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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NORMAN --- “An Evening with a Hollywood Producer/Distributor”

The Independent Film Project at the University of Oklahoma will present producer Tanya York, dubbed by *The Hollywood Reporter* as one of the most powerful women in the motion picture industry. York laughs: “I think I’m like 14 places away from Barbara Walters, and I’m right before Katie Couric – so I watch Katie Couric every morning and I wonder, How did *that* happen?”

York Entertainment is a Los Angeles-based independent motion picture studio that acquires, produces and distributes feature films for the domestic and international home entertainment marketplace. York Entertainment distributes more than 50 new films each year, adding to a fast growing library of more than 400 titles across the diverse genres of Urban, Action, Horror, Sci Fi and Comedy. York product is available through major outlets such as Blockbuster, Hollywood Video and Wal-Mart, the world’s largest retailer of home video.

Tanya York produced her first theatrical film at age 19. At age 21, she created York Entertainment, and has drawn such names as Martin Sheen, Stacy Keach and Grammy nominee Mystikal to appear in her independently-produced features. York’s “Top 50” catalog includes *The Restaurant* with Academy Award® winner Adrien Brody (*The Pianist*), and *Fatal Destiny*, the directorial debut of legendary entertainer Gregory Hines. The company reportedly has a new feature in production every six weeks.

The Jamaican-born York arrived in Los Angeles at age 17, working briefly as an actress before discovering her talent as a producer/distributor. She relentlessly pursued investors and never let rejection cloud her objective. “I just rolled up my sleeves and was very persistent,” she adds. In her first two years she produced seven films, and now York is a major player in the home entertainment market, as well as a top minority-cast producer. From 1990 to 2001, York Entertainment annual revenue soared from \$500,000 to \$20 million, while staff streamlined from 30 to 18. York’s success story is a model of efficiency and market savvy.

Shawnee Brittan, OU Filmmaker-in-Residence and creator of the Independent Film Project, will host the event with an interactive Q&A discussion. York will share the challenges and keys to success of a major independent distributor and entrepreneur. Says Brittan: “This is an opportunity for our students and the state’s independent filmmakers to learn about motion picture distribution and production from a knowledgeable Hollywood professional.”

“An Evening with a Hollywood Producer/Distributor” will be presented on Tuesday, 18 April at 7:30pm, at the Kerr Auditorium, Sam Noble Museum of Natural History.

The Independent Film Project/OU in the School of Art promotes independent filmmaking in the

region, presenting screenings with cast and crew, symposia and workshops. All events are free and open to the public, and are held in the Kerr Auditorium at the Sam Noble Museum of Natural History. For additional information and accommodations on the basis of disability, please call (405) 325-4670.

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