

Media Release

Great Finale for openair screenings on the 'Mainland'

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Waiheke based Openair Cinema concluded its second season on the 'Mainland' with a great finale at Northcote Primary School. At a fundraising event for the school, the outdoor theatre attracted close to 800 parents and kids for a koha-showing of the 'Incredibles'. The first big-screen openair cinema in New Zealand had a great run weather-wise this year.

"It was the icing on the cake to finish our 'travelling' season off with the fundraiser for Northcote Primary school", summarizes Urs Bauer from Open-Air Cinema Ltd. After two very successful NZ short-film nights at Victoria Park with well more than 1000 spectators, the cinema was moved during the night to Northcote, where the screen had to be set-up for testing in the dark to be ready for 'The Incredibles' the following night. "I felt like working in a Circus – but it worked out very well, thanks to the help of many parents and friends."

Openair Cinema started the season with bad weather for the Christmas holidays in Waiheke Island. But the 40 following screenings in the Viaduct Harbour were mostly held in perfect conditions: "We cancelled a show due to high wind and during one show we screened the film in pouring rain", explains Bauer. Attendance was up about 25%, but the company still struggles to get to the break-even point. "The lack of a main sponsor to help us create cinema-culture in Auckland City and no advertising before the movies makes it difficult." The event has become an attraction for Aucklanders and tourists as well. 15,000 people enjoyed movies under the sky and about a quarter of them were tourists. The company is evaluating different options for the season 2005/2006 following invitations from other regions in New Zealand.

Openair Cinema has a five night run over Easter at Waiheke Island's Onetangi Road Vineyard. The Music Film Festival will start on Thursday 24 March with 'Brassed Off', a Music-Comedy set in the Thatcher era when government cutbacks threatened a century-old Yorkshire mine. The brass band, consisting of the miners and their families, struggles to keep it together in the face of economic repression and emotional turmoil. For Friday, the Cuban Jazz Classic, 'Buena Vista Social Club', will be screened and on Saturday 'Ray' – the award winning film of the life of Ray Charles, not only a great musician, but also a great character in modern music history. On Easter Sunday the party is set with 'The Festival Express' – old footage, newly released, of Janis Joplin, Grateful Dead and the Band. The Festival concludes on Monday with 'School of Rock' – which may inspire orchestra students of our local primary school. A proportion of ticket sales for this show will be donated to the school's orchestra.

Ticket prices for the Waiheke screenings are: Adults \$12, Senior Citizen/Students with ID \$10, Kids under 12 \$7. They can be bought at Onetangi Road Vineyard, Family Barrow Oneroa and at the door (cash only), which opens at 6pm. Movies start at 7pm (after sunset). Tickets are not allocated to a particular night, so make sure you're there well before the screening starts because of limited space.

Bring your own rugs, cushions, deck chairs and sleeping bags. Onetangi Road Vineyard will be firing up the BBQ with Ostrich Sausages plus all the great cinema snacks, wine, Baroona beer, soft-drinks and coffee. No BYO alcohol is allowed.

More information: www.openair.co.nz or contact Urs Bauer 09 372 62 97 urs@openair.co.nz

Open-Air Cinema is a private initiative of some idealistic Waiheke Island residents. The aim is to add a spark to Auckland's summer lifestyle and offer a special movie-going experience to Aucklanders and tourists as well.