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**FOCUS FEATURES AND RANDOM HOUSE FILMS
ANNOUNCE FIRST TWO PROJECTS;
FILMS PLANNED FROM BOB DROGIN'S CURVEBALL
AND YASMINA KHADRA'S THE ATTACK**

NEW YORK, February 14, 2006 – A novel set in contemporary Tel Aviv and a work of nonfiction by a Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative journalist have been selected and acquired by Random House Films and Focus Features to be the first two planned feature film projects for their new filmmaking partnership. John Lyons, President of Production for Focus Features, part of NBC Universal, and Peter Gethers, President, Random House Films, a division of book publisher Random House, Inc., made the announcement today.

The two companies are moving forward on development of a film version of *THE ATTACK*, a novel to be published in the U.S. and Canada in May by Nan A. Talese/Doubleday, an imprint of Random House, Inc.'s Doubleday Broadway Publishing Group and in the United Kingdom by the Random House U.K. Group's William Heinemann imprint. *THE ATTACK*, first published in France by Editions Julliard, has notched impressive sales of over 100,000 copies and has been short-listed for every major French literary prize. The novel tells the story of an Arab surgeon living in Tel Aviv who learns a shattering secret about his wife in the aftermath of a suicide bombing. The author is Yasmina Khadra, the pseudonym of Mohammed Moulessehoul, a former Algerian army officer. John Wells will produce the film.

The second project will be a feature based on a nonfiction book, *CURVEBALL*, named after the code name for the Iraqi informant whose deceptive information about biological weapons was used by the U.S. government to justify the war in Iraq. Scheduled for publication in Fall 2007 by the Random House imprint, whose Claire Tisne acquired it, the book is being written by investigative reporter Bob Drogen, who broke this story on the front page of his news paper, the *Los Angeles Times*. As he delves into the failures

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and systemic flaws in U.S. intelligence that led up to the Iraq war, he will present a riveting account of how misinformation and misjudgments about one man's lies could lead to global havoc.

In the multi-year deal announced last November between Random House, Inc. and Focus Features, the companies will develop movies together and co-finance and co-produce a substantial slate of feature films for theatrical release, all based on books published by Random House imprints in North America and internationally. Random House Films and Focus jointly acquire film rights for the books and partner together on script development, director selection, all phases of production, and marketing and publicity. Films co-produced by Focus or its sibling unit Rogue Pictures with Random House Films will be jointly owned, with Focus holding worldwide distribution and sales rights.

Mr. Gethers said, "We are thrilled that we have been able to acquire these two projects to kick off our joint venture. *THE ATTACK* is an illuminating and affecting story that is at once powerfully personal and compellingly political. Bob Drogin's articles have already opened a lot of eyes and the book will open quite a few more. Both pieces will reach hearts and minds as books and as films."

Mr. Lyons added, "These two stories evidence the power of the written word, and both are earmarked for strong screen adaptations – exactly the kind of emotionally compelling and thought-provoking films that Random House Films and Focus will be making."

Current and upcoming Focus Features releases include Ang Lee's *Brokeback Mountain* (nominated for 8 Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Director), starring Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal; Joe Wright's *Pride & Prejudice*, starring Keira Knightley (nominated for 4 Academy Awards, including Best Actress); Sanaa Hamri's *Something New*, starring Sanaa Lathan and Simon Baker; Rian Johnson's *Brick*, starring Joseph Gordon-Levitt (winner of a Special Jury Prize at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival); Gaby Dellal's *On a Clear Day*, starring Peter Mullan and Brenda Blethyn; Peter Cattaneo's family film *Opal Dream*; Phillip Noyce's *Hotstuff*, starring Tim Robbins and Derek Luke; Allen Coulter's *Hollywoodland*, starring Adrien Brody, Ben Affleck, and Diane Lane; and Shane Acker's animated fantasy epic *9*, produced by Tim Burton and Timur Bekmambetov and Jim Lemley & Dana Ginsburg.

Focus Features (www.focusfeatures.com) is a motion picture production, financing, and worldwide distribution company committed to bringing moviegoers the most original stories from the world's most innovative filmmakers.

Focus Features and Rogue Pictures are part of NBC Universal, one of the world's leading media and entertainment companies in the development, production, and marketing of entertainment, news, and information to a global audience. Formed in May 2004 through the combining of NBC and Vivendi Universal Entertainment, NBC Universal owns and operates a valuable portfolio of news and entertainment networks, a premier motion picture company, significant television production operations, a leading television stations group, and world-renowned theme parks. NBC Universal is 80%-owned by General Electric, with 20% controlled by Vivendi Universal.

Random House, Inc., the world's largest English-language trade book publisher, publishes many of the foremost and most popular fiction and nonfiction authors in hardcover, trade and mass market paperback, audio, electronic, digital, and other formats.

Random House, Inc. (www.randomhouse.com) is the U.S. division of Random House, the book division of Bertelsmann AG, one of the world's leading media companies. Books published by Random House, Inc. have won the most major awards of any publishing company, including the Nobel Prize, the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, and the Newberry Medal. Among the dozens of Random House, Inc. publishing divisions and imprints in the U.S. are the Bantam Dell Publishing Group, the Crown Publishing Group, the Doubleday Broadway Publishing Group, the Knopf Publishing Group, Fodor's Travel Guides, Random House Children's Books, the Random House Publishing Group, and the Random House Audio Publishing Group. Random House's publishing companies in Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Latin America, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Japan, and Korea are publishing leaders in their territories.

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