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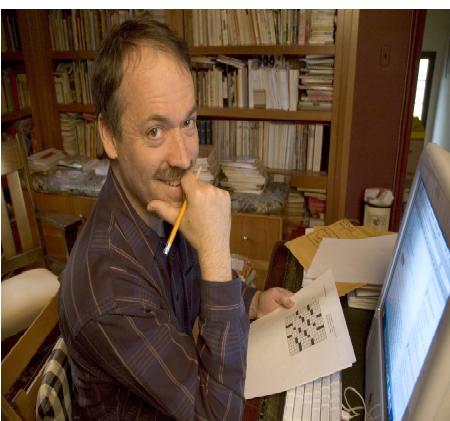
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**HIT DOCUMENTARY WORDPLAY TO AIR
FALL 2007 ON THE
EMMY®AWARD-WINNING
PBS SERIES, *Independent Lens***

***Inside Look at Crossword Puzzle Master Will Shortz
and His Passionate Devotees***

(San Francisco, CA) — **WORDPLAY** focuses on the man most associated with crossword puzzles, *New York Times* puzzle editor and NPR “Puzzle master,” Will Shortz. Director Patrick Creadon introduces us to this passionate hero and to the inner workings of his brilliant and often hilarious contributors, including syndicated puzzle creator Merl Reagle. **WORDPLAY** will air nationally as part of the sixth season of the Emmy®Award-winning PBS series, *Independent Lens*.

The film introduces us to avid crossword puzzlers such as Bill Clinton, Bob Dole, Jon Stewart, Ken Burns, Mike Mussina and the Indigo Girls, who reveal the roots of their crossword obsession.



Scenes from the box office hit, **WORDPLAY**, premiering this fall on *Independent Lens*. From left to right, “Puzzle master,” Will Shortz and crossword fans, The Indigo Girls and former President, Bill Clinton.



In addition to deconstructing this uniquely American institution, **WORDPLAY** takes us to the Super Bowl of crossword puzzling, the 28th American Crossword Puzzle Tournament where almost five hundred competitors battle it out for the title "Crossword Champ." A delightful look at the pleasures of thinking *inside the box*, **WORDPLAY** shows us why over 50 million Americans take up pencil (or in some brave cases, pen) to crossword puzzles every week.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Patrick Creadon (Director) was born in Chicago and is a 1989 graduate of the University of Notre Dame. He began his career as one of the youngest cameramen in the history of PBS, shooting and producing cinema-verite style stories for the critically acclaimed series *The 90's*. He earned his Master's Degree in Cinematography at the American Film Institute where his thesis film was nominated for a student Academy Award. As a cameraman, Creadon's work has appeared on every major network and he has also done work for Paramount Pictures, Warner Brothers, Sony, Universal and Disney. Creadon lives in Los Feliz, California, with his wife, producer Christine O'Malley, and their two children. Says Patrick, "Christine and I discovered our love of the puzzle years ago on our honeymoon. The resort we were staying at was located far from 'civilization' though it did receive an 8-page digest of *The New York Times* every morning, complete with the crossword puzzle on the back page. Within a few days, we were completely hooked on the puzzle, and have been ever since." Creadon describes himself as a "Wednesday/Thursday" crossword solver, though he once finished a Saturday *New York Times* puzzle – almost.

Christine O'Malley (Producer) was born in Manhattan and raised outside of Chicago, where she attended both DePaul University and Columbia College. She started in non-fiction production as a researcher at Van Ness Films on the A&E *Biography* series. Later she teamed with producer/director Scott Goldstein on several critically acclaimed documentaries for the Simon Weisenthal Center's Museum of Tolerance. She served as Associate Producer on **Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room**, which aired this year on *Independent Lens*. She and Patrick Creadon are married and have two children (and a fantastic dog.)

ABOUT Will Shortz

Crossword editor of *The New York Times* and NPR personality, Will Shortz has been studying, creating and editing puzzles for his entire life. A graduate of Indiana University, he is the only person in the world to hold a degree in Enigmatology (the study of puzzles), which he created under the auspices of the University's General Studies Program. A former editor at *Games Magazine*, Shortz was asked in 1978 to help organize the very first American Crossword Puzzle Tournament (ACPT) in Stamford, Connecticut.

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The event was originally conceived of by a member of the Stamford Marriott's marketing department to help create business for the new hotel. After a few years, Marriott decided to end their official involvement with the tournament, at which point Shortz took up the reigns and became – and continues to be – the director of the annual event which still takes place at the Marriott every March. Shortz is also known to millions as NPR's "Puzzle Master," and has been stumping listeners with various puzzles and word games on *Weekend Edition* since the program began in 1987. In 1993, after the sudden death of *New York Times* crossword editor Eugene Maleska, Shortz became only the fourth person to hold this position, following in the footsteps of Margaret Petherbridge Farrar (1942-1967), Will Weng (1967-1977) and Maleska (1977-1993).

ABOUT Tyler Hinman (college student and Crossword Tournament competitor) Tyler Hinman is a 22-year-old competitive puzzle solver and a featured contestant in **WORDPLAY**. He constructs original crosswords occasionally and is one of the regular puzzlemakers for *The Onion*. He graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (go Engineers!) in 2006 and is currently a bond trader in Chicago.

ABOUT *Independent Lens*

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing Tuesday nights at 10:00 PM on PBS. The acclaimed anthology series features documentaries and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement and unflinching visions of their independent producers. *Independent Lens* features unforgettable stories about a unique individual, community or moment in history. Presented by ITVS, the series is supported by interactive companion websites and national publicity and community engagement campaigns. Further information about the series is available at www.pbs.org/independentslens. *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS, and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts. The series producer is Lois Vossen.

ABOUT THE Independent Television Service (ITVS)

Celebrating its 15th anniversary, the 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 10:00 PM 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.

About PBS

PBS is a media enterprise that serves 354 public noncommercial television stations and reaches almost 90 million people each week through on-air and online content. Bringing diverse viewpoints to television and the Internet, PBS provides high-quality documentary and dramatic entertainment, and consistently dominates the most prestigious award competitions. PBS is a leading provider of educational materials for K-12 teachers, and offers a broad array of other educational services. PBS' premier kids TV programming and Web site, PBS KIDS Online (**pbskids.org**), continue to be parents' and teachers' most trusted learning environments for children. More information about PBS is available at **pbs.org**, one of the leading dot-org Web sites on the Internet.

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