



**KEIRA KNIGHTLEY'S GREEN DRESS, FROM BEST PICTURE
ACADEMY AWARD NOMINEE *ATONEMENT*, TO BE
AUCTIONED OFF BY CLOTHES OFF OUR BACK FOUNDATION;
PROCEEDS BENEFIT VARIETY – THE CHILDREN'S CHARITY**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LOS ANGELES, January 31, 2008 – An iconic piece of movie history from one of this year's Best Picture Oscar nominees will be auctioned off to benefit Variety – The Children's Charity of Southern California, beginning later this week. The Clothes Off Our Back Foundation will host the online auction of the green evening dress worn by Keira Knightley in Focus Features' *Atonement*, which is nominated for 7 Academy Awards including Best Picture and Best Costume Design. Focus CEO James Schamus made the announcement today.

The auction begins Friday, February 1st at the Foundation's site www.clothesoffourback.org and ends Saturday, March 1st. Bidding will start at \$1,000. The auction is for the green evening dress memorably worn during the crucial emotional and romantic sequences by Ms. Knightley as Cecilia Tallis, opposite James McAvoy as Robbie Turner, in director Joe Wright's *Atonement*. Upon the film's release, the dress quickly became one of the most influential cinematic costumes of recent years, being spotlighted on *The Today Show* and detailed on the covers of newspapers and magazines.

Mr. Schamus commented, "*Atonement* is an epic romance that has moved filmgoers, and garnered awards and acclaim, all over the world. As with our previous auction of the two shirts worn in *Brokeback Mountain*, we are proud to give someone a chance to own a cherished part of a beloved film and in the process benefit the Variety charity."

The dress being auctioned off, taken directly from the production's archives, is one of a handful that was made specifically for Ms. Knightley to wear during filming. Multiples were fashioned because of the fragility of the dress. The dress being auctioned off was made under the supervision of, and has been authenticated by, Jacqueline Durran, who is nominated for an Academy Award for her costume design of *Atonement*.

Ms. Durran elaborated, "Joe Wright wanted something that would flow because Keira Knightley would have to move around in it. We picked this specific shade of green for the backless dress, and Keira was involved in the process, so it really was a collaboration." Further information can be found at www.filminfocus.com/atonement. Additionally, www.bravotv.com offers an exclusive interview with Ms. Knightley in which she discusses the film's costumes, including the green dress.

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Each year, the entertainment and fashion communities come together for The Clothes Off Our Back Foundation, a 501c3 organization that hosts charity auctions showcasing today's hottest celebrity attire. Items are put up for bid to the public with proceeds going to benefit children's charities. Clothes Off Our Back was founded by actors and philanthropists Jane Kaczmarek (*Malcolm in the Middle*) and Bradley Whitford (*The West Wing*, *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*) whose efforts, along with their celebrity and designer friends, have helped improve the lives of children across the globe. In addition to the Atonement dress, Clothes Off Our Back is also currently auctioning celebrity-signed and -designed items from the Sundance Film Festival, little black dresses from actresses' closets, clothing seen on the red carpet, and more.

Variety – The Children's Charity of Southern California (www.varietysocal.org) is the local chapter of an expansive global network, Variety International – The Children's Charity, that assists afflicted children in 14 nations who have nowhere else to turn. Since 1927, worldwide, Variety has raised over \$1.5 billion to aid children with special needs. The Southern California chapter (Tent 25) was founded in 1941 as a nonprofit organization with the express mission to provide life-saving and life-enriching assistance to kids with special needs. In its 67 years of existence, the SoCal chapter has raised more than \$60 million to help thousands of children. Variety prides itself on being able to modify its agenda in order to meet new trends and evolving conditions – addressing each case in a timely, impartial manner. Long considered the “Heart of Show Business,” Variety today continues its work with the help and support of caring men and women in the entertainment industry.

Focus Features (www.focusfeatures.com) is a motion picture production, financing, and worldwide distribution company committed to bringing moviegoers the most original stories from the world's most innovative filmmakers.

In addition to Best Picture and Best Costume Design, *Atonement's* other Academy Award nominations are in the categories of Best Supporting Actress (Saoirse Ronan), Best Adapted Screenplay (Christopher Hampton), Best Original Score (Dario Marianelli), Best Cinematography (Seamus McGarvey), and Best Art Direction/Set Decoration (Sarah Greenwood, Katie Spencer). The film continues to play in theaters nationwide.

In addition to *Atonement*, current and upcoming Focus Features releases include Martin McDonagh's *In Bruges*, starring Colin Farrell, Brendan Gleeson, and Ralph Fiennes, which world-premiered as the Opening-Night film of the 2008 Sundance Film Festival; Bharat Nalluri's *Miss Pettigrew Lives for a Day*, starring Frances McDormand and Amy Adams; Andrew Fleming's irreverent comedy *Hamlet 2*, starring Steve Coogan; Shane Acker's animated fantasy epic *9*, starring Elijah Wood and Jennifer Connelly; Henry Selick's stop-motion animated feature *Coraline*, starring Dakota Fanning and Teri Hatcher; Cary Fukunaga's immigrant thriller *Sin Nombre*; Joel and Ethan Coen's *Burn After Reading*, starring George Clooney, John Malkovich, Frances McDormand, Brad Pitt, and Tilda Swinton; writer/director Jim Jarmusch's new film, tentatively titled *The*

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Limits of Control, starring Isaach De Bankolé; Gus Van Sant's *Milk*, starring Sean Penn as Harvey Milk; and a contemporary comedy to be directed by Academy Award winner Sam Mendes.

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