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**A NEW ANIMATED SHORT BY PAUL FIERLINGER, CREATOR OF
THE ACCLAIMED *STILL LIFE WITH ANIMATED DOGS*,
PRESENTS HIS LATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT, *A ROOM NEARBY*.**

“IT SEEMS TO BE EVIDENT IN OUR CULTURE OF PROSPERITY, ANYWHERE WE MIGHT BE,
THERE WILL ALWAYS BE SOMEONE LONELY IN A ROOM NEARBY.” --Paul Fierlinger

**DUE TO THE MASS POPULARITY OF *STILL LIFE WITH ANIMATED DOGS*,
PBS IS OFFERING STATIONS THE OPORTUNITY TO AIR *A ROOM NEARBY*
ON TWO DATES, MARCH 23&28 AT 10:30 PM (check local listings)**

(San Francisco) - The Independent Television Service (ITVS) presents A ROOM NEARBY, created and directed by the husband and wife duo of Paul and Sandra Fierlinger. In this half hour program, five people tell the short version of their life's story, each touching upon the storyteller's own brick wall of loneliness. In a world of interconnected technologies such as cell phones, e-mail and instant messaging it can be difficult to cope with those natural feelings of loneliness, but there are in fact lessons to be learned in those introspective periods and A ROOM NEARBY celebrates those revelations. A ROOM NEARBY airs on PBS stations nationwide on March 23&28, 2005 at 10:30 P.M. (check local listings).

According to the directors, if this film were compiled like a book of collected shorts, the binding theme would be melancholy, but the ending would be happy. Each story in A ROOM NEARBY is narrated by the animated-character's, real life counterpart. The stories are vastly different in origin and perspective—from a writer to a carpenter to a filmmaker—and each offers very different reasons for feeling entirely alone.

As the characters learn about themselves, viewers are taken on a fascinating journey through the characters' psyches until reaching a moment of internal peace. One such story is that of a typical nine-to-five office worker who spends her free time watching television until an unlikely befriending by graffiti artists. Finally feeling like her life has purpose, she begins to moonlight “tagging” buildings. Although this budding artist learns the hard way that her new passion is illegal, she is able to turn it into a positive learning experience and creative avenue.

The most heart wrenching profile offered in A ROOM NEARBY is of the acclaimed film director Milos Forman, an entertainment guru with credits for such films as “The People vs. Larry Flint,” “Amadeus” and “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest.” Forman experiences the pain of losing his only companion and “mans best friend.” In deep denial over his loss, Forman plays solitaire for hours on end, a truly symbolic act.

Paul Fierlinger

(writer/co-director/ animator/narrator/editor)

Paul Fierlinger has been a professional independent animator since his first TV commercial, which he made in 1958 in Prague, Czechoslovakia. A graduate of the Bechyne School of Applied Arts, Fierlinger has animated films in Holland, France, Germany and the United States. In 1971 Fierlinger formed AR&T Associates, Inc., his own animation house, initially to produce animated segments for ABC’s *Harry Reasoner Specials* and PBS’ *Sesame Street*, including the popular *Teeny Little Super Guy* series, which runs to this day. AR&T has produced over 700 films. Many of those films have received considerable recognition including an Academy Award nomination for *It’s so Nice to Have a Wolf Around the House* and in 1997, Fierlinger received a PEW Fellowship in the Arts award for the his body of work.

Sandra Fierlinger

(painter/co-director/writer)

Sandra Schuette Fierlinger grew up in Wayne, Pennsylvania and graduated from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts with their highest awards. She has collaborated with her husband, Paul, on many projects including ones for *Sesame Street*, *Nickelodeon*, the *American Playhouse*, Children’s Book of the Month Club, ITVS and various TV commercials.

The Fierlingers are the recipients of the 2002 Peabody Award, which they share with ITVS for the film *STILL LIFE WITH ANIMATED DOGS*. This film was chosen to represent the United States at INPUT 2001, held in Cape Town, South Africa.

About ITVS

Independent Television Service (ITVS) funds and presents award-winning documentaries and dramas on public television, innovative new media projects on the Web and the Emmy Award-winning weekly series *Independent Lens* on Tuesday nights at 10 P.M. on PBS. ITVS is a miracle of public policy created by media activists, citizens and politicians seeking to foster plurality and diversity in public television. ITVS was established by a historic mandate of Congress to champion independently produced programs that take creative risks, spark public dialogue and serve underserved audiences. Since its inception in 1991, ITVS programs have revitalized the relationship between the public and public television, bringing TV audiences face-to-face with the lives and concerns of their fellow Americans. More information about ITVS can be obtained by visiting itvs.org. ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American People.

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