

“Combines gripping action with emotional bonds. Crew and Gould deliver resounding performances ... Suspense-ridden visual splendour”

– ArtsEast

“Charlie Zone is partly an action-packed violent crime movie about the seedier side, partly a heartfelt drama about rural life, loves lost and families torn apart”

-- CulturalMining.com

“A visceral experience ... Gould and Crew are fantastic ... A rough, ragged, spirited ride that delves into dark and touchy subject matter ... well-paced and full of genuine surprises”

– The Coast

“It’s rare that we get a thriller in which suspense, bloodshed and resonant humanity are so expertly combined”

-- Vancouver Film Festival

## ***Opening in Halifax, award-winning Charlie Zone explores dark side of postcard city***

**(Halifax, NS) Feb. 18, 2013 - *Charlie Zone***, director Michael Melski’s riveting film about Halifax’s seedier side – a place rife with drugs, guns and violence – opens a theatrical run following its festival success across Canada and beyond.

The winner of four awards at the Atlantic Film Festival (*Best Atlantic Feature, Outstanding Direction, Cinematography, and Outstanding Performance by an Actor*), the dramatic thriller opens March 1 in Halifax, Sydney and Toronto.

The twisting dramatic thriller follows Avery (Glen Gould), a disgraced First Nations boxer and ex-con, as he’s hired to abduct a runaway (Amanda Crew) from a crack house in the city’s notorious Charlie Zone. What follows is a harrowing ride through the underbelly of Halifax, a gritty panoramic of a place where drugs, crime and violence have become commonplace.

“Charlie Zone was the former police name for the north end of Halifax, and it’s a term very familiar to the people who live there,” notes Melski. “Although not all of the action is set there, it’s as much a state of mind ...”

The award-winning writer, director and playwright was inspired by the idea of “two lost souls – societal outcasts – who would change each other, make each other stronger, and through an ordeal across a city, find a mutual redemption.

“In doing so, we would explore the dark side of Halifax as it has become,” says Melski. “With its rising crime, gun violence, addiction, racism, gang activity and murder for hire, it has become a dangerous place, especially for those living on the margins. It’s an aspect of this city that’s never been shown on film before.”

In performances heralded as explosive and gripping, ***Charlie Zone*** stars celebrated First Nations actor and Nova Scotia native **Glen Gould** (*Cashing In, North of 60*), and **Amanda Crew** (*jOBs, The F Word, Charlie St. Cloud*). It’s the second feature directed by Melski (*Growing Op*), who co-wrote the screenplay with **Joseph LeClair**, and the first feature film for producer Hank White.

The film has garnered rave reviews at festivals across the country, and was an official selection at Perspective Canada in Cannes; Brussels International Fantastic Film Festival; Vancouver International Film Festival; and ReelWorld Film Festival.

The film was awarded Best Dramatic Feature Film at ImagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival, the world's largest First Nations' film festival.

"We are thrilled to support **Charlie Zone**, an incredibly compelling film that meshes realistic violence with surprising humanity," says Alan Collins of **First Weekend Club** (<http://www.firstweekendclub.ca>), the national non-profit devoted to building audiences for Canadian films.

First Weekend Club will host a Q & A with Melski, and a reception following the opening night screening at 7 p.m. on March 1 at Empire Park Lane.

**Charlie Zone** reflects the multicultural fabric of Halifax, and also stars **Mpho Koaho** (*Falling Skies*, *Flashpoint*, *Down in the Delta*), **Pasha Ebrahim** (*Hobo With a Shotgun*, *Call Me Fitz*); **Jennie Raymond** (*Haven*, *Show Me Yours*), and **Cindy Sampson** (*The Shrine*, *Supernatural*). The award-winning cinematography is by **Christopher Ball**.

"It feels particularly timely to bring this film out to public audiences now – with the Idle No More movement so active across Canada – and to shed further light on the importance of native cultural awareness and empowerment in the face of ongoing marginalization," says Emily Alden, Vice President of Production and Acquisitions, Pacific Northwest Pictures.

**Charlie Zone** is produced by Brent Barclay, Tracey Boulton, Michael Melski, and Hank White with Emily Alden and Marc Savoie serving as Executive Producers. The film is produced in association with Pacific Northwest Pictures and Myriad Pictures with the support of Telefilm Canada, Film Nova Scotia, and the Canadian Film and Video Tax Credit.

### **ABOUT PACIFIC NORTHWEST PICTURES**

A Vancouver-based company launched in 2010, Pacific Northwest Pictures acquires, produces and releases Canadian and international filmed entertainment through all distribution platforms, including theatrical, DVD, on demand, cable and broadcast television, and online. PNP's current slate of films includes the upcoming directorial debut from Jason Priestley, *Cas and Dylan*, starring Richard Dreyfuss; and *All The Wrong Reasons*, starring Cory Monteith, Kevin Zegers, Karine Vanasse, and Emily Hampshire.

RT: 98 minutes

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