For Queen and Country," "The Mighty Quinn," "Heart Condition," "Glory," for which he won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor and Spike Lee's "Mo' Better Blues." Washington also starred in the action adventure film, "Ricochet, and in Mira Nair's bittersweet comedy "Mississippi Masala."

Additional film credits include Kenneth Branagh's film adaptation of "Much Ado About Nothing," Jonathan Demme's controversial "Philadelphia" with Tom Hanks, and "The Pelican Brief," based on the John Grisham novel.

Eddie Murphy received the first American Cinematheque Award in 1986. Previous honorees are as follows: Bette Midler (1987); Robin Williams (1988); Steven Spielberg (1989); Ron Howard (1990); Martin Scorsese (1991); Sean Connery (1992); Michael Douglas (1993); Rob Reiner (1994); Mel Gibson (1995); Tom Cruise (1996); John Travolta (1997); Arnold Schwarzenegger (1998); Jodie Foster (1999); Bruce Willis (2000) and Nicolas Cage (2001).

Twelve hundred entertainment industry notables are expected to attend the Tribute. This annual event is the American Cinematheque's largest benefit, providing funds for the non-profit film exhibition organization's programs throughout the year and operation of the historic landmark Egyptian Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard.

Page 4 – American Cinematheque Award

Tickets to the Cinematheque Tribute, an elegant black-tie dinner followed by a multi-media award show start at \$500. Call Carrine Mann at 323.314.7000. Please note that this event was formerly known as the Moving Picture Ball.

Established in 1981, the American Cinematheque is a non-profit viewer-supported film exhibition and cultural organization dedicated to the celebration of the Moving Picture in all of its forms. At Egyptian Theatre, the Cinematheque presents daily film and video programming which ranges from the classics of American and international cinema to new independent films and digital work. Exhibition of rare works, special and rare prints, etc., combined with fascinating post-screening discussions with the filmmakers who created the work, are a Cinematheque tradition that keep audiences coming back for once-in-a-lifetime cinema experiences. The American Cinematheque renovated and reopened (on December 4, 1998) the historic 1922 Hollywood Egyptian Theatre. This includes a state-of-the-art 616-seat theatre housed within Sid Grauman's first grand movie palace on Hollywood Boulevard. The exotic courtyard is fully restored to its 1922 grandeur. The Egyptian was the home of the very first Hollywood movie premiere in 1922.

For press credentials send a fax on letterhead from your outlet (indicating that you have a specific assignment and when the coverage will air/appear in print), to Margot Gerber at 323 461 9737 by Friday, November 15, 2002.

ADDITIONAL CONTACTS:

Alan Nierob/Rogers & Cowan (representing Denzel Washington) (310) 201-8839

###

