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# “The Tempest” to close the 67th Venice International Film Festival

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American Director Julie Taymor’s *The Tempest* has been chosen as the closing night film (Out of Competition) for the 67<sup>th</sup> Venice International Film Festival. The world premiere screening of *The Tempest* arrives on the cusp of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Shakespeare’s spectacular fantasy. Through Taymor’s trademark visual flair and creative direction, the film presents even the most devoted Shakespeare fans an opportunity to experience one of the Bard’s most beloved works in a unique and exhilarating new production.

In Taymor’s *The Tempest*, the director brings an original dynamic to the story by changing the gender of the sorcerer Prospero into the sorceress – Prospera – portrayed by Oscar winner Helen Mirren. Prospera’s journey spirals through vengeance to forgiveness as she reigns over a magical island, cares for her young daughter, Miranda, and unleashes her powers against shipwrecked enemies in this exciting, masterly mix of romance, treachery and the supernatural.

The screenplay for *The Tempest* was written by Taymor with original music by Oscar-winning composer, and Taymor’s long-time collaborator, Elliot Goldenthal. Costumes were designed by three-time Oscar winner Sandy Powell. The film was edited by Oscar winner Françoise Bonnot.

The world premiere screening of *The Tempest* will be presented in the Sala Grande (Palazzo del Cinema) on Saturday, September 11, following the awards ceremony. The 67<sup>th</sup> Venice International Film Festival will be held September 1 through 11, 2010, directed by Marco Mueller and organized by la Biennale di Venezia, chaired by Paolo Baratta.

Distributed by Touchstone Pictures and produced by Julie Taymor, Lynn Hendee, Robert Chartoff, Jason K. Lau and Julia Taylor-Stanley, the film is set for a U.S. release in December 2010. Icon Entertainment International (IEI) is handling sales for international territories.

## About Julie Taymor

A 1991 recipient of the MacArthur “genius” Fellowship, Julie Taymor has had an illustrious career that has spanned the worlds of film, opera, and theatre. Taymor’s three previous feature films have earned a total of eight Oscar and three Golden Globe nominations.

Her feature film debut, *Titus*, was based on her own off-Broadway stage production and starred Anthony Hopkins, Jessica Lange and Alan Cumming. In 2002, Taymor’s biographical film, *Frida*, earned six Academy Award nominations and won two. Taymor took on the music of the Beatles, and earned a Golden Globe nomination for Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy, in *Across the Universe*, brilliantly weaving together a tale of the tumultuous 1960’s with the group’s legendary music as a backdrop.

Beyond the silver screen, Taymor has directed five operas internationally including *Oedipus Rex*, which she turned into a film that premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and won the Jury Award at the Montreal Festival of Films on Art. Taymor also directed *Salome*; *The Flying Dutchman*; *Die Zauberflöte* which has been in repertory at The Met for six years; *The Magic Flute* which was the abridged English version of *Die Zauberflöte* and inaugurated a new series on PBS television, *Great Performances at The Met*; and *Grendel*.

Taymor is best known as the visionary creator of theatrical productions that break barriers and expand horizons. In 1998 she became the first woman to win the Tony Award for Best Direction of a Musical for her groundbreaking production of *The Lion King* on Broadway. Her previous stage successes include *The Green Bird*, which earned two Drama Desk award nominations, and *Juan Darien*, which received five Tony nominations and two Obie Awards. Taymor is set to take Broadway by storm again this year with the highly anticipated *Spider-Man: Turn Off The Dark*, an original musical with songs by U2’s Bono and The Edge.