

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 18, 2012

**Canadian Director | Producer Lands Coveted Spot in DocuWeeks 2012 Showcase
for “TRIAL BY FIRE: Lives Re-Forged”**

*Inspirational documentary by MEGAN SMITH-HARRIS scheduled for World Premiere:
Theatrical runs in NYC and L.A., will qualify film for Academy Award consideration*

TRIAL BY FIRE: Lives Re-Forged has been chosen by the International Documentary Association’s (IDA) for its prestigious **DocuWeeks 2012 Showcase**. The film was selected from among a handful of “*outstanding new documentaries from around the world*” for theatrical screenings this summer, which will allow it to qualify for **Academy Award consideration**.

TRIAL BY FIRE: Lives Re-Forged, celebrates the journeys of burn survivors who rise above their injuries to discover unexpected insights and a transformed worldview. The film, which features war veteran and celebrity, **J.R. Martinez** (“All My Children” “Dancing With the Stars”) shown twice daily at the **IFC Center in New York City (Greenwich Village) Friday, August 3rd – Thursday, 9th** and at the **Laemmle NoHo 7 Theater in Los Angeles (North Hollywood) Friday, August 10th – Thursday, 16th**.

In June, the documentary screened in Calgary at a private preview for the **Canadian Burn Survivors Conference**. **Director/Producer Megan Smith-Harris** was deeply touched by the experience. “The film received an incredibly warm reception,” she says, “and a week later when I got a personal note saying, ‘thank you for showing the world that there is so much more to us than scars,’ it reaffirmed my belief that **TRIAL BY FIRE** needs to be seen by a wide audience.”

Smith-Harris honed her producing and directing skills first at the **Canadian Film Centre** in Toronto and later at **Women in the Director’s Chair**, in Banff.

“I’m enormously grateful to the CFC for all they taught me,” says Smith-Harris “it was one of the most productive years of my life, and the WIDC program was invaluable. Those early opportunities really gave me a leg up with my professional career.”

Smith-Harris met her husband, former A&E Television executive **Bill Harris**, met at the 1997 **HotDocs** film festival. Within five weeks they were secretly engaged and came out officially as a

couple at the Banff International Television Festival, marrying during HotDocs the following year. “We redefined the meaning of an American/Canadian co-production,” quips Harris, who serves as executive producer on TRIAL BY FIRE and co-owns **Pyewackitt Productions**, the couple’s boutique production company based in Connecticut.

Smith-Harris, who had never met a burn survivor prior to undertaking the project, was motivated to make the film after seeing a photograph of burn survivors in a magazine. “I experienced a jolt of understanding that gave me instant empathy,” she recalls. “I realized that accidents can happen to anyone at anytime. You think it’s just an ordinary day... until it isn’t.”

The film features emotionally captivating stories – a distraught mother jumps through a window to save her son engulfed in flames, a high school chemistry class explosion derails the life of one of its star students, an oil refinery worker survives a major blast only to face even greater challenges, and a racecar driver makes a miraculous comeback after being pulled from her fiery wreck. Through extraordinary courage, grit, and determination, all re-forge their destinies by first imagining – and then embracing – new dreams.

“These are stories that could save your life,” says Smith-Harris. “The film takes you on an emotional journey, one that doesn’t pull any punches but is ultimately, inspirational.”

When you forge metal with fire, it becomes stronger.

It turns out the same is true of the human spirit.

TRIAL BY FIRE: Lives Re-Forged

For further information, film clips or to schedule an interview with Megan Smith-Harris, please contact:

Bill Harris, Executive Producer

(203) 210-5295 | bill@TrialByFireDoc.org

Website: <http://www.TrialByFireDoc.org>

IndieGoGo: <http://www.indiegogo.com/TrialByFireDoc>

Hope Lies Inside: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBkG-tbQP8>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/TrialByFireDoc>