



**PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Massively multi-player movie at Cannes**

**Next-generation film company, MOD Films, will give sneak previews of the its re-mixable sci-fi film pilot, *Sanctuary*, at this year's Cannes Film Festival and invite potential distributors to take part in a world-first experiment. What happens when the audience has the right to play with a story?**

*Sanctuary* is a virtual reality super-hero film and a proof-of-concept for a new kind of story format that delivers an interactive experience through Internet social media platforms. The project, created by director Michela Ledwidge, is a hybrid designed to be viewed as a traditional movie but also hints at a possible future for film-making – the audience can sample the film as easily as music and re-version material.

The company was founded in 2004 with a NESTA Inventions and Innovations award to demonstrate how regular films could be given to the audience in a malleable form using Internet and video game technology. *Sanctuary* is not a game but it allows audiences to make their own entertainment from it, including games. The approach stems from years of research into how audiences actually experience movies and interactive storytelling. MOD Films has created a story framework to let people enjoy what others have done with a film, as well as play with, disassemble, and re-assemble materials themselves without breaking the law. The extra in scene five can finally become the star.

*Sanctuary* was shot on 35mm film on location in Sydney in 2005 after some controversy when the Australian Media and Entertainment Arts Alliance ruled that it was "inappropriate" for professional actors to appear in a film with only "Some Rights Reserved" by the production company. MOD Films was forced to halt proceedings. Filming only went ahead after an Internet-led backlash challenged the ruling. The production of the 12 minute pilot went on to set a legal precedent by clearing every single aspect of the production (from concept art through to actors performances) for non-commercial use and re-use.

MOD Films is using the Creative Commons licensing scheme that expressly permits more audience freedom than All Rights Reserved. The Creative Commons was first devised in 2002 as a mechanism to help creative work be shared. Mash-up and re-mix potential is an intrinsic part of the *Sanctuary* project – empowering the audience to exercise greater control over purchased film content and treating re-use as an opportunity as opposed to a commercial threat. Audience re-use is already



prevalent in the computer games industry, often referred to as MOD'ing, and certain bestselling games have started out as MODs (e.g. Counter Strike). MOD Films is exploring how this may work creatively and commercially with the mainstream. Last month the company co-presented the milestone event *International Re-Mix* at the San Francisco International Film Festival.

*Sanctuary* is intended for distribution as DVD-Video and High Definition Video products with a vast library of material available for online subscribers. Producers also being sought for the follow-on feature film, previously developed.

Michela Ledwidge, the director of *Sanctuary*, and the recipient of the Invention award that provided seed funding for the project, said

*"We've come to Cannes to talk about the future of film-making, after receiving an unsolicited invitation to submit Sanctuary to the International Critics Week. VFX work continues on our film but all this advance interest does suggest that there is a market for new formats and a fresh approach. Audiences appreciate greater control, even if they choose to do nothing with it."*

For further information on *Sanctuary*, contact:

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### **About MOD Films**

MOD Films is a next generation film company developing re-mixable stories and tools for the future of movie-making. The company was formed from an Inventions and Innovations award received in 2004 from the UK's National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts. Support has also been received from the Australian Film Commission.

<http://modfilms.com>

<http://remixablefilms.multiply.com> (Sanctuary beta testers)

### **About thequality.com**

thequality.com is Michela Ledwidge's Internet consultancy that applies creative energy, experience and a cross-cultural, collaborative vision to exceptional media projects. Established in 1993, the company is based in London and a principal investor in MOD Films.

<http://thequality.com>