



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL SEPARATES FACT FROM FICTION WHEN THE REAL STORY KICKS OFF ITS SECOND SEASON APRIL 25TH

**Series Takes In-Depth Look at Inspiration for Iconic Motion Pictures *The Exorcist*, *Silence of the Lambs*, *Casino*, *The Bourne Identity* & *The Hunt For Red October***

**New York, NY, April 19, 2010** – Often times the best fiction is based on fact. Playing off this theme, **Smithsonian Channel** premieres the second season of its original series, **THE REAL STORY**, on **Sunday, April 25**. Classic mystery and adventure tales of the twentieth century come alive in this series that examines the true stories behind famous historical events and individuals. The season premiere looks at the inspiration for one of the most talked about movies ever, *The Exorcist*. Other episodes look at *Silence of the Lambs*, *Casino*, *The Bourne Identity* and *The Hunt for Red October*.

### **The Real Story: *The Exorcist* - Premieres Sunday, April 25 at 8pm ET/PT**

It is one of the most terrifying movies ever made that ignited anew the debate between science and faith. Yet *The Exorcist* is not a work of complete fiction. In fact, it is based on the written record of a 1949 exorcism in St. Louis in which a priest claimed to have cast out several demons from a 13 year-old boy. The exorcism rituals went on for almost four months and, according to witnesses, the boy spoke Latin and had messages appear as though branded on his skin, suggesting poltergeist activity. The episode digs deep into the true story behind *The Exorcist*, exploring exorcism diaries and securing a rare and candid interview with William Peter Blatty, author of the original novel and the film's screenplay.

### **The Real Story: *Silence of the Lambs* – Premieres Sunday, May 2 at 8pm ET/PT**

*Silence of the Lambs* tells the story of a young ambitious FBI agent as she pursues the serial killer Buffalo Bill with help from convicted cannibal Hannibal Lecter. This episode of *The Real Story* reveals the inspiration for writer Thomas Harris. While researching *Silence of the Lambs*, Harris spent time in the FBI's Behavioral Science Unit, immersed in the case-files of serial killers. This unit's researchers are interviewed and reveal some gruesome details about real-life killers Ed Gein, Ted Bundy and others.

### **The Real Story: *Casino* – Premieres Sunday, May 9 at 8pm ET/PT**

The real-life inspiration for Martin Scorsese's classic mob drama "Casino" was a casino owner who ingeniously funneled millions in gambling profits to the Mob for years. The classic film tells the extraordinary story of Sam 'Ace' Rothstein, the fictional counterpart of the real life Frank Rosenthal, a successful gambler from Chicago who secretly controlled three mafia-owned casinos in Las Vegas during the 1970s. Through

an ingenious scam, he outwitted the authorities and ensured his mafia bosses became rich beyond their wildest dreams. Key characters in this colorful real-life crime story are interviewed to reveal exactly how the mafia employed intimidation and murder to protect their interests. Also revealed is how the FBI was finally able to expose mob practices and overcome the mob's formidable grip on Sin City.

**The Real Story: The Bourne Identity – Premieres Sunday, May 16 at 8pm ET/PT**

Jason Bourne is the ultimate CIA operative caught up in high-octane action that although highly entertaining, seems far-fetched. Despite being a fictional creation based on the books of author Robert Ludlum, Bourne is more than just Hollywood fantasy. The real story behind the movie franchise is explored through interviews with terrorism experts and former CIA agents who confirm that many of Jason Bourne's actions closely mirror the real-life training of Agency operatives. The political assassinations in the Bourne books and films were also inspired by real-life events.

**The Real Story: The Hunt For Red October – Premieres Sunday, May 23 at 8pm ET/PT**

*The Hunt for Red October* tells the story of a Russian captain who attempts to defect to the West in a nuclear submarine. Based on a best-selling book by Tom Clancy, the story was directly inspired by an extraordinary Cold War incident. In November 1975 Valery Sablin started a mutiny and took his destroyer out into the Baltic Sea heading West. Soviet Navy bombers stopped the ship when it was just two hours from Swedish waters, and Sablin was arrested, returned to Moscow, found guilty of treason, and executed. Speaking to those involved in the mutiny and the officers sent to stop it, this episode of *The Real Story* investigates a remarkable story of bravery, tragedy and Soviet secrecy.

**ABOUT SMITHSONIAN NETWORKS**

Smithsonian Networks (SNI/SI Networks L.L.C.) is a joint venture between Showtime Networks Inc. and the Smithsonian Institution, formed to create channels featuring programs largely inspired by the assets of the Smithsonian Institution, the world's largest museum complex. Smithsonian Channel features award-winning original documentaries, series, and groundbreaking programs highlighting America's historical, cultural and scientific heritage. Smithsonian Channel brings the American experience home in high definition and Dolby Digital 5.1 and is currently available to customers of DirecTV, Time Warner Cable, Charter Communications, Cablevision, Verizon, AT&T, and more. Learn more at [www.smithsonianchannel.com](http://www.smithsonianchannel.com).

###

**For information, contact:**

Josh Gross  
Seldin Gross Communications  
347-432-8300  
jgross@seldingrosspr.com

Drew Seldin  
Seldin Gross Communications  
917-608-6786  
dseldin@seldingrosspr.com