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Penticton to Play Itself, as All-Canadian Film - *Change of Pace* - Begins Production Following Nationwide COVID Shutdown

Coming-of-Age Feature Celebrates Strengths and Foibles of Small-Town Life and Explores Unbreakable Bonds Between Father & Son, Both On and Off-screen

Vancouver, BC—Suitcase Charlie Films announces the filming of an all-Canadian motion picture *Change of Pace*, set and filmed in the city of Penticton. The production is inspired by a 60-minute, Super-8 film that Suitcase Charlie Films owner **Graham Fraser** and **Mike Drinkwater** shot in their final year of high school in 1980. Now, nearly 40 years later, Fraser's son, Luke Fraser, has written a new script, partnering with the pair to re-envision the original screenplay. *Change of Pace* will be among the first productions to begin work in Canada following a nationwide industry shutdown around COVID-19—and will offer valuable opportunities to its Canadian cast and crew, while highlighting a potential road forward for the sector.

“As it did for most businesses worldwide, the global pandemic ground film production to a grinding halt,” says the film’s **Producer and Director Shel Piercy**. “As the world tries to determine what their ‘new normal’ looks like in the months ahead, we’re excited to offer one such vision for film and TV. This is a homegrown production that taps into the enormous pools of local artistic and technical talent, while showcasing the abundant beauty and charming character of communities like Penticton.”

Change of Pace is a love letter to Canada. It is a modern, coming-of-age film that pays homage to the 80's with a quirky, and relatable, cast of characters. The film encompasses the appreciation of Penticton, B.C. and the charm and community it offers; including the breathtaking beauty of the Okanagan landscape, which stands out as its own character in the film.

The film’s narrative follows Mike Freshwater, an awkward high school student having trouble fitting in during his final year at Penticton Secondary School. His offbeat father, Hank, spends more time defrauding the government than paying attention to his son. Mike’s lack of direction takes a turn when he meets Wallace, a reserved new kid from Toronto. As graduation nears, Wallace helps Mike train for an annual, cross-country race, while Mike guides Wallace through an unfamiliar, small-town environment.

In addition to highlighting the scenic and cultural allure of the region, the project will bring essential employment to the Okanagan’s many film professionals, most of whom have been without work since the pandemic hit this past March. The film and TV industry contributes more than \$3 billion annually to British Columbia’s economy, so signs of early return are welcomed by those who work within the sector—and the many ancillary businesses who support it, including caterers, rental companies, security, and more.

“We are delighted to see the production of the film *Change of Pace* take place in our great city,” states **Penticton Mayor John Vassilaki**. “Penticton is such a charming community and it will be a privilege to have our city as the backdrop to what’s sure to be an outstanding motion picture.”

Among the iconic Penticton locations and landmarks set to grace the screen are the **sternwheeler SS Sicamous, the Penticton Vees at play in South Okanagan Events Centre, Penticton Secondary**, and more.

The production office for the film will open on August 10, just as principal casting is completed. With a 15-day shoot commencing on September 14, the producers estimate that **70 per cent of the film's cast and 60 per cent of its crew will be drawn from the talent and expertise already present in the Okanagan.**

“At the time I shot the first film back in 1980, I couldn't possibly have known the role that endurance racing and competition would come to play in my life,” says **Executive Producer Graham Fraser**, who owned and produced the iconic **Ironman Triathlon across North America** from 1995 to 2012. “This film is a real merging of my past and present life, so I cannot think of anything more fitting than having my son pick up the tale. I hope audiences will be touched by its heartfelt and timely message of hope and resilience—and that its story will continue to resonate through the years in their own lives.”

Luke Fraser, who graduated from University of Colorado Boulder's film school in 2019, consulted with his father and Drinkwater to re-envision, modernize, and expand the original film's narrative. Now, as the film is set to begin production, father and son are excited to collaborate on this new venture, drawing on their shared history of training for endurance races together.

Additional *Change of Pace* credits include **Theresa Piercy** as producer, **Dennis Swartman** as line producer, **Mike Drinkwater** and **Edward “Ted” McDonald** as script consultants, and **Deb Green** as casting director. Horizon Motion Pictures, a Telefilm approved sales agent and distributor for the film, will see the film's completion in January 2021. *Change of Pace* will then be submitted to festivals across the country.

For more information, visit changeofpacefilm.com.

About Suitcase Charlie Films:

Suitcase Charlie Films is an Okanagan-based company owned by Graham Fraser, which will produce the feature film *Change of Pace* in collaboration with Infinity Films.

Graham Fraser made his name synonymous in the endurance sports world while producing triathlon events for more than 30 years in Canada and the U.S. Having founded his own successful triathlon series in Canada, he purchased the financially insolvent Ironman Canada in 1995 and turned it into the great Subaru Ironman Canada. Due to the successful turnaround, Fraser was granted the rights to produce Ironman races in North America. While producing Ironman Canada in Penticton, B.C, he fell in love with the area and became the majority shareholder of the Penticton Vees Junior A Hockey Team. After the sale of NA Sports (formerly Ironman North America), Graham created and produced Centurion Cycling events in the U.S. and Canada and rekindled his passion for filmmaking. In 2018, Graham and his wife, Sue, moved full time to Penticton, where he is currently Chairman of the BCHL.

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