

# MACGILLIVRAY FREEMAN FILMS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
January 23, 2004

## **MacGillivray Freeman's "Coral Reef Adventure" Is The Highest Grossing Documentary Of 2003. Box Office Surpasses \$24 Million And Counting.**

*Coral Reef Adventure* Opens in Los Angeles on January 30 at the California Science Center IMAX Theater

**LAGUNA BEACH, CALIFORNIA—January 23, 2004—***Coral Reef Adventure*, MacGillivray Freeman's documentary for IMAX® theaters, is the highest grossing documentary film released in 2003, taking in \$24.6 million worldwide (\$21.1 million domestic) since its platform release in February 2003. Heralded as a groundbreaking film with stunning underwater cinematography, *Coral Reef Adventure* was released in 55 large format theaters in 2003 and continues to open in new theaters. Applauded by film critics for its spectacular imagery and bold environmental message, the film is on track to become one of the most successful films in the giant screen medium.

Voted Best IMAX Theater Film of 2003 by the members of the Giant Screen Theater Association, *Coral Reef Adventure* was directed by Academy Award®-nominated director Greg MacGillivray (*Everest*, *Dolphins*), produced by MacGillivray and Alec Lorimore, edited by Stephen Judson and written by Judson, Osha Gray Davidson and Jack Stephens. The film follows the inspirational personal quest of underwater filmmakers Howard and Michele Hall to document the imperiled coral reefs of the South Pacific and the worldwide challenge to save them. *Coral Reef Adventure* is narrated by Liam Neeson and features songs written and recorded by Crosby, Stills & Nash.

"The success of *Coral Reef Adventure* reflects a great partnership between a group of passionate filmmakers and ocean advocates dedicated to bringing the vitally important story of the world's endangered coral reefs to light," said MacGillivray. "We've experienced tremendous support from the large format theater community which embraced this film and brought it to audiences worldwide. Thanks to their support, millions of people are discovering a new love for coral reefs and the world's oceans."

"Coral reefs are among the world's most important, yet endangered ecosystems," added Christopher Palmer, one of the film's executive producers and CEO of National Wildlife Productions at National Wildlife Federation. "Through its story of human courage and the global challenge to preserve these marine treasures, *Coral Reef Adventure* is having an important impact on conservation efforts to help reefs."

The film's success follows a pattern previously established by MacGillivray Freeman Films. Four of the company's recent films have topped the box office chart for documentaries in the year they were released: *Journey Into Amazing Caves* in 2001

- more -

## **Coral Reef Adventure—Page 2**

(\$39 million through 2003); *Dolphins* in 2000 (\$73.7 million); *Everest* in 1998 (\$125.7 million); and *The Living Sea* in 1995 (\$87.6 million).

*Coral Reef Adventure* will continue to open in giant screen theaters in 2004, eventually playing in approximately 150 to 200 theaters. First released in IMAX theaters on February 14, 2003, *Coral Reef Adventure* is the third in the company's series of ocean-themed mission-driven films. It is also part of the company's Great Adventure Film series—a series of films based on real-life adventures undertaken in remote locations that celebrate the discovery of the natural world. For the launch of *Coral Reef Adventure*, MFF coordinated a far-reaching outreach effort to generate increased awareness for the plight facing the world's reefs. The company produced a companion book, a scientist lecture series, a traveling exhibit for museum lobbies, and a teacher's guide among other projects. The company estimates its campaign as so far reached approximately 43 million people with its message of hope and conservation for reefs. The company's fourth ocean conservation film, *Water Planet*, will be released in 2006.

“As an ocean enthusiast who has seen the decline in our world's oceans over the past thirty years, making films that highlight the beauty and importance of the sea has become my most important personal mission as a filmmaker,” adds MacGillivray. “If more and more people are inspired with a love for the ocean it will add strength to the growing global efforts to reverse the destructive trends that threaten the future of marine life on this planet.”

*Coral Reef Adventure* was produced and distributed by MacGillivray Freeman Films with major funding from National Science Foundation and MacGillivray Freeman Films in association with Museum of Science, Boston, National Wildlife Federation, Lowell, Blake & Associates, and Museum Film Network.

### **About MacGillivray Freeman Films**

MacGillivray Freeman Films is the world's leading independent producer and distributor of giant screen films for IMAX theaters and large format cinemas. The company has 30 giant screen films to its credit, including such blockbuster hits as *Everest* and *To Fly!* and the Academy Award®-nominated documentaries *Dolphins* and *The Living Sea*. The company's upcoming films include *The Mystery of the Nile* and *Greece: Secrets of the Past*, both slated for release in 2005.

###

IMAX® is a registered trademark of IMAX Corporation. Academy Award® is a registered trademark of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

**For more information, please visit [www.macfreefilms.com](http://www.macfreefilms.com) or contact;**

Lori Rick, MacGillivray Freeman Films, 949-494-1055 ext. 118,

[lrick@macfreefilms.com](mailto:lrick@macfreefilms.com)