



At a time when the feature-length documentary has firmly established itself as a force at the box office, humorist, poet and pundit Andrei Codrescu and celebrated independent film director Michael Almereyda are embarking upon a unique journey of discovery along the entire length of the Mississippi River---and creating an edgy and exciting new documentary feature that promises to strike a deep chord with audiences eager for meaningful, thought-provoking entertainment at the Cineplex.

The next great American story, *Big River Blues with Andrei Codrescu*, shines a new light on the magnificent waterway that is our greatest river. The Mississippi: dividing line of the country, power source, mega-highway, drainpipe; the lowest, deepest channel that binds us all together. The unfolding story of the destruction of his beloved New Orleans by hurricane Katrina has become part of our film, revealing much about our frailty in the face of nature's power and exposing both the best and the worst in human behavior.

Master social commentator Andrei Codrescu will share his fabled wisdom and wit, at once sympathetic and razor-sharp, seeking out the evocative, the dramatic and the amusing, all with an eye to taking the pulse of contemporary America as he travels its main artery. Codrescu doesn't just interview---he interacts, diving in to situations, becoming part of them---and the results can be wildly humorous or painfully serious, or some combination of both, but always thought-provoking in often unforeseeable ways.

Director Michael Almereyda has been an acclaimed film director since writing and directing *Twister* in 1990. He is accomplished in both documentary and dramatic formats. Almereyda's feature films include *Another Girl, Another Planet, Nadja, Hamlet* (starring Ethan Hawke and Sam Shepard and distributed by Miramax) and for IFC films, *Happy Here and Now*. In 2006 he wrote and directed two independent features, *Tonight at Noon*, and *New Orleans Mon Amour*, shot in New Orleans in August.

The musical soundtrack will have a life of its own. Drawing on a legacy of blues greats, from Robert Johnson, Mississippi John Hurt, and Honey Boy Edwards, to the work of top contemporary artists, the compilation CD presents an inspired anthology, emblematic of the diverse world of music that the river has inspired and nurtured for more than 200 years. The soundtrack gives a voice to the song of the river, its people, and its stories.

*Big River Blues* is being shot in High-Definition video, a format suitable for both theatrical and television release. Brian Doubleday is Producer and Columbus Baker is Executive Producer.

After theatrical release of *Big River Blues*, the producers will secure broadcast and cable television distribution and release to the home video and DVD markets. Due to his national radio presence, Codrescu has a loyal and easily targeted national following who will be the initial audience for the film. There is a substantially larger population throughout the world who will discover his gift for unexpected, mind-bending observation of all things American through this film.

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