

## **Family Portrait in Black and White – Award Winning Documentary on Super-Foster Mom and her 16 Bi-racial Children Arrives on DVD December 4, 2012**

**On the heels of National Adoption Month comes a documentary that explores the growing pains of the foster system in Ukraine, dissecting one foster mother Olga Njenja and her brood of 16 mixed race orphans. A martyr for the cause of abandoned children, this foster mother fights tooth and nail to keep her family together. Unfortunately, her overbearing control of the children's freedom limits their future opportunities. This engaging film raises many questions about parenting and is available online at regular DVD retailers including Barnes & Noble, Best Buy and Amazon or can be saved on Netflix.**

Documentary Family Portrait in Black and White introduces headstrong Olga Njenja, a foster-mother to 16 Ukrainian-African orphans struggling in a small village in racially charged Ukraine. Despite hardships caused by their lack of money and the racist attitudes of their compatriots, these abandoned kids function as a family under Olga's relentless dictatorial guidance. The film offers deep insight into a fraught community surrounding this one-of-a-kind clan and into the passions, hopes and hardships of a unique self-made family.

(<http://www.familyportraitthefilm.com/>). Quoting Rosie O'Donnell, TV personality and adoption advocate, "Director Julia Ivanova beautifully highlights Olga Njenja's bold and courageous journey as she copes with the difficulties of parenting while navigating the challenges of foster care, adoption, and racism. The film is riveting, truthful, and profound."

Family Portrait in Black and White will be released on DVD on December 4<sup>th</sup>. This documentary premiered in competition at Sundance Film Festival and won Best Canadian Feature at Hot Docs, North America's largest documentary film festival. The film was released theatrically in USA this July, broadcast on PBS and has been shown at numerous film festivals all over the world.

The filmmakers are hoping that Family Portrait in Black and White will encourage North American families to participate in summer hosting programs bringing disadvantaged Eastern European children to USA and Canada for summer or Christmas vacations. These orphan hosting programs already exist in many communities in North America but more host families are needed.

Human rights activism for equality of all races is still in infancy in post-Soviet republics, including Ukraine. The problems of racism were highlighted during the Euro Cup soccer championship this summer and have not disappeared. Many organizations are still fighting to force the government of the Ukraine to protect its bi-racial citizens and to prosecute racially motivated crimes with maximum sentences. Family Portrait in Black encourages more human rights organizations to take on this cause.

The documentary was produced by Interfilm Productions in association with ITVS International, Eghd, Knowledge, DR, Rogers and Hot Docs/Shaw Documentary Funds and is available for

home and educational use through Passion River Films as well as your favorite retailers and at (<http://www.familyportraitthefilm.com/>).

About Interfilm Productions:

Interfilm Productions is a documentary production company that focuses on combining entertainment and intelligence in high definition. Documentaries to date include 'High Five: A Suburban Adoption Saga', '10 Days=Wife: Love Translated' on dating tours, 'Loving a Stranger' on international love affairs, 'From Russia, For Love' on adoption, 'Moscow Freestyle' about English teachers abroad and 'Fatherhood Dreams' on gay parenting.

About Passion River:

Since 1998, Passion River Films has been devoted to acquiring, distributing and representing unique independent films and documentaries. Their award winning and festival favorite features have made their home on shelves of various notable film library, online and retail stores such as Netflix, Barnes and Noble, Best Buy, and Blockbuster.

For more info:

Boris Ivanov

Producer

Interfilm Productions

Tel: 604-290-3002

Fax: 604-899-4353

[boris@interfilm.ca](mailto:boris@interfilm.ca)

For Images: (<http://www.familyportraitthefilm.com/press/>)