

J.R. Martinez Featured in Inspirational Documentary:

TRIAL BY FIRE: Lives Re-Forged Lands Coveted Spot in DocuWeeks 2012 Showcase

Film Scheduled for World Premiere theatrical runs in New York & Los Angeles

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

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 popular celebrity, **J.R. Martinez** ("All My Children" "Dancing With the Stars") will be shown twice daily at the **IFC Center in New York City (Greenwich Village) Friday, August 3 – Thursday, August 9** and at the **Laemmle NoHo 7 Theater in Los Angeles (North Hollywood) Friday, August 10 – Thursday, August 16**

J.R. Martinez was critically injured when his convoy drove over a roadside bomb in Iraq. Trapped in the burning vehicle for five minutes, Martinez sustained burns to more than 40 percent of his body. After being hospitalized for 34 months and enduring some 30 surgeries, J.R. recovered and was cast as "Brot," a war veteran, in **All My Children** (2008 – 11). In addition to his success breaking barriers and stereotypes as an actor, Martinez dazzled audiences week after week on **Dancing With the Stars** eventually winning the competition along with the admiration of much of America for his bravery, sensitivity and candor.

"Being burned taught me so much," says Martinez, "I'm going to accept who I am. *This* is who I am... this is my body, these are my scars, this is my new uniform, and I wear it every single day and there's nothing I can do to take it off. I'm going to wear it as a badge of honor."

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Director/Producer Megan Smith-Harris interviewed Mr. Martinez at the 2010 World Burn Congress in Galveston, TX, a year before his stint on DWTS. “J.R.’s phenomenal rise in popularity has been a tremendous asset for TRIAL BY FIRE,” says Ms. Smith-Harris, “When you tell people you’re making a film about burn survivors, they get a little anxious and uncomfortable but when you tell them the film features J.R. Martinez, they immediately smile and relax. J.R. has put a friendly face to the burn community which helps people be more open and understanding.”

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. “Looking at that photograph, I felt 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 other 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.

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

TRIAL BY FIRE: Lives Re-Forged, also honors the emergency and medical personnel who assist burn survivors in their recovery. The filmmakers have launched an educational and community outreach effort promoting burn awareness and fire safety, including a “Detector in Every Home” campaign with a goal to distribute free smoke detectors through fire stations across the country. The film is a non-profit production, endorsed and supported by various firefighting, medical, and burn community organizations. “Simply put,” says Smith-Harris, “it’s a movement to help save lives and make the world a more welcoming place for everyone.”
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*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:

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

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

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

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